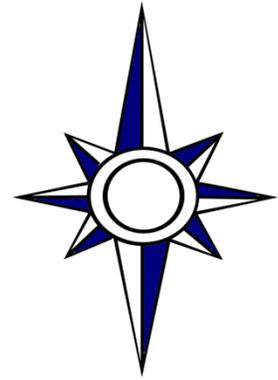


Comparative Connections

A Quarterly E-Journal on East Asian Bilateral Relations



Regional Overview:

Hopes and Plans Torpedoed; Strategies Outlined

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Hopes for a resumption of Six-Party Talks this past quarter were torpedoed when an international investigation team concluded that the ROK Navy ship *Cheonan* was deliberately attacked by a North Korean submarine. The Chinese, while scuttling plans for UNSC censure of Pyongyang, fired a warning shot of their own, denying Defense Secretary Gates' request for a China visit after the Shangri-La Dialogue in June in a sign of continued displeasure over US arms sales to Taiwan. Also once again torpedoed, this time by an oil spill, was President Obama's twice-delayed "homecoming" visit to Indonesia.

ASEAN defense officials gathered in Singapore in June for the Shangri-La Dialogue but not until after convening their fourth ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM) in Hanoi in May where they finalized plans for a broader multilateral ADMM Plus Eight confab to improve regional defense cooperation. If successful, the ADMM+ could render the Shangri-La Dialogue obsolete. Other regional multilateral activity included the third China-Japan-South Korea Trilateral Summit and the 10th Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit, while globally the G8 and G20 met for the first time back-to-back in Canada, with the G20 beginning to outshine its older more exclusive cousin.

The Obama administration published its overdue *National Security Strategy* and *Nuclear Posture Review* reports this quarter, outlining its overall strategic priorities and the (diminished) role of nuclear weapons as, together with Moscow, Washington made a New START toward its declared goal of a nuclear weapons-free world. Nuclear safety and security were very much on the president's mind as he convened the first ever Nuclear Security Summit involving leaders and other senior officials from 49 countries in Washington and applauded the success of the 2010 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference in New York.

Finally, it's been a rough quarter politically in East Asia, especially in Thailand where "red shirt" protests and government reactions both turned violent. In Japan, Prime Minister Hatoyama chose to walk the plank (and took ruling party Secretary General Ozawa with him) in hopes of salvaging his party's chances in the upcoming Upper House elections while Prime Minister Rudd was also a victim of a surprise attack, in this case coming from his own party. A peaceful transfer of power did take place in the Philippines, however, and Hong Kong took another baby step toward promised universal suffrage.

Six-Party Talks: (un)intended victim of *Cheonan* attack?

Rumors about the stage being set for a resumption of Six-Party Talks appeared baseless even before the final report from a South Korean-led international Joint Civilian-Military Investigation Group (JC-MIG, including US, UK, Australian, and Swedish experts). It concluded, after a “scientific and objective” review of the evidence, that the *Cheonan* had been attacked and sunk by a North Korean-manufactured torpedo and that “the evidence points overwhelmingly to the conclusion that the torpedo was fired by a North Korean submarine There is no other plausible explanation.” It was further noted that at least four submarines departed Cape Bipagot naval base – North Korea’s primary submarine base in the Yellow Sea – two to three days prior to the *Cheonan* attack, and that they returned to base two to three days following the incident, while “all submarines from neighboring countries were either in or near their respective home bases at the time of the incident.” As ROK President Lee Myung-bak said in announcing the investigation results on May 24, “with the release of the final report, no responsible country in the international community will be able to deny the fact that the *Cheonan* was sunk by North Korea.”

Thus far, China begs to differ as it continues to serve as Pyongyang’s defense attorney at the UN Security Council (UNSC) and in the court of world public opinion, calling on all parties “to maintain calmness and restraint and to properly deal with relevant issues,” in order to avoid an escalation of tension on the Korean Peninsula. This prompted President Obama to observe, during a G8 press conference, that “I think there’s a difference between restraint and willful blindness.” He also made a direct link between the Chinese response to the attack and the resumption of Beijing-led denuclearization negotiations through the currently moribund Six-Party Talks: “We are not going to be able to have serious negotiations with the North Koreans if China fails to deal resolutely with the incident.” One wonders if the attack was in part aimed at killing any prospect of talks, since Pyongyang does not appear eager to place its nuclear weapons capability on the negotiating table, especially during a period of possible leadership transition.

