

Russia Tests its Nuclear Triad for Massive Response Capability

Description

via [Gilbert Doctorow](#)

A couple of days ago, Russian evening news showed a brief video of Vladimir Putin arriving at the southern military command center in Rostov on Don for a meeting with Valery Gerasimov, Head of the General Staff of Russian Armed Forces. We were shown their handshakes at the start and their handshakes at the conclusion of the meeting as Putin was on his way to his aircraft, but nothing was said about the reason for the visit.

This evening we found out about the likely topic of the talks two days ago. Breaking news on Russian television gave some sketchy details of the tests just carried out on the war readiness of the country's nuclear triad for response to some incoming nuclear missile from an unnamed enemy. Gerasimov reported to Putin on the satisfactory results of the launch from the nuclear submarine Tula in the Barents Sea of a Sineva ballistic missile with 5,500 km range; the launch of a Yars ballistic missile with 12,000 km range from an underground shaft in Kamchatka; and the launch of a 5,500 km range cruise missile from a TU-95 "Bear" turboprop bomber-missile carrier (location unspecified). Considering the location of the missile launches and the radius of possible strikes, it does not take much imagination to conclude that the enemy being attacked was the U.S. of A. The actual tests consisted of one missile each; the capability being tested was for a massive retaliatory strike.

We may assume that the tests were Russia's response to the announcement within the past week of American 'pre-tests' of nuclear weapons, which Moscow took to indicate that Washington intends to proceed with weapons testing in one way or another now that the treaty banning such tests has become a dead letter. Or we may assume that the Russian missile firings were a warning to the United States against escalation in the Middle East by attacking Iran.

On the subject of Iran, Russian state television yesterday told us about the visit to Teheran of Foreign Minister Lavrov, who arrived from meetings in Pyongyang with North Korean leader Kim and had talks with the Iranians and representatives of Armenia and Azerbaijan over resolution of their conflict. Lavrov told a reporter inter alia that talks with Teheran over conclusion of a Strategic Partnership agreement are 90% complete.

Today Russian state television related news from Prime Minister Mishustin on his talks with Iranian leaders over furtherance of bilateral trade and also on the likely conclusion before year's end of a Free Trade Zone agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union. Clearly the 'axis of evil' is forming with amazing speed under pressure from the wars in Ukraine and now in the Middle East.

I call attention to the difference in tone with respect to Iran by Israeli leaders these past two days and by spokesmen of the Biden administration. A member of Netanyahu's cabinet has threatened Iran with utter destruction, whereas American officials are focusing their attention on the various proxies that Iran is helping to prepare for military action against Israel if the ground invasion of Gaza proceeds. Moreover, it is now unclear whether the large naval task forces that the United States is assembling in the Eastern Mediterranean and in the Red Sea are intended for offensive action against Iran or for

defensive action, to protect American bases in the region against attack from pro-Iranian forces and to evacuate American military and civilians from the region if necessary.