

NAPSNET Weekly FLASH Update 30 May, 2001

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNET Weekly FLASH Update 30 May, 2001", NAPSNet Weekly Report, May 30, 2001, <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-weekly/napsnet-weekly-flash-update-30-may-2001/>

Missile Defense

1. US Missile Defense Program

The Center for Defense Information released an update to their report on missile defense, which stated that the US Defense Department's Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO) will be reorganized into three parts focusing on the three stages of ballistic missile flight: boost phase, midcourse, and terminal. CDI also reports that the US Federal Bureau of Investigation concluded that the May 2000 report by Theodore Postol, an MIT scientist and a leading critic of NMD, contained classified information. Finally, CDI relayed a report by Aerospace Daily, which stated that five former top-level Department of Defense and NASA scientists said that missile defense technology is proven and will work.

"Technological Challenges in National Missile Defense (Update)"

Roy Gutman writes for Newsweek Magazine that, having met significant skepticism to the Bush administration's plan for missile defense, US Defense Department officials had little to brief members of the US Congress on after their return to the US from extensive overseas consultations. Gutman reviews the reactions of many overseas governments to the US consultations.

"Bush Bombs Out"

2. US Politics

Steven Mufson reports in the Washington Post that Democratic members of the US Congress are moving towards consensus on a response to the Bush administration's missile defense proposal. Mufson states that they will not to attack the idea of missile defense, but question the efficacy of the technology and the diplomatic and financial costs. Democrats may not be able to block the system, states US Representative Barney Frank, "But there's overwhelming agreement . . . that a major financial commitment at this point is a mistake." Mufson states that the first test of Democratic unity will come when the Bush administration seeks money to start construction of the first elements of a missile defense system, when some analysts predict Bush will gain the support to proceed from enough Democrats interested in a limited defense system.

"Democrats Plot Strategy on Missile Defense"

A Carnegie Endowment analysis states that US Senator James Jeffords' decision to leave the Republican Party means that President Bush will face increased resistance to his policies on issues such as missile defense, arms control treaties and nuclear weapons. However, the analysis states, the moderating influence of the Senate could produce political wins for Bush by earning him stronger public approval. Further, Senate hearings and votes will be more critical of missile defense, more supportive of stockpile reduction programs in Russia and the US, and are likely to push the administration towards diplomatic resolutions to proliferation threats and allied cooperation, such as with the DPRK, rather than unilateral US action. The analysis argues that the developing political arrangement could be similar to that faced by former President Ronald Reagan and could be beneficial for the US.

"Jeffords' Jump Jolts Agenda"

Defense analysts stated that with the shift in power in the US Senate, Democratic senators who are skeptical of the US missile defense plan and oppose withdrawing from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty would soon gain control of the Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committees. US Senator Carl Levin, soon to be chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee after a power shift in the US Senate, said that he is wary of any move by US President Bush to abrogate the 1972 ABM Treaty to build a national missile defense system. Also, after receiving a briefing from Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on his top-down review of US military strategy, Levin said, "I don't have a good grasp of where the secretary is headed. I don't think the secretary has a good grasp of where the secretary is headed. That's the very distinct impression that we have."

"Senate Power Shift Could Slow U.S. Missile Defense"

"Levin Wary of Dropping ABM Treaty"

3. Russian Statements

The Russian Foreign Ministry announced, following a visit by a PRC delegation to Moscow, that Russia and the PRC were united in opposition to the missile defense proposal announced by US President George Bush. The diplomats, reported the foreign ministry statement, "carried out a deep exchange of opinions on a wide range of disarmament problems, paying special attention to the situation around the ABM agreement." The statement also said, "Russia and China again confirmed their opposition to plans to develop a system of 'global missile defence,' banned under the 1972 treaty, and don't consider the arguments of supporters of such systems to be convincing."

"Nuclear powers unite against NMD"

Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov arrived in the US for two days of intensive talks with the Bush administration on arms control and missile defence. Ivanov said, "We intend to set down our position and initiatives on boosting strategic stability so that no one's interests are hurt." A senior US official stated that when they meet face-to-face, US President George W. Bush will tell Russian President Vladimir Putin that US missile defense plans are in both nations' interests.

"Missile shield dominates Ivanov talks"

"Bush to Tell Putin Russia 'Not An Enemy' - Source"

Philip Gordon, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, states in France's *Libération* that during its consultations abroad on missile defense, the Bush administration confronted arguments that it is "needlessly provoking Russia, possibly setting off a new nuclear arms race and undermining the prospects for cooperation on a whole range of issues, including nuclear arms control and proliferation." Gordon argues that the Bush administration could pursue missile defenses in a way that will increase, rather than undermine, global security. Gordon proposes that Bush follow through on negotiating a new strategic relationship with Russia, include coverage for allies under the missile defense shield, accept that any eventual deployment decision must be driven by strategy and not ideology or politics, focus the system on so-called rogue states and not at Russia or the PRC, and, finally, recognize that missile defense cannot be a substitute for nonproliferation efforts.

