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United States

1. US Nuclear Policy

The Bush administration is no longer standing by a 24-year-old US pledge not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states, a senior administration official said yesterday. John Bolton, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, said in an interview, "The idea that fine theories of deterrence work against everybody, which is implicit in the negative security assurances, has just been disproven by September 11," he said. "What we are attempting to do is create a situation where nobody uses weapons of mass destruction of any kind."

"US Nuclear Policy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 22, US)

2. US-Philippines Anti-terror War

A fiery helicopter crash inflicted the first American casualties in a joint anti-terror operation in the Philippines. Three US soldiers were killed after a MH-47 Special Forces helicopter involved in anti-terrorism exercises went down at sea following a fiery midflight explosion off the central island of Negros on Friday. Three other US servicemen were rescued after the aircraft carrying 10 US soldiers plunged into central Philippine waters. The cause of the crash is still under investigation, the Philippine and US authorities said.

"US- Philippines Anti-terror War" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 22, US)

3. US-Russian Negotiation on Arms Control

US and Russian officials on Tuesday wrapped up consultations on nuclear arms cuts and other issues, paving the way for a presidential summit in May. Delegations led by US Undersecretary of State John Bolton and Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Mamedov focused on issues relating to "strengthening strategic stability and international security, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement. In a step toward compromise, US Secretary of State Colin Powell has said that Washington was willing to sign a legally binding agreement on the cuts.

"US-Russian Negotiation on Arms Control" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 22, PRC)

"Russia- US Arms Control Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 19, US)

Korean Peninsula

1. US-ROK Summit

Standing atop a sandbag bunker and protected by bulletproof glass, US President George W. Bush got his first direct look at the DPRK. Peering through binoculars at the DPRK, Bush bluntly called it "evil." However, Bush also stated that the US had no intentions of invading or attacking the DPRK and that his goal in the Korean peninsula was peace. Bush said that he fully supported the "sunshine policy" of negotiations with the DPRK. Bush also said that it was not counterproductive to lash out at a country and its leader and then expect the leader to sit down agreeably for talks. In conclusion, Bush declared, "We hope for a day when the stability of the Korean peninsula is built on peaceful reconciliation of North and South," he said. "Today, however, the stability of this peninsula is built on the military might of our great alliance."

"US-ROK Summit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 20, US)

"Bush ROK Visit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 19, US)

"Security for Bush's Visit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 19, ROK)

"DPRK Conventional Weaponry" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 19, ROK)

2. DPRK-US Diplomatic Relations

US Secretary of State Colin Powell on February 22 explained that while US President George W. Bush has softened his "axis of evil" rhetoric in Asia, it was his strong words that got the DPRK's attention. Former US President Jimmy Carter criticized Bush's language. "I think it will take years before we can repair the damage done by that statement," Carter said. He called the statement "overly simplistic and counterproductive." Powell said Bush's remark had had the desired effect. The DPRK rejected US President George W. Bush's call for dialogue, dismissing him as a "politically backward child." The DPRK declared, "we are not willing to have contact with his clan, which is trying to change by force of arms the system chosen by the Korean people."

"DPRK-US Diplomatic Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 22, US)

"DPRK-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 20, US)

3. US-ROK-DPRK Diplomatic Relations

ROK President Kim Dae-Jung called for patience and determination in the campaign to force the DPRK to start talking with the outside world again. In a video-taped address to a Seoul conference, Kim appealed, "We need to be patient and persistent in pushing ahead with the 'Sunshine Policy.' I will make strenuous efforts to get inter-Korean talks resumed and help open North Korea-US talks."

"US-ROK-DPRK Diplomatic Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 22, US)

4. US-DPRK Relations

At a joint press conference after a summit with ROK President Kim Dae-jung, US President George W. Bush reiterated on February 20 that the US is willing to resume dialogue with the DPRK. Bush added his country will supply food assistance to the DPRK no matter whether or not US-DPRK relations are restored. Bush expressed his support for ROK's sunshine policy to the DPRK, reiterating the US commitment to maintain peace on the Korean Peninsula.

"US-DPRK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 22, PRC)

5. ROK's View of Bush Asia Tour

The ROK government welcomed President George W. Bush's assurance that the US would not invade the DPRK. The ROK presidential office said Bush's statement on Wednesday after a summit with President Kim Dae-Jung had put to rest fears of confrontation on the Korean peninsula that mounted after Bush had said the DPRK was part of an "axis of evil."

