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Nuclear Weapons

1. Worldwide Nuclear Forces

Arms Control Today published current estimates of the US and Russian inventory of nuclear warheads, comparing these numbers to estimates made in September, 1990, before START I went into effect. According to these numbers, the US has reduced its warhead inventory from 10,563 to 7,519, and Russia from 10,271 to 6,464. The Ukraine, formerly part of the Soviet Union, has 396 warheads, while Belarus and Kazakhstan have none.

"U.S. and Soviet/Russian Strategic Nuclear Forces"

2. Russian Nuclear Forces

Russian Air Force chief General Anatoly Kornukov stated that the nuclear-capable Tu-95 "Bear" bombers deployed to Russia's far east were not probing US defenses while on training, but he did not to rule out such flights. The US Defense Department said last week that it expected the Tu-95 bombers to test air defenses soon by flying up through the Bering Straits and close to Alaska. Kornukov told Russian news agencies that the bomber crews were simply training in Arctic night conditions and "posed no security threat to our neighbors." The Tu-95 aircraft can fly 11,600 km without refueling and can carry nuclear cruise missiles, but Lieutenant-General Mikhail Oparin said that the planes were not flying more than 200 km from their bases at Tiksi, Anadyr and Vorkuta.

"Russian "Bears" not Threatening U.S., Says Air Chief"

The Russian Strategic Rocket forces announced that a new regiment of Russia's Topol-M ballistic missile systems will be put into active duty later this month. The Topol-M is expected to become the backbone of Russia's strategic nuclear force.

"New Batch of Russian Strategic Missiles to Go on Duty"

3. US Nuclear Forces

Litton Industries Inc. announced that the US Navy has awarded it a US\$338.2 million contract to build a DDG-51 Class Aegis guided missile destroyer. The Navy plans a total of 57 ships in the DDG-51 program, 51 of which have been procured so far. Aegis ships are designed to provide primary protection for the Navy's battle forces, and are equipped with weapons and helicopter support facilities.

"Litton awarded \$338 million U.S. navy contract"

4. PRC Nuclear Force Modernization

The Carnegie Endowment published a nonproliferation analysis which argues that while the PRC is slowly modernizing its strategic nuclear forces, PRC doctrine emphasizes the maintenance of a "limited nuclear deterrent" and there is no evidence to suggest either an acceleration of the program or any near-term threat to the US. The analysis states that the design and deployment of PRC nuclear forces is shaped by two key concerns: the survival of a second-strike capability and the potential deployment of missile defense systems.

"China's Slow March"

5. PRC Missile Test

US Defense Department spokesman Kenneth Bacon reported that the PRC conducted a test flight of a DF-31 intercontinental ballistic missile last month while the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Henry H Shelton, was on an official visit to Beijing. Bacon said that the Clinton administration is not alarmed by the PRC's long-range ballistic missile force modernization plans.

"China tests ballistic missiles"

"China Tested Missile During Shelton Visit"

An anonymous US Defense Department official said that the PRC conducted the second flight test of the DF-31 missile in early November and is preparing for a third test in the next few weeks. One US Defense Department official familiar with reports of the test said, "This test and plans for the next one show that they are moving ahead with their road-mobile long-range missile program." The flight test was carried out from the Wuzhai Missile and Space Center, some 250 miles north of Beijing. The test was conducted within PRC territory and involved several decoy warheads. Officials said that US intelligence reports indicated that the missile test was successful. Richard Fisher, a PRC military specialist with the Jamestown Foundation, added that the latest DF-31 test is part of a propaganda campaign aimed at influencing US policymakers against deploying a missile defense. Fisher said, "The tests themselves are being used to target American decision makers as well as to target Taiwan's leadership to signal both that China's new missiles are intended to deter American support for Taiwan."

