

NAPSNET Week in Review 15 February, 2002

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United States

1. US Policy and the "Axis of Evil"

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. Bush declared, "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... I will reserve whatever options I have. I'll keep them close to my vest."

"US Policy and the 'Axis of Evil'" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 13, US)

"US-DPRK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 12, US)

2. US Anti-terror Defense Spending

The Bush administration is expected to ask Congress for as much as US\$8.5 billion extra this year to cover the costs of the war in Afghanistan and the Pentagon's share of homeland security, according to senior US officials. The emergency defense money would be spent in the last five months of the current fiscal year, which ends September 30. It comes on top of the US\$17.4 billion Congress gave the Pentagon shortly after the September 11 terrorist attacks to cover the costs of the war in Afghanistan and to provide for additional homeland security, and it is separate from the \$379 billion budget request for fiscal 2003 that the Bush administration sent to Congress earlier this month. The Pentagon has thus far spent about US\$9.5 billion of the \$17.4 billion it received in September. Pentagon officials expect the remainder of that money to run dry by the end of May.

"US Anti-terror Defense Spending" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, US)

3. US-Philippines Anti-terror

More than 400 US troops are to arrive in Zamboanga next week, making up the bulk of 660 soldiers assigned to a joint anti-terror action, a Filipino officer said. The bulk of the US force is expected Monday, and some would visit the Abu Sayyaf Muslim guerrilla stronghold of Basilan island the following day, Lieutenant General Roy Cimatu announced. This will be the largest deployment of US forces abroad since the ongoing US-led campaign in Afghanistan.

"US-Philippines Anti-terror" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, US)

"US-Philippines Anti-terror War" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 13, US)

"US-Philippines Anti-terror War" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 12, US)

4. Russia's View of US Anti-terrorism

Russian President Vladimir Putin warned against US military action against Iraq, saying that the situation in the Persian Gulf nation was different from Afghanistan and that only the UN Security Council could sanction any attack. Putin objected to US President Bush's inclusion of Iraq, Iran and the DPRK in what Bush called an "axis of evil" in his State of the Union speech. Putin expressed, "We oppose the drawing up of black lists." Putin did admit that Iraq presented a "problem," but said, "Such problems cannot be solved by one country alone."

"Russia's View of US Anti-terrorism" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 11, US)

5. US Domestic View of Nuclear Reduction

At a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee, US democratic senators criticized President George W. Bush's plans to cut the number of readily available nuclear warheads as merely "rearranging the furniture" in the US nuclear arsenal. Committee chairman and democratic Senator Carl Levin stated, "Just as Enron couldn't make its debts disappear by moving them from one set of books to another, we are not going to make our nuclear warheads go away by moving them from launchers to warehouses." "This approach (storing U.S. warheads) surely will make it highly unlikely that Russia will destroy its nuclear warheads. If we store our nuclear weapons, Russia is likely to follow suit. It's warehoused terror rather than immediate terror." Levin said.

"US Domestic View of Nuclear Reduction" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, US)

Korean Peninsula

1. Bush ROK Tour

ROK President Kim Dae-Jung said February 15 that he hoped to hear words of "peace" from US President George W. Bush when he arrives at the Dorasan railway station in the heavily fortified buffer zone. White House officials say the president intends to use the six-day tour as a "celebration of alliances" in the far East and a maintenance of Asian support for his war on terrorism.

"Bush Asia Tour" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, US)

"US-ROK Sunshine Policy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, US)

"US-DPRK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, ROK)

2. ROK-US Summit Issues

ROK President Kim Dae-jung and US President George W. Bush will jointly call on DPRK to address concerns about its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) during their upcoming summit in Seoul. "This summit will confirm the two leaders' joint efforts to cope with the North's threat of WMD proliferation," said a senior ROK government official. The official said that President Bush will also reaffirm his support for ROK's policy of reconciliation and cooperation with DPRK.

"ROK-US Summit Issues" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, ROK)

3. US-ROK Relations

US President George W. Bush is under growing pressure at home and abroad to modify his stance on the DPRK. Some ROK lawmakers and major civic groups have already accused Bush of heightening tension on the peninsula by unleashing a series of hard-line statements against the DPRK. Senate majority leader Tom Daschle declared that Bush was wrong to label DPRK, Iran and Iraq an "axis of evil," saying his phrase has had negative repercussions. "I think we've got to be very careful with the rhetoric of that kind," Daschle.

