

## **DISARMAMENT DIGEST**

**Friday, 16 December 2022**

### **NEWS**

**Nuclear: [Russia releases video of nuclear-capable ICBM being loaded into silo](#)**

Russia's defense ministry shared a video of a intercontinental ballistic missile being loaded into a launch silo, days after reports surfaced that the US is preparing to send an advanced Patriot air defense system to Ukraine. (Business Insider)

**See also: [Russia 'Activates' Nuclear ICBM RS-24 Yars That Is 12x Stronger Than US Atomic Bomb That Struck Hiroshima](#)** (The EurAsian Times)

**Missiles: [North Korea tests new rocket motor, advancing long-range missile development](#)**

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un guided the first test of a large new solid-fuel rocket engine at the country's main spaceport on Thursday, according to state media, in a sign of progress on plans to build long-range nuclear missiles that can be launched more quickly in a conflict. (NK News)

**See also: [North Korea claims successful rocket test that could bolster its ICBM force](#)** (CNN)

**See also: [North Korea Tests New Rocket Engine to Enable Long-Range Missile Strikes](#)** (The Wall Street Journal)

**Missiles: [Russia launches another major missile attack on Ukraine](#)**

Ukraine's capital came under one of the biggest attacks of the war Friday as Russia's invading forces fired dozens of missiles across the country, Ukrainian officials said, reporting strikes in at least four cities that triggered emergency power outages. (AP News)

**Missiles: [Russia To Deploy 'Mach 27' Avangard Hypersonic Missiles That Can 'Outmaneuver' Any Defense System](#)**

The Commander of the Russian Strategic Missile Forces, Sergey Karakayev, announced that the Avangard missile system would enter service with the missile regiment of the Yasny military formation on December 17, state news agency TASS reported. (The EurAsian Times)

**See also: [Strategic missile forces to introduce regiment with Avangard systems by December 17](#)** (TASS)

**Drones: [The global supply trail that leads to Russia's killer drones](#)**

The hundreds of Russian drones hovering ominously over the Ukrainian battlefield owe their existence to an elastic, sanctions-evading supply chain that often runs through a shabby office above a Hong Kong marketplace, and sometimes through a yellow stucco home in suburban Florida. (Reuters)

**Drones: [Turkey's Baykar launches new jet-powered drone, aiming for air-to-air combat](#)**

Turkish defence firm Baykar said its first jet-powered unmanned aerial combat vehicle (UCAV) completed its maiden flight on Wednesday, as the company continues to gain popularity globally, most recently by helping Ukraine's army fight Russian forces. (Reuters)

**Cyber Security: [Cyber Posture Trends in China, Russia, the United States and the European Union](#)**

Current understanding of the cyber postures of China, Russia, the United States and the European Union (EU) merits re-evaluation. It is often assumed that China and Russia are aligned, yet this is not always the case. Unlike Russia, which has an ongoing focus on information security, China's official documents incorporate both information security and cybersecurity concerns that are similar to those of the EU and the USA. (Sipri)

**Cyber Security: [Putin to choose cyber warfare before nuclear weapons](#)**

Retired Gen. Keith Alexander, the former National Security Agency director and head of U.S. Cyber Command, said on Tuesday that Russian President Vladimir Putin is likely to continue using cyberattacks against Ukraine before using nuclear weapons. (The Hill)

**Arms Trade: [S. Korea, Canada ink revised arms industry cooperation pact](#)**

South Korea and Canada signed a revision Friday to their decades-old memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the arms industry and logistics cooperation to expand the scope of their defense collaboration, Seoul's state arms procurement agency said. (YonHap News Agency)

**Military Affairs: [Japan OKs enemy base strike capability in major defense policy shift](#)**

Japan decided Friday to acquire the capability to strike enemy bases and double defense spending in a dramatic shift in its postwar security policy under the nation's war-renouncing Constitution, provoking a harsh backlash from China. (Kyodo News)

**Military Affairs: [Zelensky demands modern war equipment from the EU](#)**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has urged EU states to supply modern tanks to defend against Russian attackers. "There is no rational reason why Ukraine shouldn't get it now," he said at the EU summit, to which he was connected via video. (Deutsche Welle)