"ROK's View of Bush Asia Tour" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 21, US)

6. ROK Anti-Bush Protests

Seven hundred representatives from civic, social and religious groups in the ROK released a peace declaration and urged US President George W. Bush to seek dialogue with the DPRK, on February 18. Protests by civic groups denouncing US President Bush's visit continued in central Seoul and at Incheon International Airport on Tuesday. Nine civic groups, including the Solidarity for Unification, held a press conference and protest rally in front of Incheon Airport's main gate. The protesters demanded that the US "stop hostile policies toward the DPRK, stop stirring up tension in the Korean Peninsula, and stop forcing the ROK to purchase weapons like F-15 fighter jets."

"Anti- Bush Protests" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 20, US)

"Anti- Bush Protest" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 19, ROK)

"Civic Movement Against US" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 19, ROK)

7. US Pacific Security

At his speech before the Japanese Diet, Bush promised that the US would "continue to show American power and purpose" in defense of the Philippines, Australia and Thailand, as well as ROK, and declared himself "more committed than ever to a forward presence in this region." Bush also warned that he was prepared to carry the war on terrorism beyond Afghanistan. Bush declared, "We will continue to show American power and purpose in support of the Philippines, Australia and Thailand. We will deter aggression against the Republic of Korea, as the success of this region is essential to the entire world, and I am convinced the 21st century will be the Pacific century."

"Republic of Korea" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 20, US)

8. ROK Domestic Politics

At an ROK parliamentary session Monday, lawmaker Song Suk- chan described Bush as an "incarnation of evil who plots to perpetuate the division of the Korean peninsula by lumping North Korea into an 'axis of evil.'" Though the lawmaker was quickly reprimanded by President Kim Dae-jung, his comment in the National Assembly highlighted how US-ROK ties have emerged as a campaign issue in a presidential election year. On Tuesday, the opposition Grand National Party, which holds a majority in the Assembly, called Song a "spokesman for North Korea."

"ROK Domestic Politics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 19, US)

9. Separated Family Issue

ROK Unification Minister Jeong Se-hyun said the government plans to utilize Dorasan Station to install family meeting place for separated family members in both Koreas. "US President Bush will be issuing special message at Dorasan Station for the world and North Korea to hear upon his arrival to Seoul for summit meeting," Minister Jeong said. "We shall go even further by establishing family meeting place for families scattered in the North and the South." Minister Jeong added that the station would also be open for ceremonies at every national occasion including Lunar New Year and traditional Thanksgiving Day.

"Separated Family Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 19, ROK)

People's Republic of China

1. Bush PRC Visit

US President George W. Bush and PRC President Jiang Zemin met behind closed doors, Jiang stated, "It is my hope and conviction that today's meeting will have a positive impact on improvement and growth of China- US relations." Bush said relations were "mature, respectful and important to both our nations and to the world." No announcement was made on a missile agreement, but US officials said they still hoped to negotiate a deal under which the PRC would implement a November 2000 pact to curb ballistic missile exports. "My government hopes that China will strongly oppose the proliferation of missiles and other deadly technologies," said Bush.

"Bush PRC Visit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 22, US)

"Bush's PRC Visit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 22, PRC)

"Bush PRC Visit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 21, US)

"PRC-US Visit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 20, US)

2. Taiwan-US Arms Sales

Taiwan and the US are to hold a so-called US-Taiwan defense summit next month to discuss the island's defense needs and arms sales processes. The three-day seminar and a roundtable, rare since the US switched its diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing in 1979, will be held in Florida on March 10-12. Scheduled speakers include US Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz and a group of senior generals from the two countries including Li Chieh, Taiwan's chief of the General Staff. The conference is being organized by the US-Taiwan Business Council.

"Taiwan- US Military Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 19, US)

"Taiwan- US Arms Sales" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 20, US)

"Taiwan- US Military Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 19, US)

3. PRC-US Relations

When asked for comments on US Senator Jesse Helms' latest article in the Washington Times, which used the excuses of human rights, religion and Taiwan issues to attack the PRC, PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan responded that there will always be a small number of people in the US who stick to cold war thinking and make accusations against the PRC for no reason.

