

February 20, 2023

SYLLOGE ON CHINA

Focus: Nuclear, Space, Missiles and other Security Issues

An Initiative by Indian Pugwash Society and Centre for Nuclear Issues and Arms Control (MP - IDSA)



INDIAN PUGWASH SOCIETY

The Chinese ‘spy balloon’ shot down by US missile wasn’t one of ours, says country’s biggest weather balloon maker

Zhang Tong

South China Morning Post, February 11, 2023

China’s largest balloon manufacturer has denied any involvement in the “spy balloon” incident in the United States this month. A Chinese balloon that drifted across American airspace and was shot down by the US Air Force on live television has sparked conjecture about Chinese espionage and prompted Secretary of State Antony Blinken to cancel a trip to China on February 5-6. The US is confident the manufacturer of the balloon “has a direct relationship with China’s military and is an approved vendor of the [People’s Liberation Army], according to information published in an official procurement portal for the PLA,” said a senior US State Department official quoted by NBC.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3209780/chinese-spy-balloon-shot-down-us-missile-wasnt-one-ours-says-countrys-biggest-weather-balloon-maker>

Members of U.S. special committee on China weighing visit to Taipei

Ryo Nakamura

Nikkei Asia, February 12, 2023

A U.S. House Special committee on China is in talks to send a delegation to Taiwan in a show of support for the self-governed island that faces intensified military pressure from China. Representative Rob Wittman, a Virginia Republican and a senior member on the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party, told Nikkei that he and other members of the committee are exploring a trip to Taiwan.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/US-China-tensions/Members-of-U.S.-special-committee-on-China-weighing-visit-to-Taipei>

US turn to cut capital infusion into Chinese tech firms, seeking a Pyrrhic victory

Global Times, February 12, 2023

The Biden administration has reportedly devised a new plan to crack down on Chinese high-tech companies by considering a ban on US investments in those companies, a move experts said again reflects Washington's anxiety over China's high-tech development after many previously launched policies have proved ineffective. But this capital ambush will be no more successful than their predecessors, not just because Chinese companies are not solely reliant upon US capital, but because it will infuriate US investors with their \$40 billion locked in China's artificial intelligence companies and other hefty investments.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202302/1285285.shtml>

Philippines accuses China's coast guard of targeting vessel with military-grade laser

Kathrin Hille

Financial Times, February 13, 2023

The Philippines has accused China of targeting one of its coast guard vessels with a military-grade laser in the South China Sea, as Beijing's almost-constant presence in the contested waters raises regional tensions. The Chinese coast guard ship directed the laser at the BRP Malapascua twice on February 6, "causing temporary blindness to [the] crew at the bridge", the Philippine Coast Guard said on Monday. The incident happened in Ayungin Shoal, a Philippine-controlled land feature also known as Second Thomas Shoal, it added.

<https://www.ft.com/content/19a25eb1-b041-4878-b678-13d112fac9e>

China, EU to accelerate the restart of China-EU high-level exchanges, economic and trade cooperation: Chinese ambassador to France

Chen Qingqing and Bai Yunyi

Global Times, February 13, 2023

With the optimization and adjustment of its COVID policies, China is expected to welcome more foreign leaders in 2023. Among them, French President Emmanuel Macron has expressed explicitly his willingness to visit China. In recent years, China-EU relations have seen some obstacles emerging against the backdrop of the US-led strategic containment of China and the Ukraine war. In an exclusive interview with Global Times reporters Chen Qingqing and Bai Yunyi (GT), Chinese Ambassador to France Lu Shaye (Lu) talked about prospects of China-EU relations as influenced by the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, the Taiwan question, and China-France ties with the US' exertion of pressure on its major allies.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202302/1285365.shtml>

