

FACT SHEET

Strengthening Homeland Missile Defense

On March 15, 2013 Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announced a series of steps the United States will take to improve its homeland ballistic missile defense systems to stay ahead of the long-range ballistic missile threat posed by North Korea and Iran.

The Changing Threat

North Korea

- North Korea's long-range ballistic missile capabilities continue to mature. North Korea announced in February 2013 that it conducted its third nuclear test, and in April 2012 displayed what appeared to be a road-mobile intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).
- North Korea also used its Taepo Dong-2 launch vehicle to put a satellite in orbit, thus demonstrating its long-range missile technology.

Iran

- Iran also continues to advance its space-launch and longer-range ballistic missile capabilities. Iran has used a space-launch vehicle, the Safir-2, to place a satellite in orbit, demonstrating some of the key technologies required for ICBM development.

The U.S. Approach

The Obama Administration's policy on homeland ballistic missile defense, as described in the 2010 Ballistic Missile Defense Review (BMDR), is to protect the United States from limited ICBM attack from states like North Korea and Iran.

It is U.S. policy to stay ahead of this threat. To maintain the United States' advantageous position vis-à-vis the ballistic missile threat from North Korea and Iran, the Department of Defense will take four steps:

- **First, the United States will deploy 14 additional Ground-Based Interceptors (GBIs) in Fort Greely, Alaska.** This will increase the total number of GBIs deployed from 30 to 44, providing a nearly 50 percent increase in our current capability. (Currently, 26 GBIs are deployed at Fort Greely and 4 GBIs are at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.) The GBIs are one element of the Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system that is designed to intercept long-range ballistic missiles in space.
- **Second, with the support of the Japanese government, we are planning to deploy an additional AN/TPY-2 radar in Japan.** This will provide improved early warning and tracking of any missile launched from North Korea at the United States or Japan.

- **Third, as required by the Fiscal Year 2013 National Defense Authorization Act, we are conducting Environmental Impact Studies (EIS) for a potential additional GBI site in the United States.** The Administration has not decided to proceed with an additional GBI site, but if that decision were made in the future, conducting EIS's for potential sites would shorten the timeline for construction.
- **Fourth, we are restructuring the SM-3 IIB missile defense interceptor program into a technology development program focusing on an enhanced kill vehicle capability for both the GBI and the SM-3 family of interceptors.** The SM-3 IIB schedule had been delayed by several years due to congressional funding cuts. The kill vehicle is the component at the tip of an interceptor that maneuvers into the path of a ballistic missile's warhead and destroys it.

Continued Commitment to EPAA

In 2009, the United States announced its plan for missile defense in Europe, known as the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA), designed to counter the growing threat of Iranian ballistic missiles. We remain committed to the EPAA and ensuring the United States and Europe are protected from growing ballistic missile threats.

- The U.S. commitment to Phases 1 through 3 of the EPAA and NATO missile defense remains ironclad, including the planned sites in Poland and Romania. The U.S. missile defense deployments to Europe will be capable of providing coverage of all European NATO territory in the 2018 timeframe, so there will be no impact on the defense of NATO.
- Due to the decision to restructure the SM-3 IIB program, we are no longer planning for Phase 4 of EPAA for defense of the U.S. homeland. We are instead focusing on improving homeland defense through deployment of additional GBIs in the United States, which can defend against threats from both North Korea and Iran.
- Phases 1 through 3 of the EPAA will, however, continue to provide important contributions to the defense of the United States homeland and U.S. deployed forces in Europe. For example, the radar deployed in Turkey as part of EPAA can provide important early trajectory data on any Iranian missile launches against the United States.

“Fly Before You Buy”

We also remain committed to our “fly-before-you-buy” policy that requires us to demonstrate the effectiveness of the GMD system through intercept flight testing.

- Proving the operational capability of the latest model of the GBI kill vehicle is one of our top priorities.
- A successful non-intercept GBI flight test in January 2013 helped increase our confidence in the design and we will continue further testing.