Seoul, firmly backed by Washington, is seeking a strong condemnation and UNSC resolution, or at least a presidential statement condemning the North’s actions but, at quarter’s end, little progress had been made and Seoul was indicating that it would be prepared to settle for a comment along the lines of that made at the Muskoka, Canada G8 meeting at the end of June. While it did not specifically blame Pyongyang for pulling the trigger – Russia was not prepared to go that far, even after its own independent investigation of the evidence – it came close enough to serve as a model for the UNSC (and perhaps for the ASEAN Regional Forum when it meets in Hanoi in July). [*Note: A UNSC chairman’s statement was finally agreed upon on July 9 which generally follows the G8 model; its impact will be assessed next quarter.*]

In the G8 statement, the leaders “deplore the attack on March 26 that caused the sinking of the Republic of Korea’s naval vessel, the *Cheonan*,” identifying it as “a challenge to peace and security in the region and beyond.” They called for “appropriate measures to be taken against those responsible for the attack,” noted that the JC-MIG had concluded that the DPRK was responsible for the attack, and then stated: “We condemn, in this context, the attack which led to the sinking of the *Cheonan*. We demand that the Democratic Peoples’ Republic of Korea refrain from committing any attacks or threatening hostilities against the Republic of Korea. We support

the Republic of Korea in its efforts to seek accountability for the *Cheonan* incident, and we remain committed to cooperating closely with all international parties in the pursuit of regional peace and security.” The G8 statement expressed “our gravest concern” about DPRK nuclear and missile activities and called on Pyongyang “to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear and ballistic missile programs, as well as proliferation activities, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874.”

China as part of the problem

Beijing alone seems reluctant to accept this reality, despite its earlier pledge (during Wen Jiabao’s visit to Korea) to scrutinize the results in an “objective and fair manner” and “not protect anyone regarding the review.” Skepticism regarding China’s contribution to Korean Peninsula denuclearization and broader peace and security began well before the *Cheonan* incident; economic promises made during Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao’s visit to Pyongyang in October 2009 were seen at a minimum to be undercutting ROK President Lee Myung-bak’s proposed “grand bargain” and, at worst, to be violating the spirit if not the letter of UNSCR 1874, put in place after the North’s second nuclear test. But these concerns have been magnified in the wake of the *Cheonan* “incident” (as Beijing calls the attack), first by Beijing’s decision to honor Kim Jong-il’s request to visit China while the *Cheonan* investigation was underway – reportedly after being expressly and personally asked not to when President Lee met with President Hu in Shanghai several days before the visit – and then by Beijing’s “neutral” stance.

The South’s concerns center on possible future hostile acts if North Korea reaches the conclusion that its own nuclear weapons capability now serves as a deterrent protecting it from harsh international reaction to acts of aggression. Washington’s concerns echo Seoul’s but go further and deeper. UNSCR 1874 was supposed to prevent nuclear or missile components from being delivered to Pyongyang but also to restrict North Korean export of all military-related goods. There is already good evidence Pyongyang has tried to circumvent this prohibition: witness the North Korean arms shipment bound for the Middle East that was intercepted in Bangkok. North Korea is one of the very few potential sources both of technical know-how and of plutonium or other radioactive material desired by international terrorist organizations seeking a rudimentary nuclear weapon or “dirty bomb” capability. Keeping such materials out of the hands of terrorists is a core national security interest of the United States. If Pyongyang reaches the conclusion that Beijing will protect it from censure or punishment regardless of how egregious its actions, the likelihood of proliferation goes up.

