

Russia: Iranian Missiles Have 'Worldwide Reach'

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Iran Satellite Would Mean Boosted Missile Range

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AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
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MOSCOW - Iran's successful launch of a satellite with its own technology shows that the country's missiles "can reach any point on the globe," a senior Russian space sector official said Feb. 5.

"I take my hat off to the Iranian scientists," said Vitali Lapota, manager of the RKK Energia space construction company. "They have shown their missiles can reach any point on the globe."

Iran's launch Monday of the Omid (Hope) satellite carried by the home-built Safir-2 rocket has set alarm bells ringing among Western powers because of the implications for the range of its ballistic missiles.

U.S. experts fear that Iran could eventually equip ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads capable of striking Europe or the U.S.

Monday's launch comes at a time when Iran has been ignoring repeated U.N. Security Council demands to freeze its uranium-enrichment activities.

<http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=3934643&c=EUR&s=AIR>

Iran Satellite Would Mean Boosted Missile Range
By AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
Published: 3 Feb 14:33 EST (19:33 GMT)

BRUSSELS - Iran's announcement that it has launched its first satellite would, if true, confirm that the Islamic republic has missiles capable of striking Israel and southeast Europe, a NATO officer said Feb. 3.

The officer said, on condition of anonymity, that it could take up to a week to verify whether Tehran's claim that it had sent an Omid (Hope) satellite into space carried by the home-built Safir-2 space rocket was true.

"It will take several days for all our countries to examine the information," the high-ranking officer said. "First we will verify whether it is really a satellite and at what altitude it is traveling at."

He noted the apparent "light weight of the satellite - from 25 to 40 kilograms (55-88 pounds) - and the quite low altitude, from 250 to 500 kilometers (155-310 miles), at which it would be flying."

"If this is confirmed, it would mean that their rockets are capable of firing 2,000-3,000 kilometers, and would therefore have the range to hit part of Europe and Israel," he said.

"It would be confirmation of their potential."

The officer said that NATO had developed an "Active Layer Theatre Missile Defense" (ALTMD) system to protect allies like Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Turkey from such an eventuality.

He said that the ALTMD was a "mobile system that can cover these territories, and their populations, for a range of 2,000 kilometers."

The United States has moved to expand its anti-missile shield into Europe, with 10 interceptors in Poland and a radar in the Czech Republic, to counter any threat from "rogue nations" like Iran.

But the shield would not cover southeast Europe, and NATO had been mulling whether to "bolt on" its ALTMD to the U.S. system.

U.S. President Barack Obama has yet to make public his position on the shield, developed under predecessor George W. Bush, but a senior U.S. official has said he could announce a review into its costs and progress made.

<http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=3931358&c=MID&s=TOP>

The Third Iran Satellite Launch Attempt
{youtube}0Ud1093PIr4{/youtube}

Iran's Satellite launch "grave concern." in U.S.A
{youtube}AotuQxc1eM8{/youtube}

Iran Satellite Launch 3D Animation
{youtube}UO_RA3vxmSo{/youtube}

Germany, US concerned about Iranian satellite launch
{youtube}B11n3DXmjVs{/youtube}

Iran's Satellite launch "grave concern." in U.S.A
Feb. 3, 2009

U.S. Department of Defense officials confirmed the launch, and the State Department expressed "grave concern."

"Developing a space launch vehicle that could ... put a satellite into orbit could possibly lead to development of a ballistic missile system," State Department acting spokesman Robert Wood told reporters. "So that's of grave concern to us."

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is expected to discuss Iran in meetings Tuesday with British Foreign Secretary David Miliband and German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

Iran Tuesday successfully launched its first satellite into orbit, a step hailed by Iran's president as a "source of pride" for the Islamic republic, according to state-run news outlets.

On Wednesday officials from the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China will meet in Germany to discuss next steps on Iran. Wood said that Undersecretary William Burns, who is representing the United States, will seek input and discuss some ideas the Obama administration has about how to move forward.

Two U.S. officials confirmed that Iran had launched a low-earth orbit satellite, CNN Pentagon Correspondent Barbara Starr said.

There were no indications of any weapons activity on the two-stage rocket, although the rocket is capable of launching long-range weapons, the officials said.

"I wouldn't think of this in terms of highly advanced technology," one U.S. official said. But it does suggest Iran's two-stage rockets are increasingly reliable.

The Pentagon said Tuesday the launch is "clearly a concern of ours."

"Although this appears to be satellite, there are dual-use capabilities that could be applied to missiles, and that's a concern to us and everybody in region," Department of Defense spokesman Geoff Morrell said.

The launch of the satellite Omid -- which means "Hope" in Farsi -- was timed to coincide with the 30th anniversary celebrations of the Islamic revolution in Iran, according to Iranian media reports.

Iran said the satellite had already completed its first mission -- to transmit a message from Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who spoke at the launching ceremony Monday night.

In his message, Ahmadinejad congratulated the nation and said the successful launch improves Iran's status in the world, the Islamic Republic News Agency reported.

He stressed that both the satellite and the Safir rocket used to launch it were made entirely by Iranian technicians.

Iranian Defense Minister Mostafa Mohammad Najjar said that despite the small size of the Omid satellite, it will open the way for an Iranian space program. He said Tehran plans to launch another satellite in the future.

In August, Iran performed a test of a rocket capable of launching a satellite into orbit. Iranian officials declared that mission a success, but U.S. officials disputed that.

Senior U.S. officials had expressed concern about the test of the rocket, saying Iran could use the rocket to deliver warheads.

Al Jazeera report

The United States has voiced "great concern" over Iran launching its first domestically built satellite.

Robert Wood, a US state department spokesman, said that Tuesday's satellite launch by Tehran could "possibly lead to the development of ballistic missiles".

The fears were mirrored by Geoff Morrell, the Pentagon press secretary, who said that it raised suspicion that Iran was continuing to develop a missile of "increasingly long range".

The satellite, named Omid (Hope), was launched into orbit by rocket and is the first in a series that Iran plans to put into space by the end of next year.

"With this launch, the Islamic Republic of Iran has officially achieved a presence in space," Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Iranian president, said in a broadcast.

Omid will stay in orbit for up to three months as part of a programme Iranian officials say is aimed at improving telecommunications and monitoring natural disasters.

Nuclear fears

Ahmadinejad has made scientific development, which often puts the country at odds with the West, a central theme of his presidency.

The satellite's launch demonstrates the development of technologies that many countries fear could one day be used to launch nuclear weapons. Iran insists it has no plans to do so.

The Iranian Fars state news agency said the satellite "has been designed for gathering information and for testing equipment ... [that] is going to help Iranian experts send an operational satellite into space".

It said the launch was "another achievement for Iranian scientists under sanctions".

Iran is under two rounds of UN sanctions due to its refusal to halt uranium enrichment, which the US and other Western nations fear could lead to the production of nuclear weapons.

Tehran says its nuclear ambitions are limited to generating electricity.

A satellite was put into orbit by Iran in 2005, but was carried by a Russian rocket.

Archive Video

Iran first space rocket launch

February, 2008

www.presstv.com www.iribnews.ir
www.irna.com/en www.shiatv.net
{youtube}1F5hJ8gAN6w{/youtube}

Iran Military strength

April, 2008

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