"Bush, the Europeans, and Missile Defense"

4. Other Foreign Statements

Gus Constantine writes in the Washington Times that Greek Foreign Minister George Papandreou avoided criticism of the Bush administration's proposal to deploy missile defense, but promised the Greece, and NATO as a whole, would carefully examine the plan. When asked by a reporter why he was not being more critical of the plan, Papandreou said, "We need more information and more dialogue about the U.S. plan. So far the proposal is in its theoretical stage."

"Athens to examine missile-shield plan"

Pamela Constable writes in the Washington Post that US President Bush's proposal for a missile defense system has been greeted enthusiastically by Indian authorities, in sharp contrast to skepticism from US allies and antagonists alike, and is leading the US and India towards what could be a full-fledged strategic partnership. Constable states that US-India relations had been obstructed by India's nuclear tests and India's refusal to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, but the Bush administration is now considering dropping sanctions against India.

"Missile Defense Plan Is Uniting U.S., India"

Kazakhstan President Nursultan A. Nazarbayev urged US President Bush to work with Russia and other nuclear weapons states to reduce strategic nuclear arsenals rather than proceed with plans to build the missile defense shield and to abandon the 1972 Antiballistic Missile Treaty. He said, "Any state has the right to defend itself as it sees fit. But such one-sided decisions could launch a new arms race."

"Kazakhs Take Strong Issue With Bush's Missile Project"

5. Commentary on Missile Defense

An editorial in the Philadelphia Inquirer by Craig Eisendrath argues that none of the missile defense options proposed by US President George W. Bush works or shows the possibility of effective deployment for decades. Eisendrath also argues that the threat to the US posed by "rogue" states is overstated, as "none...is even close to having a missile that could hit the continental United States, and none would be so foolish as to risk total destruction by launching one, as such missiles clearly carry a return address." He concludes by questioning the motivation of pursuing missile defense, and is undecided whether it is part of the US pursuit of unilateral freedom of action on the international scene or to create defense industry jobs at home.

"Missile defense system flawed technically, unwise politically"

Derek H. Chollet and James M. Goldgeier, both with the George Washington University, argue in the Washington Times that missile defense is an insurance policy within the overall US effort to protect itself, an effort that also includes three more D's beyond defense: deterrence; denial, preventing proliferation of key technologies; and diplomacy, weaning regimes away from weapons of mass destruction. They state that those who argue that missile defense will allow a president to act confidently in a crisis are wrong, because, they state, just as President Kennedy couldn't knock out the missiles in Cuba in 1962 for fear of missing some, "Stopping nine out of 10 nuclear-tipped missiles is still a catastrophe. ...Missile defense is not a substitute for the three other Ds." They argue that to avoid destabilization and to convince the world that missile defense is truly defensive, the Bush administration should show that it recognizes the inherent limits of missile defense, should be mindful of the need for greater transparency as it develops a new system, should follow-through on Bush's pledge to cut the offensive strategic nuclear stockpile to a level of 1,000-1,500, and should pledge to work toward a formal agreement on missile defense with other major powers during the years it will take such a system to be developed.

"Missile Defense in Perspective"

6. European TMD Systems

A new report from PENN-NL (Project on European Nuclear Non-Proliferation) finds that significant Theater Missile Defense (TMD) technology is under development in Europe but that the projects have gone almost unnoticed in the public debate. "It is the development of these theatre missile defenses which we believe should be debated as well as the better-known NMD" (National Missile Defense system), writes authors Martin Broek and Frank Slijper. The report, which is entitled "Theatre Missile Defence: First Steps Towards Global Missile Defence," is written in the context of the European public debate, which is almost exclusively oriented on NMD and its effect on transatlantic relations. The authors predict that a global missile defence shield will be built up "from below," beginning with various TMD technologies and only evolve into an actual NMD at a later stage.

"New Report: TMD is First Step Towards NMD"

Arms Control

1. INF Treaty

Officials from the US, Russia, Belarus, Kazakstan and Ukraine marked the end of 13 years of monitoring under the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) disarmament treaty, signed by then-US President Reagan and former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in December, 1987. This event marks the end of monitoring by the parties involved, but the agreement itself to not deploy intermediate-range nuclear weapons is unlimited in duration. However, Russian Lieutenant General Vyacheslav Romanov, head of Russia's National Center for Reducing Nuclear Threat, was quoted earlier this year as saying that Russia may opt out of the INF treaty in retaliation to the planned US missile defense.

"U.S., Russia Stop Checking a Treaty"

US Ambassador Stephen Steiner, the US Representative to the Joint Compliance and Inspection Commission and the Special Verification Commission, stated that the successful implementation of the 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty demonstrates that "former adversaries can work together in a spirit of cooperation to achieve a common purpose.