"US-ROK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, ROK)

"US Domestic View of 'Axis of Evil'" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 12, US)

"US Domestic Views of 'Axis of Evil'" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 11, US)

4. DPRK-US Relations

DPRK military officers and party cadets rallied Friday to celebrate DPRK supreme leader Kim Jong Il's birthday, calling for heightened vigilance following President Bush's condemnation of the DPRK. Kim turns 60 on February 16. On the eve of the national holiday, the DPRK called a massive "national meeting" in Pyongyang, where Kim Yong Nam, the country's Number 2 man, made a report on the state of national affairs.

"DPRK-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, US)

"DPRK-US Diplomatic Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 11, US)

5. DPRK Missile Sales

During US President's George W. Bush's six-day tour through Asia, he will continue his hard line concerning his views of DPRK missile-trafficking. National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice stated, "The North Koreans have been known to go around with glossy brochures about their ballistic missiles. They're stocking a lot of the world right now... We believe the North is exporting to just about anybody who will buy." Rice also made clear that Bush will not back away from his "axis of evil" stance.

"DPRK Missile Sales" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, US)

6. ROK-DPRK Relations

ROK government officials said Thursday that the ROK will propose resumption of inter-Korean dialogue this month after US President George W. Bush's visit. "We cannot wait around forever in this context, where it is difficult for North Korea to respond and come to the table for talks [with the US or South Korea]," said an official at the ROK Unification Ministry.

"ROK-DPRK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, ROK)

7. DPRK Military Movement

Peter Brookes, US deputy assistant secretary of defense for Asian and Pacific Affairs, stated that the DPRK is increasing and modernizing its conventional weapons and forces near the Demilitarized Zone. Brookes referred to the DPRK's conventional weapons as the "fuse of a time bomb." While the weapons of mass destruction are important, he said, armies do not start hostilities with them.

"DPRK Military Movement" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, ROK)

8. ROK Military Plan

The ROK Ministry of National Defense announced Thursday that more than 98 trillion won (US\$75 billion) will be allocated to enhance national defense between 2003 and 2007. It said that 36 trillion won would be spent to develop and purchase weaponry, and 62 trillion won would be invested in military administration. According to the ministry, an Aegis destroyer battle system, at a cost of 1.2 trillion won (US\$923 million), will be selected before May.

"ROK Military Plan" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, ROK)

9. DPRK-US Diplomatic Relations

The New York Times carried an analytical article on US President George W. Bush's harsh stance toward the DPRK. The article stated that Bush's description of the DPRK as part of an "axis of evil" has already distressed a long-time ally: the ROK. The administration's strategy is a virtual prescription for deadlock and that the DPRK, while difficult negotiating partners, have kept to previous commitments. "The administration says it is willing to meet anytime and anywhere with the North Koreans. But what they mean is that they are prepared to meet to accept North Korea's surrender on the points at issue." said Robert L. Gallucci, who negotiated the accord to freeze the DPRK's nuclear program in 1994.

"DPRK-US Diplomatic Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, US)

"DPRK-US Diplomatic Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 12, US)

10. DPRK Diplomacy

The DPRK is seeking to strengthen its ties with the PRC and Russia, and is sending a signal of reconciliation to Japan. DPRK leader Kim Jong-il met Wu Donghe, the new PRC ambassador to the DPRK, on Sunday and emphasized the importance of reinforcing amicable relations between the two countries. Kim also met Konstantin Pulikov-sky, a Russian official, on February 18-19 in Pyongyang.

"DPRK Diplomacy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, ROK)

11. ROK-US Relations

The ROK hopes to establish regular senior-level talks with the US on foreign affairs and defense separate from an annual security meeting, a government official said on February 20. The official said that the move is part of a plan to strengthen the alliance between the US and the ROK, which will be the central focus of the February 20 summit meeting in the ROK between US President George W. Bush and President Kim Dae-jung. The ROK and the US would hold the Security Consultative Meeting yearly.

"ROK-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, ROK)

12. ROK Air Force Project

Following the ROK's decisions last week to push ahead with its multi-billion dollar fighter jet project and approve US Forces Korea (USFK)'s plan to build apartments on the Yongsan military base, allegations are growing that the ROK hopes to use the two issues to secure concessions from the US on its DPRK policy. Some analysts and lawmakers speculate that during his trip, Bush may put pressure on ROK to purchase Boeing's F-15 jet fighters. Analysts allege that the ROK is leaning toward selecting the US aircraft maker in an effort to win Bush's endorsement for its "sunshine policy" toward the DPRK.

"ROK Air Force Project" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, ROK)

13. DPRK Refugees UN Aid

On the final day of an international conference in Tokyo on human rights in the DPRK, UN delegates expressed the opinion that the UN should spearhead relief efforts for DPRK refugees in the PRC and Russia. Jack Rendler, vice chairman of the U.S. Committee for Human Rights in the DPRK stated, "Along the border with China, tens of thousands of North Korean refugees live in hunger and in fear of forced return.

