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US nuclear buildup shows new arms race has already begun – German FM

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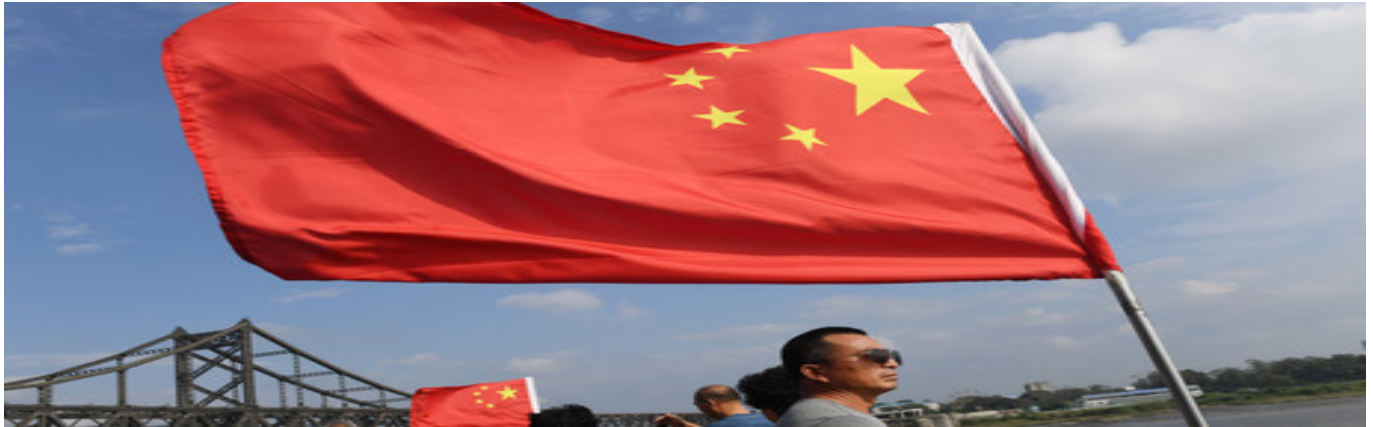
World safety requires more disarmament initiatives, not more nukes, says German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel, accusing the new US Nuclear Posture Review of endangering Europe.

*“The decision by the US government in favor of new tactical nuclear weapons shows that the spiral of a new nuclear arms race is already under way,”* Gabriel said in a statement, noting that *“like the Cold War times, we in Europe are in particular danger.”*

The newly-released US Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) refers to Russia’s nuclear modernization as one of the reasons to renovate and upgrade the US nuclear arsenals making them more mobile by developing new, low-yield nuclear weapons.

Gabriel also put part of the blame for the deterioration of international security on Moscow, mentioning its 2014 reunification with Crimea and a *“dramatic loss of confidence”* in Russia as a result. The instability in the countries along Europe’s southern borders is another challenge to the global order, which *“is increasingly being called into question,”* Gabriel said.

Read more [‘Cold war mentality’: China blasts US nuclear review which brands Beijing a threat](#)



But building more nukes is not the answer, he added. Instead, they send the “*wrong signal*” and trigger a new upward spiral in the arms race.

*“Instead of new weapon systems, we need new disarmament initiatives,”* Gabriel said, noting that all existing arms control agreements should be *“upheld unconditionally”* in a concerted effort to create a world free of nuclear weapons.

While not having nuclear weapons of its own, Germany stores about 20 American B61-4 nuclear bombs which it keeps at the Luftwaffe’s Büchel Air Base in Rhineland-Palatinate, western Germany. The base hosts German Tornado aircraft that can carry the US bombs under a nuclear sharing deal. Starting from 2021, the aging bombs will be gradually replaced by a new variant of the B61, the B-12, which is expected to go into full-scale production in 2020. The new bombs are considered to be more accurate and are set to be stored at the same base which has been housing US nuclear weapons since 2007, despite vocal protests from the German opposition.

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Germany's criticism comes after the US nuclear doctrine was denounced by Russia, China and Iran, all named in the document as potential nuclear threats to the US.

On Sunday the Chinese Foreign Ministry branded the report that accuses it of a major nuclear-build up "*presumptuous speculation*" calling on Washington to drop its "*Cold-War mentality*." Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif [wrote](#) in a tweet that it violates international non-proliferation treaties and brings the world "*closer to annihilation*."

Decrying the US nuclear ambitions, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said that "*Americans are shamelessly threatening Russia with a new nuclear weapon*."

Commenting on the document, Moscow said that the [accusations against Russia](#) in the review "*have nothing to do with reality*," dismissing Washington's "*aggressive Russia*" notion as a straw man, and a pretext for pumping more money into its military industry.