



Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments

#### IN THE NEWS

## Panel Says U.S. Missile Defenses Inadequate Against Chinese Threat

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China is rapidly increasing the size, variety and capabilities of its missile force and the United States must change how it defends both the homeland and its forward-deployed forces in the Western Pacific to counter the growing threat, a panel of experts said Aug. 19.

Although China may not currently have the “intent” to use its expanding force of nuclear-armed intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) to attack the United States, the U.S. military must be prepared to deal with its “capabilities,” four experts said at a Hudson Institute forum.

Retired Air Force Lt Gen Trey Oberling, a former Missile Defense Agency director, said the national missile defenses are not adequate to counter the existing and potential ballistic missile threat from Iran and North Korea, let alone “the increasingly sophisticated threats from China and Russia.”

Among the possible threats to the Navy’s carrier-based strike capabilities is the DF-21D anti-ship ballistic missile, commonly called the “carrier killer.” Although the missile itself is known to be deployed, neither Oberling nor Mark Schneider, a senior analyst with the National Institute for Public Policy and a former Pentagon official dealing with the missile threat, could confirm that the integrated surveillance and targeting system has ever been tested against a mobile sea-based target.

But both said that what they knew of the system is enough to concern them.

Schneider, Dean Cheng, a Chinese military scholar at the Heritage Foundation, and Bryan Clark, a retired Navy commander and senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, said China has far more land-, ship- and air-launched ballistic and cruise missiles than U.S. defenses in the Western Pacific could counter.

READ: Seapower Magazine (<http://www.seapowermagazine.org/stories/20150819-china-missiles.html>)