



## A Serious Deficit

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Iranian leaders have decided to inundate us with news pertaining to its growing defensive capacity. As if its nuclear program didn't cause us enough worry, over the past few days Iran has let us know:

1. It has a new missile, called the Fajr-3, able to carry a variety of warheads and avoid radar detection. We do not know if this missile is none other than the awaited Shahab-4, which can transport three warheads and strike 2,000km away. Testing took place last February and satisfied both engineers and military brass.
2. It has a new torpedo, baptized "Hot," designed to avoid radar and, above all, travel at such high speed it would not give the enemy any reaction time.
3. It has a new surface/water missile to strengthen its arsenal.
4. It has also improved its light surface to air missile, the Misaq.
5. With help from Russia, it will soon launch a new satellite, using the most basic technology, able to transmit military information to Iranian Armed Forces, thus complementing the work being ca-

ried out by the satellite it sent into orbit last October.

Iran is sending us a clear message: it wants to make the leap to great power status; it can strike states like Israel, Turkey Saudi Arabia and Greece. And it can block the Strait of Hormuz if attacked. We add to this message what we already know: Iran can unleash a wave of terrorist attacks, through its Lebanese affiliate Hezbollah; and within one or two years its missiles program will allow Iran to strike countries as far as 5,000km away.

Iran knows what it wants and advances according to a strategy put in place years ago. At the very least, Europeans should consider developing a joint anti-missile system that would allow us to avoid Iranian missile blackmail. For years people made fun of Reagan's "Star Wars" system and nothing was done to protect our territory. Since that time, the United States and Israel have advanced a great deal in this area and, more recently, Japan and Turkey are acquiring sophisticated anti-missile systems, aware of the threats that China and Iran pose respectively. Time is running out to address this serious deficit.

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