

DOUBLE-STANDARD ON DPRK SPACE LAUNCHES

Written by John Hallam

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PEOPLE FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT NSW NUCLEAR FLASHPOINTS

DOUBLE-STANDARD ON DPRK SPACE LAUNCHES – NEED FOR BALANCE

We are seeing yet once more, a double-standard in dealing with the DPRKs space and missile launches.

PND is calling for balance in the way we talk about both DPRK and US and Russian space and missile launches.

While the DPRK's aggressive rhetoric in dealing with the US and the RoK does it no favours, it must surely be seen as odd, that

--When, as happens 2-3 times a year, the US test launches what is unambiguously and definitely a nuclear-capable Minuteman-III ICBM from Vandenberg toward Kwajalein, apart from a hardy band of protestors at Vandenberg, everyone thinks it is perfectly routine.

--The same happens when Russia launches Topol-M or SS-18 missiles.

Even when India launches its latest iteration of Agni, few eyebrows get raised.

--One or two eyebrows might be raised when Pakistan tests short range tactical Hatf missiles, thereby lowering the threshold for nuclear apocalypse in South Asia.

Let me emphasise this. The US and Russia, who hang desperately on to their ability to make the planet uninhabitable in 40 minutes at an hour and a half, test missiles whose only purpose is to deliver nuclear warheads. It's a yawn. The US and Russia maintain over a thousand warheads each on high alert, and 20 years after the cold war has supposedly ended, continue to drill for the apocalypse on a regular basis. Nobody notices. Or cares.

The DPRK tests something that is at least SUPPOSED to be a space satellite. All their previous satellite launches for various reasons, have not worked at all. There is no reason for optimism over this one either.

And it's the end of the world.

Strange, PND was under the impression that this was the US and Russia's portfolio.

As the DPRK has made clear for many years that it (rightly or wrongly) doesn't regard space launches as anything to do with nuclear missiles even though the technology used for the one is indistinguishable from that used for the other – this should have been at least seen coming.

The imbroglio over the DPRK launch planned for April 15 will almost certainly de-rail both the food aid deal, and any further talks over nuclear weapons. This is hardly an unexpected outcome.

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If the food aid deal disappears as it is likely to, and if the talks go completely off the track, then we may well also, see a third nuclear test.

The DPRK sees its missile and putative space technology as an asset it cannot do without.

Any agreement that fails to take this into account will fail, achieving yet further nuclear tests and further dangerous confrontation.

All this for a space launch that in all likelihood will fail as the other space launches have done thus far.

Contact:

John Hallam,

People for Nuclear Disarmament

johnhallam2001@yahoo.com.au,

61-2-9810-2598

m0416-500-793