

Iran To Conduct Missile War Games

By [Global Research](#)

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TEHRAN, Iran, Jan. 21, 2007

(AP) Iran plans three days of military maneuvers, including short-range missile tests, beginning Sunday — its first since the U.N. Security Council imposed sanctions against it in late December, state-run television said.

“The elite Revolutionary Guards plans to begin a three-day missile maneuver on Sunday near Garmsar city,” said the broadcast. The city is located in northern Iran on the edge of Kavir desert, about 60 miles southeast of Tehran.

“Zalzal and Fajr-5 missiles will be test fired in the war game,” the television quoted an unnamed commander of the guards, as saying. Both are considered short-range missiles.

Iran conducted three large-scale military exercises last year as tensions with the West and the United States rose.

In November, for example, it test-fired dozens of missiles, including the Shahab-3 that can reach Israel, in military maneuvers that it said were aimed at putting a stop to the role of world powers in the Persian Gulf region.

Sunday’s maneuvers are to be the first by Iran since the U.N. Security Council imposed limited sanctions on the country on Dec. 23, banning selling materials and technology that could be used in Iran’s nuclear and missile programs and freezing assets abroad of 10 Iranian companies and individuals.

Iran regularly holds large maneuvers, often using them to test weapons developed by its arms industry.

The latest Iranian maneuvers also come just days after the U.S. announced it would deploy a second aircraft carrier to the Gulf, the USS Stennis.

That appeared to have alarmed some in Iran’s hard-line leadership. A prominent member of a powerful cleric-run body this week warned that the U.S. plans to attack Iran in the coming months, possibly by striking its nuclear facilities.

The United States has said it is focusing on diplomacy but will not rule out other options.

Washington has accused Iran of backing militants fueling Iraq’s violence and has tried to rally its Arab allies in isolating Tehran.

Last year, Iran held three large-scale military exercises. In April, Iran tested what it called an “ultra-horizon” missile, fired from helicopters and jet fighters, and the Fajr-3 missile, which can reportedly evade radar and use multiple warheads to hit several targets simultaneously.

While U.S. officials have suggested that Iran is exaggerating the capabilities of its newly developed weapons, Washington and its allies have been watching the country’s progress in missile technology with concern.

In October, the U.S. led maneuvers of its own in the Gulf, focusing on surveillance, with warships tracking a ship suspected of carrying components of illegal weapons.

In December 2005, Israel successfully tested its Arrow missile defense system against a rocket similar to Iran’s Shahab-3. The Arrow was developed jointly with the United States.

While the Zalzal is a solid fuel missile, the Fajr-5 missile, from the Persian word meaning dawn, is an artillery rocket developed by Iran in early 2006. It includes a mobile platform and its primary role is to engage land targets, with a range of 50 miles.

Iran has recently urged Arab Gulf nations to kick the U.S. military out of the region and join Iran in a new regional security alliance, an offer mostly ignored by the Gulf states.

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