

May 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

China's top foundry SMIC says profits halved in first quarter, with 'no sign' of a full market recovery yet

Che Pan

South China Morning Post, May 11, 2023

Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corp (SMIC), China's top contract chip maker, posted its biggest drop in quarterly revenue in over a decade, reflecting sluggish recovery in global chip demand. During the three months ended March 31, sales at SMIC dropped 20.6 per cent year on year to US\$1.46 billion, beating the median estimate of US\$1.44 billion by 14 analysts surveyed by Bloomberg.

<https://www.scmp.com/tech/tech-war/article/3220251/chinas-top-foundry-smic-says-profits-halved-first-quarter-no-sign-full-market-recovery-yet>

China's cargo craft Tianzhou-6 docks with space station combination

Global Times, May 11, 2023

The cargo craft Tianzhou-6 completed its status setting and docked with the orbiting Tiangong space station on May 11, the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) said. At 5:16 a.m. (Beijing Time), Tianzhou-6 docked at the rear docking port of the Tianhe core module, said the CMSA. The Shenzhou-15 taikonauts onboard the space station will enter the cargo craft and transfer the payloads as scheduled.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202305/1290516.shtml>

China's nuclear weapons explosion: will they sign disarmament treaties?

Peter Hussey

Warrior Maven, May 11, 2023

However, to make the case that a benign and friendly US attitude toward China would do the arms control trick, von Hippel and Garwin invent a history of the end of the Cold War with the USSR that is totally at odds with the facts. They claim the [Soviet proposed] nuclear freeze movement transformed the US-USSR relationship, limited arms racing and brought about the START arms reduction process.

<https://wariormaven.com/global-security/chinas-nuclear-weapons-explosion-will-they-sign-disarmament-treaties>

Caught in China-US rivalry, South Korea is tempted by military nuclear capacity

Philippe Mesmer

Le Monde, May 11, 2023

South Korea is concerned about its deteriorating security environment, North Korean nuclear development and tensions between the Chinese, Russians and Americans. It hoped that Washington would agree to deploy nuclear weapons on its soil for deterrence purposes, or even let it develop its own arsenal.

https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2023/05/11/caught-in-china-us-rivalry-south-korea-is-tempted-by-military-nuclear-capacity_6026343_23.html

China-Australia economic and trade ties facing important window period: envoy

Global Times, May 11, 2023

After years of tensions due to a series of hostile moves by the previous Australian administration against China, bilateral relations are showing signs of improvement. Still, differences and hurdles remain.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202305/1290570.shtml>

UAE-China nuclear deals signal evolving energy relationship

Salim A. Essaid

Al Monitor, May 11, 2023

The United Arab Emirates signed three agreements with Chinese nuclear energy organizations, which experts believe is only the beginning of the nuclear energy goals for the country, and region. Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation, which is developing the UAE's nuclear energy sector, signed memorandums of understanding with China's Nuclear Power Operations Research Institute, the China National Nuclear Corporation Overseas, and the China Nuclear Energy Industry Corporation.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/05/uae-china-nuclear-deals-signal-evolving-energy-relationship#ixzz84h9WNgqw>

Wang-Sullivan meeting opens window for breaking China-US diplomatic stalemate but Washington's sincerity essential for meaningful progress

Global Times, May 12, 2023

The meeting between China's top diplomat Wang Yi and US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan in Vienna opens a window for the two countries to remove obstacles and ease tensions amid a diplomatic stalemate after the balloon incident, but whether the bilateral relations can be fixed remains to be seen given US' problematic China policy and its inconsistent words and actions, analysts said.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202305/1290612.shtml>

Nato office in Japan risks further entangling ties with China: analysts

Minnie Chan

South China Morning Post, May 12, 2023

Japan's plan for a Nato liaison office will further complicate Tokyo's relations with China, with Beijing likely to see the move as a challenge to its reunification plan with Taiwan, according to analysts. Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi said that Japan was in talks to open Nato's first liaison office in Asia, citing Russia's invasion of Ukraine as a driving factor.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3220247/nato-office-japan-risks-further-entangling-ties-china-analysts>

EU says China will take advantage of Russian defeat in Ukraine

Henry Foy and Laura Dubois

Financial Times, May 12, 2023

The EU's chief diplomat has warned that China will "take geopolitical advantage" of a Russian defeat in Ukraine and that Brussels needs to respond to Beijing's global ambitions. Josep Borrell, the bloc's high representative for foreign policy, has urged member states to find a "coherent strategy" to deal with China that responds to both Beijing's rising nationalism and a "hardening of the US-China competition".

