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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW

03 January 2013 – 16 January 2013

DTRA

ARMS CONTROL (GENERAL)

How Close Are We to Doomsday?

Slate, 15 January 2013; http://www.slate.com

The world didn't end last month with the "Mayan apocalypse." But we still need to think about how close total annihilation caused by nuclear weapons could be. *(1,028 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

How to Revitalize Disarmament Efforts

Carnegie Endowment for Peace, 09 January 2013, http://www.carnegieendowment.org

States have reached an impasse over disarmament issues. The standoff is particularly apparent at the Conference on Disarmament, which was meant to be the single multilateral forum for negotiating disarmament when it was created. The body has not achieved a single agreement for over fifteen years. *(2,532 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC)

Burma Denies Using Chemical Weapons on Rebels

The Express Tribune, 10 January 2013, http://tribune.com.pk

Burma on Thursday denied accusations it had used chemical weapons against ethnic minority rebels in the northern state of Kachin, where an escalating conflict has overshadowed wider political reforms. *(359 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR TEST-BAN TREATY (CTBT)

Brunei Darussalam Ratifies the CTBT

CTBTO, 14 January 2013; http://www.ctbto.org

Brunei Darussalam has ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), becoming the 158th country to do so. *(274 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

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NEW STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION TREATY (NST)

Russia to Lay Down Two Improved Borey Class Subs in 2013

Ria Novosti, 14 January 2013; http://en.rian.ru

Russia's Sevmash shipyard will lay down in 2013 two upgraded Borey class nuclear-powered strategic submarines, capable of carrying 20 ballistic missiles each, Rossiiskaya Gazeta newspaper said on Monday citing defense industry sources. *(257 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

Finally Flying Colors: Yury Dolgoruky Nuclear Sub Joins Russian Navy

Russian Times, 10 January 2013, http://www.rt.com

After years of sea trials and missile test launches, the Borey class nuclear-powered submarine Yury Dolgoruky has officially became part of the Russian Navy. The sub and its siblings are to be part of Russia's nuclear deterrence shield. *(324 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

U.S. Fiscal Cliff Deal Boosts New START

Nuclear Threat Initiative, 03 January 2013; http://www.nti.org/gsn

Buried inside legislation to avert the federal budget "fiscal cliff," passed by the U.S. Senate and House on Tuesday, are two retroactive changes to wording on nuclear arms reductions found in a recently passed defense authorization conference bill. *(903 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

FULL TEXT OF BI-WEEKLY ARTICLES FOLLOWS:

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How Close Are We to Doomsday?

Slate, 15 January 2013; http://www.slate.com

The world didn't end last month with the "Mayan apocalypse." But we still need to think about how close total annihilation caused by nuclear weapons could be.

Each year, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists considers resetting the Doomsday Clock, which gauges the state of existential global threats to civilization. The setting of the clock is, of course, a somewhat subjective activity, and one can argue with the choices made. When it was first released in 1947 to graphically publicize the threat nuclear weapons and a nuclear arms race pose to humankind, the clock was set to seven minutes to midnight. The closest it's ever been to predicting annihilation came in 1953, at two minutes to midnight. In 1991, it was set to its furthest point so far, 17 minutes to midnight.

A major change in the procedure for setting the clock took place in 2007 (coincidentally, when I took my current position on the bulletin's board). No longer were nuclear weapons the only threat we would monitor: We would also take into account the growth of potentially destructive biotechnology and the threat of climate change. Exactly what time the clock is set to is less important than the trends we can observe – whether we are moving toward or away from disaster. Last January, the clock was moved forward one minute closer to midnight, in part because, while there was progress in several key areas, hopes that that Barack Obama would drive progress in climate change and nuclear proliferation were not met. This year, in large part because of continued lack of progress, the clock remains at five minutes to midnight – which is not good.

