



## **RUSSIA, CUBA AGREE ON SECURITY COOPERATION**

*May 15, 2014* voa.com reported: "Russia's Security Council and Cuba's Commission for National Security and Defense have signed a memorandum on cooperation and agreed to establish a joint working group, the secretary of the Russian Security Council said Wednesday.

'The situation in the world is changing fast and it is dynamic. That's why we will need the ability to react to it promptly,' Nikolai Patrushev said.

A Cuban delegation led by Col. Alejandro Castro Espin arrived in Moscow on Tuesday and held a meeting with the leaders of the Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR), Russia's primary external intelligence agency.

The delegation is also scheduled to meet with representatives from the Federal Security Service (FSB), the principal security agency of the Russian Federation and the main successor agency to the Soviet Union's Committee of State Security, or KGB.

'Russia and Cuba need an effective cooperation tool to respond to sensitive issues. The memorandum may define priorities for cooperation to ensure effective security of both states,' said Castro Espin, who is Cuban leader Raul Castro's son.

Patrushev has been linked in recent years to the rapprochement between Moscow and Havana. In the 1970s, he worked with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the KGB."..."



## **SAUDI SEEKS STRONGER US-GULF MILITARY COOPERATION**

*May 14, 2014* spacedaily.com reported: " Saudi Arabia's crown prince called Wednesday for stronger military cooperation between the United States and the Arab monarchies of the Gulf whose security he said was under threat.

Crown Prince Salman bin Abdulaziz, who also holds the defence portfolio, made the remarks at a meeting in the Saudi city of Jeddah between US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel and ministers from the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council. Hagel for his part stressed that Washington remained "committed" to the oil-rich region's security and stability.

"We meet today amid persistent threats to the region's security and stability," which "necessitate coordination in politics and defence strategies of our countries," said Prince Salman.

"The security of our countries and our people is in danger," he added. The crown prince singled out concerns over "political crises" in some Arab states, as well as "attempts to acquire weapons of mass destruction and meddling of certain states" in the internal affairs of others, in an apparent reference to Iran.

He stressed that "historic and strategic relations" between Washington and GCC countries had "contributed to cementing security and stability in the region."..."

## **NETANYAHU WARNS OF IRAN-NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR COOPERATION**

*May 14, 2014* Arutz Sheva reported: "Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu warned that Iran 'would share whatever (nuclear) technology it acquired with North Korea,' in an interview with one of Japan's leading newspapers on Tuesday.

Speaking to Mainichi Shimbun during his visit to the country, Netanyahu remarked that in the ongoing negotiations with world powers, Iran is seeking 'the capacity to make nuclear weapons. ...The outcome, if that happens, would be very bad, and it would be like North Korea.'

When asked about the sharing of intelligence material between Israel and Japan regarding Iran and North Korea, Netanyahu acknowledged 'we have close consultations, I would say, and I think that's only natural.'

Netanyahu added that world powers 'should insist that Iran stops developing ICBMs (intercontinental ballistic missiles), in addition to dismantling its capacity to make atomic bombs and atomic warheads.' He said developing ICBMs 'is obviously an indication of their plan to have nuclear weapons.'

'Whatever (nuclear technology) they have they will share with North Korea,' warned Netanyahu. 'If Iran gets to a point where it's very close to...the production of nuclear weapons, then this will immediately cause other countries in the Middle East to...go for nuclear weapons too, so the Middle East would turn into a very dangerous place.'

Iran's impact on regional events was further revealed in statements last week by a senior Revolutionary Guards commander, who said Syrian President Bashar Assad is "fighting this war (in Syria) as our deputy."..."

## **ISRAELI PM SAYS IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM A 'CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER'**

*May 12, 2014* Reuters reported: "Iran's nuclear program is a clear and present danger and the country cannot be allowed to get the capability

to make nuclear arms, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Monday

Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, on Monday described as "stupid and idiotic" Western expectations for his country to curb its missile development, taking a defiant tone ahead of another round of nuclear talks.

In Japan for meetings with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and other officials, Netanyahu compared the danger posed by Iran to that of North Korea, which this weekend renewed a threat to conduct a nuclear test amid rising worries that the reclusive state may set off an atomic device for the fourth time.