**Military Affairs: [Pacifist Japan unveils biggest military build-up since World War Two](#)**

Japan on Friday unveiled its biggest military build-up since World War Two with a \$320 billion plan that will buy missiles capable of striking China and ready it for sustained conflict, as regional tensions and Russia's Ukraine invasion stoke war fears. (Reuters)

**See also:** [Pacifist Japan unveils unprecedented \\$320bn military build-up](#) (Al Jazeera)

**Military Affairs: [China sends ships into Pacific amid Japan security moves](#)**

A squadron of Chinese Navy ships sailed through straits near Japan into the Western Pacific this week, while Beijing on Friday blasted Tokyo's adoption of a new national security strategy putting itself on a more offensive footing — largely as a result of the perceived threat from China. (AP News)

**Military Affairs: [N. Korea seems to be prepping military parade in Pyongyang](#)**

North Korea has shown signs of preparing for another military parade in Pyongyang apparently in connection with a major political schedule next year, a South Korean military official said Friday. (YonHap News Agency)

**See also:** [North Korea preparing to hold military parade: Satellite imagery](#) (NK News)

## OPINION & ANALYSIS

### [In a Hi-Tech War, It's Still Shells That Count](#)

Russia continues to wreak havoc on Ukraine as temperatures there hover below freezing, with missile strikes today further damaging energy infrastructure and making it harder for people to access power, heating and water. As the war heads toward its 11th month, it's also prompting rapid reassessments elsewhere about the way militaries are funded and the equipment they have now and will need in future. (Rosalind Mathieson for Bloomberg)

### [Is the World Ready for the New Era of Deterrence?](#)

The first component of the new metaverse for deterrence is the growing threat to states' cybersecurity and the possibility of cyberwar. Cyberwar among state and non-state actors is already a significant challenge to international security. Cyberattacks occur as solo excursions or as supplements to the kinetic use of force. Both the public and private sectors are vulnerable to cyberwar, and the possibility of a crippling attack against American infrastructure, including military forces and command systems, requires constant vigilance and upgrades to information systems. (Steve Cimbala and Lawrence J. Korb for The National Interest)

### [Looking Ahead: Risk in Biden's Arms Transfers](#)

Despite campaign trail promises, President Biden's weapons transfer policy to date looks very similar to Trump's administration. Weapons are being sold to anyone willing to bid and are transferred nearly everywhere around the globe. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and few signals that the administration cares about the riskiness of its clients, Biden's risky arms transfers look likely to continue in 2023. (Jordan Cohen for the Forum on the Arms Trade)

### [How to Know if Putin Is Going to Nuke Ukraine](#)

While Ukraine gave up the nuclear weapons left behind after the Soviet collapse, many Russians see the current conflict as one with NATO. And Russian leaders, diplomats, and commentators have not shied away from advocating for nuclear use, frequently referencing Russia's arsenal. (David M. Allison for The National Interest)

### [US lightning carriers may or may not save Taiwan](#)

The US is considering the deployment of so-called "lightning carriers" to defend Taiwan, a clear departure from its use of supercarriers to signal intent to protect the self-governing island from Chinese threats during previous Taiwan Strait crises. (Gabriel Honrada for the Asia Times)

### [Testing Nuclear Weapons in the Lab Instead of the Ground](#)

Earlier this week, the Department of Energy announced the major scientific accomplishment of achieving a fusion ignition in a lab setting. The experiment fired nearly two hundred high-power lasers at a small fuel pellet to briefly create the intense heat and pressure necessary for a fusion reaction to take place and, for the first time, the reaction produced more energy than it consumed. (Eric Gomez for the CATO Institute)

### [The Biden Administration's Iran-Deal Fable](#)

The Biden administration continues to push the myth that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a.k.a. the Iran nuclear deal, was a success in restraining Iran's nuclear program. In the words of State Department spokesman Ned Price, it provided a "permanent . . . mechanism to ensure that Iran is never able or allowed to acquire a nuclear weapon. (Brett D. Schaefer for the National Review)

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