Philippines urges China to halt 'provocative act' after laser aimed at vessel

Nikkei Asia, February 13, 2023

China should restrain its forces so that they do not commit any "provocative act", the Philippine military said after Manila accused China's coast guard of using a laser to try to disrupt a resupply mission to its troops in the South China Sea. The Philippine coast guard (PCG) said its vessel was assisting a navy mission to deliver food and supplies to troops stationed on an atoll in the disputed waterway on Feb. 6 when a Chinese coast guard ship directed a "military-grade laser" at the ship temporarily blinding its crew at the bridge. "I think it's time for the Chinese government to restrain its forces so that it does not commit any provocative act that will endanger the lives of people," military spokesperson Medel Aguilar told reporters.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/South-China-Sea/Philippines-urges-China-to-halt-provocative-act-after-laser-aimed-at-vessel>

China accuses US of 10 balloon incursions in its airspace

Joe Leahy, Maiqi Ding and Demetri Sevastopulo

Financial Times, February 13, 2023

China has accused the US of repeatedly flying surveillance balloons into its airspace, allegations Washington immediately denied, as tensions between the two nations reached a new high. Beijing's accusations came after the US shot down what it said was a Chinese spy balloon off the coast of South Carolina this month and subsequently downed three other objects, most recently at the weekend. "It's very common that the US intrudes [into] others' airspace," Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said on Monday. "Just last year, more than 10 American high-altitude balloons illegally flew through Chinese airspace without permission from the relevant Chinese authorities."

<https://www.ft.com/content/1870e6ba-3ecf-41d9-ab0f-8fa3d0a33ea3>

Beijing to support leading AI enterprises to build models similar to ChatGPT

Global Times, February 14, 2023

Beijing announced that it will support leading artificial intelligence (AI) enterprises to build large models similar to ChatGPT, the AI-enabled chatbot developed by Silicon Valley-based OpenAI, and it will strengthen the layout of AI computing infrastructure and the supply of AI data. The Beijing White Paper on the development of the AI Industry in 2022 was released, outlining the city's achievements and expectations in the field of AI. The paper emphasized that Beijing had 1,048 leading AI enterprises by October 2022, accounting for 29 percent of the total AI enterprises in China, ranking first in the country. Additionally, the city has a strong industrial agglomeration capacity and a well-developed full-stack artificial intelligence industrial chain.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202302/1285405.shtml>

China begins phase-II construction on far-reaching radar system, to boost defense against near-Earth asteroid impact

Zhao Juecheng

Global Times, February 14, 2023

The second phase of a high-definition deep-space active observation facility, China Fuyan, which is dubbed as the world's most far-reaching radar system, kicked off in Southwest China's Chongqing Municipality, the Global Times learned from the project lead Beijing Institute of Technology (BIT). The second phase of the project, codenamed China Fuyan [faceted eye], will involve building 25 radars with a 30-meter aperture, so as to realize the detection and imaging of asteroids over 10 million kilometers away, which will provide strong support for China's near-Earth asteroid impact defense and planetary science research.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202302/1285461.shtml>

US recovers electronic components from suspected Chinese spy balloon

Demetri Sevastopulo

Financial Times, February 14, 2023

The US military has recovered important electronic components from the suspected Chinese spy balloon that was shot down this month off the coast of South Carolina, Northern Command said. The US military command said crews had retrieved significant debris, including all the “priority sensor and electronics pieces” as well as large sections of the structure. Retrieval of the sensors and other electronic components is critical to US efforts to demonstrate that the balloon was a surveillance craft and not a civilian airship conducting meteorological research as China has claimed.

<https://www.ft.com/content/f7b6f73a-b0a8-49f8-bf64-ec6ce7df7aa7>

US, S. Korea and Japan will jointly deter N. Korean threat: Wendy Sherman

The Korean Times, February 14, 2023

The United States, South Korea and Japan will work together to deter North Korea's nuclear and missile threats and to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman said. "Standing united, our nations will deter the DPRK and urge it to give up its nuclear weapons program and abide by its obligations under U.N. Security Council resolutions," she said at a joint press conference with her South Korean counterpart, Cho Hyun-dong, and Japanese Vice Foreign Minister Takeo Mori. The U.S. official also stressed the importance of the trilateral cooperation in dealing with other regional issues, including "challenges posed by the People's Republic of China (PRC)."

