



# US Nuclear Weapons in Europe: a made in New Mexico Problem

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# US Nuclear Weapons in Europe: a made in New Mexico Problem

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This talk will cover

- Everything Starts in New Mexico
- The Origins
- Some Figures...
- Money, Money, Money
- Modernization Programme
- Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT - 1970)
- NPT What?
- “NWs Guarantee Security”
- Men at Work (1): Incirlik Base - Turkey
- Men at Work (2): Italy – Aviano and Ghedi
- Italy Must Face Nuclear Danger
- Italian International Political Posture on NWs
- Public Opinion

# Everything Starts in New Mexico

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- Europe hosts US B61 (3-4-7 and 10)
- 1\$ trillion modernization programme → upgrade them to B61-12 (strategic nuclear warheads)
  - is triggering Russian reaction, escalating tension with US and Europe
  - Putin: «*The world is being pulled into a completely new dimension, while [Washington] pretends that nothing's happening*»
- Designed, tested and partially built in New Mexico (Sandia and Los Alamos Labs)
- UNM is bidding to manage Sandia Labs as member of a team (Battelle, Boeing, Texas A&M University System and University of Texas System)
- Whither UNM and New Mexico?

# The Origins

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- NATO Nuclear Sharing Programme:
  - 1952–1968 Secret Agreements US-EU countries
  - Non-Strategic B-61 weapons (gravity bombs between 0.3 and 170 kt)
  - Weapons under US full control - some responsibility for the host country (equipment, storage, transport, delivery)
- Purpose: Guarantee US umbrella on Europe
- In the 70s NATO umbrella could count on 7300 US nuclear weapons

# Some Figures...

<b>US Nuclear Weapons Storage Sites In Europe (2015)</b>				
<b>Country</b>	<b>Air Base</b>	<b>WS3 Vaults</b>	<b>Weapons (B61)</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Belgium	Kleine Brogel AB	11	20	For Belgian F-16s
Germany	Büchel AB	11	20	For German Tornados
Italy	Aviano AB	18	50*	For U.S. F-16s
	Ghedi AB	11	20	For Italian Tornados
Netherlands	Volkel AB	11	20	For Dutch F-16s
Turkey	Incirlik AB	25	50	For US rotational aircraft
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 bases</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>180</b>	

\* The security upgrade at Aviano AB indicates that the number of operational nuclear weapons storage vaults at the base might have been reduced and the B61 bombs reduced from 50 to 25-35.

Belgium, Germany, Italy and Netherlands host the weapons but are also responsible for delivering them. Turkey only hosts them, leaving delivery to US aircraft.

Source: Federation of American Scientists website (FAS)

# Money, Money, Money

## NATO Security Investment Program Spending on European Weapon Storage Sites

Program Name	Total (millions)	Total (US\$M)*	Remarks
Initial WS3 Installation	~\$215M	\$250	249 vaults at 13 bases
Basic Capability Package (July 2000)	€12.8	\$11.8	
Addendum 1 (February 2005)	€17.9	\$23.6	First after 9/11 attacks
Addendum 2 (April 2006)	€13.0	\$16	
Addendum 3 (March 2009)	€13.0	\$17.5	
Addendum 4 (August 2011)	€108.0	\$155.7**	Includes security perimeters at Incirlik and Aviano
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$474.6</b>	

\* Numbers are approximate (in millions), assuming then-year dollars and conversion rates from European Central Bank at <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/stats/exchange/eurofxref/html/eurofxref-graph-usd.en.html>

\*\* This number is similar to the \$154 million DOD stated in 2014 was planned to bring European sites up to more stringent U.S. security standards.

