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# 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

## **More than just nuclear: risk reduction in the China-US relationship**

Fiona S. Cunningham

The Diplomat, November 10, 2023

In a June speech, National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan indicated that the United States would need new strategies to achieve its longstanding goal to “reduce the risk of nuclear conflict.” From a U.S. perspective, China’s nuclear arsenal is contributing to that risk for at least three reasons. First, China has not revealed the goals and reasons behind its nuclear modernization, which Sullivan described as “one of the largest peacetime nuclear build-ups in history.”

<https://thediplomat.com/2023/11/more-than-just-nuclear-risk-reduction-in-the-china-us-relationship/>

## **China, France share experience in nuclear energy development**

CGTN, November 11, 2023

It is important for China and France to share their experiences in the sustainable development of nuclear energy in the two countries, said participants of a recent international symposium in Beijing. The China-France International Symposium on Innovative Development of Nuclear Energy was held in Beijing from November 7 to 9, 2023, discussing key contents of a blue book on nuclear energy and low-carbon development. In April, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) and Electricite De France (EDF) on a joint prospective study for technology development and market trends, as well as a blue book to show the countries' common ground in addressing climate change and energy issues.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2023-11-11/China-France-share-experience-in-nuclear-energy-development-1oEkfDVwxFu/index.html>

## **Biden, Xi set to pledge ban on AI in autonomous weapons like drones, nuclear warhead control: sources**

Igor Patrick, Mark Magnier and Amber Wang

South China Morning Post, November 11, 2023

In a landmark agreement set to be announced at Wednesday’s much-awaited bilateral meeting, Presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping are poised to pledge a ban on the use of artificial intelligence in autonomous weaponry, such as drones, and in the control and deployment of nuclear warheads, two sources familiar with the matter confirmed to the Post. The potential dangers of AI are expected to be a major focus of the US-China discussions, taking place on the sidelines of this year’s Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in San Francisco.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3241177/biden-xi-set-pledge-ban-ai-autonomous-weapons-drones-nuclear-warhead-control-sources>

## **Beijing's data and spy laws threaten to spur decoupling with Europe, says business group**

Joe Leahy

Financial Times, November 12, 2023

China's amended anti-espionage and data laws threaten to spur decoupling with Europe by making it difficult for foreign companies to invest, according to a European business lobby group. The remarks from BusinessEurope, which represents commercial lobby groups from across the EU, come after China sought to allay growing concerns over the foreign investment environment last week with a memo ordering local authorities to cease discriminatory practices. China has been cracking down on due diligence companies, detaining local employees of US group Mintz and investigating others, such as expert network CapVision, making compliance more difficult.

<https://www.ft.com/content/93bbc4ee-41ee-4552-9da0-d2cffaae0528>

## **China, five Southeast Asian countries to hold joint military exercise**

China Military Online, November 12, 2023

The Chinese military will hold a joint exercise with Cambodian, Lao, Malaysian, Thai, and Vietnamese forces in south China's Guangdong Province in mid-to-late November, the Ministry of National Defence said. Themed on countering terrorism and maintaining maritime safety, the exercise will organize joint and live anti-terrorism and anti-piracy drills, according to the ministry. The aim is to help participants enhance their urban anti-terrorism, maritime anti-terrorism and anti-piracy capabilities, and deepen military mutual trust and cooperation to safeguard regional peace and stability, the ministry said.

[http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/CHINA\\_209163/TopStories\\_209189/16266215.html](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/CHINA_209163/TopStories_209189/16266215.html)

## **The China Dilemma**

John Erath

Centre for Arms Control and Non-proliferation, November 13, 2023

The lack of transparency about China's nuclear buildup adds to the problem. Historically, China maintained a "minimal" deterrent, but its doctrine has clearly changed over the last decade with President Xi Jinping calling for a "world class" military by 2035, including nuclear forces. China has been modernizing its armed forces for a long time, but the past few years have seen unprecedented growth in its nuclear dimension. It may be comfortable to explain China's nuclear expansion as merely a reaction to U.S. (and Russian) nuclear modernization, but this is too facile. These programs have been underway for years and do not involve increases in the size of U.S. or Russian strategic arsenals.

<https://armscontrolcenter.org/the-china-dilemma/>

## **Nuclear testing could start a new arms race**

Anton La Guardia

The Economist, November 13, 2023

Seismological detectors around the world could soon twitch not to the tremors of earthquakes, but of an underground nuclear explosion, at Novaya Zemlya in Russia's Arctic region, or Lop Nur, in the Xinjiang region of China. Then, soon enough, a blast at the Nevada National Security Site in America. None of the big three powers has detonated a nuclear device since 1996, the year the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (ctbt) was negotiated. Yet satellite imagery suggests intense activity at their test sites. A detonation at any of them could start an arms race more dangerous than that of the cold war.

