
NPP Weekly Flash Update 7 June, 2000

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Nonproliferation and Arms Control

1. US-Russian Arms Control Talks

Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Bill Clinton failed to narrow their difference over US proposals for a missile defense system. They did sign agreements to share information about nuclear missile launches aimed at either nation and to scuttle 34 metric tons of weapons-grade plutonium - enough for thousands of nuclear weapons.

"Full Text of Clinton, Putin Press Conference"

"Results of U.S-Russia Summit"

"United States - Russian Federation Plutonium Disposition Agreement"

"Joint statement on principles of strategic stability"

"Clinton-Putin Summit Meeting Information"

"ABM Issue Unresolved as Summit Ends"

"Putin stands ground against missile shield"

"Putin: 'We've Established Now ... Personal Relations',"

"Clinton, Putin Seek Common Ground"

US President Bill Clinton told Russian legislators that partnership despite differences is the right course for both their nations. He said that while the US and Russia are not destined to be adversaries again, "it is not guaranteed that we will be allies."

"Clinton: U.S., Russia Should Ally"

"Text of Clinton Speech in Russia"

The New York Times writes that US President Bill Clinton's goals at his summit meeting with Russian President Vladimir V. Putin were to soften Russia's resistance to US plans for a limited missile defense and to pave the way for a new arms control framework. "The meetings, however, failed to produce progress on either count, and the prospects for a breakthrough on Mr. Clinton's watch seem as dim as ever." Barry Schweid writes that the differences over missile defense reflects both Cold War-era concerns about a devastating nuclear attack and different views of the world today. William Safire argues that Clinton made an "enormous concession" by agreeing that issues of strategic offensive arms cannot be considered in isolation from issues of strategic defensive arms and vice versa.

"Sense of Urgency for Clinton on Arms Issue"

"Analysis of US-Russia Missile Debate"

"Mistake in Moscow"

2. US Nuclear Reductions

US National Security Advisor Samuel R. Berger writes that reducing nuclear weapons unilaterally while building up a Star War-like ballistic missile defense system, as proposed by Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush, would be destabilizing and risk re-igniting the arms race and reversing 20 years of arms-control gains. "Negotiated arms-control treaties may take time," Berger argues, "but doing so ensures that each side has an understanding of the other side's intentions and capabilities."

"Unilateral Move Is Unwise"

"Text-only version"

The Washington Post notes that George W. Bush's proposal for deep cuts in the US nuclear arsenal could face hurdles due to existing legislation to prevent such cuts. The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace argues that the US can safely begin deep cuts in its nuclear weapons, as economic and physical limitations will reduce Russia's strategic nuclear weapons from thousands to hundreds over the next ten years.

"Bush Nuclear Plans Could Face Hurdle"

"The Incredible Shrinking Russian Nuclear Force"

3. Implementation of START II

Frank von Hippel and Bruce Blair write in the Washington Post that despite ratification of START II by the Russian Duma, the treaty has not taken effect. The Duma attached conditions requiring US ratification of amendments to the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty negotiated in 1997, while the US Senate wants to scrap the ABM altogether. "Therefore, seven years after Presidents Bush and Yeltsin agreed to reduce deployed ballistic-missile warheads by about 60 percent, implementation of START II may still be many years away."

"A Longer Nuclear Fuse"

4. US-Russian Nuclear Cooperation

Princeton University's Research Program on Nuclear Policy Alternatives at the Center for Energy and Environmental Studies sponsored a conference on "Helping Russia Downsize its Nuclear-Weapons Complex."

"Helping Russia Down-Size Its Nuclear-Weapons Complex"

5. NPT Review Conference

The British-American Security Information Council (BASIC) has the final document from the 2000 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference

"2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: Final Document"

6. DPRK Nuclear Complex

David Albright and Corey Hinderstein of the Institute for Science and International Security analyze high-resolution commercial satellite images of the DPRK's Yongbyon nuclear site, along with photos from a videotape that the DPRK gave to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in May 1992.

"Solving the North Korean Nuclear Puzzle"

Missile Defense

7. US Missile Defense

US Department of Defense (DOD) spokesman Kenneth Bacon responded to an article in the Washington Post which said that an internal DOD report suggested that a US national missile defense capability could be accomplished faster through a sea-based system than a land-based system as currently planned by the Clinton administration. This transcript includes the questions and answers from the briefing.

"Quickest Way to Deploy NMD Is Via Land-based System, Pentagon Says"

"Full briefing text"

The Center for War, Peace, and the News Media has an edited transcript of a telephonic press briefing organized on June 1, 2000, featuring William Hartung of the World Policy Institute, and Frank Gaffney, Director of the Center for Security Policy, and moderated by Richard Halloran. The participants discussed the debate over US missile defense proposals. An audiofile of the briefing will be made available soon.

"What is Really Driving the Missile Defense Debate?"

