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## Washington's Greater Middle East Agenda: War

By Stephen Lendman

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Targeting the Middle East's rich oil and gas resources, Washington plans warring against the region one country at a time to replace independent regimes with client ones.

At issue is achieving total dominance over MENA (Middle East/North Africa) countries and Central Asia to Russia and China's borders. Another key objective is removing or marginalizing their regional influence.

Russia is Washington's main military rival. Between them, they control about 97% of the world's nuclear arsenal with sophisticated delivery systems able to target strategic global sites.

China also has significant military strength. According to a 2009 Pentagon report, its naval forces alone are formidable. They number at least 260 vessels, including 75 or more major warships and over 60 submarines.

In addition, Beijing has hundreds of nuclear warheads, sophisticated delivery systems, and other strategic weapons. As a result, it's the region's dominant military power.

During Asia's mid-November Bali summit, Obama sought anti-China coalition partners to enhance Washington's regional position. Key is establishing military superiority.

Obama said America "is a Pacific power, and we are here to stay." Military spending amounts "will not - I repeat, will not - come at the expense of the Asia Pacific."

It does include escalating military tensions with China. Beijing is very mindful of US belligerence and quest for global dominance.

During his visit, Obama announced boosting America's Australian presence as part of a broader military buildup targeting China and Eastern Russia.

Together with South Korea, America's expanding its Asian footprint on Jeju Island with a strategic naval base for Aegis class attack ships. They're equipped with sophisticated SM-3 interceptor missiles for offense, as well as powerful computers and tracking radar for first-strike capability.

In 2002, Seoul announced construction plans to accommodate Pentagon officials despite strong local opposition. Located south of Korea proper, Jeju is its only special autonomous province. It's situated in the Korea Strait, Southwest of Jeollanam-do Province it separated from in 1946.

Japan lies Northeast, China due West. Jeju is in central Northeast Asia. Strategically located Southwest of Japan, East of China between the East China Sea and Korea Strait shipping lanes, Pentagon officials value its location to control key shipping lanes and regional waters.

China, of course, is concerned about America's growing military presence that challenges its

regional dominance.

Beijing also rivals Washington economically. The IMF's 2011 World Economic Outlook shows it surpassing America by 2016, based on purchasing power parity (PPP).

It reflects an appropriate exchange rate between currencies as measured by the cost of a representative basket of goods in one country v. another.

China's growth requires increasing amounts of resources, especially oil, gas, others for its industries, and enough food for its huge population.

Getting them puts them in direct competition with America that wants unchallenged global control. AFRICOM was established to secure it and deny Beijing and Russia access.

America tolerates no rivals. Economic, political and belligerent policies are employed to marginalize and eliminate them. In contrast, China and Russia establish relationships through mutually beneficial investments and other economic ties. Longer-term, they matter most.

#### Targeting Syria and Iran

Last winter, Syria's externally generated uprising began. Orchestrating change like elsewhere in the region, Washington replicated its Libya model. Heavily armed insurgents are involved. So are Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon's March 14 alliance, other Arab League partners, and Israel.

Regime change is planned. So far it's short of war, but it's coming if other measures fail. Middle East analyst Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya calls the Syrian situation "complicated," because of "several competing trends of opposition."

Internal and external forces are involved. In Libya, NATO formed the Transitional National Council (TNC) to replace Gaddafi and Jamahiriya government. Proxy Syrian National Council (SNC) members were enlisted to replace Bashar al-Assad's regime after it's ousted.

Internal conflict's raged for months to "isolate, cripple, and subjugate Damascus." Given Syria's military capability, expect protracted conflict and violence to continue.

However, disturbing reports about hundreds of US and NATO Special Forces massing on Syria's border may tip the balance of power if using them for combat operations is planned, especially if combined with air operations.

According to former FBI whistleblower [Sibel Edmonds](#), Washington and other NATO partners have a "secret training camp" at America's Incirlik, Turkey air base. In April, it began "organiz(ing) and expand(ing)" Syrian dissidents.

Edmonds says Washington and NATO forces are also training Turkish troops for a possible Syria strike. In addition, US forces from Iraq's Ain al-Assad base were transferred to Jordan on

December 8 instead of returning home.

Obama's cynical Fort Bragg speech about withdrawing US forces from Iraq, in fact, concealed their regional repositioning and continued Iraq presence on major bases America will keep operating.

In fact, it plans increased numbers of regional forces through one or more Libyan bases, larger force contingents in Kuwait, expanded ties with Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE and Oman, and a greater overall regional footprint to establish an enhanced "security architecture" to integrate air, ground, and naval units for future combat missions.

Israel's Mossad-connected DEBKAFile also said "American special forces troops have been diverted to positions in Jordan opposite a Syrian tank concentration building up across the kingdom's northern border."

In addition, America's naval presence includes additional warships and attack boats, perhaps there for combat, not saber rattling.

Edmonds said NATO forces have conducted training operations near Syria's border since May. Until now, Western media scoundrels suppressed it. Still, little about it is reported. The situation bears watching, including hostile anti-Iranian rhetoric.

Washington claims Tehran threatens world peace, saying its commercial nuclear program plans nuclear weapons development, despite no evidence proving it.

In October, Washington falsely charged Iran with plotting to kill Saudi Arabia's US ambassador. The accusation sounded more like a bad film plot than real intent. Laughable on its face, it was baseless propaganda.

In November, outdated, forged, long ago discredited, and perhaps nonexistent documents were used to claim Iran's developing nuclear weapons. Again, no credible evidence proves it. Instead, baseless accusations were used to justify Washington's claim about Iran threatening world peace.

America and Israel alone hold that distinction along with Arab League client states supporting their rogue agendas.

On December 15, Manhattan Federal Judge George Daniels said he'll sign an order accusing Iran, Hezbollah, and Al Qaeda of responsibility for the 9/11 attacks.

In response to a lawsuit brought by family members of 9/11 victims, he claimed Iran provided material support to Al Qaeda, based on spurious testimonies from three Iranian defectors whose affidavits remained sealed during court proceedings.

Expert witnesses never appeared in court to refute them. Instead Judge Daniels relied solely on anti-Iranian operatives, making baseless accusations without evidence.

Testimonies given were false. Iran, Hezbollah and Al Qaeda had nothing to do with a plot hatched in Washington to initiate America's global war on terror. Ravaging the world one country at a time was planned.

It remains ongoing across the Middle East and Central Asia. Syria and now Iran are targeted. At issue is regime change throughout the region to install subservient client states.

The road to Tehran runs through Damascus. Expect belligerence to persist longer-term. The business of America is war. Waging them alone matters. New targets replace subdued ones. Nations are pillaged for wealth, power and dominance. War profiteers want them fought, win, lose or draw.

Iran is hugely important. It has about 10% of proved world oil reserves. It's second only to Russia in gas resources with about 33 trillion cubic meters. In fact, after a potentially huge new Caspian Sea discovery, it may rank first.

Washington covets Iran's mineral wealth to control its supply, price, what nations get access in what amounts, and which ones don't. Regionally, Iran's the remaining crown jewel. Washington's longstanding policy is replacing its government with a subservient client regime.

On December 16, Obama told the 71st General Assembly of the Union for Reform Judaism that America will continue pressuring Iran with "no options off the table."

One of them is war. Battleground belligerence could rage across the entire Mediterranean Basin through Central Asia to Russia and China's borders.

As a result, general war may follow. America's key rivals may enter. Their interests very much are at stake. Nuclear weapons could be used.

Preventing potentially global catastrophic destruction is crucial before it's too late to matter.