The Chinese have long argued that their first priority in Northeast Asia is regional stability. Preventing proliferation, Washington’s primary goal, finishes a distant second. But it is time for Beijing to ask itself if regional stability is possible if North Korea believes that it has *carte blanche* from China to misbehave and that it has the US, ROK, and the rest of the world deterred. Certainly attacking a South Korean warship is not conducive to regional stability. This does not mean that China should “abandon” North Korea. But there are a lot of things China can and should be doing to express its dissatisfaction with Pyongyang’s behavior. Blocking or watering down UNSC resolutions is not one of them. Such actions not only undermine future regional stability; they threaten US core national security interests.

Shangri-La Dialogue: US remains a “Pacific Nation”

The North Korean drama and lingering US-China tensions played themselves out at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore in early June. In his prepared remarks, US Defense Secretary Robert Gates noted that Pyongyang’s nuclear ambitions and aggressive behavior “continue to undermine the peace and stability of Asia.” He identified the *Cheonan* attack as “part of a larger pattern of provocative and reckless behavior” and noted that Washington, in close consultation with Seoul and others, was “assessing additional options to hold North Korea accountable.” This reportedly includes a much-discussed major military exercise off the west coast of North Korea, which continues to draw heavy Chinese protests (which, in our view, provides additional incentive to proceed with this show of force.)

Gates’ main message was that the US “is, and will remain, a power in the Pacific” since “America’s security interests and economic well-being are integrally tied to Asia’s.” Gates outlined overall US security objectives and priorities and pledged that the US was increasing its deterrent capabilities in a number of ways, including “serious steps to enhance our missile defenses . . . renewing our commitment to a strong and effective extended deterrence . . . and the forward presence of substantial US forces in the region.” He noted that the US defense posture in Asia “is shifting to one that is more geographically distributed, operationally resilient, and politically sustainable,” highlighting the build-up on Guam as a key element in this shift.

All this was largely ignored in the international media, which focused on his comments about China and the lack of progress in achieving “sustained and reliable” military-to-military relations with the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA), especially in light of Beijing’s denial of Gates’ request to visit China. Gates defended US arms sales to Taiwan as “nothing new,” reminding China that the US does not support Taiwan independence, and asserting that arms sales are “an important component of maintaining peace and stability in cross-strait relations.”

Beijing remains unconvinced. In his prepared remarks, PLA Deputy Chief of Staff Gen. Ma Xiaotian repeated last year’s accusations that US alliances represented “cold war mentality” and were “outdated.” He avoided the topic of North Korea completely but, in another example of “willful blindness” did note that “in the face of the complicated security situation, nations concerned should remain calm and exercise restraint and avoid escalation of tension.” The Chinese continue to send Ma, rather than their defense minister or armed forces chief of staff, to the meeting and the organizers – the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) – continue to overlook this protocol breach and give the Chinese representative a prominent position, this time in the second plenary (right after Gates) on a panel with Japan’s defense minister and the national security advisor to the prime minister of India.

ADMM+ as the preferred alternative

While eight out of 10 ASEAN states were represented at the Shangri-La Dialogue (five by their defense ministers), ASEAN has made little secret of its desire to put itself in the “driver’s seat” when it comes to regional defense cooperation and security architecture building. Hence the announcement at the fourth ADMM in Hanoi on May 10–13 that the first ASEAN Defense

Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM+) meeting would take place in Hanoi in October. The idea of holding an ADMM+ was initially suggested at the first ADMM meeting in Malaysia in 2006.

The assembled ministers endorsed two important documents for regional security architecture, namely “ADMM Plus: Configuration and Composition” and “ADMM Plus: Modalities and Procedures.” Their stated intent is for ADMM+ to be the “cornerstone” for ASEAN and its dialogue partners to discuss defense and security cooperation. The inaugural ADMM+ is projected to be a 10+8 configuration including all ASEAN member states plus Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Russia, and the US; Secretary Gates was quick to proclaim that he intended to attend the first ADMM+; it will be interesting to see who China sends. The 10 + 8 structure would mirror the envisioned expansion of the East Asian Summit (EAS), assuming the US and Russia ultimately join – the Russians have been beating on the door since day one and the Obama administration is discussing how to engage more fully in the EAS.

