

Weekly Intelligence Brief

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The Russian Federation Agrees to Station Tactical Nuclear Weapons in Belarus

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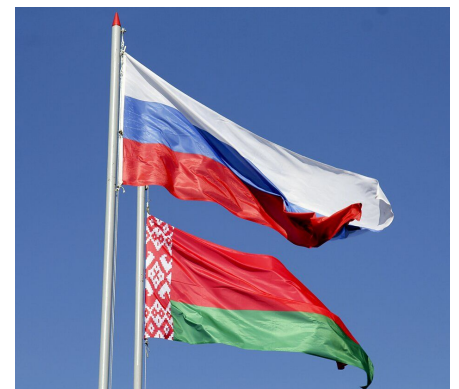
The Russian Federation has agreed to station tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus. Construction for the nuclear weapons' storage is expected to be complete by 01 JULY 2023. Russian authorities claim the weapons will be monitored and handled by personnel of the Russian Federation at all times.

The Russian Federation claims this move is not in violation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed the stationing of tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus is similar to the United States' storing of nuclear weapons in their allied nations. Putin claimed the Russian Federation has aided Belarus in converting 10 aircraft to

handle tactical nuclear payloads, as well as beginning to prepare Belarusian forces on how to operate the aircraft.

The stationing of these Russian tactical nuclear weapons continues to provide evidence for the expansion of Russian nuclear capabilities, which were recently expanded when Russian military forces resumed production of the Tupolev Tu-160 "Blackjack" strategic bombers, as well as continued the development of the RS-28 Sarmat "Satan-II" intercontinental ballistic missiles. The United States Department of State spokesperson, Vedant Patel, claimed that the stationing of these Russian nuclear weapons has not indicated that the Russian Federation has any intention for using nuclear weapons. Therefore, the United States Department of State saw no need to adjust the United States nuclear weapons policy.

We can state with this high confidence, despite the Russian Federation's stationing of nuclear weapons in Belarus being a concern to the United States' national defense, it is likely that the Russian Federation will not use these nuclear weapons in the near future nor harm the United States or its interests abroad.



The United States and the United Kingdom Designate Individuals Close to the Syrian Captagon Empire

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On 28 MAR 2023, the United States Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) coordinated with the United Kingdom to designate six individuals vital to the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and its production and exportation of the amphetamine, Captagon.

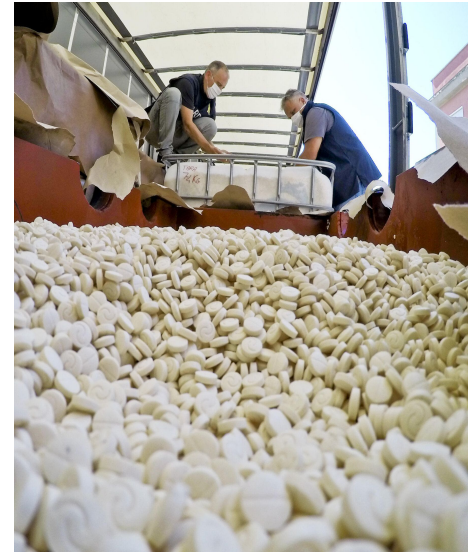
These six individuals were placed on the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List. Three of the six individuals are Lebanese drug traffickers with ties to the Lebanese political and terrorist organization, Hezbollah. Moreover, two of the six individuals, Samer Kamal al-Assad and Wassim Badi al-Assad, are cousins of President

al-Assad. Lastly, one of the six individuals is Maher al-Assad, President al-Assad's younger brother.

The sanctions placed on these six individuals include the sanctioning of all property, assets, and interests that come into contact with the United States or United States persons and are reported to the OFAC. Similarly, any entities that these six individuals own at least 50% of are also being sanctioned. The OFAC indicated that anyone in contact with the designated individuals, including foreign financial institutions that may facilitate significant transactions or services, may become subject to sanctions.

With the statements made by the OFAC, we can state with moderate confidence that if President al-Assad contacts his cousins, brother, or other recently

designated individuals, President al-Assad may experience similar sanctions from the United States.



Greece Purchases Israeli Missiles

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Europe Desk

On 29 MAR, Greek representatives approved the purchase of Israeli Spike-NLOS missiles. The approval of the purchase of the Israeli Spike-NLOS missiles came during a National Security Council meeting, chaired by Greek Prime Minister (PM), Kyriakos Mitsotakis. The Spike-NLOS missile has a range of up to 32 kilometers and can be integrated with existing platforms on land, air, and sea. The missiles are produced by the Israeli defense contractor, Rafael Advanced Defense Systems. The purchase of these missiles comes at a time when multiple arms agreements are being negotiated between Greece and other countries such as the United States, France, and Germany.

In 2022, Greece had an estimated defense expenditure of about €7.5 billion equivalent to \$8 billion. This equates to about 3.54 percent of their gross domestic product (GDP) for the year, surpassing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's guideline of 2 percent GDP defense spending. For comparison, the United States spends 3.46 percent of its GDP on defense and Türkiye only utilizes 1.37 percent of its GDP on defense. Greek defense spending has increased since Mitsotakis became Greek PM in 2019, prioritizing military modernization to "improve the balance of power in the Aegean."

At this time, we can state with high confidence that Türkiye will speak about the increasing Greek military capabilities and acknowledge the Greek arms deals as destabilizing for Turkish authority in the Aegean. However, we

can state with moderate confidence that the relations between the two countries will remain stable in the short term due to their recent unrelated cooperation.



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