

NAPSNET Weekly FLASH Update 4 December, 2000

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Nuclear Weapons

1. Russian Nuclear Weapons Security

The Freelance Bureau published an article in which they interviewed a Russian army guardsman in the 12th directorate, the group responsible for the security of Russian nuclear weapons. The interview repeated earlier reports that indicate that there are significant problems with the security of Russian nuclear weapons and a great danger of "loose nukes." "Russia's Nuclear Safety 'A Sad History'"

Proliferation

1. PRC Missile Technology Control Agreement

On November 21, PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson Sun Yuxi stated that the PRC would tighten its export controls on missile-related technology and equipment. The US stated its support for tighter PRC export controls and decided to waive sanctions for violations of the Missile Control Technology Regime (MCTR) in order to encourage PRC nonproliferation efforts.

Missile Technology Control Commitment (NAPSNet Week In Review, December 1)
"Text of US-China Statements on Missile Export Control Agreement, 21 November 2000"

2. Iraqi WMD Stockpiling

British Foreign Office minister Peter Hain quoted western intelligence reports as saying that Iraq has been stockpiling chemical and biological weapons in schools and hospitals. Hain said the reports list 610 tons of precursor chemicals for the production of the VX nerve agent and growth media used to make biological weapons such as anthrax. Hain stated that Iraq is now receiving £11 billion a year under the Oil for Food program. He said, "This amounts to three times per capita what Egypt spends on food and medicines. If there are shortages it's because of stockpiling.... There's no reason at all for anyone in Iraq to be suffering."

"Saddam stockpiling deadly chemical weapons"

The Bahrain Times reported that regional newspapers have dismissed statements by US Defense Secretary William Cohen that countries of the Gulf did not want Iraq freed from UN sanctions, contrary to US assertions that states in the region were still concerned about Iraqi compliance with disarmament requirements.

"Support for sanctions crumbling: Iraq"

"Text Only"

3. Russian Nonproliferation Programs

The US Department of Energy's Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL) and four Russian biological institutes announced plans to work with Diversa Corporation to establish a Russian Ecological Biotrade Center to explore that country's biodiversity potential for developing important new commercial products. This project is part of the Department of Energy's Initiatives for Proliferation Prevention (IPP) program, which engages former Soviet research organizations and scientists to ensure that weapons of mass destruction expertise does not leak to countries of proliferation concern.

"Energy Department's Idaho Lab Teams with Russia to Establish Ecological Biotrade Center"

Former Ambassador Ronald Lehman, Director of the Center for Global Security Research at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, joined with senior officials from the U.S.

Department of Energy on Saturday to commission the Strela Open Computing Center in Snezhinsk, one of 10 closed and formerly secret nuclear cities in Russia, as part of continuing US nonproliferation efforts in Russia. The Strela Center will provide commercial research opportunities to former nuclear weapons specialists in computer software programming and modeling and computer-assisted engineering and design.

"Computing Center in the Russian City of Snezhinsk Commissions Non-Weapons Related Jobs"

"Full Text"

4. Russian Fissile Material

The US Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration announced the completion of an effort to secure approximately 10 metric tons of weapons-usable nuclear material, enough material for more than 500 nuclear bombs, at the Novosibirsk Chemical Concentrates Plant in Siberia, Russia. The updated facility is part of the US-Russian Material Protection, Control and Accounting program, a cooperative effort with Russia designed to protect hundreds of metric tons of plutonium and highly enriched uranium against theft or diversion.

"Ten Metric Tons of Russian Nuclear Material Secured"

"Full Text"

Arms Control

1. Russian Arms Control Proposal

The Christian Science Monitor reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin proposed a comprehensive bilateral reduction in deployed nuclear weapons for Russia and the US. Putin said, "We have proposed to the United States to aim toward cutting the nuclear warheads of both countries to 1,500, which is perfectly feasible by 2008. But this is not the limit. We are ready in the future to look at further reductions." Military journalist Alexander Goltz said, "It has become clear to [Russian] leaders that we can no longer pretend to fulfill the Soviet Union's global mission. Those superpower symbols are very hungry, and they swallow up all the resources that could be used to create a modern military machine, one that would be more appropriate to Russia's real security needs and limited means."

"Russia's Disarmament Gambit"

The Russian Itar-Tass news service reported that Russian Foreign Ministry Department for Security and Disarmament head Yuriy Kapralov said that the Russian proposal to bilaterally reduce nuclear arsenals also seeks negotiations on a pullout of US non-strategic nuclear weapons from Europe.

"Russia Wants US Nonstrategic Weapons Out Of Europe"

The Russian newspaper Segodnya argued that Putin's proposal was poorly timed because of the continuing uncertainty of the outcome of the US election. Strategic Missile Troops [SMT] Commander-in-Chief Vladimir Yakovlev, however, stated that the US has already invested considerable resources in the antimissile defence program and proposed that Russia reconcile itself to the fact that modification of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty cannot be avoided if the Republicans control the US government. Yakovlev also suggested that anti-missile defense be included as part of the calculus in future arms control agreements. The Segodnya also reported that Russia has been led to believe by US statements that the US would reduce its nuclear stockpile to 2,200 weapons, but not lower. A senior Russian Foreign Ministry official denied that Moscow is backing down from its opposition to such a system.