For many, nuclear weapons have fallen off the political radar entirely, except for the ongoing worry about terrorists or rogue states gaining access to nuclear materials and delivery systems. But the fact remains that the governments of the world already possess perhaps 20,000 nuclear weapons – enough to destroy the world several times over – and we've seen little progress in the quest to rein in this danger. So nukes remain the Doomsday Clock's primary focus. As such, whether the clock moves in 2014, and in which direction, could depend in part on a policy battle now heating up in Congress.

The current nuclear states have made a commitment to reduce their stockpiles, and the Obama administration has made some progress in that vein – for instance, early in his administration, by ratifying the New START treaty, which calls for reductions in arsenals in both the United States and Russia. But the heart of encouraging nonproliferation is for nuclear states to behave as though they don't view these weapons as a long-term strategic resource. If they continue to do so, how can we convince states that do not yet have nuclear weapons to resist pursuing them? It is a tragedy and a travesty that the United States, four years after Obama's first

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election, has still not ratified a Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, for example. Doing so would signal that we do not intend to develop new nuclear weapons technologies that might make their use somehow more palatable.

But now a looming crisis may finally force renewed public discussion on our nuclear weapons arsenal, and on the role it plays in our national security infrastructure.

In 1946, the very scientists who first founded the bulletin lobbied successfully to have atomic energy (including weapons) placed under civilian, rather than military, control. They were worried that the military would not only be more inclined to use these weapons, as they had against Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but what little transparency and public accountability remained in this area would evaporate. As a result, the Atomic Energy Agency was formed.

In the intervening 65 years, our nuclear weapons complex has grown tremendously in size and cost, and managing and maintaining its infrastructure and security seems to have been beyond the capabilities of any government agency. In 1999 the National Nuclear Security Administration [NNSA], located inside the Department of Energy [DOE], was created to manage all aspects of nuclear development, including managing the national laboratories in which research and production of nuclear weapons is carried out.

In 2012, a bevy of problems, including excessive cost overruns, deteriorating facilities, and concerns over security caused Congress to consider legislation that would transfer control of safety, security, and financial compliance of nuclear research from the Energy Department to civilian contractors. However, after a supposedly highly secure weapons site at Oak Ridge was penetrated by peace activists (including a nun), one option now under consideration is transferring the NNSA to the Defense Department. The Senate passed a resolution to create an advisory panel to investigate management of the NNSA. A final report is expected by February 2014.

If the NNSA is transferred to the military, it will be the first time since the Manhattan Project that management of our nuclear weapons complex will not be in civilian hands. I personally find this prospect worrisome, but the issue is not black and white. One might think initially that, under military jurisdiction, the nuclear program will only grow and become more costly. However, it's not unlikely that the nuclear program would face cuts, as the armed forces have many other spending priorities. Moreover, removing nuclear weapons from the purview of the DOE would allow that department to actually focus on one of the biggest challenges the United States faces in the 21st century: conversion to sustainable and economically viable new energy sources.

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The situation is thus complex, and there may be no good solution. Maintaining our current arsenal is incredibly expensive, and in the current economic climate, the cost simply to update the infrastructure is at best unpalatable. If this current dilemma gets played out openly in Congress, and hopefully in the media, it could pave the way for real progress in disarmament. As has so often occurred, peace might break out not for the right reasons, but because the alternative is simply no longer economically viable.

Perhaps the upcoming debate over the NNSA's future will finally re-engage the public with this issue – something that is long overdue. Then maybe we can move the Doomsday Clock back, further away from midnight.

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How to Revitalize Disarmament Efforts

Carnegie Endowment for Peace, 09 January 2013, http://www.carnegieendowment.org

States have reached an impasse over disarmament issues. The standoff is particularly apparent at the [United Nations (UN)] Conference on Disarmament [in Geneva], which was meant to be the single multilateral forum for negotiating disarmament when it was created. The body has not achieved a single agreement for over fifteen years.

This prolonged lack of results has justifiably increased global skepticism, particularly within the security community, about the effectiveness of existing multilateral institutions that address disarmament, nonproliferation, and international security.