<https://www.ft.com/content/b18e073e-f280-4189-82a1-536f39eb3ebb>

Asia-Pacific diplomacy of Biden administration source of tension

Zhu Feng

Global Times, May 12, 2023

Since the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis, the Biden administration has been trying to tie China and Russia together, pushing NATO to move eastward and urging its Asia-Pacific allies to act tough on China. However, the US is determined to maintain hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region, and does not hesitate to suppress and contain China by encouraging bloc confrontation, undermining regional economic cooperation, and pushing for a new Cold War.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202305/1290617.shtml>

How politics and business are driving the AI arms race with China

Will Henshall

Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, May 12, 2023

The reasons that a pause in AI won't happen are multifold—and are about more than just the research itself. Critics of the proposed pause argue that regulating or restricting AI would help China pull ahead in AI development, causing the United States to lose its military and economic edge. To be sure, the United States must keep its citizens secure. But failing to regulate AI or to coordinate with China in cases where that is in the United States' interest would endanger US citizens.

<https://thebulletin.org/2023/05/how-politics-and-business-are-driving-the-ai-arms-race-with-china/>

China's largest chipmaker SMIC reports drop in revenue

Global Times, May 12, 2023

China's largest chipmaker Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation (SMIC) reported a drop in revenue in its first quarter fiscal results on Thursday, but said it will roll out new products and take other measures to boost growth amid lingering external uncertainties including the US crackdown.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202305/1290598.shtml>

US and China hold talks on global security in effort to defuse tensions

Demetri Sevastopulo and Felicia Schwartz

Financial Times, May 12, 2023

US national security adviser Jake Sullivan and China's top diplomat Wang Yi held talks in Vienna in an attempt to stabilise relations between the countries, which have hit their lowest level since diplomatic ties were normalised in 1979.

<https://www.ft.com/content/f544c19a-bf89-4e09-8a42-f385a77dbc8e>

US debt woes cast dark cloud over G7; radical anti-China plans face growing resistance

Wang Cong and Yu Xi

Global Times, May 12, 2023

For weeks, US and Japanese officials have been hyping about, among other things, plans to counter China at the upcoming summit in the Japanese city of Hiroshima from May 19-21. But some have raised concerns about whether US President Joe Biden will even be able to attend in person, as he has failed to reach any deal with US congressional leaders over raising the debt ceiling to avoid what could be a disastrous US default.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202305/1290628.shtml>

China's nuclear ambitions get a boost from Russia, but is energy the only goal?

Liu Zhen

South China Morning Post, May 13, 2023

The confirmation came last week when Russia said it had agreed to supply highly enriched uranium-235 to energy-hungry China over the next three years. The announcement backed up reports that the shipments of nuclear fuel – enriched up to 30 per cent – were part of a deal to supply a demonstration fast-neutron power plant, a technology that could help China ease its shortage of nuclear fuel.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3220391/chinas-nuclear-ambitions-get-boost-russia-energy-only-goal>

Expert: Nuclear weapons will bring disaster to ROK

China Military Online, May 13, 2023

Yoon abandoned the stance of neutrality on the nuclear issue upheld by previous ROK presidents and has fully aligned with the strategic arrangements of the US, vigorously catered to the strategic deployments of the US, and even actively accommodated the desires of Japan and used the ROK as a bridgehead to confront both the DPRK and China.

http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/OPINIONS_209196/Opinions_209197/16224029.html

Expanding China-Russia Cooperation Has Risks, Experts Say

Xiaoshan Xue

Voice of America, May 13, 2023

A senior adviser to the Biden administration and other experts say that deepening cooperation between China and Russia could overturn decades of stable international nuclear arms control. Pranay Vaddi, the U.S. National Security Council's senior director for arms control, said that China and Russia have been deepening cooperation on key technologies for nuclear weapons while strengthening ties with Iran, according to Bloomberg.