"DPRK Refugees UN Aid" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 11, US)

14. ROK Train Station

The ROK briefly reopened a train station near its border with the DPRK on Tuesday, allowing hundreds of elderly ROK citizens to travel by rail to a stop that had been closed since the 1950-53 Korean War. Many of the 650 passengers have not seen relatives in the DPRK for over half a century. Some wept, bowed in the direction of the North and wrote messages such as "I hope unification comes soon" on the railroad ties at Dorasan Station.

"ROK Train Station" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 12, US)

People's Republic of China

1. PRC-US Plane Incident

According to a classified State Department intelligence report, PRC President Jiang Zemin believes fellow PRC Politburo member Li Peng is behind the planting of electronic listening devices aboard Jiang's new US jetliner. US intelligence officials state that President Jiang is said to be convinced that Li ordered the aircraft bugging to listen in on his discussions of financial corruption related to Li's wife and children.

"PRC-US Plane Incident" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, US)

2. PRC-US Relations

US President George W. Bush will visit Beijing next Thursday and Friday. Bush and PRC President Jiang Zemin will confront issues such as weapons proliferation, human rights, Taiwan and the US missile defence program. However, administration officials and outside experts express that and are unlikely to make any breakthroughs.

"PRC-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, US)

3. Taiwan-US Warships

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 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.

"Taiwan-US Warships" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 13, US)

4. Cross-straits Relations

In his annual Chinese Lunar New Year's eve address, PRC Premier Zhu Rongji said on Monday that the PRC would push to resume dialogue with Taiwan in the Year of the Horse, while trying to raise incomes and crack down on corruption. Zhu said, "We will persist in promoting the resumption of cross-Straits dialogue and negotiations on the basis of 'one China' and promote the development of cross-Straits relations."

"Cross-straits Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 12, US)

"Cross-Straits Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 11, US)

5. PRC Bible Smuggler

A PRC court released Li Guangqiang, a Hong Kong businessman sentenced to two years in prison for smuggling bibles, Saturday on medical grounds. The court in the coastal province of Fujian d cided Li could serve his sentence outside prison under surveillance because he was suffering from hepatitis B, the official Xinhua news agency said. Li thanked the PRC government for releasing him before the Chinese New Year holiday. Li also thanked US President Bush and his administration for their role, as well as the Hong Kong government and citizens.

"PRC Bible Smuggler" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 11, US)

6. PRC View of CIA Chief's Comment

The PRC reacted to US Central Intelligence Agency chief George Tenet including it in a list of global threats to the US, calling the description "unreasonable, irresponsible and unacceptable." PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson Kong Quan called on the US to work harder on building friendly relations with Beijing. Kong also expressed, "An improvement in bilateral relations would be in the interest of both nations, but it does require effort from both sides."

"PRC View of CIA Chief's Comment" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 11, US)

Japan

1. Japan's View of "Axis of Evil"

Japan's defense minister Gen Nakatani said that the DPRK should not have been lumped in with Iran and Iraq by US President George W. Bush as part of an "axis of evil." "I think North Korea is not on an equal footing with Iran and Iraq because it has no links with al-Qaeda or the Taliban," the director general of the defence agency stated.

"Japan's View of 'Axis of Evil'" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, US)

2. Japanese New Foreign Minister

Japanese new Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi appointed Yukio Takeuchi, the ambassador to Indonesia, as her vice foreign minister.

"Japanese New Foreign Minister" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 11, Japan)

3. Japan-DPRK Relations

A Japanese man who has been held in the DPRK since 1999 for alleged spying was released on Tuesday. Takashi Sugishima, a former Nihon Keizai Shinbun reporter, returned to Japan. A Japan foreign ministry spokesperson said Pyongyang informed it earlier in the month that 62 year old Sugishima would be released soon. "We don't even know why they decided to release him," the spokesperson said. "It will be terrific if this leads to a resumption of (stalled) Japan-North Korea talks," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told reporters on February 20.

"Japan-DPRK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 15, Japan)

4. Japanese Security Legislation

The Japanese government and the ruling coalition parties agreed last Tuesday to roll planned legislation on military emergencies into one comprehensive law that sets out a basic philosophy as well as the details of how to deal with such emergencies. Not included in the proposed law, however, are provisions stipulating how to deal with large-scale acts of terrorism, incursions by unidentified armed vessels, armed intelligence agents and cyber terrorism. The government and the coalition parties agreed to discuss these issues separately and deal with them in other legislation.

