

## Ghadr-1 Missile: Iran shows off new missile, taunts Israel

Contributed by France24, AFP  
Sunday, 23 September 2007  
Last Updated Sunday, 23 September 2007

Iran on Saturday showed off a longer-range missile in public for the first time and proclaimed a string of anti-Israel slogans in a major military parade amid mounting tensions with the West.

The missile -- Ghadr-1 (Power) -- was said to be in development by Western experts, but its appearance at the climax of the annual military parade to mark the start of Iran's 1980-1988 war with Iraq was its first public showing.

The official announcer at the parade told reporters the weapon had a range of 1,800 kilometres (1,100 miles), sufficient to put US bases in the Middle East and Iran's arch enemy Israel within reach.

"The Iranian nation is ready to bring any oppressive power to its knees," read a slogan from supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei inscribed on a massive board on a truck.

The missile, which has a "baby bottle-style" nose for extra aerodynamic efficiency, is seen as an improved version of Iran's existing longer-range Shahab series, which was also paraded.

Officials have said in the past that the Shahab-3 could reach 2,000 kilometres (1,250 miles), but the announcer said it had a 1,300-kilometre (800-mile) range.

The parade was marked by a litany of slogans calling for "Death to America" and "Death to Israel." Western military attaches, apparently warned of this in advance, boycotted the rally for the second year running.

"The Western attaches did not come. It was because of the slogans about Israel and the United States," said one foreign representative who declined to be named.

"Israel should be eliminated" and "No Iranian Muslim, no Muslim recognises Israel," were among the slogans borne on the back of military vehicles, quoting the words of Iran's revolutionary founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

"Israel has to be wiped off the map," read another Khomeini quote which aroused worldwide controversy when it was repeated by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2005.

The parade came amid growing tensions over Iran's nuclear programme, which the United States alleges is cover for a nuclear weapons drive but which Tehran insists is aimed solely at producing electricity.

French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner has warned that the world should brace for war against Tehran if it keeps defying the UN Security Council by pressing on with sensitive nuclear work.

But the head of the elite Revolutionary Guards, Mohammad Ali Jaafari, warned Iran's enemies: "They would surely have a bitter experience in Iran, which is the cradle of defence civilization."

Iran's military, especially its air force, has been hit by the US trade embargo, and Jaafari admitted that the Islamic republic would need to outsmart its enemies through means other than technology.

"Their material capabilities are better than us, everyone knows it and we admit it. We are responding to technology not with technology but with special methods and tactics," he told reporters.

Officials at the parade said that only weapons built by Iran were shown at the parade, in a bid to emphasise the country's self-sufficiency in military technology.

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad meanwhile said in a speech to the parade that Iran was a force for peace in the region.

"Iran is an influential power in the region and the world, and the world should know that this power has always served peace, stability, brotherhood and justice."

The full panoply of Iran's armed forces were on display, with thousands of members of the regular army and the elite Revolutionary Guards saluting Ahmadinejad and top military leaders in a march-past.

The United States and its ally Israel have never ruled out using military strikes to punish Iran for its defiance in the nuclear standoff.

Iran has said it will never initiate an attack, but has warned of striking US bases in the Arabian peninsula, Iraq and Afghanistan -- as well as Israel itself -- as a response to any aggression.

<http://www.france24.com/france24Public/en/administration/afp-news.html?id=070922090519.j36khorh&cat=null>

by Stuart Williams  
22/09/07 10h08 GMT+1  
AFP News brief

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Iran Military Parade - Ghadr 1

{youtube}uy6-UWYT4Fk{/youtube}

Ahmadinejad Warns Against Attack during Parade

{youtube}QrIhP7TeGkM{/youtube}

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An Iranian soldier stands by as a new longer-range missile named "Ghadr-1" (Power) rolls by during an annual military parade in Tehran. Iran also proclaimed a string of anti-Israel slogans in the military parade amid mounting tensions with the West.

(L-R) Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, newly appointed head of the Iranian elite Revolutionary Guards, General Mohammad Ali Jaafari, and Defence Minister Mostafa Mohammad Najjar are seen during an annual military parade in Tehran. Iran has showed off a longer-range missile in public for the first time and proclaimed a string of anti-Israel slogans in a major military parade amid mounting tensions with the West.

A military truck carries a long-range Iranian Shahab-3 missile during an annual military parade in Tehran. Iran also showed off a longer-range missile -- Ghadr-1 (Power) -- in public for the first time and proclaimed a string of anti-Israel slogans in a major military parade amid mounting tensions with the West.