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SYLLOGE ON CHINA

Focus: Nuclear, Space, Missiles and other Security Issues

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Busy May looms for China space launches as Tiangong trio prepare for home

South China Morning Post, April 10, 2022

China is preparing to welcome its three astronauts, who will complete their record 180 days in space in about a week. Zhai Zhigang, Wang Yaping and Ye Guangfu are preparing the Tiangong space station for the arrival of its next crew before their return to Earth in the final leg of their mission. Chinese state media has reported that ground crews at the Dongfeng landing site in northern China's Inner Mongolia region have been rehearsing the search and retrieve exercise for the astronauts as they wind up their almost six-month mission.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3173570/busy-may-looms-china-space-launches-tiangong-trio-prepare-home>

China warns UN not to add 'fuel to the fire' after North Korean missile test

South China Morning Post, April 9, 2022

China's envoy on North Korean issues Liu Xiaoming said on Friday the United Nations Security Council should not add "fuel to the fire," indicating his reluctance to back US efforts to pursue a new sanctions resolution following its recent ballistic missile test. Liu, who recently visited the United States and met White House Indo-Pacific coordinator Kurt Campbell, posted on Twitter that the Security Council should play a "constructive role for the political settlement" of issues related to the Korean peninsula. "Any action it takes should be conducive to de-escalation and dialogue, instead of adding fuel to the fire," he added. The United States has been calling on China and Russia, both permanent veto-wielding members of the council, to cooperate in imposing tougher sanctions on North Korea, which test-fired an intercontinental ballistic missile in March, the first such launch since 2017. But US special envoy to North Korea Sung Kim told reporters on Wednesday that he cannot yet say "productive discussions" are taking place with the two countries.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3173678/china-warns-un-not-add-fuel-fire-after-north-korean-missile>

Chinese space tracking ship Yuanwang-6 escorts Gaofen-3 03 satellite into orbit

China Military Online, April 8, 2022

The Long March 4C carrier rocket carrying the Gaofen-3 03, a new Earth-observation satellite, was launched from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwestern China at 7:47 on April 7. It was later accurately captured by the space-tracking ship Yuanwang-6 of the China Satellite Maritime Tracking and Controlling Department (CSMTC), which was on standby in the predetermined waters of the Indian Ocean. Whereafter, the ship served to provide reliable measurement and control support for key actions such as rocket place into orbit and satellite orbit determination. According to Xu Rong, the deputy captain of Yuanwang-6, the ship was to undergo equipment maintenance to ensure the smooth completion of the subsequent plans set.

http://english.chinamil.com.cn/view/2022-04/08/content_10146785.htm

Chinese tests show nuclear bunkers are not what they used to be, with earth-penetrating weapons on the rise

South China Morning Post, April 8, 2022

China has built a new research facility to simulate an attack by nuclear bunker-busting weapons and learn how they damage defence facilities, even those built at extreme depths, according to military scientists involved in the project. In the past, shelters buried several hundred metres deep were rated nuclear-proof but the Chinese test facility shows that a tunnel more than 2km (1.24 miles) under the surface could be destroyed, according to the researchers. In one test, the simulated tunnel almost crumbled after taking hits the effective equivalent of five consecutive strikes by earth-penetrating nuclear weapons, an outcome that would have once been considered impossible.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3173478/chinese-tests-show-nuclear-bunkers-are-not-what-they-used-be>

Ukraine war lessons for China in downing of Russian Sukhoi-35 fighter

South China Morning Post, April 7, 2022

The reported downing of a Sukhoi-35 by Ukraine could have important tactical lessons for the Chinese military, which holds the world's second largest fleet of the fighter jets after Russia. As the war in Ukraine entered its 40th day, a video emerged apparently showing the moment the jet fell from the sky in flames before exploding. Pictures of the burned-up wreck were later posted on social media. Ukraine said the Su-35 was shot down near Kharkiv by its anti-aircraft missile forces, in what Ukrainian deputy interior minister Anton Gerashchenko said amounted to "US\$50 million worth of damage" for the Russians.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3173290/ukraine-war-lessons-china-downing-russian-sukhoi-35-fighter>

