



PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

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PUTIN WARNS NATO AGAINST BORDER BUILD-UP

November 20, 2007 SpaceWar.com reported: "President Vladimir Putin warned NATO against "muscle-flexing" on Russia's border Tuesday and ordered top generals to raise the combat readiness of the country's nuclear missiles.

Meanwhile, the armed forces chief of staff, General Yury Baluyevsky, also confirmed that Russia would suspend adherence to a key Cold War arms treaty on December 12, news agencies reported.

"In violation of previous agreements, certain member countries of the NATO alliance are increasing their resources next to our borders," Putin told a meeting of defence chiefs in Moscow in comments broadcast on state television. "Russia cannot remain indifferent to the clear muscle-flexing," he said.

The Kremlin leader, who earlier this year threatened to target nuclear missiles at Europe, said he wanted the atomic arsenal put on a higher level of readiness.

"One of the most important tasks remains raising the combat readiness of the strategic nuclear forces. They should be ready to deliver a quick and adequate reply to any aggressor," Interfax quoted him as saying.

Baluyevsky told the meeting of top brass that Russia would "certainly" suspend its participation in the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty on December 12.

"We will certainly fulfil this ruling exactly on time," Baluyevsky was quoted by Interfax news agency as saying, following a vote in parliament to suspend application of the CFE.

However, Putin left the door open to Russia resuming participation, saying Moscow will "re-examine the possibility of renewing its obligations after our partners join the adapted treaty and, more importantly, implement it."..."

OLMERT, MUBARAK AGREE TO STEP UP COOPERATION TO PREVENT ARMS SMUGGLING

November 20, 2007 Haaretz.com reported: "Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak agreed Tuesday to step up cooperation between Israel and Egypt in order to bring an end to the arms smuggling from Sinai into the Gaza Strip. At a joint press conference following talks at the Sinai resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh, the two leaders said that the heightened cooperation would include information sharing between the countries' security forces.



Ehud Olmert

"Israel is determined to halt terror activity from Gaza," Olmert said, adding that he had discussed the issue with Mubarak. "It will act with all its might to prevent the entry of Hamas terrorists into Gaza to serve as a base for their operations."

"We established joint operating procedures for the [two countries'] security and intelligence agencies in order to prevent terrorists from entering Gaza," said the prime minister.

Defense officials have said that Egypt could do more to stem the tide of arms and armed men into the Strip. But Mubarak stressed that Egypt has made an extensive effort to prevent the smuggling.

"In the past year we destroyed 236 tunnels and confiscated a large quantity of weapons," he said. "We have no interest in the smuggling, and I would be happy if [Israel and Egypt's] security agencies would meet even once a week in order to discuss the problem. If there is information that smuggling is taking place, please give it to us and we will catch them."

Olmert's talks with Mubarak were seen as an effort to boost Arab participation in the upcoming U.S.- sponsored Middle East peace summit in Annapolis, Maryland. Arab League foreign ministers will meet in Cairo on Thursday to debate the issue of participating at Annapolis.

The prime minister said that despite expected crises and arguments with the Palestinians, he hoped to see a peace agreement by the end of next year."..."

EU 'SHOULD EXPAND BEYOND EUROPE'

November 19, 2007 The BBC News reported: "Foreign Secretary David Miliband has suggested the European Union should work towards including Russia, Middle Eastern and North African countries. He said enlargement was "our most powerful tool" for extending stability.

In his first major speech on the UK's relationship with Europe, he said the EU would not become a "superpower" but should be a "role model" for the world. It could be a "model power of regional co-operation" dedicated to free trade, the environment and tackling extremism.

He said the EU must "keep our promises to Turkey", adding: "If we fail.... it will signal a deep and dangerous divide between east and west.

"Beyond that we must keep the door open, retaining the incentive for change and the prospect of membership provides."

Mr Miliband made his address at the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium, where Baroness Thatcher delivered her famous warning against "some sort of identikit European personality" almost exactly two decades ago in September 1988. Mr Miliband said that speech had been "haunted by demons - a European superstate bringing in socialism by the back door".

