

# SANDNet Weekly Update, May 3, 2000

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## **Nuclear Issues**

### **1. Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty Convention**

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright told the NPT review conference that "there is no provision in the treaty for new nuclear weapon states, nor will there be any one." The five acknowledged nuclear powers pledged "unequivocal commitment" to eliminate atomic weapons. They did not set a timetable.

Analysis: A "Hindustan Times" (India) editorial argues that the U.S. has galvanized global opposition by acting so clearly against the spirit of the NPT disarmament clause. A "News" (Pakistan) editorial argues that the NPT conference has brought to the surface disagreements between nuclear haves and have-nots that have been simmering since the 1998 South Asian nuclear tests. V.R. Raghavan (in the Hindu) argues that the NPT is meaningless in a world where both the U.S. and Russia view nuclear weapons as crucial to their security. C. Raja Mohan (in the Hindu) argues that "it is time for both the NPT managers and India to end their traditional diplomatic posturing and find a historic nuclear reconciliation based on realism."

### **2. Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty**

Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov strongly urged the U.S. to revise its plans for a National Defense System which, he says would be in violation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. Seven countries calling themselves the "New Agenda Coalition" (New Zealand, Ireland, South Africa, Sweden, Brazil, and Egypt) strongly objected to the U.S. position that a national missile defense system (NMD) is consistent with an unequivocal commitment to nuclear disarmament. The Pakistani newspaper "Dawn" reprinted a Los Angeles Times story that argues that the estimated US\$60 billion cost for the NMD program is unjustified because, even when completed, it will not be capable of destroying all incoming missiles in the event of war.

### **3. Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty**

P.K. Iyengar, former chairman of India's Atomic Energy Commission, urged the Indian government not to sign the CTBT until much more nuclear testing has been completed. He said that additional tests "will not violate any international or bilateral treaty as we have not signed any." Brajesh Mishra, Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee's security advisor, said that India is "determined" to have a nuclear arsenal that can withstand a first strike by China or Pakistan.

French President Jacques Chirac told Indian President K.R. Narayanan that India must sign the CTBT and NPT prior to any meaningful commercial nuclear cooperation between the two countries.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Sun Yuxi welcomed last week's CTBT ratification by the Russian Duma and said that China also would "speed the process" toward ratifying the treaty.

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## **Sri Lanka**

### **4. War Fighting**

Sri Lanka continues to be in the midst of a major civil war. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

(LTTE) continued their push toward Jaffna after taking control of Elephant Pass last week for the first time since 1995. A growing number and variety of Sri Lankan voices are calling for international intervention. The Sri Lankan government has approached both India and Pakistan regarding new weapons purchases. Others called for national conscription to raise an army that could defeat the LTTE. The Sri Lankan government reported that its navy and air force are "keeping up the pressure" on the LTTE.

## **5. Diplomacy**

On April 29, Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga asked the LTTE to choose between peace talks and a "relentless military option." LTTE leaders did not respond and the LTTE army continued with its plan to capture the city of Jaffna.

The government ordered the suspension of live broadcasts by BBC news, alleging that the network gave misleading coverage of recent battles. The government's chief censor, Ariya Rubasinghe, said that the LTTE is a proscribed organization and that any relay of news from that "terrorist organization" was derogatory for the country.

On May 3, as the LTTE army pressed closer to Jaffna, President Chandrika Kumaratunga asked India to help rescue 40,000 government troops (later revised to 25,000) that are stranded on the peninsula. Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh replied that India would not engage in a military intervention in Sri Lanka and the Sri Lankan government had not sought a humanitarian intervention. [Note: two of India's NDA governing coalition members are the DMK and the MDMK, both strongly pro-Tamil nationalist parties]. Following the Indian response, Chandrika announced that Sri Lanka would suspend all "non-essential" development work for three months and focus all energies on defeating the LTTE.

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## **Pakistan**

### **6. Security Planning**

Pakistani Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar said, "If a country starts a war on a limited scale, there is no guarantee that it would remain limited. Anything can happen." Naval Staff Admiral Abdul Aziz Mirza said that the Pakistan navy "has the capability to break the back" of the Indian navy." He also said that the introduction of nuclear weapons in South Asia has reduced the danger of a major war in the region. Abdul Sattar disagreed (in a separate statement): "I think we should recognize that the nuclearization of South Asia has greatly aggravated the dangers that existed before."

### **7. Pakistan-U.S. Relations**

The U.S. State Department's annual terrorism report is severely critical of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Yet, State Department terrorism expert Michael Sheehan said that he doesn't believe that Pakistan merits being designated a state sponsor of terrorism abroad: "When we look at the designation of a state sponsor, we look at the country's record on counterterrorism. In the case of Pakistan ... we continue to work with them. But they definitely need to improve their efforts."