Overcoming this stalemate and skepticism is about much more than revamping the procedures of international institutions. The main source of tension is a pervasive lack of trust – between nuclear weapon and nonnuclear weapon states as well as among nuclear weapon states themselves. Making progress will require a change in current international structures and the creation of a security framework that addresses the concerns of all states.

The Evolution of Disarmament Bodies

At the outset, the international disarmament machinery seemed to be sustaining momentum. The evolution of contemporary disarmament bodies began with the establishment of the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament in 1960. Membership in that committee initially included five members from NATO and another five from the Warsaw Pact, and the body was enlarged in 1962 to include eight new members not belonging to either alliance. Thereafter, to reflect the increased membership, the committee was known as the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. It subsequently evolved into the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (1969) as membership continued to enlarge.

This body eventually became the Conference on Disarmament. In addition to the conference, the current United Nations disarmament institutions consist of a number of bodies that were established by the General Assembly's first special session on disarmament in 1978 (commonly known by its acronym, SSOD-I).

The First Committee of the General Assembly considers all questions of disarmament within the scope of the UN Charter, from general principles governing the regulation of armaments to the promotion of cooperative agreements. The Disarmament Commission is a deliberative body that makes recommendations on various disarmament issues, follows up on any disarmament decisions, and reports annually to the General Assembly. And the Advisory Board on

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Disarmament Matters advises the UN secretary general on matters related to arms limitation and disarmament.

But the Conference on Disarmament is, according to the United Nations, the international community's "single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum." It has a rotating chairmanship among 65 members, and demands for increased membership continue to be made.

The evolving versions of the conference have successfully negotiated and promoted the adoption of a number of important agreements in the field of disarmament, including the Partial Test-Ban Treaty (1963), the Seabed Treaty (1971), the Biological Weapons Convention (1972), the Chemical Weapons Convention (1993), and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (1996). The conference also served as the venue for discussions on a draft of the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1965 and 1966, sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union.

Yet, despite its historic successes, the conference has been unable to engage in new disarmament negotiations since the mid-1990s. The intransigence of many state positions has frustrated all previous attempts to increase the effectiveness of UN disarmament institutions. In fact, voting patterns at the First Committee clearly demonstrate the permanence of deep divisions on many disarmament issues, and for most of the past decade the Disarmament Commission has not even been able to agree on session agendas. Even when consensus on agenda items exists, conference reports to the General Assembly simply record the disagreement on the disarmament issues under discussion, which does nothing to promote conceptual progress and agreement on substance.

This beleaguered situation compounds frustration over the persistent lack of substantive negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament.

An Attempt at Revival

To be fair, UN disarmament institutions are attempting to address these challenges. Particularly since the 1980s, organizational procedures in the First Committee of the General Assembly and the Disarmament Commission have been changed. Members chose to reduce the duration of conference sessions, to avoid the annual reintroduction of a number of resolutions, and to group issues in clusters for debate instead of addressing them one by one, among other steps. These procedural changes, however, have not facilitated new agreements on questions of substance.

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States are not in agreement on what to do about the Conference on Disarmament. Even as UN disarmament bodies have evolved over the past few decades in the search for increased efficiency, the productivity of the Conference on Disarmament has decreased.

While many states, including the P5, strongly support the conference's status as the single multilateral negotiating body and argue for leaving its rules of procedure intact, structural and procedural changes to the Conference on Disarmament have been proposed.

Some advocate changing the rule that all conference decisions require consensus. Others argue that enlarging conference membership could stimulate the development of novel disarmament approaches. Still others have simply proposed the termination or replacement of the conference in its present form.

And there have been several recent attempts to revive the conference. Among other initiatives, in 2010 the secretary general of the United Nations convened a high-level debate aimed at revitalizing the disarmament machinery, emphasizing the conference in these deliberations. The secretary general requested that the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters discuss ideas on the revitalization of the disarmament machinery, but the body did not achieve consensus on any practical recommendations. In 2011, the General Assembly adopted a resolution inviting states to "explore, consider and consolidate options, proposals and elements" for the regeneration of the United Nations disarmament bodies. Concrete results from these debates, however, continue to elude the international community.