Security remains **inadequate** at some bases, according to Congressional sources questioned by Greg Mello

Source: Federation of American Scientists website (FAS)

# Modernization Programme

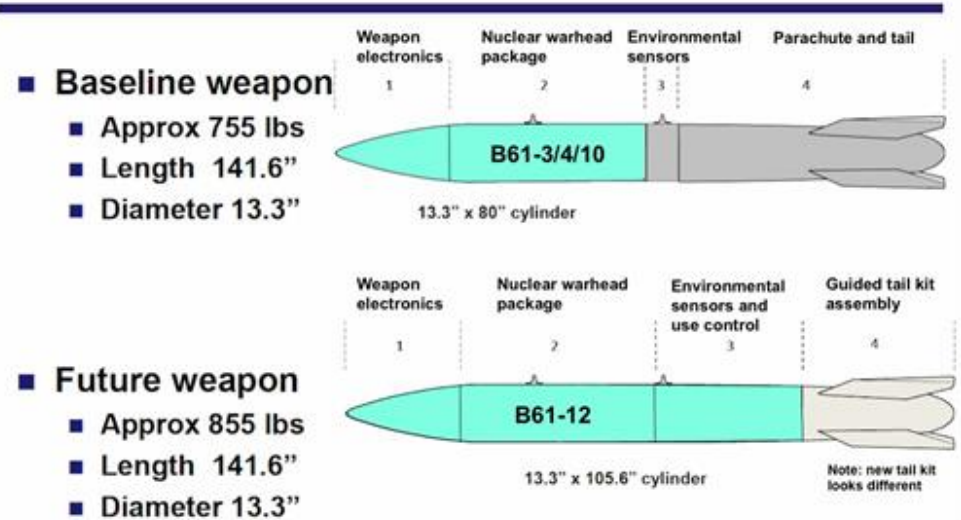
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- [http://www.lasg.org/videos/B61-12\\_SAND8928\\_2015.mp4](http://www.lasg.org/videos/B61-12_SAND8928_2015.mp4)

# Modernization Programme

2010 US Nuclear Doctrine contains programme to modernize nuclear weapons in Europe (B61-12) by 2021-2024

B61-12 Dimensions Compared With Current B61s in Europe  
(USAF drawing modified by FAS)



B61-12 features:

- more precise and usable (“victims reduction”);
- former U.S. Under Secretary of Defense for Policy James Miller defined them “reliable and **ethical**”



# B61-12 @ US Senate





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Modernization also envisages aircraft replacement (with F35)

According to Hans Kristensen:

“Over the next decade, the United States plans to spend roughly \$10 billion to modernize the B61 bomb, over \$1 billion more to make the new guided B61-12 compatible with four existing aircraft, another \$350 million to make the new stealthy F-35 fighter-bomber nuclear-capable, and another \$1 billion to sustain the deployment in Europe.

This adds up to roughly \$12.5 billion for sustaining, securing, and modernizing U.S. nuclear bombs in Europe over the next decade.”

Source: *Italy's Nuclear Anniversary: Fake Reassurance For a King's Ransom* (FAS) Jun.30, 2014

# Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT - 1970)

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- Entered into force in 1970 divides states into:
  - Nuclear Weapons State (NWS - legitimately possess NWs pending disarmament);
  - Non Nuclear Weapons State (NNWS) – the hosting countries all belong to this category
- Came after the Nuclear Sharing agreements but countries freely decide to sign and ratify this **legally binding measure**

# NPT What?

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- Art. 1: “*Each nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly*”

## **Infringed by the US**

- Art II: “*Each non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to receive the transfer from any transferor whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly*”

## **Infringed by Hosting Countries**

# “NWs Guarantee Security”

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- Feb 2008 - US Air Force Blue Ribbon Review: most nuclear sites in Europe didn't meet US security requirements
- Hans Kristensen: “Security upgrades at US Air Force bases in Europe (Incirlik and Aviano) indicate that nuclear weapons deployed in Europe have been stored under unsafe conditions for more than two decades”

# Men at Work (1): Incirlik Base - Turkey

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- 110 kilometers (68 miles) from Syrian border
- Turkey is actively involved in a conflict with Kurdish militants
- Only AB in Europe without nuclear capable aircrafts but used by US as base for strikes in Syria
- Safety gap needed renovation. Estimated expenditure → more than **26€ millions**