"China runs 2nd test of long-range missile"

Proliferation

1. PRC Non-Proliferation Pledge

In Arms Control Today, J. Peter Scoblic analyzes the PRC decision to not export ballistic missile components and technology restricted by the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). Scoblic states that the PRC continued proliferating activities despite promises otherwise in the past, though the specificity of the current promise leads US officials to believe that this is real progress for nonproliferation regimes. A US official said, though, that the PRC's membership in the MCTR would be best.

"China Issues Missile Export Pledge; U.S. Says It Will Waive Sanctions"

2. DPRK Nuclear Proliferation

David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security and co-author of "Solving the North Korean Nuclear Puzzle," and Jon Wolfsthal, an associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, spoke at the Carnegie Endowment on the DPRK's nuclear program. The issues they raised were discussed in this CEIP Policy Brief. The brief states that the DPRK could have weapons-grade plutonium that is not under IAEA safeguards. The DPRK is supposed to permit inspections of potential nuclear storage sites as part of the deal to halt its nuclear program, and in order to receive the necessary parts for international donors to construct several Light-Water Reactors, the IAEA must be satisfied, which the DPRK has yet to do. Delays in individual areas of the project delay the project as a whole, and as time goes by it becomes increasingly difficult for the IAEA to verify DPRK claims with any certainty.

"Back to the Future in North Korea"

US officials are reviewing the results of the latest talks with the DPRK to decide whether or not President Clinton will make a trip to the DPRK to seal any potential deals to terminate the DPRK's missile program. In addition to ambiguity about the specifics of a deal, the next US administration's position on the deal impacts commitment to a US-DPRK deal by the current administration. US officials will meet with the staff of president-elect George W. Bush because it would be up to the next administration to enforce or fulfill the terms of the deal.

"U.S. studies North Korea missile talks"

3. US Cooperative Threat Reduction Program

Adolph Ernst, manager of the US Cooperative Threat Reduction program for chemical weapons destruction stated that the US could begin clearing a site in central Russia before Christmas in order to build a huge plant to destroy Soviet-era Russian chemical weapons, but is awaiting approval from the US Defense Department. Russia is seeking not only cash assistance to help it cope with the destruction of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and weapons manufacturing sites, but is also seeking billions of US dollars in debt forgiveness.

"Interview-Russian Arms Scrapping Plan Could Start by Year-End [Chemical Weapons]"

4. CEIP Non-Proliferation Conference

The 2000 Carnegie International Non-Proliferation Conference: "New Challenges in Asia and America" took place on March 16-17, 2000, in Washington, DC. Carnegie published the full conference proceedings, including the transcribed remarks of the six keynote addresses and the videotape greeting provided by US President Bill Clinton, the presentations in the opening plenary panel on proliferation prospects, and summaries of all the panel sessions. "The 2000 Carnegie International Non-Proliferation Conference: "New Challenges in Asia and America"
"Conference Description"

Arms Control

1. START I Agreements

Arms control negotiators from the US, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan signed agreements that provide for the phased elimination under the START I Treaty of the last SS-24 ICBMs remaining on Ukrainian soil. They are set to sign a separate agreement related to the dismantling of infrastructures used as part of the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty's inspection regime. The deadline for eliminations under START I is December 4, 2001, by which time the limits of 1,600 deployed strategic nuclear delivery vehicles and 6,000 deployed strategic warheads on each side must be achieved, though the US and Russia already have agreed to lower levels. Under the US Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program, US personnel are in Ukraine to assist with the dismantling effort but the process had become stalled over defueling the missile stages and conversion to civilian use issues. "Two Sets of Arms Control Agreements Signed in Geneva"

2. US-Russia INF Treaty

The US and Russia signed an agreement to end inspections of missile assembly plants, begun under the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty 13 years ago. While the INF Treaty, which eliminated medium-range missiles and denuclearized Europe, is of unlimited duration, continuous monitoring at several US and Russian sites will be concluded at midnight on May 31, 2001. Arms negotiators from the US, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan also signed an agreement providing for the phased elimination of the last SS-24 intercontinental ballistic missiles remaining on Ukrainian soil. "U.S., Russia Agree to End INF Missile Inspections"