<https://www.voanews.com/a/expanding-china-russia-cooperation-could-destabilize-international-nuclear-arms-control-experts-say-/7091670.html>

New stand-off between Vietnamese and Chinese ships reported in South China Sea

Minnie Chan

South China Morning Post, May 14, 2023

Chinese and Vietnamese vessels have been involved in a new confrontation in a disputed part of the South China Sea after Hanoi tried to expand oil drilling operations in the area, according to social media reports. Neither country has confirmed the encounters, which indicates that both sides are trying to avoid further escalation, according to one Chinese observer.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3220534/new-stand-between-vietnamese-and-chinese-ships-reported-south-china-sea>

U.S. eyes access to Papua New Guinea naval base and airport

Ryo Nakamura and Rurika Imahashi

Nikkei Asia, May 14, 2023

Gen. Kenneth Wilsbach, commander of the U.S. Pacific Air Forces, expressed interest in closer cooperation with Pacific Island countries in a recent interview with Nikkei. "Obviously we would like to disperse in as many places as we can to make the targeting problem for the Chinese as difficult as possible," Wilsbach said. China signed a security agreement in April 2022 with the Solomon Islands, which are just across the Bougainville Strait from Papua New Guinea.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Indo-Pacific/U.S.-eyes-access-to-Papua-New-Guinea-naval-base-and-airport>

Xi Jinping's Taiwan ambitions threaten China's rise

Gideon Rachman

Financial Times, May 15, 2023

"Hide your brightness, bide your time." That famous piece of advice from Deng Xiaoping has served China well over the past 40 years. Deng, the leader whose economic policies transformed China, understood that if his country was to become richer and stronger, it must avoid confrontation with the west.

<https://www.ft.com/content/7b39260f-c855-4069-9c8f-4b575e65c417>

Lack of U.S.-China talks puts world 'in trouble': Philippine envoy

Ryo Nakamura

Nikkei Asia, May 15, 2023

The Philippines is urging greater dialogue between the U.S. and China to reduce tensions strained by issues such as Taiwan, advanced technology and human rights, Manila's ambassador to the U.S. told Nikkei in a recent interview. "We want to see more dialogue or a more open line of communication between China and the United States," Jose Manuel Romualdez said. "That will give us some form of peace of mind."

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Editor-s-Picks/Interview/Lack-of-U.S.-China-talks-puts-world-in-trouble-Philippine-envoy>

‘China-friendly’ Hungary hails Beijing’s peace efforts in Ukraine during meeting between top diplomats

Kawala Xie,

South China Morning Post, May 16, 2023

China called on Europe to avoid “bloc confrontations” while Hungary vowed support for China’s peace efforts in Ukraine during talks at the start of Hungarian Foreign Affairs Minister Peter Szijjarto’s visit to China. Top Chinese diplomat Wang Yi hailed Hungary’s “China-friendly” policy in a meeting with Szijjarto, who is on an official visit to China this week.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3220752/china-friendly-hungary-hails-beijings-peace-efforts-ukraine-during-meeting-between-top-diplomats>

China confirms YJ-12A missile’s complex trajectories and 500 km supersonic range

Joseph P Chacko

Frontier India, May 16, 2023

A few days ago, the Chinese state-run media outlet CCTV disclosed that the supersonic anti-ship missile known as the Eagle Strike 12A (YJ-12A) ranges up to 500 kilometres and is primarily intended to attack large surface ships belonging to hostile nations. In the past, it was believed to have an operational range of 250 and 400 kilometres.

<https://frontierindia.com/china-confirms-yj-12a-missiles-complex-trajectories-and-500-km-supersonic-range/>

Chinese national charged for conspiring to provide materials for the production of ballistic missiles to Iran in violation of U.S. sanctions

US Attorney’s Office, May 16, 2023

Xiangjiang Qiao, an Employee of a Chinese Company Sanctioned for Its Role in the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Conspired to Provide Isostatic Graphite, a Material Used in the Production of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, to Iran.

<https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/chinese-national-charged-conspiring-provide-materials-production-ballistic-missiles>

Summit a ‘major diplomatic event’ to boost China’s ties with Central Asian nations amid Ukraine, Afghanistan concerns

Minnie Chan and Laura Zhou

South China Morning Post, May 16, 2023

China is expected to further boost ties with Central Asia when President Xi Jinping hosts his counterparts from the region amid uncertainties stemming from Russia’s war in Ukraine and increasing hostility from the West. Leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan invited to first China-Central Asia summit. Presence of ethnic Russians in the five countries has triggered fears Moscow could target their territory next, analyst says.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3213710/summit-major-diplomatic-event-boost-chinas-ties-central-asian-nations-amid-ukraine-afghanistan>

Rosatom delivers nuclear fuel fabrication equipment to China

TASS, May 16, 2023

TVEL (Rosatom's fuel company) supplied equipment for nuclear fuel fabrication to China, the company reported. China currently operates four power units with VVER-1000 reactors as part of the Tianwan NPP. Since 2009, fuel for these types of reactors has been manufactured at the Ibinsk plant under a TVEL license.