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2023/02/113_345371.html

US firms up Japan and South Korea security ties to counter China following balloon saga

Orange Wang

South China Morning Post, February 14, 2023

The US is doubling down on aligning with Japan and South Korea to counter China, the Biden administration made clear on Monday, amid escalating tensions between Washington and Beijing following the balloon saga. Senior diplomats from the three countries met in Washington to discuss plans to enhance their security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region and the world. The trilateral talks touched on the challenges posed by Beijing and the need to respond with unity at home and abroad, according to US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/3210105/us-firms-japan-and-south-korea-security-ties-counter-china-following-balloon-saga>

China to launch 2 crewed missions each year: China Manned Space Agency

CGTN, February 15, 2023

China will send two manned spacecraft and one or two cargo spacecraft every year to its space station, which has entered a new phase of application and development following its completion last year, said China Manned Space Agency (CMSA). The CMSA introduced the country's 2023 space mission plan in the newly initiated solicitation announcement for the mission logos. China will send the Tianzhou-6 cargo ship in May to dock with the aft port of the core module, forming a configuration of three modules and two ships. It will take supplies for the in-orbit taikonauts, maintenance spare parts, propellants and samples of applied mission payloads. In-orbit wastes will be brought back by the cargo ship.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2023-02-15/China-to-launch-2-crewed-missions-each-year-China-Manned-Space-Agency-1hrgYLU4H7y/index.html>

ASML reveals intellectual property theft by China employee

Anna Gross

Financial Times, February 15, 2023

Dutch chip toolmaker ASML has revealed an employee in China recently stole information about its technology, which may have resulted in export controls being violated, in an incident that underscores the company's importance in the global battle to produce advanced semiconductors. ASML, the international leader in the production of so-called lithography machines that use light to etch semiconductors, said in its annual report that it had been "subject to misappropriation of data relating to proprietary technology by a (now) former employee in China".

<https://www.ft.com/content/b686c84a-8d5f-46dc-af67-90cbf635170a>

China says US balloons flew over Xinjiang, Tibet, warns of countermeasures

The Korean Times, February 15, 2023

Diplomatic friction festered between the United States and China on Wednesday as Beijing charged that U.S. high altitude balloons flew over its Xinjiang and Tibet regions and said it would take measures against U.S. entities that undermine Chinese sovereignty. Washington and Beijing are locked in a tussle over flying objects after the U.S. military this month shot down what it called a Chinese spy balloon over the coast of South Carolina. Beijing says its balloon was a civilian research vessel mistakenly blown off course, and that Washington overreacted.

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/world/2023/03/683_345530.html

Chinese envoy to UN calls on international community to slow down global warming and contain rapid sea-level rise

Global Times, February 15, 2023

A Chinese envoy called on the international community to take all necessary actions to rigorously slow down global warming and contain the trend of rapid sea-level rises during a United Nations (UN) Security Council debate. The international community should step up forward-looking studies on the consequences of rising sea levels, and in the meantime, focus on climate change as its root cause, rigorously slow down global warming, and contain the trend of rapid sea-level rises, Zhang Jun, China's permanent representative to the UN, told a Security Council debate on "Sea-level Rise: Implications for International Peace and Security."

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202302/1285494.shtml>

China's stealth fighter inventory set to eclipse America's F-22s

Ken Moriyasu

Nikkei Asia, February 15, 2023

China is outpacing the U.S. in the production of stealth fighters, with the inventory of its most advanced J-20A overtaking that of the U.S. Air Force's F-22 Raptor as soon as this year, the head of the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies said. The director general of IISS told reporters that China's combat aircraft inventory has been transformed over the past five years.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Defense/China-s-stealth-fighter-inventory-set-to-eclipse-America-s-F-22s#:~:text=TOKYO%20%2D%2D%20China%20is%20outpacing,for%20Strategic%20Studies%20said%20Wednesday>

China's top chip industry group opposes export bans from U.S., Netherlands, Japan