<https://www.economist.com/the-world-ahead/2023/11/13/nuclear-testing-could-start-a-new-arms-race>

## **How Chinese aggression is increasing the risk of war in the Taiwan Strait**

Christian Shepherd and Vic Chiang

The Washington Post, November 13, 2023

China's increasingly aggressive activities around Taiwan — and its refusal to speak to the U.S. military through channels designed to avoid conflict — is fueling fears that the United States could be drawn into a third major war in the world. Reestablishing those communication channels will be high on the agenda when President Biden talks with Chinese leader Xi Jinping this week, their first meeting in a year. But China is being deliberately unpredictable and incommunicative, analysts say, to keep the U.S. military off guard in the Pacific and to warn against American attempts to help defend Taiwan.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/11/13/china-biden-xi-meeting-apec-taiwan/>

## **China urges greater efforts to support establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zone in Middle East**

China Daily, November 14, 2023

A Chinese envoy called for greater efforts to support the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. "Given the current context, the international community should make greater efforts to support the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), which is of great urgency and relevance in facilitating reconciliation and cooperation among regional countries in the Middle East and advancing the Middle East peace process," said Geng Shuang, China's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202311/14/WS6552d5e0a31090682a5ee0a8.html>

## **Xi Jinping enlists Flying Tigers as China's propagandists seek warmer tone on US**

Joe Leahy Sun Yu and Corbin Duncan

Financial Times, November 14, 2023

Here the story of the US and Chinese pilots who together defended China's Nationalist government against the Japanese during the Second World War is commemorated through exhibits of their flight jackets and portraits of their P-40 fighters, with distinctive shark grin livery. After years of portraying the US as a hegemon in terminal decline — especially during the coronavirus pandemic, when bilateral relations plumbed new lows — China's state media has recently revived the story of the “spirit of the Flying Tigers” to set the tone for reviving dialogue with Washington.

<https://www.ft.com/content/33d39f0d-343f-483e-b6f3-4913542fbc40>

## **China demands border security guarantee from Myanmar junta as rebels gain ground**

Liu Zhen

South China Morning Post, November 14, 2023

Myanmar must guarantee the safety and stability of its border with China, Beijing stressed, as the Naypyidaw junta lost ground to rebel groups in the country's north. Foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning repeated China's “high concerns” over the conflicts in northern Myanmar. “We urge the relevant parties in Myanmar to cease fighting as soon as possible,” Mao said in Beijing. All parties should resolve differences peacefully through dialogue and consultation, she said.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3241544/high-concerns-china-demands-border-security-guarantee-myanmar-junta-rebels-gain-ground>

## **The US and China re-engage on arms control. What may come next**

Daryl G. Kimball

Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, November 15, 2023

The United States has a decades-long experience of nuclear arms control and strategic stability talks with the Soviet Union, and later Russia. However, there has not been a sustained bilateral dialogue between Washington and Beijing on how to reduce the risk of conflict, nuclear escalation, and nuclear arms control and disarmament. Until recently, China had rebuffed US overtures for

bilateral talks on nuclear risk reduction and arms control, and on other security issues. Adding to the tensions, China has embarked since the early 2000s on a major buildup of its relatively smaller nuclear arsenal and has resisted calls for a global halt on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

<https://thebulletin.org/2023/11/the-us-and-china-re-engage-on-arms-control-what-may-come-next/>

## **Biden launches AI ‘risk and safety’ talks with China. Is nuclear C2 a likely focus?**

Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

Breaking Defence, November 15, 2023

Following a highly-publicized meeting between US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jjinping, Biden announced three key points of agreement. While much of the focus is going to be on the two sides restarting mil-to-mil communications and counternarcotics cooperation (specifically against fentanyl), the third initiative stood out as new item on the US-China agenda: artificial intelligence. “Thirdly,” the president said at a press conference after the summit, “we’re gonna get our experts together to discuss risk and safety issues associated with artificial intelligence. As many of you [know] who travel with me around the world almost everywhere I go, every major leader wants to talk about the impact of artificial intelligence. These are tangible steps in the right direction to determine what’s useful and what’s not useful, but dangerous and what’s acceptable.”