The First Committee addressed this quandary at the General Assembly's 2012 session and ultimately adopted three resolutions supported by expressive majorities. Many delegations and civil society observers hope that productive results will stem from these resolutions, despite a number of negative votes and abstentions.

One of these resolutions (A/RES/67/53), initiated by Canada, calls on the conference to start "immediate" negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes or other nuclear explosive devices. This resolution also requests that the secretary general seek the views of member states and experts on such a treaty and establish a 25-member expert group to "make recommendations on aspects which could contribute to, but not negotiate, a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices" in 2014 and 2015 or until the conference reaches agreement on this matter.

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The second resolution (A/RES/67/56), sponsored by twenty states including Austria, Mexico, and Norway, calls for convening an open-ended working group in Geneva for fifteen days in early 2013 to "develop concrete proposals to take forward multilateral negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons."

The Nonaligned Movement sponsored the third resolution (A/RES/67/60), which called for the next General Assembly to convene a high-level meeting addressing nuclear disarmament in September 2013. All three resolutions were motivated by general frustration on the part of many nonnuclear states regarding the current pallor of international disarmament.

Nuclear weapon states that abstained or voted against all three resolutions expressed concern that the creation of new institutions outside of the conference would be unsuccessful and could harm current conference efforts to break the impasse. Many states emphasized the role of the conference as the sole negotiating body on disarmament issues and supported its continued existence even in the absence of consensus on any of its agenda items.

The Art of Negotiation

It has never been easy to achieve agreement, either of procedure or substance, on disarmament issues. The difficulties, however, increased gradually and became ostensibly insurmountable from the mid-1990s onward. It is somewhat ironic that the end of the Cold War did not facilitate a narrowing of differences among the international disarmament community but instead seems to have exacerbated rivalry and disagreement on many disarmament questions.

To a certain extent, the present impasse on disarmament stems from institutionalized 1950s power dynamics. Structures that functioned reasonably well in the few decades after the end of World War II – despite deep rivalry, mistrust, and arms buildups between the two superpowers – ushered in a new and highly complex era of regional interdependence and multipolarity. In short, the current international panorama bears little resemblance to the one that prevailed well into the 1980s.

The end of extreme East-West confrontation and North-South divisions gave rise to new and different security interests and agendas. At the same time, emerging centers of regional power find little, if any, recognition in the current international structures. The most glaring example of this is the composition of the Security Council, virtually unchanged since 1945 and so far impervious to reform.

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Nuclear weapon states and some of their allies, as well as a few other significant players, still adhere to the logic of confrontation and parochial security perceptions rather than to a committed search for common solutions that would increase the security of all. It appears that refusing to join in efforts to forge a general consensus is more expedient than trying to work out differences.

Despite an ostensible commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons, nuclear weapon states demonstrate no inclination to accept legally binding, irreversible, and multilaterally verifiable constraints on their nuclear arsenals. They continue to argue that multilateral disarmament negotiations are “premature” and refuse to engage in a debate on a nuclear weapons convention, even if little, if any, justification can be found for the permanence of their huge arsenals.

Conversely, states that have already given up the option of possessing nuclear arms appear unwilling to enter into new multilateral agreements for fear they will curtail the right to pursue peaceful nuclear activities, and hence prospects for development, under the pretext of preventing proliferation.

Nations seem to have forgotten the ancient art of negotiation through enlightened compromise. Diplomats continue to talk past each other without troubling themselves to search for merit in proposals other than their own. For example, proponents of banning the future production of fissionable material for weapons purposes do not want to include their own stocks in the negotiations. In that case, most nonnuclear weapon states contend, the ban would simply be redundant, because such production is already prohibited for them under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Yet, if an agreement to include stocks were reached, it could open the way for substantive progress on other issues in the conference’s agenda. The two sides, however, do not seem willing to negotiate.

