NAPSNET Weekly FLASH Update 14 March, 2000

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNET Weekly FLASH Update 14 March, 2000", NAPSNet Weekly Report, March 14, 2000, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-weekly/napsnet-weekly-flash-update-14-march-2000/

Arms Control

1. Non-Proliferation Treaty
US President Bill Clinton issued a written statement on March 6 marking the 30th anniversary of when the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) entered into force, stating, "Over the past 30 years, the NPT has served as an increasingly important barrier to the spread of nuclear weapons." US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright published an opinion article in The International Herald Tribune on March 7 in which she called the treaty "the bedrock of global efforts to reduce the danger of nuclear weapons." Ambassador Norman A. Wulf, special representative to the president for nuclear nonproliferation, said in a separate article that the NPT is "one of the great success stories of nuclear arms control."
"Clinton Statement on NPT, CTBT and Nuclear Weapons Reductions"
"Byliner: Secretary of State Albright on the NPT"
"The NPT: Advancing Global Security in the New Millennium"

2. US Ratification of CTBT
Retired US Army General John Shalikashvili said that the international community needs "straight answers" about US intentions regarding the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Shalikashvili on March 13 was named the new Special Advisor to the President and the Secretary of State for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.
"Transcript: John Shalikashvili Will Seek Senate Consensus on CTBT"

3. US-Russia Disarmament Talks
The Times of India reported that the US has turned down three Russian proposals for a sharp reduction in the number of strategic nuclear warheads each will have in its armory. US State Department spokesman James Rubin stated, "We don't want to go any lower (than 2,000 or 2,500 strategic warheads for each side) because we need these weapons for nuclear deterrence." Russia is ready to go down to 500 strategic warheads but is willing for each side to have 1,000 or 1,500 weapons for the time being.
"US Rejects Russian Proposal For Fewer Nukes"

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4. US-Russian Nuclear Waste Cooperation
The US Department of Energy (DOE) and Russia's Ministry for Atomic Energy signed an agreement to develop and test advanced technologies to remediate high-level nuclear waste in both the US and Russia. The partnership between the Department of Energy's Sandia National Laboratories and the Mining and Chemical Combine, a production facility in Zheleznogorsk, Russia, will begin immediately. A press release by the DOE stated, "The project also advances the Energy Department's Nuclear Cities Initiative by assisting Russia as it downsizes and commercializes its weapons complex."
"U.S.-Russian Cooperation in Closed Nuclear City Expanded"

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5. US Nuclear Security
Robert Ebel, Director of the Energy and National Security program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, on March 2 testified before the US House of Representatives Armed Services Committee Special Oversight Panel on Department of Energy Reorganization. Ebel commented on the status of the National Nuclear Security Administration.
"Comments on the Status of the National Nuclear Security Administration Department of Energy"

Missile Defense

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6. US Radar Facilities
Basic reports that the future use of radar facilities at a US base in Thule, Greenland for US national missile defense could be blocked by veto from Denmark. Danish Foreign Minister Niels Helveg Petersen stressed his government's desire that use of the radar "not ... be in violation of current international rules."
"Danish Opposition May Impede US National Missile Defense"

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7. PRC View of TMD
Japan's National Institute for Defense Studies on Wednesday dismissed the PRC's criticism of US-Japan joint research on theater missile defense (TMD). It said that the PRC feared that TMD would "undermine its one-sided military advantage over Japan stemming from deployment of ballistic missiles."
This article is available from World News Connection

Weapons of Mass Destruction

8. Russian Chemical Weapons

The newsletter of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Synthesis, ran an article by staffers from three Russian bureaucracies in its November-December 1999 issue. The authors contend that Russia will be able to finance just 10 percent of the estimated US$110 million needed to demilitarize former chemical weapons production facilities.
"The CBW Chronicle: February 2000, Volume III, Issue 1"

