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1. Institutional Framework for NE Asia Cooperation

The East West Center (V. Ivanov, "ENERGY COOPERATION IN NORTHEAST ASIA AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS: SOME OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS") released this for a meeting of the 2006 Working Group on Energy Cooperation in Northeast Asia organized by the Northeast Asia Economic Forum (NEAEF). The paper, written by Vladimir Ivanov, Director of Research for the Economic Research Institute for Northeast Asia (ERINA), explores "both the prospects and the reasons for establishing institutional frameworks in the context of the emerging subregional energy links in Northeast Asia." The paper lays out a number of key assumptions and preconditions for establishing a sustainable and cooperative energy future.

2. CANCAPS Papers: "Asia in Search of Identity and Security"

Canadian Consortium on Asia Pacific Security (CANCAPS) held the 13th annual conference titled "Asia in Search of Identity and Security" on December 2-4, 2005 in Ottawa at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. The following conference papers were released on the CANCAPS website.

Ravi Seethapathy, Chair of the Canadian Advisory Council, Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute (R. Seethapathy, "TECHNOLOGY: CORE TO ASIAN ENERGY SECURITY CANADA-CHINA-INDIA PARTNERSHIP") prepared this paper for the CANCAPS conference in which he presents what he views as the underpinning tenets of China and India's energy security strategy in terms of a "energy security vision for tomorrow." Seethapathy concludes "the old oil politics of trying to secure access to hydrocarbons at all costs (including unilateral action) must take a back seat to the new politics of cooperative efforts for judicious application of technologies."

Rosario Turvey (R. Turvey, "ECONOMIC SECURITY IN E-SOCIETY: A DISTINCTIVE 'GEO-SECURITY' APPROACH TO PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA'S POLITICAL ECONOMY") prepared this paper for the CANCAPS conference to present the idea of economic security in Asia's electronically powered 'E-Society." Drawing "from a research project for constructing economic security as an integral part of human security and as an approach to geo-security," Turvey explores two questions in this paper. "First, what is economic security in Asia's E-society? Second, what is this proposition as a 'distinct geo-security approach' to Asia's peace and development."

3. PRC Nuclear

Agence France Presse ('NUCLEAR AN INTEGRAL PART OF CHINA'S 15-YEAR ENERGY PLAN," March 24, 2006) reported that PRC will speed up construction of nuclear power stations as part of a 15-year national strategy to satisfy massive energy demand, state media reported Friday. The State Council, or cabinet, approved the energy blueprint for 2005-2020 on Thursday with nuclear to play an "integral role", the China Daily reported. By 2020, the country's nuclear power generation capacity is expected to reach 40,000 Megawatts, or four percent of China's total power output, the report said, citing government think-tank China Atomic Information Network.

4. Russia -PRC Gas Pipelines

Agence France Presse ("CHINA, RUSSIA USING GAS DEAL FOR VASTLY DIFFERENT REASONS," March 22, 2006) reported that PRC China and Russia have vastly different reasons for agreeing their major gas deal, with Beijing looking to simply secure supply while Moscow pursues more strategic interests, analysts said Wednesday. With Russian President Vladimir Putin in Beijing, the two nations signed an agreement on Tuesday to pursue two pipeline projects that would supply China with 80 billion cubic meters (2.8 trillion cubic feet) of gas annually by 2011.

The Financial Times Limited (N. Buckley, R. McGregor, "MOSCOW, BEIJING FACE PRICING RIFT NATURAL GAS AGREEMENT," March 23, 2006) reported that Beijing and Moscow face difficult negotiations over prices to realize this week's announcement of the construction of two pipelines to carry natural gas from Russia to China in five years. Sergei Lavrov, Russia's foreign minister, yesterday said Russia would sell the gas to PRC at the "market price", calculated according to the same formula linked to oil and diesel prices as for sales to Europe.

Russica Izvestia Information (Vremya Novostey, "GAS PIPELINE TO CHINA MAY STUMBLE OVER A NATURE PRESERVE," March 27, 2006) reported that Russian natural gas giant Gazprom's most ambitious export project of the past 30 years may be stumbled by a nature preserve in the Altai Mountains that has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site. "The Altai Mountains are one of the three largest centers of biodiversity in Russia and one of five in the post-Soviet space," said Yevgeny Shvarts, director of conservation policy for WWF Russia.

5. ROK Energy

The Korea Herald (Lee Joo-hee, "KOREA ROLLS OUT ENERGY DIPLOMACY," March 22, 2006) reported that ROK is stepping up its "energy diplomacy" as a key foreign policy objective amid intensifying competition around the globe to secure reliable sources of energy. Energy cooperation figured prominently during President Roh Moo-hyun's visit March 6 to 14 to Egypt, Nigeria and Algeria. ROK depends on 97 percent of its energy consumption on imports largely from the Middle East.

The Korea Herald (Yoo Soh-jung, " KOREA DIVERSIFYING OIL SUPPLY: LONG-TERM POLICY EMPHASIZES FUTURE-ORIENTED ENERGY OUTLOOK," March 22, 2006) reported that, faced with the uncertainties posed by high international oil prices and tight global supply, ROK's dependence on oil imports has led to a policy of promoting efficient use of and diversifying its oil supply. The world's fourth-largest oil importer has short and mid- to long-term approaches for coping with its oil needs. The approaches entail a future-oriented energy consumption system and aggressively pursuing overseas oil exploration projects, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Energy says.

6. US-DPRK Relations

Financial Times Information ("U S FORESEES CONDITIONAL ENERGY AID TO N K FROM NEXT YEAR," March 21, 2006) reported that the United States envisions energy and economic aid to DPRK beginning next year after the communist state gives up its nuclear programs, according to government performance goals for fiscal year 2007. The U. S. also hopes to press DPRK on chemical and biological weapons issues while starting negotiations on its missile programs next year.

7. Japan Energy

Jiji Press ("JAPAN EYES CUTTING OIL DEPENDENCE TO 40 PCT FROM 50 PCT," March 23, 2006) reported that the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry on Wednesday presented a draft interim report on a new national energy strategy toward 2030, featuring a reduction of Japan's dependence on oil as a primary energy source to 40 pct from the current 50 pct. The ministry, in charge of Japan's energy policies, obtained broad approval of the draft from the Advisory Committee for Natural Resources and Energy, which advises the minister of economy, trade and industry.

Associated Press Online "Chisaki Watanabe, "JAPANESE NUCLEAR REACTOR ORDERED SHUT DOWN," March 24, 2006) reported that a court Friday ordered the shutdown of Japan's second-largest nuclear reactor in response to a lawsuit by residents who feared it could leak dangerous radiation during a powerful earthquake, an official said. The Kanazawa District Court in northwestern Japan ordered the shutdown of the newly operating No. 2 Shika reactor, court official Akihiko Yasuno said.

8. US-Australia-PRC Cooperation

Australian Policy Online (G. Baker, "FOREIGN POLICY: A TRIPARTITE BALANCING ACT," March 21, 2006) reported that Australia, Japan and the United States are moving openly now to balance the rising economic and military power of PRC, and their primary strategic lever is nuclear energy. Last week's first ministerial strategic dialogue between the three nations illustrated what international political theorists would call their shared realist approach to PRC. It is an approach that aims to ameliorate or avoid conflict by encouraging India's emergence as a regional economic and military counterweight to PRC.

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