3. Russian Arms Control Proposal

Arms Control Today published the full-text of a November 13 statement by Russian President Vladimir Putin, in which he stated Russian interest in "radical progress" on nuclear disarmament and called for the "retention and strengthening" of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. Putin proposed that the US and Russia cut their deployed strategic arsenals to 1,500 warheads each by 2008, and suggested subsequent reductions below the 1,500 warhead level. Putin stated that these reductions were a better solution to US security than national missile defense, and also proposed greater cooperation on theater missile defense system development. "Statement of Russian President Putin On Strategic Reductions And Preservation of the ABM Treaty"

4. US-Russian Launch Notification Agreement

A US official stated that US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov will sign an agreement this week that greatly expands advance notice of ballistic missile launches in an effort to reduce the risk of an accidental nuclear launch. Nineteen retired admirals and generals protested the proposed agreement in an open letter to President Bill Clinton, saying it could impede development of US "space power." The US and Russia currently notify each other of launches of intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine launched missiles, but under the new agreement advance launch notification will be expanded to include space launches and launches of missiles with ranges as short as 500 kilometers.

"Former US Military Commanders Oppose US-Russian Launch Notification Agreement"

5. UN Conference on Disarmament

US Ambassador Robert T. Grey, permanent representative to the UN Conference on Disarmament, was interviewed by Arms Control Association Senior Research Analyst Wade Boese. This year, the 66-member CD successfully passed its agenda, but was unable to reach a consensus on a program of work, and without a work program, the CD cannot formally negotiate or discuss any agenda item. Grey spoke about the causes of the current stalemate at the CD and the possibility of progress.

"Deadlocked and Waiting At the UN Conference on Disarmament"

6. Arms Control Prospects

An editorial in the Chicago Tribune reported on statements by prominent Americans, Russians, Europeans and others who warn that time is running out and major reductions in nuclear arms, even unilateral cuts if need be, are vital to avoid a doomsday catastrophe.

"TIME BOMBS CONTINUE TO TICK"

Nicholas Berry argues in a Center for Defense Information essay that because Asia is the center of so many conflicts, there is a large potential for arms control agreements to provide strategic stability to the region. Berry analyzes Asian arms control agreements that have been recently completed, are in progress, or could be discussed in the near future. Berry states that if the deployment of US national missile defense (NMD) appears to Russia and the PRC to be inevitable, both might agree to accept amendments to the ABM Treaty allowing NMD in return for strict and verifiable limits for NMD interceptors. Berry concludes by stating that by not fully embracing international arms control efforts, the US is threatening the system that suits it best economically and militarily.

"FERTILE GROUND FOR ARMS CONTROL IN ASIA"

"Feature Article Archive 12/08/00"

The Council for a Livable World published an analysis that argues that the election of George W. Bush as President presents new opportunities as well as major hurdles to significant progress on arms control issues. The analysis includes an examination of statements made by President-elect Bush during his campaign that provides a basis for cautious optimism for reducing nuclear weapons, removing nuclear weapons from hair-trigger alert and restructuring the military. The analysis argues, however, that arms control plans could all wind up "in the ash heap of history" if the Bush Administration rushes forward with a national missile defense. Furthermore, outright abandonment of the ABM treaty, opposition to the test ban treaty and refusal to support the UN could put the US on the dangerous path toward isolationism.

"ARMS CONTROL IN THE NEW BUSH ADMINISTRATION: CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM"

Security

1. Future US Security Policy

Joseph Fitchett writes about the future possible US foreign policy under president-elect George W. Bush in the International Herald Tribune. He argues that the US is likely to rely more on power and unilateral action, and less on international cooperation enshrined in arms control agreements. For that reason, Fitchett argues that US allies in Asia and Europe will ponder how far does the US feel it can go in ignoring allies as its pursues its own objectives. Fitchett reviews possible Bush administration policies on Iraq, the PRC, and peacekeeping operations in general.

