



# REVIEWING NATO'S STRATEGIC CONCEPT: NON-STRATEGIC NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN EUROPE

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# Briefing Overview

- Status of US and Russian deployments
- Positions in documents and countries
- Obama administration outlook
- Issues and options for Strategic Concept review



Image right: B61-4 Type 3E Trainer

Image front slide: B61s inside igloo probably at Nellis AFB, Nevada

# Status of US Deployment

- 200 B61-3/4; all other types withdrawn  
“we’re down to a few hundred”
- At six bases in five countries  
Half US – half host country (four)
- Entirely “political” role; “Not aimed at any country”  
Alert replaced by adaptive contingency planning  
Potential targets: Russia and Iran
- Additional weapons available as needed  
200 additional bombs in US, 100 TLAM/N in US, SSBNs
- Next phase: Joint Strike Fighter (F-35 Block IV)  
Replacement for F-15E, F-16, PA-200 Tornado



# Status of Russian Deployment

- Estimated 2,000+ operational; ~650 air-delivered (perhaps 5,300 total remaining, including inactive)
- Diverse weapons and platforms
  - Cruise missiles, bombs, ASM, SAM, ABM, torpedoes, depth charges
  - Aircraft, submarines, surface ships, ABM
- Reduction since 1992:
  - Removed 100 percent from ground forces
  - Reduced by 50 percent in Air Force
  - Reduced by 60 percent in missile defense troops
  - Reduced by 30 percent on submarines (all tactical nuclear weapons have been removed from ships and submarines, but could be returned to navy if necessary)
- “Increased” importance of non-strategic to compensate for inferior conventional capability; no-first-use reversed

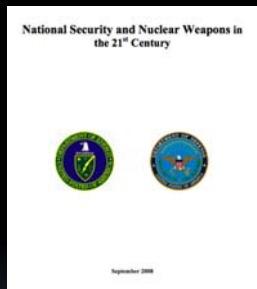
# Positions

## Recent public statements:



### June 2007 NATO NPG Communiqué

“we continue to place great value on the nuclear forces based in Europe and committed to NATO, which provide an essential political and military link between the European and North American members of the Alliance.”



### September 2008 DOD/DOE white paper *National Security and the Role of Nuclear Weapons in 21st Century*

“the U.S. nuclear deterrent has been and remains, the cornerstone of NATO’s collective security.” And “maintaining continued allied confidence in the U.S. extended nuclear deterrent is an essential element of U.S. nuclear non-proliferation policy.”



### December 2008 Report of the Secretary of Defense Task Force on DOD Nuclear Weapons Management (Schlesinger report)

“the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe remains a pillar of NATO unity.... As long as NATO members rely on U.S. nuclear weapons for deterrence – as long as they maintain their own dual-capable aircraft as part of that deterrence – no action should be taken to remove them without a thorough and and deliberate process of consultation.

# Positions

## Symbol of trans-Atlantic “link” or fissure

- Western NATO countries either want withdrawal, go along with deployment, or don't care; government policies tend to be out of sync with public opinion which overwhelmingly favors withdrawal
- Eastern NATO countries tend to defend deployment as symbol of Article V commitment against Russia; no distinction between extended deterrence in general, small deployment in Europe, or conventional capabilities
- Southern flank sees counterproliferation role; Turkey wants protection but dubious about deployment
- US tends not to care (“The Europeans want it”); military sees no value but burden; advocacy left to small elite of current and former civil servants; even McCain did not see deployment as necessary for NATO

# Obama administration outlook



- Has called for reductions of all forms of nukes
  - McCain explicitly mentioned European withdrawal, Obama hasn't
  - Hillary Clinton last year suggested extended deterrence over Middle East
- Way forward not clear
  - Could “cut through” issue with presidential initiative to withdraw
  - Could prioritize restoration of allied relations instead, which could give nuclear deployment advocates the upper hand
  - Other issues are seen as far more important
- The Jones factor (National Security Advisor)
  - As SACEUR, General James Jones told associates he favored a withdrawal from Europe
  - Told Belgian Senate committee about 2005 reduction: “good news are on their way”

# Issues and Options

- Fresh start needed in Strategic Concept update
  - Assess nuclear requirement as if no previous deployment ever occurred
  - Review future need rather than mirror/leftovers from past posture
  - Don't "recycle" old concepts; revisit assumptions; challenge claims
- Don't misuse "deterrence" and "extended deterrence"
  - Be clear if talking about *nuclear* and *conventional* deterrence
  - Be clear whether "extended deterrence" refers to overall nuclear capacity or the small portion of it currently left in Europe
  - Be honest about what else provides deterrence/link
- Cost-benefit analysis of deployment. Does it:
  - advance or obstruct relations with Russia
  - support or contradict non-proliferation policy (sharing/signals)
  - empower or burden military in day-to-day tasking



Additional resources available at  
<http://www.fas.org/blog/ssp/category/nato>