

## DAILY TRACKER

### NUCLEAR ISSUES

---

1. In Washington on Wednesday, Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid warned that Israel was prepared to use military force to stop Iran from gaining nuclear weapons capability. “Iran has publicly stated it wants to wipe us out,” Lapid said. “We have no intention of letting this happen.” At the same press event, held to mark the one-year anniversary of the Abraham Accords, which normalized relations between several Arab states and Israel, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken was much more circumspect, saying merely that Iran wasn’t negotiating and that Washington is “prepared to turn to other options.”

*Source:* <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/10/15/israel-idf-iran-nuclear-arms-weapons/>

2. While Washington policy circles debate apparently endlessly about Iran’s nuclear intentions and its level of expertise, Tehran presses on remorselessly. On Oct. 10, Mohammad Eslami, the newly-appointed head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, announced that his country had produced more than 120 kg of 20 percent-enriched uranium. This is a dramatic increase from the 84 kg reported a month earlier by the nuclear watchdog, the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the IAEA’s figure of around 63 kg three months earlier.

*Source:* <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/576798-while-washington-argues-iran-makes-nuclear-advances>

3. The U.S. continues to observe activity at North Korean nuclear sites that is “inconsistent with full denuclearization,” the Defense Intelligence Agency said in a report issued Friday. The conclusion, based on observations at the Yongbyon nuclear site and elsewhere, echoes assessments delivered to former President Donald Trump by U.S. intelligence agencies, despite Trump’s efforts to engage in direct summit diplomacy with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

*Source:* <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-10-15/pentagon-spies-say-north-korea-s-kim-still-pursues-nuclear-arms>



4. Members of the Institute community in Monterey and around the world are making their mark, whether in print, online, or both. Here, we share recent publishing news from alumni, students, faculty, and staff.

**Source:** <https://www.middlebury.edu/institute/news/recently-published-my-village-last-clouds-haben-nonproliferation-nuclear-weapons>

5. In summer 2012, in the middle of the night, an 82-year-old Roman Catholic sister hiked over a wooded ridge in east Tennessee and, with two fellow peace activists, intruded into a government facility nicknamed the Fort Knox of Uranium. They evaded patrols, cut through sensor fences, entered a shoot-to-kill zone and, with relative ease, reached their target: a looming white building that contained a stockpile of material for nuclear weapons. On its exterior wall, the trio splashed human blood, as a symbol of the cost of war, and spray painted biblical messages such as “the fruit of justice is peace”.

**Source:** <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/megan-rice-nuclear-activist-obituary-death-b1937720.html>

## NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

---

1. The recent formation of a new security alliance, the Aukus, comprising Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, whose initial project is to equip Australia with a fleet of nuclear submarines, has raised fears of a new nuclear arms race and even an escalation of the US-Sino rivalry into a nuclear confrontation. While the parties avoid mentioning the country the alliance is directed against, it is widely believed China's threats to freedom of navigation in the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean and to change the status quo in Taiwan have something to do with it. Nuclear submarines are known for their capability to launch and deliver nuclear weapons in the fastest way possible with nobody knowing where they come from.

**Source:** <https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/10/16/opinion/columns/a-new-nuclear-arms-race-afoot/1818602>

2. Iran on Friday sharply criticized the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency for keeping its eyes trained on the Islamic Republic while ignoring its arch-enemy Israel's suspected nuclear program. Israel is widely believed to be the Middle East's sole nuclear arms possessor, but it has long refused to confirm or deny it has such weapons and — unlike Iran — is not a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

*Source:* <https://www.timesofisrael.com/iran-criticizes-un-nuclear-agency-for-negligence-on-monitoring-israel/>

## MISSILES/BIO WEAPONS

---

1. Living up to the 'Rocket Man' moniker bestowed by former US president Donald Trump, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un fired a flurry of new missile types throughout September, including an intermediate-range cruise missile, a railcar-mounted short-range ballistic missile, a hypersonic missile and an air defence missile. First off the rank, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported that cruise missile tests occurred on 11-12 September. After being launched from an 8x8 transporter-erector-launcher (TEL) possessing five launch tubes, the missiles reportedly flew for 126 minutes, travelled some 1,500km and hit their targets.