The suggestion by many UN member states, particularly those in the Nonaligned Movement, to convene a new special session on disarmament in the General Assembly to assess the whole issue and make appropriate decisions is a constructive one. The convening of the fourth special session on disarmament (over twenty years after the failure of its most recent predecessor) could provide the impetus many consider essential to reach meaningful disarmament agreements. At the same time, it could address the realities of the twenty-first century that others deem intrinsically necessary.

States must realize that negotiation implies giving something in exchange for something else – it is not about imposing one set of views as the only possible way to solve a problem. In the post-

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Cold War world, the provision of credible qualification-free negative security assurances (as an interim measure, pending the achievement of nuclear disarmament) would help strengthen existing nonproliferation commitments and could provide an incentive for nonnuclear weapon states to accept further controls on their peaceful nuclear activities. In order to make progress on disarmament issues, both nuclear weapon states and nonnuclear weapon states must seek out ways to find common ground in their agendas.

Contagious Acceptance

Just as intransigence in the major disarmament bodies has increased, the interest of large sections of civil society in nuclear disarmament issues has waned – reducing political pressure for the elimination of such weapons.

In nuclear weapon states, citizens seem reconciled to the existence of nuclear weapons – as long as the status quo remains intact. The doctrine of deterrence, which the secretary general of the United Nations has called “contagious,” seems a chronic and accepted condition in countries whose security is based on weapons belonging to another state. There is also the risk that some nonnuclear weapon states will be victims of the “contagion” and decide they too must acquire nuclear means of deterring perceived threats.

In some nuclear weapon states, officials appear more concerned with the possibility that nuclear weapons might fall into the hands of nonstate actors than with the threat posed by the mere existence of the weapons themselves.

In many developing nonnuclear weapon states, global issues such as unfair trade practices, economic and social development, the environment, urban violence, civil rights, and drugs and organized crime are the foremost preoccupations. For many people in these countries, the threat of catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences stemming from the intentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons seems a very distant possibility that does not raise much concern.

Accordingly, in many nuclear weapon and nonnuclear weapon states, demands for new multilateral efforts toward nuclear disarmament are largely not reflected in broad public opinion, despite the efforts of civil society organizations dedicated to disarmament. Citizens in all states, both those possessing and those without nuclear weapons, must wake up to the real threats of global nuclear arsenals and put pressure on their governments to pursue a disarmament agenda. After all, people worldwide are increasingly skeptical about the size of current military

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expenditures in the face of an economic crisis that generates rising unemployment and cutbacks in social spending.

In Good Faith

The disarmament impasse is in part a reflection of the growing lack of trust among members of the international community. Simply engaging in procedural gimmicks will not help to overcome the fundamental and substantive discord between the concerns, objectives, and expectations of nuclear weapon and nonnuclear weapon states. Experience since the inception of the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament suggests that ad hoc changes in disarmament institutions will have little chance of alleviating the current impasse.

If international disarmament bodies are to work properly, there must be broad-based consensus on all disarmament issues. Each nation has to perceive that its security interests are duly protected and recognize that by engaging in concrete disarmament negotiations it stands to gain more than it will lose. States should muster the necessary political will to take a constructive look at proposals that have been made to begin concrete nuclear disarmament negotiations, which nuclear weapon states have thus far refused to do.

In the meantime, UN member states can engage in one essential, if obvious, measure – they can faithfully carry out their commitments and fully abide by their obligations under existing multilateral disarmament and nonproliferation agreements. If states fulfilled their responsibilities, the current disarmament climate would certainly improve and would provide the indispensable basis of confidence upon which progress must build.

The indefinite permanence of the current impasse is alarming, for it risks unraveling positive results painstakingly achieved over the past several decades. It is high time that the international community start to confront the real need to increase security for all – rather than perpetuate the outdated concept of undiminished security for a few.