"PRC-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 22, PRC)

Japan

1. Bush's Japan Visit

In just the third speech by a US president to the Japanese Diet, US President George W. Bush declared that Japan will play an "indispensable" global role in what he predicted will be the "Pacific century." Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and US President George W. Bush began talks on February 18 on the economy, bilateral alliance, as well as antiterrorism issues. On the issue of Korean Peninsula, the report said, the two sides affirmed that the US, Japan and ROK will enhance their coordination. The US and Japanese leaders welcome the PRC's further involvement into the international society.

"Bush's Japan Visit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 22, PRC)

"Bush Japan Visit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 22, Japan)

"Bush Japan Visit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 19, US)

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

Japanese Defense Agency chief Gen Nakatani expressed caution Tuesday about applying the anti-terrorism law in the event of a US military attack on Iraq. If the US attacks Iraq, Nakatani said, "Japan will have to consider legal possibilities with regard to the purpose and the aim of the law and will have to review the situation, the moves of each country and the opinion of the UN in determining Japanese policy on the issue."

"Japan's View of 'Axis of Evil'" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 22, Japan)< p>

3. Japan's Role in US-Iran Relations

Iranian deputy Foreign Minister, Mohsen Aminzadeh visited Japan and the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs on February 14. Aminzadeh had a meeting with former vice-minister of Foreign Affairs, Yoshiji Nogami. At the meeting, Aminzadeh expressed, "We Iranians were betrayed by the US which called us an 'axis of evil,' in spite of our cooperation with the US on Afghan issues." Consequently, Japanese prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi relayed this discontent against the US in the summit meeting with US President George W. Bush on February 18.

"Japan's Role in US-Iran Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 21, Japan)

4. Japan's Embassy in Kabul

Japan's provisional deputy ambassador to Afghanistan, arrived in Kabul on February 19. Komano said that he intends to cope with refugee, medical treatment, and education issues. Japanese liaison office in Kabul received the status of embassy upon Komano's arrival at Kabul.

"Japan's Embassy in Kabul" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 21, Japan)

5. Japan-Pakistan Relations

Pakistani president, General Pervez Musharaf, will visit Japan in March. Musharaf is to have a meeting with Japan's prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi, to discuss Afghan affairs, and the easing of India-Pakistan tensions.

"Japan- Pakistan Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 21, Japan)

6. Japan's View on "Axis of Evil"

Japanese Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe said last Saturday that Japan understands US President George W. Bush's position that the DPRK poses a serious threat to international security. "Relations between the US and the North Korea are different from those of between Japan and North Korea. But our basic understanding is same," Abe said on a Fuji TV program. Commenting on Bush's labeling of the DPRK as part of an "axis of evil" along with Iran and Iraq, Abe said, "I think the US designated Pyongyang as such because it is suspected of developing of weapons of mass destruction and its domestic system is suppressing its people."

"Japan's View on 'Axis of Evil'" "ASDF Documents Lost" (NAPSNet DailyReport, February 19, Japan)

7. ASDF Documents Lost

Secret documents on the Air Self-Defense Force's (ASDF) aircraft control and warning radar system have recently disappeared at the Misawa ASDF base, Japanese Defense Agency officials said last Thursday. ASDF official checking the security of key information found on January 18 that classified documents kept in a safe at the Northern Air Defense Force base were missing, and a later search failed to find them. The agency officials said they believe the document could have been mistakenly shredded, adding that they do not think the information was leaked to outsiders.

"ASDF Documents Lost" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 19, Japan)

8. Japan's View on Subcritical Nuclear Test

Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda gave a nebulous response last Thursday to a plan by the US and Britain to jointly conduct a subcritical nuclear test in the US. "Japan would never recommend such a test, but we cannot say 'no' to all such tests, either," Fukuda said. He added, "If the test is banned, it is possible that any country could demand that the world allows it to conduct a real test."

"Japan's View on Subcritical Nuclear Test" "ASDF Documents Lost" (NAPSNet Daily Report, February 19, Japan)

Nuclear Issues

1. Pakistan Nuclear Safety

Pakistan's Nuclear Regulatory Authority has reportedly instituted a nuclear disaster management mechanism for nuclear power plants.

"Pakistan Nuclear Safety" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #7)

2. India Nuclear Safety

Citing safety concerns, India's Atomic Energy Regulatory Board ordered the shut down of one of the two plants at the Rajasthan Atomic Power Station.