Defense spokesperson: US arms sales to Taiwan gravely undermine China's sovereignty and security interests

China Military Online, April 7, 2022

Senior Colonel Tan Kefei, spokesperson for China's Ministry of National Defense: The US arms sales to the Taiwan region of China seriously violate the one-China principle and the stipulations of the three China-US joint communiques, especially the August 17 Communique, grossly interfere China's internal affairs, gravely undermine China's sovereignty and security interests, and severely harm the relations between the two countries and their militaries, also gravely sabotage peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. China is firmly opposed to this and makes solemn representations to the US side. Taiwan is an inalienable part of Chinese territory. The Taiwan question concerns China's core interests and brooks no foreign interference. China urges the US to abide by the one-China principle and the stipulations of the three China-US joint communiques, revoke the arms sales plan and stop military ties with Taiwan, to avoid causing further damage to the relations between the two countries and their militaries.

http://english.chinamil.com.cn/view/2022-04/07/content_10146469.htm

China launches new civilian remote sensing satellite with high-resolution imaging capability

Global Times, April 7, 2022

China successfully sent a new civilian remote sensing satellite Gaofen-3 03 into preset orbit via a Long March-4C carrier rocket at Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in Northwest China's Gansu Province on Thursday. The Gaofen-3 03 is a new service satellite that implements China's National Medium to Long-Term Civilian Space Infrastructure Development Plan (2015-2025), and it has the same technology status with the previous Gaofen-3 02 satellite and carries mainly the C-band Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR), the Global Times learned from the China National Space Administration (CNSA) on Thursday. According to the CNSA, the new satellite will constitute a constellation with the Galfen-3 and Gaofen-3 02 to offer a multi-polarization imaging service for both land and sea with the highest resolution of one meter and a revisiting service for one single area within a day.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202204/1257716.shtml>

South Korea seeks return of US nuclear bombers, unsure of China's influence over Kim Jong-un's weapons testing plans

South China Morning Post, April 7, 2022

South Korea's new leader is seeking the redeployment of US strategic assets such as nuclear bombers and submarines to the Korean peninsula, amid warnings Pyongyang could conduct a nuclear weapons test next week. Incoming president Yoon Suk-yeol vowed to "increase the solidarity of the South Korea-US alliance and strengthen deterrence and the response posture against North Korea's nuclear and missile threats" when he visited US army base Camp Humphreys in Pyeongtaek, 70km from Seoul, said his spokesperson Bae Hyun-jin on Thursday. On Wednesday, a team of Yoon's foreign policy and security aides met US national security adviser Jake Sullivan in Washington to discuss the North's mounting threat displayed by its intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) test in March. One of the advisers, four-term lawmaker Park Jin, said both sides discussed how North Korea's nuclear and missile development posed a threat to the region.

<https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3173412/south-korea-seeks-return-us-nuclear-bombers-unsure-chinas>

China's ambassador for disarmament affairs: Banning biological weapons, US should set example rather than exception

China Military Online, April 7, 2022

On April 4, local time, Li Song, China's ambassador for disarmament affairs, led the Chinese delegation to attend the second meeting of the preparatory committee for the Ninth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). He pointed out that the US, as a

depository state of the BWC, should set an example rather than an exception in the field of strict implementation of all the obligations under the BWC. Li Song said that the Biological Weapons Convention is the cornerstone of global biosecurity governance. On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the opening for the signature of the BWC, the State Parties should commit themselves to negotiating and establishing the verification mechanism of the BWC at an early date, strengthening the mechanism for confidence-building measures (CBM), promoting international cooperation and assistance, advocating responsible biological scientific research, and coordinating and strengthening the biosecurity mechanism.

http://english.chinamil.com.cn/view/2022-04/07/content_10146378.htm

US gives green light to US\$95 million missile support deal for Taiwan

South China Morning Post, April 6, 2022

The US State Department has approved a US\$95 million missile support deal with Taiwan, which Taipei hailed as a proof of Washington's rock-solid support in strengthening its defences against mainland China. Observers said the latest approval was designed to assure the island that the US would not back down on its support for Taiwan in the event of a cross-strait war although Washington did not send forces to help Ukraine to fight against Russia's invasion. In a statement on Tuesday, the US Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) said the State Department had approved the sale of equipment, training and other items to support its Patriot Air Defence System with Raytheon Technologies as the prime contractor.