# Italian Air Bases hosting US NWs

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Ghedi is 60 miles (100 km) away  
from Milan

Aviano is 56 miles (90 km) away  
from Venice



# Men at Work (2): Italy - Aviano and Ghedi

## U.S. Nuclear Weapons In Italy, 1956-2014\*

Weapon	Deployment Start	Deployment End or Status
Corporal SSM	August 1956	September 1964
Honest John SSM	August 1956	June 1976
Bomb**	April 1957	Currently deployed at Aviano AB (50) and Ghedi Torre AB (20)
ADM	January-March 1959	1985?
Jupiter IRBM	June 1960	June 1963
Nike-Hercules SAM	October-December 1960	1988?
8-inch Howitzer	January-March 1964	1991
Sergeant SSM	January-March 1964	June 1976
Lance SSM	January-February 1976	1991
Depth bomb	January-March 1972	1991

Key: ADM = Atomic Demolition Munitions; IRBM: Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile; SAM = Surface-to-Air Missile; SSM = Surface-to-Surface Missile.

\* Primary sources: U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Atomic Energy), *Custody and Deployment of Nuclear Weapons: July 1945 through September 1977*, February 1978. Partially declassified and released to Robert S. Norris under the Freedom of Information Act; Robert S. Norris, et al., "Where they were," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, November 1999, pp. 26-35; Robert S. Norris, et al., "Appendix B': Deployment by Country, 1951-1977," NRDC Nuclear Notebook, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, November 1999, pp. 66-67; and author's estimates.

\*\* Various designs. The current designs include the B61-3 and B61-4 tactical bombs.

