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I. United States

1. US State of the Union

The New York Times (David E. Sanger, "IN SPEECH, BUSH CALLS IRAQ, IRAN AND NORTH KOREA 'AN AXIS OF EVIL,'" Washington, 01/30/02) and Reuters (Steve Holland, "NO U.S. ACTION IMMINENT AGAINST IRAQ, IRAN, N.KOREA," Washington, 01/30/02) reported that the US White House said on Wednesday that US President George W. Bush did not intend to signal imminent military action against Iran, Iraq and North Korea when he said that they form an "axis of evil" in his State of the Union address Tuesday. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer also said Bush's use of the phrase was "more rhetorical than historical" and not a historical link between these countries and the World War II alliance between Germany, Japan and Italy. Ari added, "it's an expression of how serious the president takes protecting our country. As the president said, time is not on our side. The president will be deliberate." Of the DPRK, Bush specifically stated: "North Korea is a regime arming with missiles and weapons of mass destruction, while starving its citizens." All three countries rejected the accusation Wednesday.

2. Cross-Straits Relations

The Associated Press (Christopher Bodeen, "CHINA SNUBS TAIWAN'S PRESIDENT," Beijing, 01/30/02) and Reuters ("CHINA SAYS CONDITIONS NOT RIPE FOR TAIWAN TALKS," Beijing, 01/03/02) reported that the PRC announced Wednesday that its new invitation to members of Taiwan's ruling party to visit the mainland does not extend to Taiwan president Chen Shui-bian. PRC officials stressed that the invitation, announced by Vice Premier Qian Qichen last Thursday, was not a change in policy toward Taiwan. Taiwan had welcomed Qian's comments as a conciliatory gesture toward Chen's Democratic Progressive Party. However, "The 'one- China principle' is our bottom line," said Zhang Mingqing, spokesperson for the PRC Taiwan Affairs Office.

3. Japan Domestic Politics

The Associated Press (Hans Greimel, "JAPAN'S FOREIGN MINISTER STEPS DOWN," Tokyo, 01/30/02) and Agence France-Presse ("KOIZUMI SACKS FOREIGN MINISTER OVER HIGH-PROFILE SPAT," 01/30/02) reported that Japan foreign minister Makiko Tanaka resigned Wednesday. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi asked Tanaka to step down late Tuesday after a squabble within her ministry stalled parliamentary debate on a supplementary budget and triggered a walkout by opposition members. "In this severe economic situation, the budget must be passed as soon as possible. We must also think of our interests in diplomatic affairs," Koizumi said. Tanaka capitulated on Wednesday, saying she had little choice. Koizumi hopes to appoint a new foreign minister within a week, ahead of the first visit to Japan by President Bush. Koizumi is reportedly considering former UN High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata, who recently chaired a global conference in Tokyo on Afghan reconstruction aid. In New York, where she serves as a fellow at the Ford Foundation, Ogata refused to comment.

4. US-Philippines Anti-terrorism

Agence France-Presse ("MANILA: US, RP TROOPS START CAMPAIGN V. TERROR," 01/30/02) reported that US troops open a new front in the war on terrorism here on Thursday with the launch of an operation designed to bolster the Philippine military in its fight against Abu Sayyaf guerillas. At a joint hearing of the House committees on foreign relations and national defense, Philippines Armed Forces Chief Diomedio Villanueva admitted that there were no ground rules yet for the joint RP-US military exercise in Zamboanga City and Basilan. Jose Apolinario Lozada voiced his fear that soldiers might abuse the authority given to them by the government under the guise of Balikatan 2002. The six-month Balikatan exercise aims to crush the Abu Sayyaf. Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes told a congressional hearing in Manila that towards the latter part of the exercise, US Special Forces troops would be assigned in groups of twos to join Filipino infantry companies in Basilan to observe anti-guerrilla operations. Philippines President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo reiterated, "They (Filipino forces) will do the fighting, not the American soldiers."

5. PRC Xinjiang Separatists

Reuters ("XINJIANG SEPARATISTS REJECT CHINESE TERROR CHARGE," Beijing, 01/30/02) reported that Muslim Uighurs campaigning for independence in the PRC's northwestern Xinjiang region rejected the PRC's charges that they were terrorists and accused the PRC of colonialism. A statement issued by the East Turkestan National Congress (ETNC) said, "There is an independence movement in our home country which we believe is occupied by China, but it is not a terrorist movement as China would like the world to believe." The ETNC also denied PRC charges that separatist leader Hasan Mahsum was supported and directed by bin Laden and said Uighurs involved with the Taliban had acted of their own accord.

II. Russian Federation

1. US Sanctions Against PRC Firms

Nezavisimaya gazeta's Marina Kalashnikova ("CHINESE SUBJECTED TO U.S. SANCTIONS," Moscow, 5, 01/28/02) carried an editorial that reported that the US Administration introduced sanctions against PRC firms for deliveries of equipment capable to produce chemical and biological weapons to Iran. Those PRC firms are banned from any deals with US firms for two years. The US views any breach of the non-proliferation regime as an assistance to the enemy. The editorial asserts, while writing off some international treaties, such as the 1974 ABM Treaty, the US is seemly going to give a second life to the non-proliferation related ones, and such an approach will cause many headaches even to partners close to the US.

Nezavisimaya gazeta's Marina Kalashnikova ("RUSSIA HAS ONLY TO WORK ITS HEAD BETTER," Moscow, 1, 6, 01/30/02) took an interview with Andrey Kokoshin, Director of the Institute of International Security Problems and former Secretary of RF Security Council. Concerning the recent US sanctions against three PRC firms for their cooperation with Iran, Dr. Kokoshin said that such an action sent a signal to the PRC and the world community that, despite the importance of the forthcoming visit of US President Bush to the PRC, the US wanted to make its dialogue with PRC from certain principled positions. "That step also demonstrates that non-proliferation is indeed among the topmost priorities of the Bush Administration."

2. PRC-Taiwan Relations

Izvestia ("BEING GUESTS TO A POTENTIAL ENEMY," Moscow, 6, 01/28/02) reported that German Wave (Deutsche Welle) radio- station said that a breakthrough was emerging in PRC-Taiwan relations. Taiwan Vice Premier Annet Lui said that she was going to visit Beijing as a representative of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party. In Lui's opinion, the PRC authorities have finally made a step forward in cross-straits relations.

3. RF AUM Shinrikyo Convictions

Izvestia's Oleg Zhunusov ("AUM SHINRIKYO SECT MEMBERS GOT THE VERDICT," Vladivostok, 3, 01/24/02) reported that the Primorski Area Court passed its verdict yesterday determining 5 RF members of Japan-based AUM Shinrikyo sect as guilty of illegal acquisition, and possession and transportation of explosives to carry out terrorist actions in Japan. Dmitriy Sigachyov, the group head, received 8 years prison term, the others received lighter terms of imprisonment.

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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