"India Nuclear Safety" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #7)

3. Related News and Analysis

Pakistan's Foreign Office spokesman Aziz Ahmed has reiterated that his country will not "roll back its nuclear programme under any pressure." Farah Zahra's essay in the daily Dawn, Pakistan, underlines the need for bilateral measures to reduce the risk of nuclear war between India and Pakistan.

"Related News and Analysis" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #7)

Afghanistan

1. Current Situation

US confirmed warplanes bombed the positions of warlords opposed to Afghanistan's interim government. Fighting between rival ethnic factions in the interim government has also been reported in Northern Afghanistan. According to Leslie Oqvist, the UN regional coordinator in southern Afghanistan, US warplanes may have caused greater civilian deaths than previously reported. Last week's murder of Abdul Rehman, civil aviation and tourism minister in Afghanistan's interim administration, presents a serious challenge to the stability of Afghanistan's interim government. The daily News, Pakistan, reported an increase in the flow of narcotics from Afghanistan into Pakistan.

"Current Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #7)

2. Reconstruction

The campaign by UN agencies to get Afghan girls to school has made "very slow" progress. A report by Murray Hiebert of the Far Eastern Economic Review notes that the Afghan government needs more help from the international community.

"Reconstruction" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #7)

3. Humanitarian Crisis

The United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) reported that nearly 20,000 Afghan refugees have gathered at the southern Pakistani border post of Chaman. Afghanistan's new Ministry of Health and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has launched a campaign to provide measles vaccine to about 120,000 children living in Badakhshan Province in northeastern Afghanistan. According to the World Health Organization 25 children have died in a suspected influenza outbreak in the province.

"Humanitarian Crisis" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #7)

4. General Assessments

In his essay for Himal magazine, reporter Rahimullah Yusufzai writes about the failure of Western journalists "to critically probe either US military policy or the complexities of the Taliban legacy in Afghanistan."

"General Assessments" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #7)

India-Pakistan Tensions

1. News

India's Defense Minister George Fernandes ruled out a pullback of troops from the India-Pakistan borders until Islamabad has "fulfilled" the conditions spelt out by New Delhi. Pakistan has rejected an Indian request to share information from Sheikh Omar, a prime suspect arrested in connection with the kidnapping and murder of US reporter Daniel Pearl. Pakistani and Indian troops reportedly exchanged weapons fire along the Jammu and Kashmir border. Sixteen Pakistani soldiers were reported killed in landmine blasts.

"India- Pakistan Tensions" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #7)

2. Analysis

In an essay for the daily Hindu, India, K.K.Katyul examines the conditions that can lead to troop pull back from Indo-Pakistan border. Indian Journalist Kuldeep Nayyar's article argues that Pakistan has not significantly changed its old positions towards India. Using interviews with key players, A.G. Noorani takes a close look at the Lahore summit of February 1999 between India and Pakistan.

"Analysis" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #7)

Pakistan and India

1. Pakistan: Domestic Situation

Pakistani police reportedly found four rockets planted on a wooden frame with timing devices and aimed at Karachi airport. Government authorities in Islamabad demolished 12 "unauthorized mosques" in the city. In an essay for the Indian Express, Husain Haqqani critically examines President Musharraf's decision to continue as the president of the country even after the elections scheduled for October 2002.

"Pakistan: Domestic Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #7)

2. US-Pakistan Relations

Pakistani journalist M.B. Naqvi wrote a two part overview of Pakistan-US relations to argue that the Pakistani government has no reason to be "gung ho about becoming new allies of the US."

"US- Pakistan Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #7)

3. India: Domestic Situation

Hindu nationalist Viswa Hindu Parishad (VHP) is believed to be ready to start the construction of a Ram mandir at Ayodhya on March 15. VHP has also warned of a "Hindu backlash" against those opposed to the construction of a Ram temple and demanded that the government return the land acquired by the Center in Ayodhya to the Ram Janambhoomi Trust. Ayodhya is the site of the sixteenth century Babri mosque that was destroyed by Hindu militants in December 1992. Militant Hindu parties have since been trying to construct a Ram temple in Ayodhya.

"India: Domestic Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #7)

4. US-India Relations

According to official indications, India could acquire up to 150 to 200 radars from the US as the two countries move towards developing broader military ties.

"US- India Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #7)

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