*Source:* <https://www.shephardmedia.com/news/defence-notes/kim-jong-un-punctuated-september-with-flurry-of-ne/>

2. A U.S. Army weapon under development completed its longest flight on Wednesday in a hush-hush test from Vandenberg Space Force Base near Lompoc. The test involved the Precision Strike Missile, developed by Lockheed Martin Corp., as the Army's next-generation, long-range surface-to-surface weapon. Wednesday's flight off the northern section of Vandenberg saw the weapon exceed its maximum threshold, for what added up to the missile's fifth consecutive successful flight test.

**Source:** <https://www.sanluisobispo.com/news/local/article255040732.html>

3. The Pentagon finds itself in the “shocking and eye-opening” position of needing more electrical power to protect distributed naval and ground forces from long-range attack at a time when China dominates the global production of advanced batteries needed to meet that mission, a panel of security experts said Thursday. Heather Penny, a senior fellow at the Air Force Association’s Mitchell Institute, said that as a pilot, “electricity was just as important as jet fuel” in laying out and reviewing missions. Yet, she pointed out that China’s dominance of the production end is matched by its control of mining ventures extracting cobalt, lithium and manganese critical to manufacturing advanced batteries with long lives for electrical power in combat.

**Source:** <https://news.usni.org/2021/10/15/panel-military-needs-more-electrical-power-to-counter-long-range-missile-threats>

## UN REFORMS

---

1. Spokesperson Shabia Mantoo said Afghan refugees have been approaching UNHCR offices, desperately concerned about the safety and welfare of their loved ones left behind, or living in neighbouring countries. “While recent political developments in Afghanistan have not led to large-scale cross-border displacement, many among pre-existing Afghan refugee and asylum seeker populations remain separated from their families owing to the inaccessibility of family reunification procedures,” she told journalists in Geneva. The call comes as the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate as winter approaches. Half the population, some 20 million people, depend on aid to survive, and the number is rising.

**Source:** <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/10/1103182>

2. Scaled-up investments in local food systems are critical to ensure sustainable food security and nutrition for forcibly displaced people and host communities, three UN agencies say, ahead of World Food Day on 16 October. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), and the World Food Programme (WFP), warn that the most vulnerable, especially refugees, are hardest hit by food insecurity, which continues to

be driven globally by conflict, displacement, economic shocks, climate crises and the COVID-19 pandemic. “Conflict and climate stresses are destroying lives, crops and livelihoods, and undermining people’s ability to feed themselves,” says Annalisa Conte, WFP Director of Geneva Global Office. “Tragically, the climate crisis is set to be a catalyst for further conflict over competition for resources. What we see now is only the beginning.”

*Source:* <https://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2021/10/61696fc14/world-food-day-un-calls-strengthened-inclusive-local-food-systems-displaced.html>

3. A deal for the United Nations to start work on a remote Bangladeshi island where the government has sent thousands of Rohingya refugees offers no guarantee they will be allowed to move freely to the mainland, according to a copy of the agreement. The Bangladesh government has moved nearly 19,000 Rohingya refugees, members of a persecuted mostly Muslim minority from Myanmar, to Bhasan Char island from border camps, despite protests by refugees and opposition from rights groups, who have likened it to an island jail and said some relocations were involuntary.

*Source:* <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/un-deal-offers-no-guarantees-free-movement-rohingya-island-leaked-copy-2021-10-15/>

4. The United Nations General Assembly hosted a ceremony on October 14 to honour former Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, who served as the General Assembly's 29th president between 1974 and 1975 and passed away last month. Bouteflika advocated the concepts of justice, freedom, and peace as a priority for the United Nations and played an active role in these areas throughout his administration, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said.

*Source:* <https://www.republicworld.com/world-news/rest-of-the-world-news/un-pays-tribute-to-ex-unga-prez-abdelaziz-bouteflika-lauds-his-role-in-ensuring-justice.html>