*Kristensen/FAS 2014*

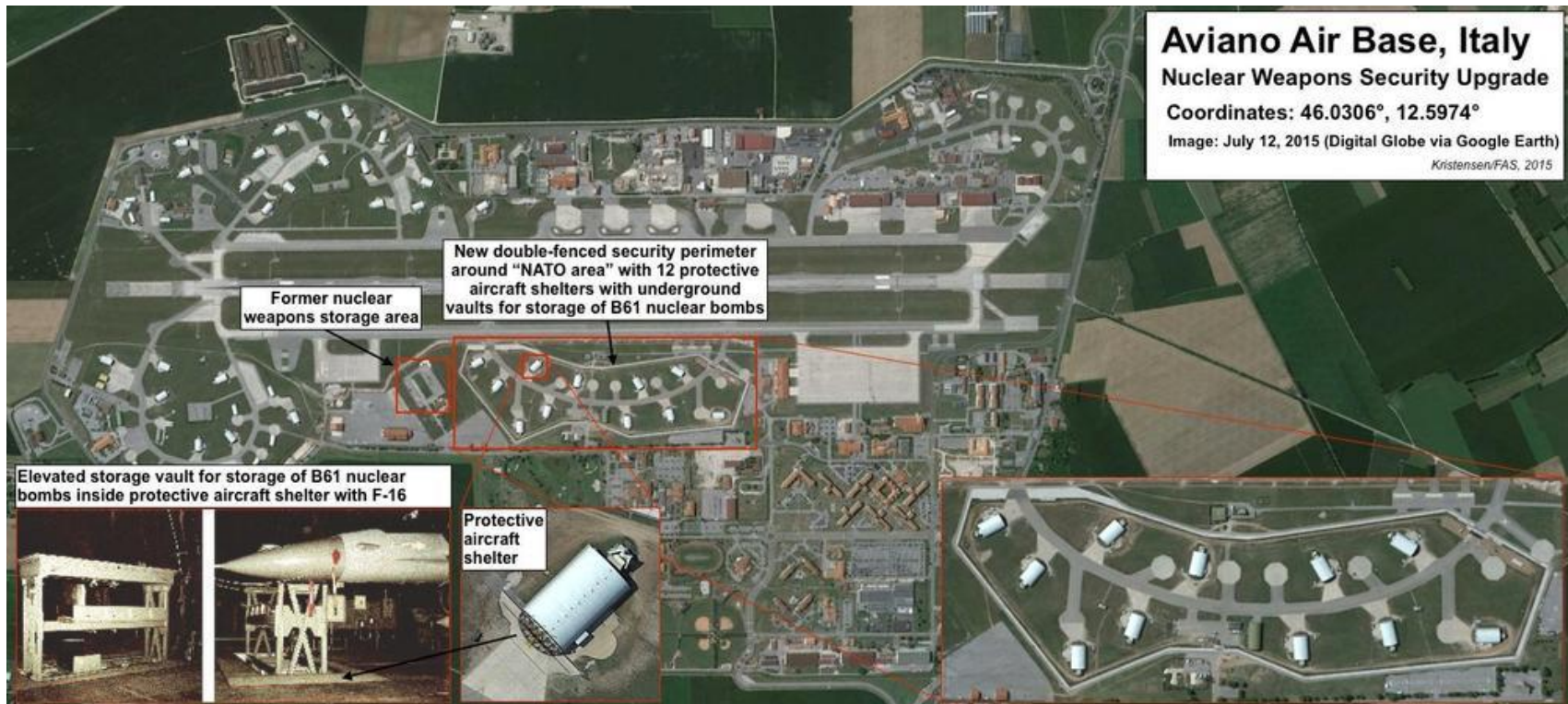


# Men at Work (2): Italy - Aviano and Ghedi

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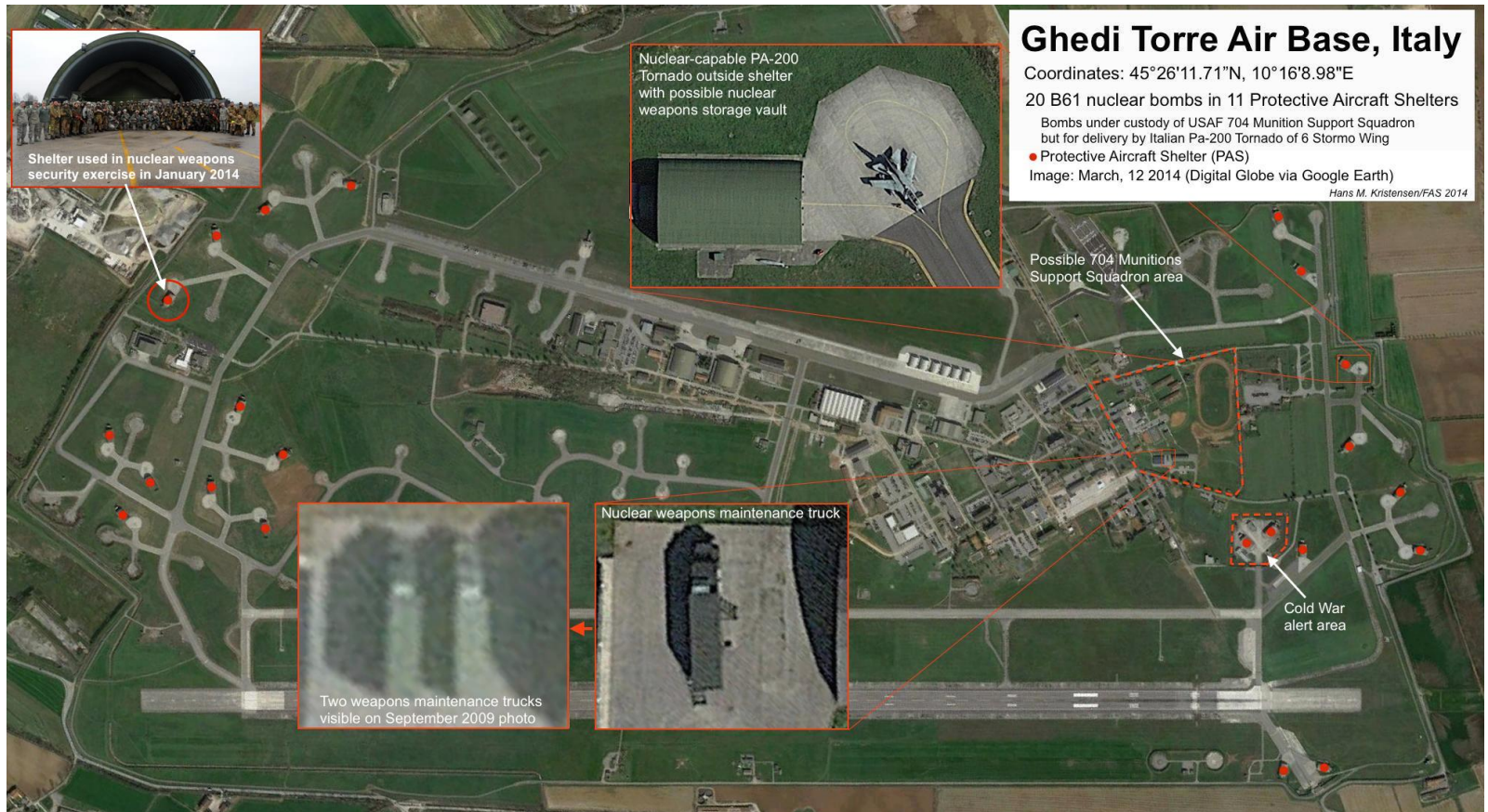
- Only country with 2 hosting facilities (both with permanent nuclear capable aircraft);
- Hosts the highest number of US weapons in Europe (39%)
- Ghedi - Munitions Support Squadron (MUNSS):  
*“responsible for receipt, storage, maintenance, and control of United States (US) nuclear weapons in support of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and its strike mission”*
- Increasing Physical Protection – cost sharing between US and Italy (economic crisis-priorities?)

