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## Iran, Russia, China to Hold Joint Wargames in 'Message to the World'

*November 27, 2019* freebeacon.com reported: "Iran, China, and Russia will hold in the coming weeks their first-ever joint war drills, which leaders say are meant to send a "message to the world" about increased military cooperation between the rogue countries.

The commander of Iran's navy, Rear Admiral Hossein Khanzadi, said Wednesday that the Islamic Republic will team up with Moscow and Beijing within the next month to hold the mass war drills.

"When we talk about joint wargames, we are talking about two or more countries with a high level of relations in various political, economic and social fields, which culminate in cooperation in the military sector, with wargames usually being the highest level of such cooperation," Khanzadi was quoted as saying in remarks to Iran's state-controlled press.

"A joint wargame between several countries, whether on land, at sea, or in the air, indicates a remarkable expansion of cooperation among them," the military leader said.

The joint war drills will be aimed at sending a message to the world, particularly Western nations, like the United States, that have sought to constrain Iran's expanding military ambitions." ..."



## EU will not replace NATO, says new Brussels chief

*November 27, 2019* spacedaily.com reported: "The new EU chief insisted Wednesday the bloc would not replace NATO as guarantor of European security as the backlash to French President Emmanuel Macron's criticism of the alliance rumbles on.

Ursula von der Leyen, the incoming European Commission president, became the latest major European leader to distance herself from a pugnacious Macron interview in which he said NATO was suffering "brain death" and that Europe could defend itself.

The French leader's comments have caused a rift with Germany, with Chancellor Angela Merkel breaking with her usual reserve to slap down unnecessary "sweeping judgements", and anger among eastern European allies who see NATO as a vital bulwark against Russian aggression.

The EU has launched various initiatives to make its military spending more coherent and efficient, but former German defence minister von der Leyen said the transatlantic alliance would remain responsible for European collective security "without any question".

"The European Union will never be a military alliance. The European Union is completely different," she told reporters after the European Parliament approved her new commission team.

"I see many, many fields where I do not see NATO but the European Union is called upon," she added, pointing to the bloc's "huge tool box of instruments" including trade, development aid and humanitarian assistance.

In his Economist interview, Macron said allies should "reassess the reality of what NATO is" in light of US President Donald Trump's apparent ambivalence about the alliance, adding that he believed "Europe has the capacity to defend itself." ..."

## Beijing Says It Is Interested in Further Development of Strategic Cooperation with Russia in Space

*November 27, 2019* spacedaily.com reported: "Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Le Yucheng said on Monday at a press conference in Moscow that Beijing is interested in further strategic cooperation with Russia in the space industry, noting that NATO's recent remarks on recognizing space as the alliance's operational domain represent a 'very dangerous phenomenon'.

'I think this is a very dangerous phenomenon on the part of NATO. We have always firmly opposed the deployment of weapons in outer space and the development of an arms race in space. That is why we, together with Russia, proposed the initiative to negotiate arms control in outer space and sign a relevant international document', Le pointed out.

The Vice Foreign Minister stressed that Washington rejected China and Russia's proposals and pointed out that it was necessary to prevent space from becoming a new battlefield and for Beijing to further cooperate with Moscow in this regard..."

## Suicides and overdoses among factors fueling drop in US life expectancy

*November 26, 2019* LA Times reported: "Preliminary signals of declining health were neither a false alarm nor a statistical fluke. A reversal of American life expectancy, a downward trend that has now been sustained for three years in a row, is a grim new reality of life in the United States.

New research establishes that after decades of living longer and longer lives, Americans are dying earlier, cut down increasingly in the prime of life by drug overdoses, suicides and diseases such as cirrhosis, liver cancer and obesity.

The ills claiming the lives of Americans between the ages of 25 and 64 vary widely by geography, gender and ethnicity. But the authors of the new study suggest that the nation's lifespan reversal is being driven by diseases linked to social and economic privation, a health care system with glaring gaps and blind spots, and profound psychological distress.

The twin trends — an increased probability of death in midlife and a population-wide reversal of longevity — set the United States in stark contrast to every other affluent country in the world. Those trends are detailed in a study published Tuesday in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

In an editorial accompanying the new report, a trio of public health leaders said the study's insight into years of cumulative threats to the nation's health "represents a call to action."

If medical professionals and public health experts fail to forge partnerships with social, political, religious and economic leaders to reverse the current trends, “the nation risks life expectancy continuing downward in future years to become a troubling new norm,” wrote Harvard public health professors Dr. Howard K. Koh, John J. Park and Dr. Anand K. Parekh of the Bipartisan Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

The new research offers some new insights into a U.S. epidemic of so-called “deaths of despair.” Long thought to be a phenomenon limited to rural white America, the study reveals that these premature deaths have gained ground in the nation’s suburbs. And it suggests they are making inroads into black and brown populations, whose long history of adversity were thought to have conferred some protection from despair.