<https://tass.com/economy/1618245>

China says ready to ‘smash’ Taiwan self-rule as US prepares major arms package, sends advisers

Associated Press, May 16, 2023

China’ is prepared to “resolutely smash any form of Taiwan independence,” its military said, as the U.S. reportedly prepares to accelerate the sale of defensive weapons and other military assistance to the self-governing island democracy. A recent increase in exchanges between the U.S. and Taiwanese militaries is an “extremely wrong and dangerous move,” Defense Ministry spokesperson Col. Tan Kefei said in a statement and video posted online.

<https://apnews.com/article/us-china-taiwan-military-b7d7f4e8ee181301b0b0ceefc1dce74b>

When the chips are down: A US-China cold war is brewing

Omer Kabir

CTech, May 17, 2023

At a time when demand is at its peak, the Chinese trade in semiconductors is actually shrinking. The reason: the reaction of the global industry to American sanctions. While China is trying to find components that are not included in the boycott and continue production, the American government is subsidizing the establishment of advanced factories and reducing dependence on Asia.

<https://www.calcalistech.com/ctechnews/article/502slb2s5>

Chinese-made military drones have hidden tech to stop them being used to attack China, source claims

Minnie Chan

South China Morning Post, May 17, 2023

Chinese drones are leading the global market, but hidden “watchdog” technology is in place to limit their use in attacks on China. A source close to the military said all Chinese combat and reconnaissance drones had been designed and developed to recognise an “electric geofence” encircling the borders of China’s territory.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3220830/built-watchdogs-protect-china-its-own-drones-military-source>

South Korea gets tough on tech leaks to China

Christian Davies and Song Jung-a

Financial Times, May 17, 2023

Yeo Han-koo, who served as trade minister in Seoul until May 2021, said efforts to acquire South Korean technology have become more aggressive as Beijing seeks to mitigate the damage from Washington’s own moves to curtail Chinese access to American technology and expertise.

<https://www.ft.com/content/9e72a96f-5d92-460f-a154-0715c343e7c9>

BeiDou navigation satellites welcomes new, stronger member after 3 years

Fan Anqi and Fan Wei

Global Times, May 17, 2023

Following a three-year interval after the dense networking of the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS) global constellation was completed, the first backup satellite was launched on May 17 morning. The launch will enhance the system's service performance, enabling users to achieve more rapid and precise positioning.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202305/1290879.shtml>

How long will it take for China's nuclear power to replace coal?

Shih Yu (Elsie) Hung

Forbes, May 17, 2023

In contrast, for over a decade, China has been steadily expanding its nuclear power fleet to provide stable, reliable, clean baseload electricity for its growing economy. China's latest Five Year Plan sets the 2025 targets of 70GW of nuclear capacity as well as 3,000GW total power generating capacity from all fuels.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/thebakersinstitute/2023/05/17/how-long-will-it-take-for-chinas-nuclear-power-to-replace-coal/?sh=151b579a3b1b>

South China Sea: Asean, Beijing agrees on next step for delayed code of conduct to regulate behaviour in disputed waterway

Liu Zhen

South China Morning Post, May 18, 2023

The South China Sea code of conduct will complete its second reading this year, following an agreement between Chinese and Asean negotiating parties in their first formal meeting since June 2021, China's foreign ministry said. The legally binding document was supposed to come into effect last year to regulate behaviour in the disputed waterway, which is also at the centre of rising geopolitical tensions between Beijing and Washington.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3220974/beijing-asean-agree-next-step-delayed-south-china-sea-code>

China's largest seawater uranium extraction test platform put into operation

Global Times, May 18, 2023

China's largest seawater uranium extraction test platform has been successfully launched and made accessible to the public in South China's Hainan Province. The platform, built by China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC), has a total area of about 670 square meters.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202305/1290953.shtml>

China's semiconductor developers eye shift to RISC-V architecture amid growing chip demand in cars, data centres and AI, executive says

Che Pan

South China Morning Post, May 18, 2023

China's growing demand for semiconductors used in electric vehicles, high-end servers in data centres and artificial intelligence applications provides a vast opportunity for RISC-V processors to flourish, according to a proponent of the open-source, royalty-free chip design, even as integrated circuits (ICs) built on proprietary Arm and x86 architectures continue to dominate the global market.

