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## Russia Raises Concerns Over new US Ballistic Missile Test

*December 13, 2019* voanews.com reported: "Russia said on Friday it was alarmed after the United States tested a ground-launched ballistic missile that would have been prohibited under the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty, the RIA news agency reported.

The United States carried out the test on Thursday. Washington formally withdrew from the 1987 INF pact with Russia in August after determining that Moscow was violating the treaty, an accusation the Kremlin has denied.

'It alarms us. Of course we will take this into account,' said Vladimir Ermakov, head of the foreign ministry's arms control and non-proliferation department..."

## Pentagon Tests Long-banned Ballistic Missile over Pacific

*December 13, 2019* voanews.com reported: "The Pentagon on Thursday flight-tested a missile that had been banned under a treaty that the United States and Russia abandoned last summer. Some U.S. arms control advocates said the test risks an unnecessary arms race with Moscow.

The prototype missile was configured to be armed with a non-nuclear warhead. The Pentagon declined to disclose specifics beyond saying the missile was launched from a 'static launch stand' at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California and landed in the open ocean. The Defense Department said the ballistic missile flew more than 500 miles.

The test comes amid growing uncertainty about the future of arms control. The last remaining treaty limitation on U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons — the New Start treaty of 2010 — is scheduled to expire in February 2021. That treaty can be extended for as long as five years without requiring a renegotiation of its main terms. The Trump administration has indicated little interest in doing so..."

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## China improves space-based observation of Earth

*December 12, 2019* spacedaily.com reported: "China has greatly improved its ability to observe the Earth from space with a series of high-resolution remote sensing satellites sent into orbit over the past nine years, according to the China National Space Administration (CNSA).

The satellites, belonging to China's high-resolution Earth observation project (Gaofen project) initiated in 2010, have formed a stable satellite remote sensing system, said Tong Xudong, chief designer of the project.

The project has increased the resolution of China's low-earth orbit remote sensing satellites from 2.1 meters to 0.65 meter, and the resolution of China's geostationary orbit remote sensing satellites improved from kilometer-level to 50 meters, Tong said.

The satellites, covering different observation bands, are deployed in different orbits, giving China a preliminary ability for all-weather and round-the-clock observation, said Tong..."



## Indian warship drives away Chinese vessel

*December 4, 2019* Spacedaily.com reported: "India's Navy chief said Tuesday that an unauthorised Chinese vessel had entered its waters in the strategic Indian Ocean Region in September, with media reports suggesting New Delhi deployed a warship to repel the vessel.

India is wary of Chinese clout in the Indian Ocean Region — one of the busiest maritime routes in the world — which it considers to be in its sphere of influence.

The Chinese research vessel, Shi Yan 1, was spotted in September in India's exclusive economic zone in the Andaman Sea, within 200 nautical miles from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which are an Indian archipelago.

'Our stand is that if you have to do anything in our EEZ (exclusive economic zone), you have to notify us and take permission,' Admiral Karambir Singh told reporters on Tuesday when asked about the intrusion.

Indian media reports said the Navy's maritime surveillance aircraft had spotted the vessel in the region, prompting the Navy to send a warship that pushed it away..."

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## **Putin says Russia ready for cooperation with NATO**

*December 4, 2019* spacedaily.com reported: "President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday said Russia is open to cooperation with NATO as a two-day summit of the Western alliance was to open outside London.



'We have repeatedly expressed readiness to jointly resist real threats,' Putin said, Russian news agencies reported.

He named these common threats as 'international terrorism, local armed conflicts (and) the danger of uncontrolled proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.'

The strongman was speaking in the Black Sea resort of Sochi as a two-summit of NATO leaders opened on Tuesday in the British town of Watford..."

## **Iran wants to challenge western navies in Gulf with China and Russia**

*December 4, 2019* jpost.com reported: "Iran thinks it is entering the big league in naval powers as its Rear Admiral Hossein Khanzadi announced a joint naval drill with Russia and China. It came as a deputy chief of the Chinese Joint Staff was in a meeting with Khanzadi, according to Iran's *Press TV*.

What's really behind the scenes of this is that Iran wants to show off after the US and France have both announced maritime security initiatives in the Gulf.

Iran is pushing a 'Hormuz peace' plan called HOPE. Now Iran says its Maritime Security Belt drill will go ahead on December 27. Iran wants to work more closely with China. Having Russia on board is a win as well for Tehran. The problem for Tehran is that while China is an emerging naval behemoth, and Russia is a historic naval power, Iran has a weak navy. Iran's great naval 'achievements' of the last years has been using fast boats to harass real navies. One US official said at a conference in February that the US could destroy Iran's navy easily. In fact Iran's navy is bifurcated between the IRGC and the actual navy. The IRGC is the one that harasses western governments. The actual navy doesn't do much. But Iran has been showcasing new drones and other technology for its ships.

So Iran's message is that it can play in the big league with the Russians and Chinese..."

## **'Muslim provocation in the Jewish Quarter'**

*December 3, 2019* Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "Jewish residents of the Old City of Jerusalem are protesting the renovation of a mosque in the Jewish Quarter which has been out of use for nearly a century, calling the decision to put the mosque back into use a deliberate provocation.

The Sidna Omar Mosque was built in the 14th century, next to the Ramban synagogue, which was built in the 13th century, on Jewish-owned property, after the owner converted to Islam. The mosque has been out of use since the early 20th century.

Last month, however, the Jordanian-based Waqf, or Islamic trust, which maintains Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem, began renovation work on the Sidna Omar Mosque, prompting fears among Jewish residents that the Waqf is looking to reopen the mosque after nearly a century, despite the fact that there is no Muslim population in the vicinity of the mosque.

Speaking with *Arutz Sheva*, Efraim Holtzberg, who has lived in the Jewish Quarter for four decades, called the move a 'provocation' aimed at disrupting Jewish life in the area..."

## **IRGC commander: Our missiles are aimed at 21 US bases**

*December 2, 2019* Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "General Allahnoor Noorollahi, a top advisor to the commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) Officers College, said in a speech in Bushehr this past Friday that 21 of the American bases in the region constitute targets for Iran's missiles.

Claiming that NATO said Iran can launch 20,000 missiles per day, General Noorollahi suggested that Iran has even greater capabilities, and he said that Iran has prepared itself for 'the greatest war against the greatest enemy.'

He stressed that Iran's enemy is the United States and cited a speech by Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei in which Khamenei threatened to raze Haifa and Tel Aviv to the ground if Israel made any 'mistake.'

The speech, which aired on *Bushehr TV*, was delivered at an event commemorating 40 years since the establishment of the Basij and was translated by the Middle East Media and Research Institute (MEMRI)..."

## **North Korea threatens Japan with 'real ballistic missile'**

*December 2, 2019* bbc.com reported: "North Korea has branded Japan's PM Shinzo Abe an 'imbecile' and 'political dwarf', and accused him of mislabeling its latest weapons test.

Mr. Abe condemned the North for 'repeated launches of ballistic missiles' after two projectiles were fired on Thursday.

But the North insisted it was testing a 'super-large multiple-rocket launcher'.

On Saturday, state media said Japan 'may see what a real ballistic missile is in the not distant future'.

North Korea is banned from firing ballistic missiles under UN Security Council resolutions..."

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