<https://breakingdefense.com/2023/11/biden-launches-ai-risk-and-safety-talks-with-china-is-nuclear-c2-a-likely-focus/>

## **China's Xudapu nuclear power plant starts building another power unit**

China Daily, November 15, 2023

With a total investment of 140 billion yuan (about \$19.5 billion), the Xudapu Nuclear Power Plant is designed to have six pressurized water reactors with a combined installed capacity of 7.6 GW. Upon full completion, the plant can generate 54 billion kWh of electricity annually. The nuclear power plant is invested by China National Nuclear Power Co Ltd, a subsidiary of China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC). Construction of the first two power units at the nuclear power plant started in 2021. CNNC now has 10 nuclear power units under construction, with a total installed capacity of 11.42 GW.

[https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202311/15/WS6554b6eaa31090682a5ee592\\_2.html](https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202311/15/WS6554b6eaa31090682a5ee592_2.html)

## **The big, quiet issue Biden and Xi are avoiding**

Michael Hirsh

Politico, November 15, 2023

All this means that, despite the positive noises coming out of San Francisco this week — where Biden is meeting Xi on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation summit — many nuclear experts see little immediate hope of any deal that might reverse this nuclear escalation. Biden's negotiations with Xi in San Francisco are expected to cover a wide range of issues, but U.S. officials say they want to focus on re-establishing military-to-military communication, which was suspended after then-Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan in 2022.

<https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2023/11/15/biden-china-nuclear-policy-00127147>

## **Chinese defense ministry delegation attends 10th ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus**

China Military Online, November 16, 2023

A delegation of the Chinese Ministry of National Defense attended the 10th ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-PLUS) held in Jakarta, Indonesia, on November 16, according to Defense Spokesperson Senior Colonel Zhang Xiaogang, at a press briefing. Spokesperson Zhang introduced that during the conference, the Chinese side called on all parties to practice genuine multilateralism, uphold correct security concepts, stay committed to consultation and cooperation instead of conflict and confrontation, and fulfill their responsibilities for world peace and development.

[http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/CHINA\\_209163/TopStories\\_209189/16267196.html](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/CHINA_209163/TopStories_209189/16267196.html)

## **New Report: US must modernize nuclear posture for tri-polar world**

John A. Tirpak

Air and Space Forces, November 16, 2023

To confront a world with not one but two major nuclear powers—neither of which is willing to enter arms talks—the U.S. must revive its atrophied nuclear weapons enterprise with all speed and build up its stock of conventional weapons in order to deter war, the chairs of a bipartisan strategic posture panel told the House Armed Services Committee on Nov. 15. The U.S. has no margin left for modernizing its nuclear forces, and it's doubtful that planned upgrades will arrive on time, Madelyn R. Creedon and former Sen. Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.), chair and vice chair of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States, told lawmakers after spending the last year studying the issue.

<https://www.airandspaceforces.com/us-modernize-nuclear-posture-tri-polar-world/>

## **Construction begins on Unit 1 of China's Xudapu Nuclear Power Plant**

CGTN, November 16, 2023

Construction started for Unit 1 of China's northernmost nuclear power plant, Xudapu Nuclear Power Plant. With a designed lifespan of 60 years, the plant has a capacity of 1,290 megawatts and is expected to be completed by 2028. It adopts a homegrown pressurized water reactor with third-generation technology, whose safety system reaches international standards. Located in Xingcheng City, northeast China's Liaoning Province, the nuclear plant will be able to provide electricity to neighboring cities and it is close to Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei Province.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2023-11-16/Construction-begins-on-Unit-1-of-China-s-Xudapu-Nuclear-Power-Plant-1oM2ijlODza/index.html>

## **Taiwan 'most dangerous' issue in China-US relations, Xi tells Biden in meeting**

Jack Lau and Lawrence Chung

South China Morning Post, November 16, 2023

Chinese President Xi Jinping has told his US counterpart Joe Biden to stop arming Taiwan and denied Beijing has imminent plans for military aggression, in a candid exchange on the “most dangerous” issue in the bilateral relationship. During his four-hour meeting with Biden on Wednesday in California, Xi said Beijing’s preference was for peaceful reunification with Taiwan, but went on to talk about conditions in which force could be used, according to a senior US official. Xi was trying to indicate that China is not preparing for a massive attack on Taiwan, but that does not change the US approach, the official said.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3241699/xi-biden-summit-military-military-talks-resume-equality-and-respect>

## **How the US and China talking AI safety could reduce nuclear war risk**

Jeremy Hsu

New Scientist, November 16, 2023

The US and China agree on the need for bilateral talks to reduce the risks from advanced artificial intelligence. Such talks could lead to restrictions on using AI to control nuclear weapons command and control systems. The affirmation of the need for government talks on AI safety came out of a meeting between US president Joe Biden and China’s president Xi Jinping during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in San Francisco on 15 November. It may provide some common ground at a time when the US has restricted exports of computer chip technologies to China in an effort to limit China’s AI development. “It’s pretty low-hanging fruit, because we all agree that



nuclear weapons should not be used and we all agree that we should responsibly manage them,” says Lyle Morris at the Asia Society Policy Institute, a think tank based in New York and Washington DC. “And then we also can agree that having a human in the loop is important for [managing] escalation of nuclear weapons.”