<https://www.scmp.com/tech/tech-trends/article/3221027/chinas-semiconductor-developers-eye-shift-risc-v-architecture-amid-growing-chip-demand-cars-data>

IAEA chief expects wider, deeper nuclear cooperation with China

Liu Xinyu and Yu Tao

Xinhua, May 18, 2023

Rafael Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), hailed China's fast-growing nuclear energy industry, and expressed hope to strengthen nuclear cooperation between the agency and China, in a recent exclusive interview with Xinhua.

<http://english.news.cn/20230518/b1cdf738074b49cd8c37d47ceaa4197e/c.html>

CNNC launches test platform to extract uranium from seawater

World Nuclear News, May 18, 2023

China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) has commissioned a seawater uranium extraction test platform, said to be the largest such test platform to be built in the South China Sea. CNNC noted that only a few institutes in China have carried out on-site tests of seawater uranium extraction. It said its new marine test platform has the ability to carry out material verification and amplification experiments in real ocean conditions.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/CNNC-launches-test-platform-to-extract-uranium-fro>

Japan's pacifism hangs in balance as China and North Korea threats loom

Tessa Wong & Eri Okazaki

BBC, May 19, 2023

An assertive China is spending billions on its military. It has made increasingly daring moves in the South China Sea, especially against Taiwan, which sits on the doorstep of Japan's southernmost islands. This has fuelled Japanese anxiety that should conflict break out in Taiwan, Japan would not only be pulled into a war between the US and China, but also targeted as an ally.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-65643346>

Chinese researchers discover evidence of ancient ocean on Mars

Global Times, May 19, 2023

An international team of researchers led by Chinese scholars has made another groundbreaking discovery on the surface of Mars. By analyzing data obtained from the multi-spectral camera onboard the Zhurong rover, they have found evidence of marine sedimentary deposits, providing the first geological proof of the existence of an ancient ocean in the northern region of the Red Planet.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202305/1291013.shtml>

Could the US missile defence system used by Ukraine help Taiwan? Analysts are split

Minnie Chan

South China Morning Post, May 19, 2023

Taiwan officials are monitoring Ukraine's use of an advanced version of the US-made Patriot Advanced Capability - 3 (PAC-3) missile defence system to intercept Russian hypersonic rockets, but analysts are split whether the system could defend the self-ruled island from attacks launched by mainland China.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3221064/could-us-missile-defence-system-used-ukraine-help-taiwan-analysts-are-split>

From a nuclear briefcase to hypocritical accusations against China, the G7 a drama driven by farce

Global Times, May 20, 2023

Unfortunately, when G7 leaders pledged on Friday their commitment to achieving a world without nuclear weapons while ensuring security for all, they took aim at China, ridiculously claiming that China is accelerating the build-up of its nuclear arsenal without transparency, which "poses a concern to global and regional stability."

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202305/1291041.shtml>

World leaders warn China and North Korea on nukes as Ukraine's Zelenskyy travels to G7 summit

Foster Klug, Adam Schreck and Zeke Miller

Associated Press, May 20, 2023

Leaders of the world's most powerful democracies warned China and North Korea against building up their nuclear arsenals, pivoting to major northeast Asian crises ahead of the arrival later of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. China, the world's No. 2 economy, sits at the nexus of many of those concerns. There is increasing anxiety in Asia that Beijing, which has been steadily building up its nuclear bomb program, could try to seize Taiwan by force, sparking a wider conflict.

<https://apnews.com/article/g7-japan-hiroshima-ukraine-biden-kishida-3ac64076f63786490a1b062f9a408408>

Beijing blasts G7 for hyping up China-related issues, interfering in China's internal affairs

Fan Anqi

Global Times, May 20, 2023

China slammed the Group of Seven (G7) for hyping up China-related issues in a communiqué and other documents adopted at the G7 Hiroshima Summit, saying what the bloc does is to hinder international peace, undermine regional stability and curb other countries' development and China has lodged stern démarches to the summit's host Japan and other parties concerned.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202305/1291039.shtml>

*Sylloge on China is compiled by Mr. Niranjan C. Oak
with inputs from Mr. Kushal Agrawal*

**Nuclear and Arms Control Centre, MP-IDSA
And
Indian Pugwash Society**