



MISSILE DEFENSE BRIEFING REPORT

The American Foreign Policy Council's Review of
Developments in Missile Defense

Missile Defense Briefing Report: No. 339

September 2, 2015 **Richard M. Harrison**

Related Categories: Missile Defense

THE NAVY TASK FORCE THAT WILL RUN NATO MISSILE DEFENSE

The U.S. Navy's European headquarters in Naples, Italy will soon house a new ballistic missile defense coordination structure, dubbed Task Force 64, intended to consolidate command of new anti-missile ships and shore sites. The new command center is scheduled to come online in October 2015. It falls under the authority of the Navy's 6th Fleet, and will oversee radar stationed in Turkey, BMD ships in Spain, and land-based missiles in both Poland and Romania. But the task force mission is far from certain, since the ships it oversees are in high demand around the world, very expensive to maintain, and future funding remains an open question. (*Stars and Stripes*, July 28, 2015)

IRAN DEAL IGNITES REGIONAL ARMS RACE

Just weeks after the signing of the P5+1's nuclear deal with Iran, countries in Iran's periphery - including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, and other Gulf Cooperation Council members - are scrambling for additional defenses against Iran's strategic capabilities. Saudi Arabia, for one, is reportedly interested in a \$5 billion purchase of 600 Patriot missile interceptors, while other regional states are reportedly interested in procuring THAAD interceptors, which have a longer range. (Defense One, July 29, 2015)

IRON DOME FOR EXPORT

In last summer's Gaza War with the Hamas terrorist group, Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system proved its versatility, shooting down an estimated 90 percent of incoming enemy rockets. That performance caused foreign nations to take notice, and now at least one nation is moving toward procurement of the system. Canada has reportedly inked a deal to purchase the Israeli anti-missile technology, and hope to have the system operational and ready for deployment in conflict zones to provide protection for the Canadian armed forces by 2017. (PanARMENIAN.Net, July 30, 2015)

NEW RUSSIAN MILITARY ADVANCES

Amid ongoing tensions with the West, Russia is continuing its military modernization program. Among the recent inductions into the Russian arsenal is a new high-tech spy ship, as well as 40 new inter-continental ballistic missiles. The vessel, named the Admiral Yuri Ivanov, will reportedly be capable of using advanced sensors to "track all elements of the U.S. missile defense system" and conduct electronic warfare. The new advanced ICBMs, meanwhile, are said to be designed to evade even the most robust U.S. missile defense systems. (*Value Walk*, July 27, 2015)

PENTAGON LOOKS "LEFT OF LAUNCH"

America's current approach to missile defense is deeply deficient, a top U.S. military official has said. According to NORAD and NORTHCOM commander Admiral Bill Gortney, the existing U.S. missile defense architecture is unaffordable and simply will not work. Gortney argues that the U.S. should instead focus its efforts on disrupting, disabling, and eliminating missile threats before they are even launched, a state of affairs often referred to as "left of launch." He strongly advocates supporting funding for a robust worldwide sensor system that leverages data sharing to provide targeting information to both offensive and defensive systems. (*Breaking Defense*, August 11, 2015)

PATRIOTS STUCK IN TURKEY

The threat of Syrian missile strikes against Turkey has dwindled in recent months, diminishing the need for missile defenses to protect the Turkish state. However, Washington is interested in a more prominent Turkish role in the fight against the Islamic State terrorist group - a consideration that has caused the Pentagon to tread lightly, and delayed plans to remove the two Patriot anti-missile batteries that have been deployed in Turkey since 2013. As of now, there is no date certain for their withdrawal, but the political pressure is mounting amid high demand for the batteries elsewhere. (*New York Times*, August 16, 2015)