

NPP Weekly FLASH Update 22 February, 2000

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Arms Control

1. US Arms Control Policy

Avis Bohlen, assistant secretary of state for arms control, told a dinner meeting of Women in International Security February 15 that efforts at building support for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and work toward a presidential decision on deploying a National Missile Defense (NMD) system rank highest on the list of priorities for the Clinton administration's last year in office. US President Bill Clinton's Senior Advisor for Arms Control, Non-Proliferation and Security Affairs, John Holum said February 15 that arms control remains central to US national security interests and to the international security environment, and the United States will continue to take a leadership role in non-proliferation efforts. Holum called the NPT Review Conference, which will be held at United Nations headquarters beginning April 24, "an extremely important international event."

"Bohlen Sees CTBT, Missile Defense as Arms Control Priorities"

"Transcript: Holum WorldNet on Arms Control, Non-proliferation Feb. 15"

"U.S. Intends to Remain Leader in Arms Control, Holum Says"

2. NPT Review Conference

Jayantha Dhanapala, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, addressed the 12th Regional Disarmament Meeting in the Asia-Pacific Region on Strategic Stability, Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, and the 2000 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, held at Kathmandu, Nepal 15-17 February 2000.

"Dhanapala Addresses Asia-Pacific Regional Disarmament Meeting."

3. START Treaties

US Democratic Senator Kent Conrad warned Russia that failing to follow through on pledges to cut its tactical nuclear weapons stock could threaten Congressional passage of START III. Conrad urged Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and other US officials to continue to press Russia to live up to vows made by then-president Boris Yeltsin in 1991 and 1992 on the matter. Alexander Piskunov, a Russian Duma deputy who attended all talks on the START II treaty, discussed possible ways out of Russia's dilemma on the treaty. On the one hand, if the Duma does not ratify the treaty, Russia will enter a period of open nuclear confrontation with the US, while on the other hand, it is impossible to ratify START II in its initial wording, as it does not take into account Russia's current interests.

"Russia Warned Tactical Nukes Could Threaten START III"

"Nuclear Shield At Negotiated Price"

4. Russian Nuclear Conversion

Russia informed the US in early February that the project to convert three Russian plutonium-producing reactors was not viable and had to be abandoned. Instead the Russian officials said the reactors must be closed down entirely.

"Pu-production reactors to be shut down"

Missile Defense

5. Russian Views of Missile Defense

Major General Vladimir Dvorkin, chief of the Russian Federation Defense Ministry's Fourth Central Scientific Research Institute, said that Russia is now among the "rogues" states against whom the US allegedly needs to protect itself with a National Missile Defense system. He warned that because Russia does not have the capability to build a similar system, it will be forced to upgrade its Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) and increase their numbers.

"Russia's General Dvorkin Views NMD."

6. ABM Treaty

The START Forum Web site has a message board where readers can vote on whether or not Russia should agree to modify the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty.

"ABM Treaty Modification: Should Russia Agree?"

7. US Missile Defense

Following the failed national missile defense intercept test on January 18, 2000, an increasing number of Pentagon officials, independent experts, Republican and Democratic politicians, and publications around the US are calling for US President Bill Clinton to defer a decision on National Missile Defense deployment to the next Administration. Colonel Dan Smith, USA (Ret.), Chief of Research, at the Center for Defense Information, argues that in the debate about deploying a national missile defense (NMD) system by 2005, the fact that 2005 is a self-imposed deadline seems to get lost.

"Delaying Missile Defense: Not a Tidal Wave, But a Definite Tide"

"National Missile Defense -- Just say No"

8. Theater Missile Defense

The Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute for International Studies has an annotated chronology of Theater Missile Defense in Northeast Asia.

"Theater Missile Defense (TMD) in Northeast Asia: An Annotated Chronology, 1990-Present"

Military

9. US Naval Missile Deployment

The US navy hopes to convert four soon-to-retire ballistic-missile submarines into Tomahawk cannons. One advocate said that through this program, the Navy could produce a Stealth weapon system that on its own could "take down a country for a week." Opponents questioned the cost of the new system.

"The Navy Weighs A Potent New Weapon"

10. US Military Budget

The Council for a Livable World has a table showing the breakdown of the US military budget for fiscal year 2001.

"Fiscal Year 2001 Military Budget at a Glance"

11. Japanese Military Policy

Stratfor argues that the announcement by the Japanese Foreign Ministry last week that Japan is considering deploying vessels to patrol the Strait of Malacca is part of a much broader debate over Japan's use of the armed forces. The article said that Japan is beginning to come to grips with the reality that it is a great power with strategic interests as pressing as its economic ones.

"Forging a New Japan"

12. Pakistan Missile Development

Pakistan conducted a flight test of the 100km-range Hatf 1A surface-to-surface missile on 7 February. The launch breaks Pakistan's traditional pattern of testing its missile systems only in reaction to such tests by India.

"Pakistan tests new missile and revises command structure"

Diplomacy

13. Russia-NATO Relations

Russian analysts welcomed Wednesday's visit to Moscow by NATO Secretary-General George Robertson as a sign that Russia and NATO are thawing out their strategic relations, frozen after NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia last spring. The analysts see cooperation with the world's most powerful alliance as inevitable.

"Russia: Putin Revives Ties With NATO"

Korean Peninsula

14. DPRK Negotiating Style

The US Institute of Peace has a webcast of a discussion on DPRK negotiating behavior. The discussion focused on the threat to regional and international security posed by the DPRK, and the challenge of negotiating with the DPRK regime.

"Negotiating on the Edge: North Korean Negotiating Behavior"

Taiwan Straits

15. Taiwan Security

Martin L. Lasater discusses whether the PRC will use force against Taiwan and whether the US will intervene to help defend the island. The fundamental conclusion of his study is that, under most conditions, the US will intervene militarily to prevent the PRC defeat of Taiwan. Analysts in Taiwan disputed a memo from Stephan Yates at the Heritage Foundation arguing that Senate approval of the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act (TESA) would prevent the PRC's possible interference in Taiwan's presidential election next month. They warned that such a move could backfire and heighten cross-strait tensions.

"Conflict in the Taiwan Strait: The American Response"

"TSEA 'Could Backfire' for Taiwan"

16. Taiwan Elections

While many Taiwanese believe that the ruling Nationalist Party will lose the presidency for the first time in more than 50 years, some analysts say that the party might retain power even if independent James Soong wins the election. Although the Nationalists recently expelled Soong, they could choose to reach an agreement with him if he wins.

"Nationalists Might Lose in Taiwan"

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