"Russian Paper Sees Missile Chief at Odds With Putin Over Nuclear Initiative"

"Putin, Yakovlev Differ Over Approach to ABM?"

A senior US official reported that US President Bill Clinton and Russian President Vladimir Putin met on November 15 and continued their discussion of strategic stability and arms control. The official reported that they also discussed a range of nonproliferation concerns, specifically related to Iran, regional security issues, and Russia's ongoing transition and integration with international institutions.

"Press Background Briefing By Senior Administration Official On The President's Meeting With Russian President Putin"

The Independent UK reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin met with British Prime Minister Tony Blair to seek British, and hopefully other European countries', support for further US-Russia arms control talks and to put pressure upon the US to abandon its proposed national missile defense (NMD) system.

"Putin Seeks Help From Blair On Nuclear Arms Cuts"

2. US Responses to Putin Proposal

US President Bill Clinton, in an interview from Vietnam, said that the US and Russia could agree to deeper cuts in their nuclear arsenals, but did not indicate how low cuts could go. Clinton also said that if there was a high probability it could protect against missiles hitting the US, it would be irresponsible to not build a national missile defense system (NMD). Clinton said the "trick" would be to persuade countries opposed to NMD that the system was also in their interest to develop. He said it was hard to justify destroying the current treaty system, but that the best way to proceed would be to solicit other countries help in developing the system.

"Clinton Says Further Arms Cuts Possible with Russia"

Condoleezza Rice, the top foreign policy adviser to Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush, called for a review of the US strategic nuclear relationship with Russia. She said, "The numbers that the United States may or may not need to maintain deterrence really needs to be determined by a U.S. internal review and I do not think should be held hostage to some kind of deal with the Russians until we've done our own work." Rice would not say how a Bush administration would respond to Russian President Vladimir Putin's proposal earlier this week that the two countries slash their nuclear arsenals to less than 1,500 warheads.

"Bush Adviser Calls for Rethinking Nuclear Strategy Vis-A-Vis Russia"

The Russian Foreign Ministry, welcomed what it called a US "quick and interested response" to a plan by President Vladimir for the two countries to slash their nuclear arsenals.

"Russia Welcomes U.S. Response to Putin's Nuclear Proposals"

3. Commentary on Putin Proposal

An editorial in the Los Angeles Times by John Pastore and Peter Zheutlin argued that the wrong answer for the US to Russian President Vladimir Putin's offer to cut nuclear weapons is to just wait until Russia drops out of the nuclear weapon competition and possesses a few hundred warheads. They argue that this is one step in "preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons" and "rapid progress toward a global ban on nuclear weapons." They conclude by asking, "But which is the greater risk: to live indefinitely in a world where thousands of nuclear weapons are on hair-trigger alert and more and more nations seek nuclear weapons, or a world in which an outlaw nation may try to harbor a bomb in the basement?"

"Seize the Moment, Ban the Bomb"

4. US Missile Program

The Russian Nezavisimaya Gazeta reported that Russia plans to accuse the US of violating the 1987 INF treaty prohibiting intermediate range missiles with its production of the Hera missile. The Hera is being actively used as a Scud imitator by the US Defense Department's Ballistic Missiles Protection Organization during the testing of two ABM systems, the THAAD and the Patriot PAC-3. Both are theater missile defense systems and are not limited by the 1972 ABM Treaty. The Hera is made of the second and third stages of obsolete Minuteman-2 missiles but is rumored to be equipped with the sophisticated control and targeting systems of the Pershing-2. The report states that the US claims that the Hera is legal under the treaty.

"PERSHING'S REINCARNATED"

5. Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

The Ukrainian parliament ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) after becoming a signatory in 1996. Ukraine becomes the 31st of 44 nuclear capable states to have ratified the pact.

"Ukraine Ratifies Nuclear Test Ban Treaty"

Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar stated that Pakistan is "not in a hurry" to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh stated that India will not block enforcement of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, but views nuclear testing as an "inherent right." Singh also reiterated statements that CTBT enforcement will not be possible with the existence of nuclear weapons all over the world.

"Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty" (NAPSNet Week In Review, December 1)

6. US Disarmament Efforts

Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan spoke to the conference on "The Second Nuclear Age and the Academy" and argued that nuclear weapons have faded from the US public consciousness, and that slow progress towards disarmament, by both the US and globally, is harmful to nonproliferation efforts. Annan stressed that the proposed US national missile defense system would place pressure on arms control as a process and lead to arms races. Annan concluded by imploring academia to play a positive role in education and advocacy in nuclear weapons and nuclear policy.