CGTN, February 15, 2023

China's top chip industry trade group has expressed opposition to reported export controls from the U.S., Japan, and the Netherlands on the country's chip manufacturing sector, warning of the potential harm to the global industry and economy. This comes after the U.S. reportedly reached an agreement with Japan and the Netherlands recently to tighten their export controls on advanced chip-manufacturing equipment and technology to China. Details about what type of equipment companies would be banned from selling have yet to be made public.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2023-02-15/Chinese-chip-group-opposes-export-bans-from-U-S-Netherlands-Japan--1hrz6CTGRQQ/index.html>

Wang Yi meets Macron ahead of security conference

Wang Qi and Cui Fandi

Global Times, February 16, 2023

Chinese top diplomat Wang Yi spoke with French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris on strengthening bilateral cooperation, upholding multilateralism, and the Russia-Ukraine conflict, in his first stop of his Europe trip. He will also attend the Munich Security Conference, where Wang will convey China's vision on security. Chinese experts believe that the visit will give Europe a better understanding of China's policies and stances after the 20th Communist Party of China (CPC) National Congress, and is of great significance to promoting China-EU strategic cooperation and multipolarization, at a time when China-US relations are strained due to the "balloon incident."

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202302/1285617.shtml>

China sanctions Lockheed Martin, Raytheon over Taiwan arms sales

Nikkei Asia, February 16, 2023

China put Lockheed Martin and Raytheon Technologies on an "unreliable entities list" over the arms sales to Taiwan, banning them from imports and exports related to China in its latest sanctions against the two U.S. companies. The measures come amid heightened tensions after the U.S. military shot down what it says was a Chinese spy balloon, and a day after Beijing warned of "countermeasures against relevant U.S. entities that undermine China's sovereignty and security."

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/US-China-tensions/China-sanctions-Lockheed-Martin-Raytheon-over-Taiwan-arms-sales>

China top tech dealmaker goes missing amid graft crackdown

The Korean Times, February 17, 2023

Shares of the company that operates one of China's top investment banks, China Renaissance, plunged Friday after the firm said it had lost touch with its founder Bao Fan, one of the country's most high-profile bankers and a top tech-sector dealmaker. China Renaissance Holdings said in a filing to Hong Kong's stock exchange Thursday that it had been unable to contact Bao, who has worked on major deals including e-commerce company JD.com's \$2 billion initial public offering and the public listing of short video platform Kuaishou in Hong Kong.

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/world/2023/03/683_345660.html

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The Korean Times, February 17, 2023

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https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/world/2023/03/683_345660.html

U.S., China, other nations urge 'responsible' use of military AI

Nikkei Asia, February 17, 2023

More than 60 countries including the U.S. and China signed a modest "call to action" on Thursday endorsing the responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the military. Human rights experts and academics noted the statement was not legally binding and failed to address concerns like AI-guided drones, 'slaughterbots' that could kill with no human intervention, or the risk that an AI could escalate a military conflict. However, the statement was a tangible outcome of the first international summit on military AI, co-hosted by the Netherlands and South Korea this week at The Hague.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Defense/U.S.-China-other-nations-urge-responsible-use-of-military-AI>

If Washington wants to cool down relations with China, it should first stop attacking Huawei

Fei Xue

Global Times, February 18, 2023

After the dramatic reversal of the balloon incident, the Joe Biden administration tried to "cool down" the tension of China-US relationship. However, very recently, some US politicians and media outlets have once again begun to exaggerate the use of communication base stations equipped by Huawei near the ongoing Munich Security Conference (MSC), claiming that it has brought serious security risks. Politico said that Huawei kit is set up around the conference venue, highlighting a sore point in Germany's security ties with the US and allies. CNN also stated that while people are focusing on China's spy balloon, the threat to the US and allies from the Chinese telecommunications equipment giant Huawei should not be ignored.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202302/1285708.shtml>

Chinese peace proposal on Ukraine provokes western scepticism

John Paul Rathbone and Guy Chazan

Financial Times, February 18, 2023

Western leaders have reacted with scepticism to an announcement by China's top diplomat that Beijing will put forward a peace proposal to bring an end to the war in Ukraine. Wang Yi told the Munich Security Conference that China "was not directly concerned in the conflict, but was not standing idly by" and would soon publish a position paper on how to find a political solution. He said it would be based on principles already laid out by President Xi Jinping, including territorial integrity and "the sovereignty of all countries".

