



Russia Tests New ICBM Component in Arctic

OE Watch Commentary: Russia continues to upgrade its ICBM capability. The accompanying passage from an article in the *Independent Barents Observer*, an independent online newspaper covering the Barents Region and the Arctic, discusses an ejection test of the Sarmat missile (NATO designation: Satan-2) which took place at the Plesetsk launch site in late December. The test was reportedly successful. According to the article, the new missile will replace today's R-36M (NATO designation: SS-18 or Satan) silo-based ballistic missile. The Sarmat reportedly has a maximum range of 16,000 kilometers.

The Plesetsk Cosmodrome has been around since 1957 and is truly a veteran launch site for the Soviet and Russian missile programs. However, its high latitude dictated that most of the famous Soviet-era launches were from Baikonaur Cosmodrome in what is today Kazakhstan. Russia now rents Baikonaur from Kazakhstan, but has increased its missile activity in Plesetsk. **End OE Watch Commentary (Grau)**

“...the Sarmat is ... able to penetrate any American anti-ballistic missile system.”

Source: “Russia tested most deadly nuke-missile,” *The Independent Barents Observer*, 28 December 2017. <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2017/12/russia-tested-most-deadly-nuke-missile>

“Russia’s new super-heavy thermonuclear armed ballistic missile is one step closer to deployment. The missile is a core part of the ongoing modernization program for the silo-based ballistic missile forces, one of the most costly legs of the country’s rearmament program. The test has so far not been officially reported by the Defense Ministry..., but a brief note in Moskovsky Komsomolets refers to the test taking place at the Plesetsk Cosmodrome in the Arkhangelsk region on ... 27 December. The test was reportedly successful.”

A so-called ejection test is not a full launch, but limits the firing to the first stage engine. Moskovsky Komsomolets writes that the missile flew “several dozen kilometers.”

The Sarmat missile, NATO ... designation Satan-2, can reportedly carry a payload of about 10 tons allowing for up to ten heavy nuclear warheads, or 15 lighter ones with yields ranging from 150 kilotons to one megaton. The Russian Military TV channel Zvezda states that, like the submarine-based missile Bulava, the Sarmat is ... able to penetrate any American anti-ballistic missile system.

The new missile will replace today’s R-36M (NATO designation SS-18 or Satan) silo-based ballistic missile. Sarmat has a maximum range of 16,000 kilometers.



Intercontinental ballistic missile SS-18 Mod 5, Strategic Missile Forces museum.

Source: By Michael (Nuclear silo), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ASS-18_missile%2C_Strategic_Missile_Forces_museum.JPG, CC BY 3.0.