"SECRETARY-GENERAL STRESSES ACADEMY'S KEY ROLE IN PROMOTING NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT"

In the NPP Weekly Flash V.2 #15, we reported that K. Scott McMahon, at a presentation to Sandia National Laboratory's Tenth International Arms Control Conference on 16 April 2000, argued that we have to be prepared for the possibility of US withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. The full text of his paper is now available, and also will be forthcoming in James Brown, ed., *Conundrums in Arms Control: The New Millennium* (Albuquerque: Sandia National Laboratories, 2000).

"The End of the ABM: Planning for Withdrawal and Threat Reduction"

Security

1. Nuclear Policy in South Asia

Pervez Hoodbhoy, Professor in the Department of Physics at Pakistan's Quaid-I-Azam University, writes in a Carnegie Non-Proliferation Project Proliferation Brief that strategists in India and Pakistan argued that their respective countries should go overtly nuclear, using similar rhetoric and similar arguments. Hoodbhoy reviews the statements made in 1998 by India and Pakistan, and compares conditions then with current conditions. Hoodbhoy argues that while the nuclear hawks in both countries said that nuclear weapons would increase security such that there would be no more war, the Kargil conflict one year ago justifies the argument that perhaps nuclear weapons actually made possible the war.

"Nuclear Nirvana"

Missile Defense

1. PRC-Russian Anti-NMD Cooperation

PRC President Jiang Zemin, after meeting Russian leader Vladimir Putin at the recent APEC summit, was reported as saying that the two leaders agreed on "safeguarding and abiding (by) the anti-missile agreement earlier this year."

"China, Russia to Cooperate on Anti-Missile Plans"

2. NMD Consequences in Asia

The US National Bureau of Asia Research published an essay by Michael J. Green and Toby F. Dalton, in which they state that, in light of the likelihood that the US will deploy its proposed national missile defense (NMD) and theater missile defense (TMD) systems, US policymakers and military officials must identify the potential consequences of deployment for US allies and other countries to anticipate their likely reactions, and to determine an approach to missile defense that will reinforce regional stability. Their essay provides background on the missile defense debate, examines the impact upon key states in the Asia Pacific, and closes with policy recommendations.

"Asian Reactions to U.S. Missile Defense"

"Text Only"

Steve LaMontagne with the Council for a Livable World Education Fund argues that if the US proceeds with plans to develop NMD, other countries responses could aggravate existing threats to US security and also threaten arms control agreements. LaMontagne argues that both Russia and the PRC would strengthen their nuclear arsenals, which Russia can't afford to do, and drive nuclear and conventional arms races in South and Southeast Asia.

LaMontagne also points to prospects for increased sales of nuclear and missile technology to other proliferating states by the PRC and the DPRK and for indigenous development of nuclear weapons by Japan.

"National Missile Defense: Troubling Implications for Nonproliferation"

Military

1. PRC Radar Acquisitions

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov discussed with PRC General Zhang Wannian and Prime Minister Zhu Rongji the sale of four to six Beriev A-50E advanced radar aircraft. Acquisition of the early-warning radar would strengthen the PRC's ability to attack Taiwan and possibly allow the PRC to threaten US aircraft-carrier battle groups in the region.

"Russia to sell early-warning radar to China"

2. Russian Submarine Program

Russia's latest nuclear submarine, an Akula-class Guepard according to NATO classification, is to have been tested during November. Construction began started in 1991, but has suffered delays due to financial constraints. The submarine is slightly smaller than and not a replacement for the Kursk, which sank to the bottom of the Barents Sea on August 12.

"Russia to Test New Nuclear Submarine"

3. Indian Submarine Acquisition

The Indian Navy's newest submarine, the INS Sindhushastra, is a Russian-built Kilo-class submarine, the first Indian submarine capable of firing Klub anti-ship cruise missiles. The Sindhushastra arrived from Russia in time to participate in the Indian Navy's Defence of Gujarat Exercise 2000 naval-air wargame. Kilos fire Klub missiles from their torpedo-tubes, carry as many as 18 torpedos, can track five different targets simultaneously, and can patrol an area up to 7000 miles.

"'Klub-capable' submarines"

4. EU Rapid Reaction Force

Jane's Defense Weekly reported that France, which holds the current EU presidency, has received assurances that European nations are ready to contribute as many as 200,000 troops required for an autonomous European force. The EU will be able to deploy a 60,000-strong rapid reaction force for a full year in a crisis area and see that its personnel are rotated. The EU force is not due to become operational until 2003, though some elements could be available for certain types of military operations from mid-2001, when France expects the new 100-strong EU military staff to begin functioning under the direction of German Lieutenant General Klaus Schuwirth. Germany and the UK have pledged up to 18,000 troops, Italy 15,000, France 10,000 while Belgium and the Netherlands have each offered to contribute 3,000.

"Europe to provide troops for rapid reaction force"

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Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org