<https://www.ft.com/content/c0d1c5e3-7cfe-4221-88bf-0eb3bfd58968>

US meddling in China-EU ties shows hegemonic mindset

Global Times, February 19, 2023

When seeking to allay EU concerns about subsidies under the US Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) in a meeting with EU Executive Vice President Valdis Dombrovskis, US Trade Representative Katherine Tai also stressed the importance of US-EU cooperation in responding to economic coercion and other non-market practices, according to a statement issued by Tai's office. While the statement didn't mention China, some US media outlets, like VOA Chinese, interpreted that Tai was referring to "China's economic coercion."

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202302/1285768.shtml>

China, Russia, S Africa to hold 2nd naval exercises

Jiang Chenglong

China Daily, February 19, 2023

The navies of China, Russia and South Africa will hold the second joint maritime military exercises in the airspace and waters east of the South Africa from Monday, China's Defense Ministry said. "The navies of China, Russia and South Africa will hold the maritime drills in the airspace and sea east of part of South Africa — from Durban to Richards Bay — from Feb 20 to 27, according to the consensus reached by the three countries," the Ministry of National Defense said in a news release. The exercises are targeted at jointly safeguarding the security of shipping and maritime economic activities, it said.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202302/19/WS63f1aeb0a31057c47ebaf951.html>

China names special envoy to Pacific Islands as rivalry with US heats up in region

Liu Zhen

South China Morning Post, February 19, 2023

China has named a special envoy to fill a new role in its Pacific Islands diplomacy as it competes with the United States for influence in the region. Qian Bo, China's ambassador to Fiji since 2018, was appointed as the first special envoy of the Chinese government on Pacific Islands affairs, foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin announced.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3210735/china-names-special-envoy-pacific-islands-rivalry-us-heats-region>

Peaceful development path worked well: senior Chinese diplomat

Global Times, February 19, 2023

China's own experience shows that the peaceful development path has worked, and worked well, said China's senior diplomat Wang Yi at the Munich Security Conference (MSC). Wang, director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, made the remarks when delivering a keynote speech to participants of the MSC.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202302/1285718.shtml>

China plays catch-up to ChatGPT as hype builds around AI

Ryan McMorrow, Nian Liu, Eleanor Olcott and Madhumita Murgia

Financial Times, February 20, 2023

China's tech giants including Baidu, Alibaba and NetEase are racing to match the west's recent developments in artificial intelligence, touting projects that they hope will achieve the same buzz created by the release of ChatGPT. After months of announcing cost cuts and headcount reductions, big groups are now optimistically presenting investment plans to rival OpenAI's chatbot, while trademark trolls are lining up to claim words related to ChatGPT's achievements.

<https://www.ft.com/content/a4f6c01e-403f-4d43-9c6a-713d49771a4d>

China publishes report on US' hegemonic, domineering and bullying practices

Xu Keyue

Global Times, February 20, 2023

China on Monday released a report on US hegemony and its perils to expose the US' abuse of hegemony in the political, military, economic, financial, technological and cultural fields, by presenting the relevant facts, and to draw greater international attention to the perils of the US' practices to world peace and stability and the well-being of all peoples. The report also pointed out that the US' surveillance is indiscriminate. All can be targets of its surveillance, be they rivals or allies, or even leaders of allied countries such as former German chancellor Angela Merkel and several French presidents. Cyber surveillance and attacks launched by the US such as "Prism," "Dirtbox," "Irritant Horn" and "Telescreen Operation" are all proof that the US is closely monitoring its allies and partners. Such eavesdropping on allies and partners has already caused worldwide outrage.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202302/1285858.shtml>

*Sylloge on China is compiled by Mr. Niranjan C. Oak
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