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Burma Denies Using Chemical Weapons on Rebels

The Express Tribune, 10 January 2013, http://tribune.com.pk

Burma on Thursday denied accusations it had used chemical weapons against ethnic minority rebels in the northern state of Kachin, where an escalating conflict has overshadowed wider political reforms.

“Our military never uses chemical weapons and we have no intention to use them at all. I think the KIA (Kachin Independence Army) is accusing us wrongly,” Presidential Spokesman Ye Htut said.

The rebels on Wednesday told [the Agence France-Presse (AFP)] that the army had stepped up its operations in recent days, allowing troops to take territory in a push towards the KIA stronghold of Laiza on the border with China.

“It is already three days (and they have) used chemical weapons (and) they are able to occupy very important posts,” KIA spokesman James Lum Dau told AFP. He said there was an intense heat and soldiers “lost consciousness” when the shells exploded. “Around that area everybody suffers,” he added.

AFP was not able to verify the claims, which follow the recent use of air strikes by the government against the rebels in the resource-rich area. Tens of thousands of people have been displaced by the conflict since June 2011, when a 17-year ceasefire between the government and the KIA broke down.

The rebels made a similar accusation that the army had used chemical weapons in late 2011. The Kachin clashes, along with communal unrest in the western state of Rakhine, have marred optimism about dramatic political changes since Burma’s widely praised emergence from decades of army rule in early 2011.

The United States and the UN have voiced concern over the air raids. Civil war has plagued parts of the country formerly known as Burma since it won independence from Britain in 1948. Burma’s quasi-civilian regime has reached tentative peace deals with other major ethnic rebel groups, but an agreement with the Kachin has proved elusive.

President Thein Sein, a former general, in December 2011 ordered an end to military offensives against the rebels and continued hostilities have led to doubts over his ability to control the powerful armed forces. Ye Htut reiterated government assertions that the army was only firing “in self-defense”. “We always open the door for peace,” he said.

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Brunei Darussalam Ratifies the CTBT

CTBTO, 14 January 2013; http://www.ctbto.org

Brunei Darussalam has ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), becoming the 158th country to do so. Tibor Tóth, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), welcomed the move: "This is not only a step towards a safer and more peaceful future in Asia. Brunei Darussalam has made an important contribution to ridding the planet of nuclear tests and nuclear weapons".

Brunei Darussalam signed the CTBT on January 22, 1997, shortly after [the treaty was] adopted. Of the ten countries comprising the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), all have signed and [the following] eight have also ratified: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam. Myanmar and Thailand have yet to ratify.

Although the CTBT has been signed by 183 countries, of which 158 have also now ratified it, [the treaty] can only enter into force after it has been ratified by the [following] eight remaining nuclear capable countries: China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States. ***Click here for an interactive map of the treaty's status.***

The CTBT bans all nuclear explosions. The CTBTO is building a verification regime to monitor the planet for compliance with the treaty. Over 85 percent of the global network of 337 facilities to monitor underground, the oceans and the atmosphere for nuclear explosions have already been established.

The closest monitoring stations to Brunei Darussalam are located in Malaysia and the Philippines. Verification data from the stations can also be used for disaster mitigation such as tsunami warning. Brunei Darussalam is located on the northwest coast of the island of Borneo in an earthquake-prone region.

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Russia to Lay Down Two Improved Borey Class Subs in 2013

Ria Novosti, 14 January 2013; http://en.rian.ru

Russia's Sevmash shipyard will lay down in 2013 two upgraded Borey class nuclear-powered strategic submarines, capable of carrying 20 ballistic missiles each, [the] Rossiiskaya Gazeta newspaper said on Monday citing defense industry sources.

The construction of the Alexander Suvorov, the fifth in the series and second of the improved Project 955A (Borey-A) class, will begin on July 28, when Russia celebrates Navy Day, while the sixth submarine, the Mikhail Kutuzov, will be laid down in November. The metal cutting works for the hulls of these vessels have been carried out since 2011, the paper said.

