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I. United States

1. US Nuclear Posture Review

The Associated Press (Carolyn Skorneck, "POWELL DEFENDS NUCLEAR TARGETS REPORT," Washington, 03/12/02) reported that US Secretary of State Colin Powell responded to criticism of the recently reported Nuclear Posture Review stated that the US has never ruled out using nuclear weapons against a nuclear-armed enemy. Powell said, "We think it is best for any potential adversary out there to have uncertainty in his calculus," Powell said Sunday. However, top Democrat on the national security subcommittee, Dennis Kucinich criticized, "People are playing with the apocalypse. These are doomsday scenarios ... (and) it needs to be challenged." However, Powell responded, "There is no way to read that document and come to the conclusion that the United States will be more likely or will more quickly go to the use of nuclear weapons. Quite the contrary." He noted the US' "overwhelming, conventional non-nuclear capacity" made its potential use of nuclear weapons even more remote.

The Associated Press ("CHINA WANTS U.S. NUCLEAR EXPLANATION," Beijing, 03/12/02) reported that the PRC stated on Tuesday that it is waiting for "clear explanations" from the US Defense Department report that lists the PRC among possible targets for nuclear strikes. PRC Foreign

Ministry spokesman Sun Yuxi indicated he was not satisfied with explanations from US Secretary of State Colin Powell and national security adviser Condoleezza Rice that the US does not plan to use nuclear weapons. "We are now waiting for the US side to offer up further more formal and clear explanations," Sun said at a regular news briefing. Sun also repeated an earlier statement that the PRC was "deeply shocked" to be in the group, as the PRC and the US have an agreement not to target each other with nuclear weapons.

The Associated Press (Barry Schweid, "RUSSIAN MINISTER MEETS WITH BUSH," Washington, 03/12/02) and Reuters (Charles Aldinger, "RUSSIAN DEFENSE MINISTER HOLDS WASHINGTON TALKS," Washington, 03/12/02) reported that Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov held separate meetings on Tuesday with US President George W. Bush and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, saying afterwards he had discussed the latest US nuclear policy review. Ivanov said he had a "very long and detailed discussion" about the review with Rumsfeld and would return to the Pentagon on Wednesday for more talks. "It's quite natural that you are in a better position to discuss those documents with the originators, with the authors, of course if the documents are genuine, are true," he said.

Inter Press Service (Jim Lobe, "BUSH NUKE TARGETING PLANS DRAW FIRE," Washington, 03/12/02) carried an analytical article on the Pentagon's new contingency plans for using nuclear weapons against a range of countries stating that it came under heavy fire Monday here and abroad. Stephen Young, a nuclear analyst at the Union of Concerned Scientists expressed, "It isn't likely that the U.S. will go around nuking countries at random, but the study conveys the notion that the US will be the global policeman and arbiter of justice, and that's not a role everyone agrees we should have." Arjun Makhijani, director of the Institute for Energy and the Environment criticized that developing new nuclear weapons will undermine the 1970 Non-Proliferation Treaty. "This policy is a de facto announcement that the U.S. will not abide by the NPT," said Makhijani. "By seeing threats everywhere, the US is giving support to those who want to create those threats everywhere. This will mean one more turn of the paranoia wheel in North Korea," and while it "won't turn things around in China," it will add to growing fears in the PRC about US intentions.

2. ROK Air Force Project

The Associated Press (Sang-Hun Choe, "S. KOREA AIR FORCE COLONEL ARRESTED," Seoul, 03/12/02) reported that ROK military prosecutors arrested an air force colonel Saturday on charges of accepting bribes from a foreign company competing for the ROK's multibillion dollar project to build new fighter jets. The colonel, identified only by his surname, Cho, was accused of accepting US$8,400 in bribes in exchange for his "advice" on price and other key selection guidelines on the bidding, said officials at the country's Defense Security Command. Cho was also accused of keeping classified military documents on the project without approval, the officials said.