It would be the third arms deal with Taiwan since President Joe Biden took office in 2021.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3173269/us-gives-green-light-us95-million-missile-support-deal-taiwan>

Aukus cooperation on hypersonic weapons will step up arms race: Beijing

South China Morning Post, April 6, 2022

The United States has said that it has tested a hypersonic missile and plans to work on the weapons with partners in the Aukus alliance, which the Chinese foreign ministry said further intensified the arms race in the Asia-Pacific. The Pentagon's hi-tech research body, the Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (Darpa), said on Tuesday that it had recently completed a free-flight test of an aircraft-launched hypersonic missile that maintained a speed of more than Mach 5, or five times the speed of sound. The missile flew more than 555km (300 nautical miles) and to an altitude greater than 19,800 metres (65,000 feet), it said.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3173296/aukus-cooperation-hypersonic-weapons-will-step-arms-race>

Renewed US hype of 'China's nuclear expansion' filled with hegemonic intentions

Global Times, April 6, 2022

A top US admiral again hyped China's "expansion of strategic and nuclear arsenal" on Tuesday,

making irresponsible and speculative remarks on the country's hypersonic weapons tests and construction of missile silos. Chinese experts said that the hype is nothing new and that the US is aiming to maintain its global military hegemony and making excuses for its record-breaking defense budget. China's "breathtaking expansion" of its strategic and nuclear arsenal is a quickly escalating risk for the US, Admiral Charles Richard, the head of US Strategic Command, wrote in testimony posted on the website of the House Defense Appropriations subcommittee to be presented to lawmakers at a closed-door hearing on Tuesday, Bloomberg reported.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202204/1257598.shtml>

China urged to fully fund Argentina's US\$8.3 billion nuclear plant as debt tightens

South China Morning Post, April 6, 2022

A tighter fiscal outlook has led Argentina to press China for full financing of its US\$8.3 billion nuclear plant, after signing an agreement in February for its construction. The South American country is grappling with high debt levels and needs to hit a fiscal balance by 2025 from a 3 per cent deficit last year as part of a recent deal with the International Monetary Fund. A tighter fiscal outlook has led Argentina to press China for full financing of its US\$8.3 billion nuclear plant, after signing an agreement in February for its construction. The South American country is grappling with high debt levels and needs to hit a fiscal balance by 2025 from a 3 per cent deficit last year as part of a recent deal with the International Monetary Fund.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3173227/china-urged-fully-fund-argentinas-83b-nuclear-plant-debt>

Aukus partnership plans to develop hypersonic weapons in apparent response to China's build-up

South China Morning Post, April 6, 2022

The United States, Britain and Australia announced plans on Tuesday to cooperate on state-of-the-art weaponry – including hypersonic missiles and “counter-hypersonics”, an apparent response to China's aggressive pursuit of its own hypersonic arsenal. It is the latest sign that Washington and many of its closest allies, including those in the new “Aukus” security partnership, remain focused on the growing military threat from Beijing, even as the war in Ukraine grinds on with no obvious end in sight. In a joint statement signed by US President Joe Biden, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, the three leaders “reaffirmed our commitment to Aukus and to a free and open Indo-Pacific.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3173187/aukus-partnership-plans-develop-hypersonic-weapons-apparent>

U.S. Sees Rising Risk in ‘Breathtaking’ China Nuclear Expansion

Bloomberg Quint, April 5, 2022

China's “breathtaking expansion” of its strategic and nuclear arsenal is a quickly escalating risk

for the U.S., the head of U.S. Strategic Command plans to tell lawmakers at a closed-door hearing on Tuesday. China's first test of an intercontinental ballistic missile-launched hypersonic glide vehicle last July is a "technological achievement with serious implications for strategic stability," Admiral Charles Richard wrote in prepared testimony posted on the website of the House Defense Appropriations subcommittee. The hypersonic vehicle flew 40,000 km (25,000 miles) for more than 100 minutes, Richard wrote in the testimony -- the most detailed U.S. account of the test to date. It was "the greatest distance and longest flight time of any land attack weapon system of any nation to date," according to the testimony. Richard gave similar testimony to both the House and Senate Armed Services Committees last month.