Russia's first Borey class submarine, the Yury Dolgoruky, officially entered service with the Russian Navy on January 10. It has been assigned to the 31st submarine division of the Northern Fleet. The second vessel of the Borey class, the Alexander Nevsky, is undergoing sea trials while the third, the Vladimir Monomakh, was floated out on December 30.

The first three vessels in the Borey series are capable of carrying 16 new multiple-warhead Bulava ballistic missiles. The first submarine of the improved Borey-A class, the Knyaz Vladimir, was laid down in July 2012.

The Borey class submarines are set to become the mainstay of the Russian Navy's strategic nuclear deterrent fleet, replacing the ageing Project 941 (NATO Typhoon class) and Project 667 class (Delta-3 and Delta-4) boats.

Russia is planning to have three Borey class and five Borey-A class submarines by 2020. The improved vessels will be equipped with advanced sonar, navigation, communications and fire-control systems and will be more "stealthy," Rossiiskaya Gazeta said.

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Finally Flying Colors: Yury Dolgoruky Nuclear Sub Joins Russian Navy

Russian Times, 10 January 2013, http://www.rt.com

After years of sea trials and missile test launches, the Borey class nuclear-powered submarine Yury Dolgoruky has officially became part of the Russian Navy. The sub and its siblings are to be part of Russia's nuclear deterrence shield.

The official ceremony of raising the Russian Navy colors on the submarine on Thursday was led by Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu. The Yury Dolgoruky is the lead vessel of the Borey family, the most modern nuclear-powered strategic submarines made in Russia.

Commenting on the news on Twitter, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin, who is known for his saber-rattling, tongue-in-the-cheek rhetoric, posted: "Tremble, bourgeoisie! You're done with!"

The submarine was commissioned in 1996 at a shipyard in Severodvinsk. It endured several years of budget restraints and design changes, after the intercontinental ballistic missile Bark, which was slated to become its prime armament, was scrapped. Its reactor was finally launched in 2008.

Between 2009 and 2012 the submarine was involved in both sea trial and test-firing of the Bulava missile, which was the replacement for the Bark. It was expected to enter service back in 2011, but the deadline was eventually postponed by a year. In December 2012 the Navy officially accepted the submarine as ready to take combat missions.

Russia has commissioned three submarines of the Borey class. Yury Dolgoruky's sister boats, Aleksandr Nevsky and Vladimir Monomakh, have been in construction since 2004 and 2006 respectively. Nevsky has been undergoing sea trials since October 2012 while Monomakh has been put on water in late December 2012.

In May 2012 the Navy has also contracted development of an upgraded version of the Borey class submarine, which will carry 20 intercontinental ballistic missiles, compared to the regular version's 16. It will also have improved characteristics, such as reduced noise, better measurability and more advanced weapon controls. The keel of the lead advanced vessel, Knyaz Vladimir, was laid down in July 2012, with four more submarines expected to be built.

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U.S. Fiscal Cliff Deal Boosts New START

Nuclear Threat Initiative, 03 January 2013; ***http://www.nti.org/gsn***

Buried inside legislation to avert the federal budget "fiscal cliff," passed by the U.S. Senate and House on Tuesday, are two retroactive changes to wording on nuclear arms reductions found in a recently passed defense authorization conference bill.

The alterations pertain to a grand bipartisan compromise hashed out two years ago in which new strategic nuclear arms reductions agreed to by Russia and the United States could proceed as long as the Obama administration fully funded modernization of the aging U.S. nuclear arsenal and atomic weapons complex.

Pursuing Republican support for ratifying the New START arms control deal in late 2010, administration leaders pledged to allocate $85 billion over 10 years for modernizing the nation's nuclear weapons complex.