NATO

9. NATO-Russia Relations

German Defense Minister Rudolf Scharping met with acting Russian President Vladimir Putin, Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev on February 29 and March 1, before traveling directly to Washington. Stratfor argues that Germany is trying "to play an increasingly precarious balancing game between Russia and NATO in an effort to avoid a costly confrontation." Acting Russian President Vladimir Putin said on March 5 that he would not rule out the possibility of Russia joining NATO, but NATO and the US rejected the offer. Stratfor argues that his comments were "crafted to bait a NATO rejection and ultimately form cracks in the alliance."
"Scharping Trying to Dampen Russian-NATO Rift"
"Russia and NATO: Putin's Diplomatic Judo"

10. Baltic Integration into NATO

Stratfor noted that the Baltic states are seeking closer cooperation with NATO. The article warns, however, that even with the de facto integration of Baltic and Nordic defense forces, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania could not hold out for long against a determined Russian attack.
"Faceoff in the Baltics: NATO Expands the West-Russia Confrontation"

South Asia

11. Pakistan Participation in NPT

Pakistan Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament Munir Akram on Thursday welcomed a call by Norway's Foreign Affairs Minister Knut Vollebaek for a special arms control regime for South Asia, and said that Pakistan was willing to attend a conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to discuss the issue.
"Pakistan says willing to attend nuclear talks"

12. Clinton's South Asia Trip
The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) held a panel discussion on South Asian nuclear issues. US Assistant Secretary of State Karl Inderfurth gave an overview of US President Bill Clinton's upcoming trip to South Asia. Senator Sam Brownback addressed US interests and opportunities from a congressional perspective. Discussants included Frank Wisner Vice Chairman, American International Group; Marshall Bouton, Executive Vice President, The Asia Society; Robert Oakley National Defense University; Shirin Tahir-Kheli Director, South Asia Program, Foreign Policy Institute, SAIS; and Ashley Tellis of RAND Corporation
"The President's Trip to South Asia & Prospects for Conflict Resolution"

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13. Indian Defense Spending
Jane's Defence Weekly reported that India has increased defense spending by 28.2 percent to Rs585.87 billion (US$13.94 billion) for Fiscal Year 2000-01. It said that the money, the largest single-year increase in Indian history, will be used to replace obsolete weapon systems and build a credible nuclear deterrent.
"India's biggest ever increase in defence spending"

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14. PRC-India Security Talks
Stratfor analyzes the recent PRC-India security talks in Beijing, arguing that they "reflect increasingly common near-term interests; but in the long run divergent strategic interests will likely dampen this burst of cooperation."
"A Shift in Chinese-Indian Relations"

Diplomacy

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15. Group of 8 Summit
Stratfor argues that the Japanese government's recent series of diplomatic overtures toward the PRC and Russia, while ostensibly in preparation for the G-8 summit, are really an attempt to head off a confrontation between those two powers and the US.
"Japan Tries to Head Off Controversy at the G-8"

Military

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16. PRC Naval Buildup
The Center for Defense Information argues that, despite recent acquisitions by the PRC People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), it has a long way to go before it will become the undisputed naval power in Asia. Besides the US Navy, current realities and long-term trends stand in the way of the PLAN playing a role larger than coastal defense.
"Chinese Navy One Of Many Arming Up In Asia"

17. ROK Military Development
Stratfor analyzes the ROK Defense Ministry's recent report calling for the gradual buildup of forces in preparation for a possible withdrawal of US troops. The article argues, "On the one hand, [the ROK] relies on U.S. troops to guard against potential North Korean attacks. Yet on the other hand, the troops' very presence increases the likelihood of conflict, and therefore compromises the success of the Sunshine Policy.... Caught in this bind, South Korea has done the only thing it can: It has formally raised the possibility of an incremental shift away from dependence on the United States. Moreover, it has done so at a time when the region seems poised to re-emerge as a focal point of U.S. strategic concern.
"South Korea Preparing For U.S. Troop Withdrawal"
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