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2403453-how-the-us-and-china-talking-ai-safety-could-reduce-nuclear-war-risk/>

## **Measures taken by China against dumping of nuclear-contaminated water by Japan are entirely reasonable and necessary: FM**

Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United States of America, November 17, 2023

During his meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, President Xi Jinping noted that the discharge of Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water bears on the health of all humanity, the global marine environment and the international public interest. Japan should take seriously the legitimate concerns both from at home and abroad and properly handle this in a responsible and constructive manner. I need to stress that the precautionary measures taken by China and some other countries in response to Japan’s move to protect food safety and people’s health are entirely legitimate, reasonable and necessary. We hope that the Japanese side will work with China to find an appropriate way to resolve the issue of the discharge of Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water through consultation and negotiation in a constructive manner.

[http://us.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/fyrth/202311/t20231117\\_11182472.htm](http://us.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/fyrth/202311/t20231117_11182472.htm)

## **Full text of Xi's written speech at Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation CEO Summit**

Xinhua, November 17, 2023

Chinese President Xi Jinping delivered a written speech at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) CEO Summit as follows: Three decades ago, where humanity should be headed in the post-Cold War era was the question of the world, of history and of the times in front of Asia-Pacific leaders. In response, they followed the trend toward peace and development, and convened the inaugural APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting. They agreed unanimously to rise above the outdated mentality of bloc confrontation and zero-sum game, deepen economic cooperation and integration in the region, and build a dynamic, harmonious and prosperous Asia-Pacific community. This major decision enabled Asia-Pacific development and economic globalization to embark on a fast track of growth, turning the region into a powerhouse for world economic growth, an anchor of stability for global development, and a pacesetter for international cooperation.

<https://english.news.cn/20231117/dd43ebe5dea64c6abfaf4eda9a98c3cc/c.html>

## **China's cosmic ray observatory releases energy spectrum for highest-energy gamma ray**

CGTN, November 17, 2023

China's Large High Altitude Air Shower Observatory (LHAASO), a high-altitude cosmic ray observatory, has released the precise energy spectrum for the highest-energy gamma-ray radiation from the brightest gamma-ray burst (GRB) observed to date. The study, conducted by the LHAASO collaboration team, was led by the Institute of High Energy Physics (IHEP) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and the findings were published recently in the journal Science Advances. GRBs are immensely energetic explosions that have been observed in distant galaxies. They are the most energetic and luminous electromagnetic events since the Big Bang.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2023-11-17/China-releases-energy-spectrum-for-highest-energy-gamma-ray-1oNuYYUgPba/index.html>

## **China's nuclear arms are behind U.S.'s but meet needs, expert says**

Toru Tsunashima

Nikkei Asia, November 18, 2023

As Nikkei reported earlier this month, China evidently is procuring Western technologies in order to advance its development of nuclear weapons. How should we look at the risks of the potential use of nuclear arms, especially in East Asia, where both China and North Korea are building up their arsenals? Nikkei recently conducted a written interview with Hans Kristensen, a nuclear disarmament expert who oversees projects on nuclear information at the Federation of American Scientists. Here is an edited excerpt:

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Defense/China-s-nuclear-arms-are-behind-U.S.-s-but-meet-needs-expert-says2>

## **Xi calls on APEC members to stick to innovation, openness to boost regional development**

CGTN, November 18, 2023

Chinese President Xi Jinping has called on Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) members to continue to focus on innovation, openness and green development, as well as inclusiveness and mutual benefits, to promote regional development. Xi, speaking at the APEC Economic Leaders' Retreat in San Francisco, the United States, urged APEC members to stay committed to innovation-driven development. He said it is important to follow the trends of scientific and technological advancement, more proactively promote exchanges and cooperation

in science and technology, and work together for an open, fair, equitable and non-discriminatory environment for scientific and technological progress.