# Aviano Air Base



Source: [www.fas.org](http://www.fas.org)

# Ghedi Torre Air Base



Source: [www.fas.org](http://www.fas.org)



# Men at Work (2): Italy - Aviano and Ghedi

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- Nov 2014: Italian Ministry of Defense signed a **contract to modernize Ghedi's underground WS3** (*Weapon Storage and Security System*) – vaults to host weapons and protected by Protective Aircraft Shelters
- Only draft of the project costed more than 215,000€
- Estimated expense of project is **15 million€**
- Two motions (local and National) to question the Minister of Defense on possible expenses and programmes. The **Minister has never answered**
- March 2016 – 300 new US personnel to Aviano AB

# Italy Must Face Nuclear Danger

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- Lassaad Briki (36) and Muhammad Waqas (28) alleged jihadists connected to IS were arrested in July 2015 because planned to attack Italy, in particular Ghedi AB.
- May 2016 - charged with 6 years in jail and expulsion from Italy after this term

# Italian International Political Posture on NWs

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- Italy denies hosting US nuclear weapons;
- As **weasel state** Italy aligns to NATO claims: work for disarmament but until we have NWs we will rely on them (!)
- Hasn't signed the **Humanitarian Pledge**;
- Doesn't acknowledge existence of the **legal gap**;
- Fear to lose NATO umbrella, US friendship
- NWs hosting used as **bargaining chip** to increase negotiating power

# Public Opinion

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- **Italy** – unaware of NWs presence, not interested in nuclear issue
  - Only exception Ghedi and Aviano population
  - January 2016 “**Motion 174**” to investigate risks connected to the presence of nuclear warheads on the territory
- **Belgium** – fear of nuclear terrorism
- **Turkey** – (personal meeting with ICAN Turkey) people are more concentrated on war, refugee crisis and linked social problems

# Public Opinion

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- **Germany** – 2010 Bundestag urged the Government “to work vigorously within the Alliance and with our US allies for the withdrawal of US nuclear weapons from Germany”
  - IPPNW poll: 93% of population want NWs banned
- **Netherlands** - PAX’ citizen’s proposal to ban NWs in the country was adopted by a large majority of the Parliament (May 17, 2016) MPs issued several motion to pressure the Government





***Thank you for your attention***

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