

NAPSNET Weekly FLASH Update 17 October, 2000

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNET Weekly FLASH Update 17 October, 2000", NAPSNet Weekly Report, October 17, 2000, <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-weekly/napsnet-weekly-flash-update-17-october-2000/>

Missile Defense

1. NMD System Tests

The US Defense Department conducted two tests of elements of the proposed National Missile Defense (NMD) system in preparation for another attempt to shoot down a target in space. US Defense Department spokesman Kenneth Bacon said that the next test should be conducted early next year.

"US conducts two tests on NMD system"

Lawrence Delaney, assistant secretary for acquisitions for the US Air Force, praised Boeing for its work in its development of an anti-missile laser system that uses a 747-400 jet as a platform.

"Boeing's work 'superb' on anti-missile defense"

2. Missile Threats

The Russian news agency ITAR-TASS reported that sources in the DPRK has said that North Korea had confirmed its intention not to launch long-range missiles. The move was intended to improve relations with South Korea and the United States.

The article "'Informed Sources': North Korea Pledges Not To Launch Long-Range Missiles" is available from World News Connection

3. Missile Defense Diplomacy: UK

A new report from BASIC examines the relationship between the proposed US NMD system and British policy. The report concludes that the next election in Britain is less likely to affect the issue than the outcome of the US presidential elections in November. The latter may force Britain to choose between a high-risk foreign policy and the wrath of its senior partner.

"Keeping Tabs On Big Brother: UK debates on US plans for Ballistic Missile Defences"

"Text-only version"

Wu Xinbo, at the Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution and professor in the International Politics Department at Fudan University, writes that human rights, trade, and security are the three major factors that have troubled Sino-US relations in the post-Cold War era. Wu argues that with the de-linking of human rights and trade in 1994 and the closing of Beijing-Washington marathon negotiations on the PRC's WTO membership in 1999, security issues are replacing human rights and trade as major sources of tension on the US-PRC bilateral agenda. Wu examines the US and PRC perspectives on various aspects of "security" as a concept.

"U.S. Security Policy in Asia: Implications for China-U.S. Relations"

"Full Text"

4. NMD Commentary: US

The October/November edition of Arms Control Today included essays by several experts on US foreign policy, including former US secretary of defense Harold Brown and former US ambassador to the Soviet Union Jack F Matlock, Jr. Most of the essays support US President Bill Clinton's decision to not deploy NMD at this time, and favor assessing both the NMD program's technical effectiveness and its full impact on US security.

"Arms Control Today"

Arms Control

1. US-Russian Arms Control Talks

The US Defense Department reported that a US delegation, led by undersecretary of state for arms control and international security John Holum, will meet with a Russian team led by Yuri Kapralov, head of the Russian arms control directorate, to discuss nuclear weapons cutbacks under a START III agreement and the proposed US NMD system."

"US, Russian Arms Negotiators To Meet In Moscow Next Week"

US President Bill Clinton and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed to the "Strategic Stability Cooperation Initiative." The joint statement reaffirms both countries' support for all existing major bilateral arms control treaties as well as the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It also calls for continued work toward several key arms control objectives, including a fissile material cutoff treaty and a START III agreement to further reduce strategic nuclear arsenals.

"Clinton, Putin Issue 'Strategic Stability Cooperation Initiative'"

"U.S.-Russian Strategic Stability Cooperation Initiative"

2. US Debate on Arms Control

Ronald Rotunda, visiting senior fellow at the CATO Institute states in a Foreign Policy Briefing that the Clinton administration now supports efforts to develop an enforcement protocol to the 1972 Biological Toxins and Weapons Convention, which threatens important constitutional rights in the US. The treaty requires signatories to renounce the development, employment, transfer, acquisition, production, and possession of all biological weapons listed in the convention, but does not include enforcement measures because compliance would be unverifiable.

"Constitutional Problems with Enforcing the Biological Weapons Convention"

Spurgeon M. Keeny, Jr, writing in the October/November issue of Arms Control Today, argues in response to Jonathan Schell's Foreign Affairs article that Schell ignores the accomplishments of arms control over the past decade. Keeny argues that the next president should energize the ongoing process of reductions and constraints, and avoid disruptive diversions such as national missile defense.

"The Folly of Disparaging Arms Control"

James M Lindsay, Brookings Institution, argues that arms control and missile defense are once again at the forefront of the US national security discussion after fading from the public eye in the 1990s. Lindsay reviews the debate from the pro-arms control and pro-NMD perspectives.

"The Nuclear Agenda: Arms Control and Missile Defense Are Back in the News"

3. NATO Nuclear Policy

A BASIC Report by Tom McDonald and Kathleen Miller argues that NATO has been unable to convince states outside the alliance that its contribution and commitment to arms control is as comprehensive as possible. They argue that NATO seems to be an appropriate forum to address the relationships among different arms control issues and they suggest some possible areas for progress within NATO regarding nuclear forces, heavy conventional weapons, and small arms.

"NATO and Arms Control: A Blueprint for Action"

"Text-only version"

A BASIC press advisory stated that NATO defense ministers, meeting at the ministerial level for the first time since 1992, should discuss NATO nuclear policy and the proposed US NMD system because of the impact these issues have upon previously made commitments by the member nations.