Richard N. Haass argues that nuclear war has thus far been avoided thanks to deterrence and the notion of mutually assured destruction. "The question now is ... whether it makes sense to move to a world of less nuclear offense and more missile defense." John J. Miller notes that the question of whether missile defense is technically feasible remains the most powerful argument for its critics, an argument that is boosted by the failure of tests to go as planned. Roger Gathman reviews "Way Out There in the Blue: Reagan and Star Wars and the End of the Cold War" by Frances Fitzgerald, which criticizes former US President Ronald Reagan's plans to build a missile defense system.

"The New Nuclear Thing"

"No Defense"

"Book Review: Ronald Reagan's Greatest Movie"

8. Russian View of Missile Defense

Prior to his summit with US President Bill Clinton, Russian President Vladimir V. Putin suggested that the US and Russia could collaborate on new ways to shoot down enemy missiles soon after they were launched, rather than in space.

"Putin Offers Alternative Antimissile Plan"

"Putin Suggests He May Accept a Missile Defense System"

9. European Views of Missile Defense

During a background briefing at the Pentagon, senior US defense officials answered questions about NATO, arms control, and missile defense systems. This excerpt is from the official briefing transcript.

"DOD Answers Questions About NATO, Arms Control, and NMD"

"Full text from briefing"

The Stimson Center held a conference on European responses to US plans to build a national missile defense (NMD). The British-American Security Information Council (BASIC) issued a press release which said that during high-level consultations at the NATO ministerial meeting in Florence, Italy, "As expected, not one U.S. ally in Europe showed support for the anti-missile system." Frank J. Gaffney Jr. argues that US President Bill Clinton left himself unnecessarily vulnerable to pressure from US allies by failing to embrace the spirit and the letter of the Missile Defense Act (MDA) of 1999, which established that it is US government policy to deploy an effective limited-missile-defense system.

"Conference on 'Ballistic Missile Defense - U.S. Plans and European Responses'"

"U.S. Makes Little Headway With Allies on NMD"

"Missile Defense for Us and our Allies"

Security

10. NATO and European Security

At the NATO meeting in Florence on May 24, the North Atlantic Council communique recalled the "comprehensive and integrated review" of confidence and security building measures, verification, non-proliferation and arms control and disarmament, that was pledged at the April 1999 Summit. The Florence communique assured that the review "is well underway" and promised that "a substantive report" would be ready in December 2000. This excerpt includes the nuclear and arms control related sections of the communique.

"Nuclear Related Excerpts From NATO Communique"

"Full text"

The United States Institute of Peace issued a Special Report which says that, while the US and Europe displayed a high level of cooperation and unity during the Kosovo crisis, the future of transatlantic relations may be clouded by disagreements on the European Security Defense Initiative, the long-term interests of the NATO alliance, the role of Russia in the Balkans, and a strategy for ensuring Balkan stability and integration with the West. Tomas Valasek, Senior Analyst at the Center for Defense Information, notes that US officials are concerned over France's assumption of the presidency of the European Union (EU) in July, fearing that France's support for a European Rapid Reaction will undermine the NATO alliance.

"Transatlantic Relations In the Aftermath of Kosovo"

"Clouds Over the Atlantic"

11. US Response to WMD

The US General Accounting Office reported on the Department of Defense's steps to make the nuclear, biological, and chemical threat a matter of routine consideration within its activities and functions, such as training and field exercises and the acquisition of weapon systems and equipment. The report concluded that the department "can do more to integrate and focus its response to the growing threat posed by the proliferation of WMD."

"Weapons of Mass Destruction: DOD's Actions to Combat Weapons Use Should Be More Integrated and Focused"

12. US Arms Exports

US President Bill Clinton approved seventeen proposals concerning US arms export policy on May 22. The proposals are "intended to expedite the export licensing process to improve industrial competitiveness," and apply to US allies, including NATO countries, Australia, and Japan.

"U.S. Changes Arms Export Policy"

13. Japanese Defense Agreements

Jane's looks at the significance of recent Japanese agreements to cooperate with Vietnam on search-and-rescue operations for civilian ships in the South China Sea, to use Singapore's military bases to evacuate Japanese nationals, and to hold regular defense consultations and anti-piracy training exercises with India.

"Japan-Vietnam-India ties"

14. Cross-Straits Relations

Richard Halloran writes that Chen Shui-bian, the new president of the Republic of China on Taiwan, has devised a "comprehensive strategy" intended to maintain Taiwan's separation from the Peoples Republic of China while averting a war. "The main element in this walk on a razor's edge is a vigorous effort to enhance a sense of identity among the people of Taiwan, especially in revising education to emphasize Taiwanese history and culture." Harvey Sicherman, President of the Foreign Policy Research Institute, writes that the election of Chen Shui-bian illustrated the PRC's weak grasp of Taiwanese politics.

"Taiwan's Chen Walking on a Razor's Edge"

"Taiwan's New President: One If And Five Nos"

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