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CONTENTS

I. United States

1. US-Philippines Anti-terror War
2. US Policy and the "Axis of Evil"
3. Taiwan-US Warships
4. PRC-US Diplomatic Relations
5. DPRK-Russia Relations

I. United States

1. US-Philippines Anti-terror War

Agence France-Presse ("PHILIPPINES RESTRICTS US TROOPS AFTER PHOTO OF AMERICANS WITH GUNS," Manila, 02/13/02) reported that Philippine authorities on Wednesday said that they would restrain US troops engaged in joint military exercises in the south from carrying firearms in public while in civilian clothes. Major Manila newspapers on Wednesday published front-page photographs of two US servicemen in civilian clothes wielding assault rifles in front of a bank in the southern city of Zamboanga, the staging point for the exercises. Reports said the two unidentified US soldiers were guarding the bank while their companions were withdrawing money. Senator Rodolfo Biazon denounced what he called the "ostentatious display" of firearms by US servicemen in public, saying it was against Philippine law. Southern Philippine military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Danilo Servando said "there were some procedural lapses. We are doing everything to make sure it does not happen again." Servando said Filipino commanders would ask their US counterparts to confine their troops to the military base for the meantime.

Agence France-Presse ("PHILIPPINE TROOPS KILL 7 ABU SAYYAF REBELS, US SIGNS DEAL TO JOIN OFFENSIVE," 02/13/02) reported that Philippine troops killed seven more Abu Sayyaf Muslim gunmen as US forces signed the final documents allowing them to join military operations against the rebels, officials said. Regional military spokesman Captain Noel Detoyato said troops in Patikul

town, on southern Jolo island, encountered fleeing Abu Sayyaf gunmen, triggering a gunbattle that left seven rebels dead. Detoyato said on Wednesday that there were no casualties on the government side. In Manila, the "terms of reference" covering the six- month military exercises aimed at helping Manila wipe out the Abu Sayyaf were signed, paving the way for the US operations to begin in earnest, officials announced. The rules now say that US special forces can not operate independently from the Philippine troops and that the Philippine armed forces chief, General Diomedio Villanueva, will have overall authority over all troops. But the field commanders of the two countries will retain command over their respective forces. Both governments also waived "any and all claims to the other for any deaths of injuries" to their respective forces during the operations. Officials from both countries have stressed the US troops will only advise and observe Filipino soldiers and not take part in actual combat. However they are allowed to carry firearms and defend themselves if attacked.

2. US Policy and the "Axis of Evil"

Agence France-Presse ("BUSH: 'ALL OPTIONS AVAILABLE' ON IRAQ, IRAN, NKOREA, 02/13/02) reported that US President George W. Bush said he would keep "all options available" for dealing with Iran, Iraq and the DPRK. "Make no mistake about it, if we need to, we will take necessary action to defend the American people. And I think that statement was clear enough for Iraq to hear me," the president said Wednesday. The comments, made during a joint White House appearance with visiting Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf, came amid speculation that Iraq will be the next target of the US' "war on terrorism." "Saddam Hussein needs to understand I'm serious about defending our country," said Bush. "I will reserve whatever options I have. I'll keep them close to my vest." Bush said he looked forward to "working with the world to bring pressure on those nations to change their behavior" but would not rule out unilateral US action. "One of the worst things that could happen in the world is terrorist organizations mating up with nations which have had a bad history and nations which develop weapons of mass destruction. It would be devastating for those of us who fight for freedom," he said. "Therefore, we, the free world, must make it clear to these nations that they've got a choice to make, and I'll keep all options available if they don't make the choice," the president told reporters.

USA Today (Jill Lawrence, "AL GORE SIDES WITH BUSH ON 'AXIS OF EVIL' ACCUSATION," 02/13/02) reported that former US Democratic presidential candidate Al Gore put himself solidly behind President Bush on Tuesday in his characterization of Iraq, Iran and North Korea as an "axis of evil." "There is value in calling evil by its name," Gore said in his first policy address, which was delivered to the Council on Foreign Affairs in New York. He compared Bush's phrase to Ronald Reagan's calling the former Soviet Union an "evil empire" and Jimmy Carter's elevation of human rights in foreign policy. "One should never underestimate the power of bold words coming from a president of the United States," Gore said. But Gore also said Bush needs to show more respect to US allies. He said the administration shows "impatience and disdain" toward NATO members. "We cannot bind them to us if we take them lightly," he said. Gore also warned against ignoring terrorism's root causes -- poverty, ignorance and oppression, which he called "another axis of evil."

3. Taiwan-US Warships

Reuters (Jim Wolf, "U.S. EXPECTS EARLY DEAL ON TAIWAN WARSHIPS," Washington, 02/14/02) reported that the US expects to wrap up a multibillion-dollar sale of Kidd-class destroyers to Taiwan by early next year and will soon present options for assisting Taiwan in acquiring eight diesel-powered submarines. The PRC has warned the US against advanced weapons transfers to Taiwan. David Des Roches, a spokesperson for the Defense Security Cooperation Agency announced, "We

expect to transfer the ships early next year, assuming the supporting equipment and training packages are worked out." The PRC expressed to US officials that it reserved the right sell advanced systems, including missiles, to countries like Pakistan, Iran, Syria and Libya if the US sends advanced systems to Taiwan.

4. PRC-US Diplomatic Relations

Reuters ("BUSH LIKELY TO MEET CHINA'S HEIR APPARENT," Washington, 02/13/02) reported that US President George W. Bush is likely to meet PRC Vice President Hu Jintao next week. Hu is regarded as the favorite to succeed Jiang PRC President Jiang Zemin. Hu, 59, has been something of a mystery to US officials. He is not believed to have visited the US as an adult. Hu made what is believed to be his first trip to Europe several months ago, traveling to France, Britain, Germany and Russia. "We don't honestly know that much about him," said an unnamed US official. "We haven't had that much face-to-face contact with him." "The Europeans who saw him in action ... seemed fairly impressed by him," he said. Hu is on the Communist Party Politburo Standing Committee and heads the central think tank and training school for party members.

5. DPRK-Russia Relations

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA, RUSSIA SHORE UP TIES, SIGN TRADE PACT," Seoul, 02/12/02) reported that the DPRK and Russia have signed a trade memorandum and pledged to strengthen economic ties, DPRK state media reported late on Tuesday following a visit by President Vladimir Putin's representative to the Russian Far East. The DPRK's state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said DPRK leader Kim Jong-il received Putin's envoy Konstantin Pulikovsky, who delivered a personal letter from the Russian president. KCNA gave no details on the letter, which reached Kim days before a slated visit to the ROK by US President George W. Bush.

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.
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