"Press Advisory: ALLIES MUST ADDRESS NUCLEAR POLICY"

Nuclear Weapons

1. US Nuclear Program

The US National Ignition Facility project, designed to test nuclear weapons in the US arsenal without nuclear test explosions, will continue development after Congress this week nearly tripled its original budget for the 2001 fiscal year. The projected cost of the laser has increased to \$4 billion, nearly \$1 billion more than originally expected, after Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory officials greatly underestimated the complexity of the project and then did not report growing problems to the Energy Department and Congress.

"Steep Budget Rise Saves Nuclear Project"

"Text-only version "

The US Navy awarded Lockheed Martin a \$541 million contract for the follow-on production of 12 Trident II D5 fleet ballistic missiles for modernizing four strategic submarines operating in the Pacific. The contract is one of several scheduled to be awarded to the company for production of missiles. The D5 missile has a longer range and is more accurate than the Trident I C4 currently deployed.

"US Navy Awards Nuclear Missile Contract"

The Inquirer reported that anti-nuclear lobbying in the US Congress has managed to stall potential work on new low-yield nuclear weapons. "We've basically kicked the can down the road," said David Culp of the Friends Committee on National Legislation, a lobbying group. "It means, for the next year, bad things are not going to happen." Language in the Fiscal Year 2001 defense authorization bill scheduled for approval this week would have permitted limited research and development of low-yield nuclear weapons, but the new version of the bill means that work can not be authorized until after the defense and energy secretaries have submitted a report on the issue to Congress in July 2001.

"Paper Reports Partial Victory For Anti-Nuclear Efforts"

"Text-only version"

A report in the DPRK news paper Nodong Sinmun picked up on rumors that the US may be developing so-called "mini-nukes," nuclear weapons with low explosive yield intended to limit collateral damage but also making the weapons more "usable." The paper responded to the information by criticizing US foreign and military policy.

The article "DPRK Daily Picks Up US Mini-Nukes Rumor" is available from World News Connection

2. Russian Nuclear Program

A spokesperson for the Russian Atomic Energy Ministry told ITAR-TASS that Russia had conducted three sub-critical nuclear weapons tests this year compared with eight in 1999. The article "Russia stages three non-nuclear explosions" is available from World News Connection

The head of Russia's department for developing and testing nuclear weapons, Nikolay Voloshin, told ITAR-TASS that Russia is not developing new nuclear weapons. He added, though, that Russia continues research in the area.

The article "Russia: No New Nuclear Weapons But Research Continues" is available from World News Connection

Russia conducted a second test of its Topol-M intercontinental ballistic missile, its next-generation missile with a range of 10,000 km. The missile was fired from a mobile missile launcher from northern Russia to a target on the distant Kamchatka peninsula; a day after a Topol-M was successfully fired on the same trajectory out of a silo."

"Russia Tests New Nuclear-Capable Missile"

Jane's Defence News provided in-depth coverage of the continuing problems being faced by Russia's strategic nuclear forces, the fate of which is tied up in a succession battle for the post of Defense Minister and in the Russian government's perception of its position in the world. The article argues the better question is how the forces will erode. The article cites the decline of maintenance and the ending of modernization in the Russian Strategic Rocket Forces, the Navy, the Air Force, and command-and-control capabilities."

"Russia's strategic forces stumble"

3. Pakistani Nuclear Program

Pakistan defense officials reported that the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission's National Defence Complex (NDC) has begun serial production of its solid-fuelled Shaheen 1 intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM). Pakistani nuclear scientist Abdul Khan said last week that Pakistan was in a position to "hit almost all the major Indian cities" and had a stockpile of missiles and atom bombs. Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes said that the Agni 3 IRBM, with a reported range of 4,000km, would be test-fired "sooner than expected."

"Pakistan starts production of Shaheen 1 missile"

Other Military

1. Deterrence

In an article in the October/November issue of Arms Control Today, Lawrence Freedman argues that the NATO air dominance over Yugoslavia served to reduce the West's reliance on its nuclear deterrent, but increased Russia's reliance on its deterrent force. Freedman writes that there are dangers in permitting Russia to maintain its deterrent because of the small Russian budget that is devoted to the nuclear weapons program, and he warns that traditional deterrence is unable to cope with the more complicated post-Cold War strategic situation.

"Does Deterrence Have a Future?"

"Text-only version"

2. Submarines

The US Navy has decided not to mothball the Avalon, one of the U.S. Navy's two top submarine rescue vehicles, after the Kursk submarine accident. A US Defense Department statement said, "In light of recent events stemming from the Kursk disaster, the Navy is reviewing possibilities [for the Avalon] short of full inactivation." A \$20.5-million contract has been awarded to a Canadian firm to build a rescue vehicle akin to that being used by the Australian navy. The Navy is buying four diving suits at \$1.5 million each to allow rescue divers to descend to 2,000 feet.

"Russian Disaster Stops Plan to Retire Submarine Rescue Vessel"

Navies from the US, Japan, the ROK, and Singapore began Exercise Pacific Reach 2000, a 13-day, first-time combined submarine rescue exercise in the Pacific. The exercise was planned prior to the Kursk submarine accident, and Russia, the PRC, Britain, Australia, Canada, Chile and Indonesia were invited as observers.

"Multinational Sub Rescue Exercise Begins"

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