"Text: U.S. Envoy Welcomes Conclusion of INF Treaty Inspections"

2. US Sanctions Against South Asia

US State Department Assistant Secretary for South Asia nominee Christina Rocca, who appeared before a Senate Foreign Relations Committee confirmation hearing, said, "My personal perception is that these sanctions have outlived their usefulness and that we need to find a new framework, and a new way to accomplish our nuclear concerns and get rid of the sanctions." Rocca reported that the Bush administration was reviewing its overall policy towards South Asia, although she said she has not participated in these consultations. She also said that while relations with India were replacing the former relationship the US had with Pakistan, relations with Pakistan were also in need of repair.

"US hints nuclear sanctions to go"

Security

1. US Nuclear Policy

The nuclear posture review currently underway within the Bush administration is considering a phase-out of all land-based intercontinental nuclear missiles and a sharp reduction in the strategic bomber force, according to an article in the Washington Post. While some argue for drastic cuts, others warn against reducing forces too deeply. The review, which officials once indicated could be finished early summer, now appears unlikely to be ready until late fall.

"U.S. Nuclear Proposals Envision Sharp Cuts in Missiles, Bombers"

US nuclear arms control agreements and reviews in the 1990s were largely determined by the nuclear war planning priorities developed by the US Strategic Command, according to a study from the Nautilus Institute. The study, which is entitled "The Matrix of Deterrence," is based on analysis of six force structure studies and briefings conducted by US Strategic Command (STRATCOM) between 1991 and 1996. The documents were declassified and released under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act. "I was struck by the extent to which STRATCOM's analyses actually became national policy," said author Hans M. Kristensen, who warns that the current nuclear posture review underway in the Bush administration may be unable to challenge many of STRATCOM's key nuclear war planning principles. "Ten years after the Cold War, the core of nuclear planning is still nuclear warfighting," Kristensen said, "and unless Bush is willing to challenge that, little will change."

"New Report: The Matrix of Deterrence"

"FOIA documents (6 Total)"

2. US Command and Control

The National Security Archive at the George Washington University issued a report by William Burr, which states that according to newly declassified documents, US President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued top secret instructions that delegated nuclear-launch authority to military commanders and the Secretary of Defense under specific emergency conditions. The so-called predelegation of authority authorized the US Commander-in-Chiefs for Europe, the Atlantic, and the Strategic Air Command to use nuclear weapons "when the urgency of time and circumstances clearly does not permit a specific decision by the president," specifically in the event of a major attack by the USSR or the PRC against US forces in international waters or foreign territories. Eisenhower's instructions also authorized the Secretary of Defense or top commanders to order retaliatory nuclear strikes if they were unable to communicate with the president or his successors in the event of a nuclear attack on US territory. The Los Angeles Times reports that these orders were also kept secret from US allies.

"FIRST DECLASSIFICATION OF EISENHOWER'S INSTRUCTIONS PREDELEGATING"

"Ike Kept Allies in Dark About Nuclear Strikes"

Nonproliferation

1. Plutonium Disposal Programs

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace reports that the Bush administration has proposed spending only \$290 million to dispose of excess weapons plutonium in the US, down from \$410 million last year, and plans to suspend all work on the plutonium immobilization program. The administration proposal suggests continue burning plutonium in nuclear reactors as mixed oxide fuel (MOX) and suspending the immobilization of plutonium with highly radioactive waste. CEIP also states that the Department of Energy may try to reprocess the plutonium to make it usable in both reactors or as weapons, despite previous policy decision not to purify plutonium in the process of its elimination.

"Bush Administration Puts Plutonium Disposition Program at Risk"

2. Agreed Framework

The International Atomic Energy Agency has begun negotiations with the DPRK over access to the nuclear weapons project abandoned by agreement in 1994 under the Agreed Framework. ROK experts have said that inspections are necessary to verify that the DPRK has complied with the 1994 agreement in order for construction to move forward on the twin nuclear reactors offered to the DPRK in exchange for terminating its nuclear program. Olli Heinonen, IAEA director of safeguards for Asia, has asked the DPRK to account for every aspect of the facilities the DPRK is suspected of having used to produce weapons-grade plutonium, though the DPRK response is expected to be contingent upon the current review of DPRK policy by the Bush administration. The DPRK has accumulated 7 to 10 kilograms of plutonium through past activities that they had not reported to the atomic energy agency, according to Han Yong Sup, a professor at the ROK National Defense University, "We are still wondering whether they finished making a nuclear bomb with that type of plutonium."

"International Inspectors Demand Access to Supposedly Defunct Project"

[\(return to top\)](#)

View this online at: <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-weekly/napsnet-weekly-flash-update-30-may-2001/>

Nautilus Institute

2342 Shattuck Ave. #300, Berkeley, CA 94704 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org