"A Shift on U.S. Security Policy"

The Russian and Eurasian Program of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace issued a report on US-Russian relations, arguing that we are in a period of change that facilitates a fresh understanding and fresh approach to US-Russian Relations. The report argues that while some recent complications in the relationship are salient to future relations, Russia must matter to the US in the future because of nuclear security, issues in NATO/European security, and challenges in Central Asia. The report proposes specific policies aimed at broadening the US-Russia security relationship while deepening US support for the ongoing Russian domestic transformation.

"An Agenda for Renewal: U.S.-Russian Relations"

2. US Confidence Building Measures

National Defense University is opening the new Near East-South Asia (NESAs) Center for Strategic Studies, which the US Defense Department hopes will provide a forum for defense leaders from around the world. The NESAs Center is one of five Defense Department regional security centers dedicated to promoting stability and fostering communications between militaries in different regions.

"Center Opens for Near East-South Asia Studies"

3. Russian Security Policy

Harvard University's Program on New Approaches to Russian Security released a new Policy Memo by Nikolai Sokov of the Monterey Institute of International Studies. Sokov reviews the internal Russian military debate over whether to emphasize conventional or nuclear forces and argues that there will be a gradual reduction of the nuclear arsenal though there may be a greater role for sub-strategic nuclear weapons. The reassessment of threats and missions that underlies the nuclear plan may indicate that the Russian military is overcoming "Kosovo syndrome"--the expectation of use of force by NATO against Russia over political disagreements--and is instead focusing on threats from militant Islamic fundamentalists. Sokov states that Russia will not divert funding to conventional forces, but also can't afford rapid reductions in nuclear forces, and will therefore increase military spending to support both.

"Kosovo Syndrome" and the Great Nuclear Debate of 2000"

Missile Defense

1. Missile Defense Expense

David E. Mosher, a RAND researcher who worked at the Congressional Budget Office for 10 years analyzing nuclear weapons, arms control, and missile defense policies and programs, argues that if the threat to the US from ballistic missiles is not sufficiently compelling or the strategic rationale does not clearly benefit US national security, congressional oversight and competition for resources within the US Defense Department will gradually squeeze the life out of an anti-ballistic missile program, as it did with the 1970s Safeguard ABM system. Mosher states that the current 20-30 percent growth increase in the cost of missile defense seems reasonable, but can not be sustained. He argues that costs will increase dramatically because the program is political and needs to respond to a near-term threat, while the technical difficulties are underestimated. Mosher proposes that decision-makers minimize the political fighting and seek consensus, resist the temptation to compress schedules, try not to underestimate the difficulty of missile defense, and keep an eye on the full testing program. "Understanding the Extraordinary Cost Of Missile Defense"

2. Theater Missile Defense Programs

The Carnegie Endowment published a nonproliferation analysis that reports that the US Navy Area Wide missile defense system is behind schedule according to US Defense Department reports, which hurts the case of those seeking rapid deployment of naval-based national missile defenses. The analysis states that while the system has had some successful tests, it is still a long way from deployment.

"Naval Missile Defense System Faces Delays"

The Center for Defense Information reported that on December 12, the US Defense Department proposed delaying launches of Space Based Infrared System (SBIRS)-High satellites, which are designed to detect enemy missile launches and track those missiles as part of the US NMD system. Also, US Navy Rear Admiral Joseph A. Sestak, Jr., director of the Navy's Quadrennial Defense Review, announced that any decision to expand the Navy's core missions, including involvement in an NMD system, "must come with additional resources to conduct that mission-in the form of additional force structure."

"Technological Challenges in National Missile Defense: Updates"

3. US Poll on Missile Defense

A recent Zogby/Reuters poll of 1,002 adults nationwide in the US showed that 47 percent prefer building a limited defense system rather than an expansive system of land, sea and space-based weapons, favored by 38 percent of those polled. The article breaks down the respondents by geographic region of the US and by ethnicity.

"More Americans Prefer a Limited National Defense System"

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