Pakistan described allegations in the U.S. State Department report as "unfounded." An analysis by Gregory Copley (in *The News*) argues that the Musharraf regime is distinct from militant, pro-Islamist elements within Pakistan. He suggests that the military government has "moved rapidly, although largely behind the scenes, to begin making major structural changes in Pakistani

government and bureaucracy."

## **8. Foreign Relations: Saudi Arabia**

The Pakistani and Saudi Arabian navies completed seven days of joint exercises off the port of Karachi.

"Pakistan, Saudi Arabia end naval exercises"

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## **India**

### **9. Security Planning**

More than 10,000 tons of small arms, armor, and artillery ammunition exploded at an ordinance depot in Bharatpur. No evidence points to sabotage; the temperature rose to 115 degrees Fahrenheit on the day of the blast. Indian planners sought to evaluate both the short-term security challenge while the stocks are replenished. Initial official estimates value the loss at US\$1.3 billion (Rs 6,000 crores).

### **10. India-China Relations**

The twelfth round of the India-China joint working group, which seeks to resolve outstanding border disputes in Kashmir and Arunachal Pradesh, began on April 28. The two countries agreed "to accelerate the negotiating process" and set up an "expert group." They also agreed to resume senior-level military contact, which had been suspended in the wake of India's 1998 nuclear tests.

### **11. India-Russia Relations**

A 20-member, high-level Russian delegation arrived in Delhi to make preparations for a state visit by newly elected Russian President Vladimir Putin. The delegation finalized the text of a strategic partnership agreement, which "would enable the two countries to compare the strategic doctrines of the two countries, to jointly analyze the military-political situation in the world and in south and in central Asia, to hold consultations on security, to combat terrorism, and to exchange groups of military-political experts." An editorial in the Times of India argues that the geostrategic configuration of Russia, China, India, and the U.S. continues to shape India-Russia relations.

### **12. Military Hardware**

The Nishant, an indigenously built unmanned air vehicle designed to perform battlefield reconnaissance, successfully completed a 4-hour test flight. Indian defense spokespeople announced plans to purchase mid-air refueling aircraft, AWACS surveillance planes, and T-90 tanks.

### **13. U.N. Security Council**

Thomas Pickering, the U.S. undersecretary of state for political affairs, said that the United States would not support India's demand for a Security Council seat unless India resumed the Kashmir dialogue and "alleviate[d] U.S. concerns on non-proliferation." British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said that the United Kingdom also would not support New Delhi's application "until India starts playing a responsible role in the region, in particular with the implementation of UN resolutions on Kashmir."

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## **Kashmir**

### **14. Pakistani Dialogue**

Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf proposed a summit meeting with Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee, perhaps to be held in the Middle East. India rejected the offer.

1,200 Islamic clerics met outside Lahore. They urged Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf to "realize that [the government] should not succumb to American pressure to put pressure on freedom fighters by trying to ban their organizations."

### **15. Indian Dialogue**

Indiatimes reports that more than 70 Indian soldiers have been killed in Kashmir and the summer thaw has barely begun. The casualties are the result of improved access by terrorists to sophisticated arms, including short-range missiles and rockets. Shelling along the Line of Control continued as the Indiatimes article went to press.

In a speech to the Rajya Sabha, India's upper house of Parliament, Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh said that India would "examine the possibility of talks about talks ... to create an atmosphere which would not aggravate the situation." Interpretations of this statement varied considerably. A Pakistan Foreign Office spokesperson "regretted that the statement showed no change in New Delhi's attitude." An editorial in "The News" disagreed, arguing instead that Pakistan should exploit "any crack" in India's consistent refusal to discuss bilateral issues.

### **16. International Pressure**

U.S. Presidential candidate Al Gore reportedly suggested that he would consider U.S. military force as a part of negotiated solutions in places such as Kashmir, Haiti, Ireland, Balkans and the Middle East. He said: "In the global age, we must be prepared to engage in regional conflicts selectively-where the stability of a region important to our national security is at stake; where we can assure ourselves that nothing short of military engagement can secure our national interest; where we are certain that the use of military force can succeed in doing so; where we have allies willing to help share the burden, and where the cost is proportionate."

In separate statements, American Consul General John Bennet, and Under- secretary of State Thomas Pickering urged India to respond positively to Pakistan's repeated requests to resume dialogue over Kashmir. Pickering also urged Pakistan to help create the necessary conditions for making the dialogue meaningful: "This need not be a matter of public fanfare, proclamations, or even comments. What matters most is to be able to see the reality on the ground." An editorial in "Dawn" described Pickering's suggestions as "sensible advice."

British Members of Parliament Lord Avebury and Anthony Coleman suggested "quiet diplomacy" between India and Pakistan. "There must be behind-the- scenes talks between Pakistan and India, as was done in the case of the Middle East, to find a mechanism that could lead to the solution of this problem... Pakistan and India should not discuss any final solution to the Kashmir issue. But they should evolve a mechanism or find ways that could help reach a final solution."

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