Netanyahu, at a press event with Abe, told reporters that Israel and Japan faced the challenge of "rogue states arming themselves with nuclear weapons".

"You have called North Korea's development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles a 'clear and present danger' and I wholeheartedly share your assessment," Netanyahu added.

"Those same words, clear and present danger, certainly apply to the Iranian nuclear program as well."

Iran and the United States, France, Germany, Britain, China and Russia will meet in Vienna on Tuesday to try to iron out differences over how to end a long standoff over suspicions that Tehran has sought the means to develop nuclear weapons. Iran denies accusations that it is seeking nuclear weapons capability and insists that its missile program, one of the biggest in the Middle East, is part of its conventional armed forces."..."

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### **'HUMILIATE CHRISTIANS UNTIL THEY CONVERT'**

*May 12, 2014* Arutz Sheva reported: "In a sermon earlier this year, a British Islamist leader outlined how under an 'Islamic State' Christians and other non-Muslims would be systematically humiliated and persecuted to encourage their women and children to convert to Islam.

Abu Walid, an Islamist affiliated with the hardline Salafi stream, cited sources in the hadith (Islamic teachings outside of the Koran, based on the words of Mohammed's companions) which detailed how the 'People of the Book' - referring to Jews and Christians - were to be treated as second-class citizens, or dhimmis, if they chose not to convert to Islam.

Those measures include, among other things: being forced to walk on the narrower side of the street to Muslims, shaving their foreheads, wearing red belts around their necks, being forced to wear odd shoes and only being allowed to travel sideways on donkeys.

The aim is essentially to bully them into accepting Islam - or at the very least to encourage their children and wives to leave them to escape humiliation.

Salafism is a puritanical version of Sunni Islam which preaches a return to what they see as the true origins of Islam, modeled strictly on the actions of the religion's founder Muhammed.

While the ideas expressed in the sermon might sound frankly bizarre, they were in the past implemented in the aftermath of the Islamic conquests of the Middle East, Africa and other regions including the Iberian Peninsula.

Those non-Muslims who were not "People of the Book" were usually given a much simpler choice: convert or die'..."

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### **IN THE KREMLIN'S GRIP: FEARS GROW OVER BULGARIA'S RUSSIAN DEPENDENCE**

*May 12, 2014* Der Spiegel reported: "Concerns are growing within the German government that the European Union's most impoverished member state, Bulgaria, could fall into the grips of Moscow's influence. Internal reports, including those of the German foreign intelligence service, the BND, warn that Moscow may seek to expand its relations with the country in order to use Bulgaria as a political beachhead into the EU, and then use that power to divide the block.



Bulgaria is an easy target for the Kremlin because the country is almost entirely dependent on energy imports from Russia to survive. One third of its economic output is either directly or indirectly controlled by Moscow, the German reports indicate. Bulgaria's governing coalition -- of the Bulgarian Socialist Party and the Movement for Rights and Freedoms party, which represents the country's Turkish minority -- is considered closely aligned with Moscow. It includes an illustrious group of former Communist Party members, intelligence service workers and Bulgarian oligarchs who do business with Russian President Vladimir Putin's minions.

One of the country's most influential business magnates is banker Tzvetan Vassilev -- whose KTB bank handles much of the money flowing from Moscow into state-controlled Bulgarian industry, particularly the energy sector.

Relations are so close that Russia apparently even has direct influence on Bulgarian lawmaking. Last week, various media reported the contents of a secret letter from Russian energy giant Gazprom to the Economics Ministry in Sofia. In the letter, the Russian state-owned company allegedly provided ministry officials with draft formulations for a law relating to the South Stream pipeline, a project that will carry Russian gas through Bulgaria to Austria. Much to the chagrin of the European Commission, the multibillion euro project is being led by Gazprom.

The government in Sofia has snubbed Brussels with the draft law because it redefines the Bulgarian part of the pipeline as a simple "gas grid interconnection" rather than a full-fledged pipeline in an effort to circumvent EU competition regulations."..."

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