"Japanese Security Legislation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 11, Japan)

5. Japanese Logistical Support for US

Three Self-Defense Forces (SDF) vessels will be dispatched to the Indian Ocean this week to help provide logistical support to the US-led military forces there. Another vessel may join the second fleet in March, extending the term of the ongoing mission due to end March 31 until mid-May, agency sources said.

"Japanese Logistical Support for US" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 11, Japan)

Nuclear Issues

1. Related News and Analysis

During his visit to the US, Pakistan's President General Pervez Musharraf stated that there are "certain indications" that India is planning a new nuclear test. President Musharraf's claim was denied by the Indian government and criticized in the Indian Press. Russia signed a \$1.5 billion contract to supply India with two nuclear reactors.

"Related News and Analysis" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #6)

Afghanistan

1. Current Situation

Clashes between local warlords in Paktia, Khost and Mazar-e-Sharif have challenged the authority of Afghanistan's interim government. Hamid Karzai, the head of interim Afghan government has asked for more international peacekeepers to protect his fragile government. As a part of general amnesty for foot soldiers, interim Afghan leader Hamid Karzai pardoned 350 captured Taliban soldiers, saying they were "innocent". Karzai warned these soldiers not to take up arms again and "to find jobs".

"Current Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #6)

2. Reconstruction

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has launched a campaign to vaccinate nine million Afghan children against measles and rubella. Afghanistan's postal service has resumed operations for the first time in more than two decades.

"Reconstruction" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #6)

3. Humanitarian Crisis

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) moved the last of about 45,000 Afghans from Jallozai camp to new sites. Jallozai, a makeshift refugee camp, was called a "humanitarian nightmare" by the UNHCR. The daily News, Pakistan, reported that the Taliban might have massacred thousands of Hazaras, a minority Shia Muslim ethnic group, in 1997 and 1998.

"Humanitarian Crisis" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #6)

4. Regional Developments

The governor of Kandahar Gul Agha has accused Iran of interference in Herat and other Provinces. The governor of Herat, however, has denied these charges. Iranian authorities have closed down the offices of Afghan guerrilla leader, and the chief of Hizb-e-Islami, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. Pakistan government has stated that Hetmatyar would not be allowed into Pakistan.

"Regional Developments" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #6)

5. General Assessments

In an interview with the Far Eastern Economic Review, the secretary general of Amnesty International Irene Khan has voiced concern that the US's war on terrorism could lead to human rights abuses.

"General Assessments" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #6)

India-Pakistan Tensions

1. News

India has again asked Pakistan to hand over 20 alleged fugitives. Meanwhile, two Indian nationals, allegedly involved in last month's attack on the American Center in Kolkata, were arrested in New Delhi after being deported by Dubai.

"News" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #6)

2. US Role

US President George W. Bush has indicated that his country will continue to press for dialogues between India and Pakistan. India, however, has reiterated its rejection of third party intervention in Indo-Pakistan affairs. Raja Mohan, commentator for the daily Hindu, India, believes that India should "grab the opportunity to cooperate with the world in transforming the subcontinent."

"US Role" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #6)

India and Pakistan Domestic Situation

1. Daniel Pearl Case

Reports in various Pakistani newspapers have been examining the complex course of the investigation into the kidnapping of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl. The investigation has so far involved a number of militant Islamic groups and also some former military intelligence officers.

"Daniel Pearl Case" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #6)

2. US-Pakistan Relations

The US President George Bush has announced an economic package for Pakistan that includes a proposal to Congress for US\$1 billion in debt relief, additional \$100 million for education and US\$142 million in increased market access for Pakistani apparel exports. Pakistan and the US have signed an "Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement (ACSA)." Under the agreement, US would initially pay around US\$300-500 million to Pakistan for the logistic support and services it provided to the US forces in its war in Afghanistan.

"US-Pakistan Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #6)

3. Domestic Situation - India

First reports on elections in Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Uttaranchal indicate that the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is doing better than expected. Polls in UP pose a major test for the ruling BJP and, according to a report in the Far Eastern Economic Review, a loss by BJP would "undermine the central government's long-term viability."

"Domestic Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #6)

Kashmir

1. Internal Situation

Newspapers in India and Pakistan reported continuing violence and protests in Kashmir. The All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC), an umbrella organization of twenty-three Kashmiri political groups, has set up its own six-member election commission. The commission is aimed at holding 'people's elections' for selecting representatives to discuss Kashmir's future in trilateral talks with Pakistan and India.

"Internal Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #6)

2. US Role

The US has ruled out both mediation and facilitation to resolve the Kashmir issue.

"US Role" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #6)

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