From 1959 to 2013, driven strongly by improvements in injury prevention, cancer treatments and heart health, the lifespan of the average American rose by close to a decade, from 69.9 years to 78.9 years. But in 2011, Americans’ lifespans stopped growing. By 2014, this vital sign of a nation’s health tipped downward. That was followed by another drop in 2015 and, the new study shows, a further decline in 2016.

Looking back over close to two decades of cause-of-death statistics, the new research makes clear that the nation’s slide has been many years in the making. Beginning in the 1990s, Americans between the ages of 25 and 64 — years in which good health and a low risk of death have long been a statistical good bet — began dying at an increasing rate.

And the causes of their deaths were not random. New laws and regulations were reducing some of the leading causes of death in midlife Americans, making cars safer, reducing air pollution and occupational hazards. New medications were reducing deaths resulting from HIV/AIDS. And prevention efforts, including statin medications and a national anti-tobacco campaign, were reducing heart attack deaths among those under 64. But other causes of death were ticking upward in young and middle-age adults.

Between 1999 and 2017, the rate of drug overdose deaths among Americans between 25 and 64 increased close to fourfold, from 6.7 per 100,000 in this age group to 32.5 per 100,000. Rates of suicide in these Americans began to rise in the early 1990s, increasing 38.3% (from 13.4 per 100,000 to 18.6 per 100,000) between 1999 and 2017. ”...”

### **It Can’t Happen Here? Muslim Organization Wants International Law Criminalizing Criticism of Islam**

*November 26, 2017 PJMedia.com* reported: “The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which is made up of 56 nations plus the Palestinian Authority, met Thursday in Jeddah and called for the adoption of an international law criminalizing criticism of Islam. But that kind of law could never be adopted in the United States, could it? Think again.



The OIC’s secretary-general, Dr. Yousef al-Othaimeen, called upon the nations of the world, both Muslim and non-Muslim, to crack down on speech that was ‘insulting religions or prophets.’ It was clear, however, that al-Othaimeen couldn’t have cared less about speech insulting Christianity or Judaism or Hinduism or Buddhism or any of the revered figures of those religions. He cared only about criticism of Islam.

‘There are laws against anti-Semitism and racism,’ said al-Othaimeen. ‘So we request a law against mocking religions.’ He didn’t explain why laws against racism should lead to laws against criticizing belief systems, since, after all, contrary to the assumptions of Rachel Dolezal, Shaun King, and Elizabeth Warren, one cannot change one’s race, but one can change one’s beliefs, including religious beliefs. Al-Othaimeen likely knows this, but cited racism because he knows how to pull the right strings to get the Western intelligentsia to do what he wants...”

### **IRGC commander threatens to ‘destroy’ Israel**

*November 26, 2017 Arutz Sheva 7* reported: “General Hossein Salami, the head of Iran’s Revolutionary Guards, on Monday threatened that Iran would ‘destroy’ the US, Israel and Saudi Arabia if they cross its ‘red lines’. Speaking at a pro-government demonstration in Tehran, Salami accused the US, Britain, Israel and Saudi Arabia of stoking last week’s protests over a fuel price hike.

‘If you cross our red line, we will destroy you... We will not leave any move unanswered,’ he added. The unrest erupted on November 15, hours after it was announced that the price of gas would rise to 15,000 rials per liter (12 US cents) from 10,000 for the first 60 liters, and to 30,000 rials for any extra fuel bought after that each month.

Iran has blamed ‘thugs’ linked to exiles and foreign foes – the United States, Israel and Saudi Arabia – for stirring up unrest following hikes in gasoline prices...”

### **Turkey tests Russian missile defences despite US threats**

*November 26, 2017 spacedaily.com* reported: “Turkey began testing on Monday its Russian missile defence system, local media reported, despite repeated calls from the United States that it could lead to sanctions.

Planes, including F-16 fighter jets, circled the Murted military base in Ankara province to test the newly acquired S-400 system and train Turkish operators, news agency DHA reported. Turkey’s acquisition of the S-400 in July was met with consternation by its NATO allies.

The US argues there is a risk that sensitive technological information could be leaked if it is used alongside Western equipment such as the new F-35 jet. Turkey has ordered 100 F-35s and its defence industry was part of the supply chain for the new jet, until it was kicked off the programme due to the S-400 purchase...”

### **U.S. general warns Iran likely still plotting major Mideast attack**

*November 25, 2019 timesofisrael.com* reported: “Iran is unlikely to have been undeterred by increased US troop deployment in the Middle East and remains on track to carry out a large-scale attack in the region, the head of the US military’s Central Command said in an interview published Saturday.

‘My judgment is that it is very possible they will attack again,’ Gen. Kenneth F. McKenzie told the New York Times.

Over the past summer Iran shot down an American drone with no retaliation from Washington. It has subsequently been blamed for — and denied — attacking international oil tankers and destroying large portions of a major Saudi petroleum facility. The lack of serious consequences has led Israeli officials to warn an emboldened Tehran could seek a major attack on the Jewish state soon...”