3. ROK-Japan Investment Treaty

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREAN CABINET APPROVES INVESTMENT TREATY WITH JAPAN," Seoul, 03/12/02) reported that the ROK's Cabinet approved a treaty Tuesday aimed at attracting more investment from Japan. The ROK plans to sign the treaty during a visit here by Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi later this month. The treaty requires the two countries to treat each other's investors equally with local businesses, give "most-favored" treatment to investors and allow them to transfer funds back home more freely. It will be the first such treaty to be signed by the ROK with a foreign country.

II. Japan

1. Japan-PRC Relations

The Asahi Shinbun (Koichi Furuya, "CHINA SIGNALS IMPORTANCE OF TIES WITH WEN VISIT IN MAY," Beijing, 03/09/02) reported that PRC Vice Premier Wen Jiabao, viewed as the likely successor to Premier Zhu Rongji, plans to visit Japan in May, diplomatic sources said. Wen is expected to visit Japan around May 7 and make a trip to the ROK around the same time. Diplomatic sources also said that Japan and the PRC are likely to resume bilateral security talks on March 18 in Tokyo. Li Peng, chairman of PRC's National People's Congress, is also to visit Japan in April.

2. Japan-DPRK Relations

The Mainichi Shinbun ("MISSING JAPANESE WOMAN SAID KIDNAPPED TO N.KOREA," 03/11/02) and the Yomiuri Shinbun ("GOVERNMENT EXPECTS ELUCIDATION OF KIDNAP," 03/12/02) reported that a Japanese woman who went missing in Europe in the early 1980s has been taken to the DPRK, the wife of a former Red Army Faction member has admitted, police said on Monday. The 46-year-old wife of the unnamed leftist -- one of the hijackers of a Japan Airlines jet from Tokyo to Fukuoka who defected to the DPRK in 1970 -- confessed to police recently that she took part in an operation to abduct Arimoto from Denmark to the DPRK. "I took Keiko Arimoto out of Copenhagen and handed her over to North Korean agents in 1983," the woman was quoted by police officials as saying. "I was a member of a group that took her to North Korea." Arimoto's 73-year-old father, Akihiro, said he is hoping that the confession would persuade the Foreign Ministry to do more to rescue people kidnapped to the DPRK.

3. US View of Mystery Ship

The Yomiuri Shinbun (Michio Hayashi, "US PRESSING FOR RECOVERY OF 'SPY SHP', Washington, 03/10/02) reported that US government officials have repeatedly asked Japan to recover a suspected spy ship that sank in the East China Sea in December. The request was first raised when US president Gorge W. Bush visited Japan in February, with a number of subsequent requests. US intelligence services believe there is a possibility that the unidentified vessel, believed to be a DPRK spy ship, was loaded with materials that could be used in chemical and biological weapons. Should Japanese government decide to raise the ship, the US will place US Navy vessels on patrol around the area during the operation, the sources said. The US has all but concluded that the unidentified vessel was designed for military purposes and that it was deliberately scuttled, leading it to believe there is a high possibility that the vessel contains confidential materials or weapons.

4. PRC View on Mystery Ship

The Yomiuri Shinbun (Satoshi Saeki, "PRC FOREIGN MINISTER IMPLIES OBJECTION AGAINST SALVAGE," 03/07/02) reported that PRC Foreign Minister, Tang Jiaxuan, objected against the salvage of the mystery ship, sunken in the South China Sea on March 6, saying that Japan should respect the PRC's right and should refrain from taking the action which would cause the situation to worsen and complicate matters further. Tang also criticized Japan for sinking the ship with weapons carelessly.

The NAPSNet Daily Report aims to serve as a forum for dialogue and exchange among peace and

security specialists. Conventions for readers and a list of acronyms and abbreviations are available to all recipients. For descriptions of the world wide web sites used to gather information for this report, or for more information on web sites with related information, see the collection of other NAPSNet resources.
We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

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