But he said: "The truth is that the EU has enlarged, remodelled and opened up. It is not and is not going to become a superstate. But neither is it destined to become a superpower."

Instead he said the EU had the chance to be a "model power" which could develop shared values between countries.

"As a club that countries want to join, it can persuade countries to play by the rules, and set global standards. In the way it dispenses its responsibilities around the world, it can be a role model that others follow."..."

SOUTHEAST ASIAN TREATY HINGES ON MYANMAR

November 21, 2007 The Associated Press reported: "Southeast Asian leaders adopted a landmark charter Tuesday, but their vision to create a *EU-style bloc* faced hurdles because of concerns about Myanmar, whose military rulers have defied international calls to restore democracy.

The pact will collapse if one country fails to ratify it. The Philippines has warned that its Congress would be hard-pressed to sign the chart unless Myanmar upholds its principles of democracy and human rights and releases pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

On Monday, the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations abruptly withdrew an invitation to U.N. envoy Ibrahim Gambari to address Asian leaders after Myanmar objected. They further rejected calls to suspend Myanmar from the bloc to oppose the junta's crackdown on pro-democracy protesters that left 15 people dead in September, and its refusal to free Suu Kyi.

"ASEAN leaders will strive to prevent the Myanmar issue from obstructing our efforts to deepen integration and build an ASEAN community," Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said in his opening remarks at the annual summit."..."

US ECONOMIC GLOOM BRINGS NEW DOLLAR LOWS

November 21, 2007 The Associated Press reported: "The dollar sank to new lows Wednesday on pessimism about the American economy and speculation that Washington will cut interest rates again.



The euro climbed to \$1.4856 before retreating slightly to \$1.4848 in late afternoon trading. It broke the \$1.48 mark for the first time since Tuesday, when it settled at \$1.4815.

The dollar also hit a two-year low against the Japanese yen, falling as far as 108.27 yen before rising slightly to 108.68 yen. That was still down from 109.69 yen on Tuesday.

The Swiss franc rose to a second consecutive record against the dollar. The U.S. currency fell to 1.1025 Swiss francs before climbing up to 1.1029 Swiss francs, still down from 1.1060 Swiss francs late Tuesday.

The euro, the pound and other currencies have been climbing steadily against the dollar since August amid fears for the health of the U.S. economy, stoked by the subprime credit crisis."..."

NETHERLANDS NOT SO DUTCH ANYMORE

November 22, 2007 The Associated Press reported: "One was a Somali refugee, the other an Argentine investment banker. Both are now high-profile Dutch women challenging this country to rethink its national identity.

Princess Maxima, the Argentine-born wife of Crown Prince Willem Alexander, triggered a round of national soul-searching with a speech last month about what exactly it means to be Dutch in an age of mass migration. "The Netherlands is too complex to sum up in one cliché," she said. "A typical Dutch person doesn't exist."

Her comments have tapped into an unsettled feeling among many Dutch who fear traditional values have been eroded in a country roiled by a rise in Muslim extremism. It's a view espoused by Somali-born Ayaan Hirsi Ali, who has turned her back on her Islamic roots.

Conservatives in this nation of 16 million say the long Dutch tradition of welcoming immigrants and putting little or no pressure on them to integrate undermines Western values.

"Unfortunately, the debate about Dutch identity is too often held at a very trite and trivial level _ as if the discussion is between Brussels sprouts and wooden shoes on the one hand, and couscous and caftans on the other," said Bart Jan Spruyt, founder of The Edmund Burke Foundation, a conservative think tank. "What is really at stake, due to a frivolous immigration policies and decades of multicultural indifference, is the identity of the Dutch nation, Dutch history and culture as a part of the history of Western civilization."..."

The system began to unravel in the 1960s, but some observers see the rise of Islam as a new pillar in Dutch society _ mosques are springing up around the country and Muslims have their own schools and Web sites."..."

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