<https://www.cgtn.com/special/Live-updates-China-U-S-summit-meeting-in-San-Francisco.html>

## **Xi calls for next 'golden 30 years' as APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting concludes**

Deng Xiaoci

Global Times, November 18, 2023

Chinese President Xi Jinping put forward proposals for the Asia Pacific region to usher in another "golden 30 years," calling on Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) members to commit to innovation, openness, green and inclusive development in promoting regional cooperation, as APEC's Economic Leaders' Meeting concluded in San Francisco. Xi made the remarks addressing the 30th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting held at Moscone Center in San Francisco, stating that since the establishment of the economic leaders' regular meeting mechanism, APEC has always stood at the global forefront of openness and development.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202311/1302076.shtml>

## **South China Sea disputes should not define ties, Philippine leader Marcos tells China's Xi at Apec**

Jack Lau and Dewey Sim

South China Morning Post, November 18, 2023

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr of the Philippines said he told Chinese leader Xi Jinping that disputes over the South China Sea should not define bilateral ties. "But nonetheless, the problems remain and it is something that we will need to continue to communicate to find ways to avoid such incidents," Marcos told reporters following a meeting with Xi on the sidelines of the Apec summit in San Francisco. The two leaders met to seek ways to defuse tensions over territorial rights in the busy waterway, where Philippine and Chinese vessels, including coastguard ships, have clashed in recent months. The run-ins included two collisions near the disputed Second Thomas Shoal in October that each side blamed on the other, with Manila summoning the Chinese ambassador.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3242013/south-china-sea-disputes-should-not-define-ties-philippine-leader-marcos-tells-chinas-xi-apec>

## **China-Pakistan Sea Guardian 2023 joint maritime exercise concludes**

China Military Online, November 19, 2023

The seven-day China-Pakistan Sea Guardian 2023 joint maritime exercise concluded in Karachi, Pakistan, on November 17, 2023. Participating troops of the two countries worked together to complete all the scheduled training subjects, achieving the expected purpose. The exercise was launched on November 11 and has been carried out in two phases, featured with shore-based exchanges and maritime joint operations respectively. During the first phase, the two sides conducted professional exchanges, mutual visits, among others. On November 14, the exercise began the second phase of maritime joint operations, focusing on more than 10 subjects, including helicopter cross-deck landing, joint search and rescue, and anti-submarine operations, in the northern waters and airspace of the Arabian Sea.

[http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/CHINA\\_209163/TopStories\\_209189/16267833.html](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/CHINA_209163/TopStories_209189/16267833.html)

## **China's rise is reversing**

Ruchir Sharma

Financial Times, November 19, 2023

In a historic turn, China's rise as an economic superpower is reversing. The biggest global story of the past half century may be over. In 2022, China's share of the world economy shrank a bit. This year it will shrink more significantly, to 17 per cent. That two-year drop of 1.4 per cent is the largest since the 1960s. China's decline could reorder the world. Since the 1990s, the country's share of global GDP grew mainly at the expense of Europe and Japan, which have seen their shares hold more or less steady over the past two years. The gap left by China has been filled mainly by the US and by other emerging nations.

<https://www.ft.com/content/c10bd71b-e418-48d7-ad89-74c5783c51a2>

## **The Era of total U.S. submarine dominance over China is ending**

Alastair Gale

The Wall Street Journal, November 20, 2023

For decades, the U.S. hasn't had to worry much about China's submarines. They were noisy and easy to track. The Chinese military, meanwhile, struggled to detect America's ultraquiet submarines. Now, China is narrowing one of the biggest gaps separating the U.S. and Chinese militaries as it makes advances in its submarine technology and undersea detection capabilities, with major implications for American military planning for a potential conflict over Taiwan. Early

this year, China put to sea a nuclear-powered attack submarine with a pump-jet propulsion system instead of a propeller, satellite imagery showed. It was the first time noise-reducing technology used on the latest American submarines had been seen on a Chinese submarine.

<https://www.wsj.com/world/china/us-submarine-dominance-shift-china-8db10a0d>

## **China wants more investment from French firms, Xi tells Macron**

The Korea Times, November 20, 2023

China wants more French companies to invest in the country and hopes France will provide a fair and non-discriminatory business environment for Chinese firms, President Xi Jinping said. Xi made the comments in a phone call with French President Emmanuel Macron, Chinese state television reported, fortifying ties with its European trading partner after Macron visited China in April. China faces an electric vehicle subsidy investigation by the European Union and a looming probe into its steelmakers. Meanwhile, several European countries have complained about China's opaque laws and rules regarding foreign companies in the country.

[https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/world/2023/11/501\\_363585.html](https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/world/2023/11/501_363585.html)

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