Among a number of related requirements initiated by the Republican-dominated House regarding the continued implementation of New START was a fiscal 2013 defense authorization demand that the president "certify to the congressional defense committees that the Russian Federation is in compliance with its arms control obligations with the United States." According to Capitol Hill sources, the administration had requested that Congress modify this provision's wording.

In signing the new defense authorization legislation into law on Wednesday, Obama issued a written statement saying he retained the latitude to interpret the bill's New START implementation restrictions in a manner that would not interfere with his "constitutional authority to conduct diplomacy."

However, the president also said he was "pleased" that the fiscal cliff legislation – which he also signed into law via "autopen" while on travel later in the day – amended the defense bill's problematic prose regarding Russian arms control compliance.

Specifically, the new changes will require the president, in annual New START certification, to state "whether" Moscow is complying with its treaty obligations, rather than "that" the Kremlin is complying. The diction adjustment appears aimed at eliminating a presumption of Russian compliance in the certification process.

Referring to the same sentence in the authorization bill, the executive branch also asked lawmakers to insert the word "strategic" before "arms control obligations." This new construct

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would allow the White House to certify Russian adherence to New START strategic nuclear arms control treaty stipulations, even if Moscow is not complying with other treaties involving the United States.

The revised wording would give Russia a pass – at least in terms of this narrow presidential certification – for no longer meeting terms of the Conventional Forces in Europe pact, for instance. Russia in 2007 announced it would suspend implementation of the accord.

The Obama White House objects to a number of the New START implementation requirements imposed by Congress, including those that hold the administration's feet to the fire in funding atomic weapons and infrastructure modernization programs into the future at specific budget levels, noted Jeffrey Lewis, a nuclear arms expert at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies in Monterey, California.

Administration officials are tacitly accepting most of the legislative provisions related to New START even if they are viewed as inappropriate or onerous. As the defense authorization text was initially written, though, the Russia certification provisions were "impossible to meet," and thus required change, Lewis said.

Under New START, which entered into force in 2011, the United States and Russia each agreed to reduce their deployed strategic nuclear warheads to a 1,550 ceiling by February 2018. The accord also limits fielded nuclear delivery vehicles – including bomber aircraft and missiles based on land and at sea – to 700, with an additional 100 allowed in reserve.

"We worked with the administration to facilitate having it happen," said Claude Chafin, a spokesman for the House Armed Services Committee, referring to the wording adjustment. Republicans on the panel, led by Representative Howard McKeon (California), "didn't object" to the Obama team's request, he told Global Security Newswire on Wednesday.

A Defense Department spokeswoman, Lt. Col. Monica Matoush, on Thursday said the Pentagon "will not comment on the internal deliberation between the Department and Congress that led to the change in language."

A spokesman for the White House Management and Budget Office similarly would not address indications that the wording modifications were discussed at high levels inside the administration. Declining to be named, he also would not say whether Obama would have vetoed the defense authorization legislation if the Russian compliance certification provision had remained unchanged.

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"The fiscal cliff package amended a poorly written provision that would have allowed the Russians to dictate U.S. nuclear arsenal policy," a Democratic congressional source said by e-mail on Wednesday, implying that any Russian treaty noncompliance should not be permitted to force any specific U.S. responses. "Both Republicans and Democrats agreed to the fix, and it was quickly made."

Similarly, both the Senate Armed Services Committee chairman, Carl Levin (D-Michigan), and ranking member, John McCain (R-Arizona), "agreed" to the alterations, said a Senate Democratic committee aide. Neither this staffer nor the congressional source was authorized to speak on the record. Levin, for one, "supports these wording changes because they are consistent with what was originally intended by the conferees," the Senate aide said.

"Congress's use of sanctions and reporting requirements reflects the relatively limited tools available to the legislative [branch] on issues of national security and foreign policy," Lewis said in a Wednesday phone interview. "The administration – I think rightly – wanted to restrict the reporting requirements to issues that were germane. If Russia is not in compliance with the Antarctic Treaty, for example, we're not going to pull out of New START."

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