<https://www.bloombergquint.com/politics/u-s-sees-rising-risk-in-breath-taking-china-nuclear-expansion>

China's new military helicopter with innovative design makes 1st flight

Global Times, April 5, 2022

China's top helicopter makers recently announced that a new type of helicopter with an innovative design has successfully completed its maiden flight, and this prototype chopper will lead to the development of the next-generation, high-performance helicopter for the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). The new helicopter, which might have a completely different aerodynamic design compared with most current ones, could feature a higher speed, better stealth capabilities or a larger takeoff weight, analysts said on Tuesday.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202204/1257539.shtml>

Taiwan tests 'tank killer' Javelin missiles in drills to deter potential Beijing attack

South China Morning Post, April 4, 2022

The Taiwanese military has been using US-made Javelin missiles in training to test their effectiveness in helping to deter potential attacks from mainland China. The 66th Marine Brigade, which has a unit to guard Taipei, the island's capital, has practised firing the portable missiles, dubbed "tank killers", which have been used recently by Ukraine to destroy a number of invading armoured vehicles from Russia. According to the Military News Agency, affiliated to the Taiwanese defence ministry, marines from the brigade joined air force and army units in a series of drills in the past week at the Joint Operations Training Base Command in Pingtung, southern Taiwan.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3173029/taiwan-holds-drills-using-tank-killer-javelin-missiles-deter>

World's fourth Hualong One unit attains full power

World Nuclear News, April 4, 2022

Unit 3 of the Karachi nuclear power plant in Pakistan - a Chinese-supplied Hualong One reactor - reached 100% capacity for the first time on 31 March. The 1100 MWe pressurised water reactor

is currently undergoing power ascension testing prior to entering commercial operation. Construction of Karachi 3, the second of two Hualong One units to be built near Paradise Point in the province of Sindh, began in May 2016. Hot functional testing of Karachi 3 - which simulate the temperatures and pressures that the reactor systems will be subjected to during normal operation and are carried out before loading nuclear fuel - was completed ahead of schedule on 4 November last year. It achieved first criticality on 21 February and was connected to the grid on 4 March. Various performance and commissioning tests have since been carried out at power levels of 25%, 30%, 50%, 75% and 87% capacity, China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) said. Once testing at full capacity is completed, Karachi 3 will perform a 100-hour demonstration run, after which it will enter commercial operation.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Worlds-fourth-Hualong-One-unit-attains-full-power>

Taiwan looks to develop military drone fleet after drawing on lessons from Ukraine's war with Russia

South China Morning Post, April 3, 2022

Taiwan will speed up the development of its military drones to strengthen its defences against Beijing after seeing how Ukraine used them to resist Russia's invasion. Noting the effectiveness of Ukraine's drone fleet, Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen said recently: "Regardless of whether it is for military or civilian use, it is highly necessary for us to speed up our development of drones as it will be an important matter for the next generation." But analysts warned it was unclear if the island would succeed given mainland China's much more advanced unmanned aerial vehicle industry.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3172808/taiwan-looks-develop-military-drone-fleet-after-drawing-lessons>

China's cargo spacecraft re-enters Earth's atmosphere, mostly burns up

Global Times, April 1, 2022

China's Tianzhou-2 cargo craft entered the Earth's atmosphere underground control at 6:40 pm Beijing Time, the China Manned Space Agency announced on Thursday. Most of the spacecraft burned up during the process, while a small amount of the debris fell into the intended area of safe water in the South Pacific, said the agency. Tianzhou-2 is the first cargo ship sent into space during the construction of China's space station. It carried out a series of extended application tests in orbit. It was launched into orbit on May 29, 2021, carrying 6.8 tonnes of supplies for the space station. On March 27, 2022, Tianzhou-2 left the core module of the Tiangong space station after completing all of its scheduled tasks, the agency said.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202204/1257411.shtml>