According to the *Hanoi Times*, the ADMM itself is “the highest-level forum” of ASEAN defense leaders, and provides the “necessary foundation for open and constructive dialogues regarding strategic issues at the ministerial level, as well as promoting real cooperation between armed forces” in the region. The ADMM+ meanwhile, according to this year’s host, Vietnamese Minister Phung Quang Thanh, “will not be considered a military alliance, but to cope with non-traditional security challenges especially disaster relief [and] maritime security.”

The “Plus Three” move forward – sort of

In other regional multilateral activity, China, Japan, and South Korea continued efforts to carve out a distinctive regional role, divorced from the ASEAN Plus 3 mechanism that first provided them a context to meet. The past quarter witnessed their fourth trilateral foreign ministers’ meeting, which convened in Gyeongju, South Korea on May 16. The official readout from the meeting highlighted satisfaction at progress in trilateral cooperation and the desire to move further. For those who prefer to scoff at prospects for deeper regional integration, it is worth citing the meeting’s declaration, which noted “with satisfaction” that more than 50 trilateral consultative mechanisms (including 17 ministerial meetings) are in full operation, along with over 100 trilateral cooperation projects in the political, economic, and social fields.

The foreign ministers discussed the things foreign ministers typically discuss: the current situation in Northeast Asia, East Asia cooperation, the G20, dealing with the aftermath of the global economic crisis, and climate change. They expressed condolences for the loss of lives in the aftermath of the sinking of the *Cheonan* and talked about the incident, along with more broad-based discussion on nuclear policy, in particular efforts to strengthen global disarmament and nonproliferation regimes.

While official statements focused on the positive, perhaps the most interesting part of the meeting was the verbal fireworks between Japan and China. Japanese Foreign Minister Okada Katsuya took issue with China’s nuclear modernization efforts, arguing it ran counter to global disarmament trends. Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi refuted “the groundless attack” (so described by Chinese newspapers), while a Foreign Ministry spokesman labeled them “irresponsible remarks.” The exchange was reported to be quite heated, with Yang supposedly

threatening to walk out of the meeting. He urged Japan to focus on building better bilateral relations and not get bogged down with....facts.

The foreign ministers' meeting was followed by the leaders meeting, the third Trilateral Summit, which convened in Jeju, South Korea on May 29-30. Like the foreign ministers, ROK President Lee, Japanese Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio, and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao took up regional and global issues, offered condolences to *Cheonan* victims, and pledged to work closely to promote peace and stability. They reiterated their call for a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula and promised to keep working through the Six-Party Talks to realize the goals set out by the joint declaration of Sept. 19, 2005. In a performance worthy of finalist status on the US reality show "Dancing with the Stars," Premier Wen managed to sidestep or shuffle around all pointed press inquiries regarding the *Cheonan* attack. His promise that China "would not protect anyone," well-received by all in Korea who sought hints of Chinese objectivity on this issue, continues to prove hollow, however.

The most significant element of the meeting was the determination to push the trilateral cooperation and coordination process. They presented *Vision 2020*, which outlines cooperation and exchanges for the next decade and agreed to set up a permanent Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat in Korea in 2011 that will facilitate coordination among the three countries. They also agreed to complete a joint study for a free trade agreement among them by 2012 and to work to realize an investment treaty within the next few months.

Yet more common ground for the SCO

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) held its 10th annual summit this quarter, meeting in Tashkent on June 11. It produced the usual declaration promising to build an effective and open multilateral organization dedicated to regional peace, stability, and prosperity. The six leaders from SCO member countries -- China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan -- took up the usual topics: regional security concerns, cooperation in fighting terrorism and the spread of drugs, the impact of the global economic crisis, and cooperation. They also expressed support for Central Asian efforts to build a nuclear weapons free zone and worried about the impact of antimissile systems.

The group, which accounts for 60 percent of the territories of Euro-Asia and 25 percent of the world's population, granted Belarus and Sri Lanka the status of dialogue partners. Mongolia, India, Pakistan, and Iran are already observers. Laying the foundation for expansion of the group, the leaders also agreed on a resolution that lays out procedures for new countries to join.

Gasps from the G8

For the first time, the two leading international leaders' meetings, the annual G8 Summit and the semi-annual Group of 20 Summit, were held back to back. Canada played host. Ostensibly, the meetings ratified a new division of labor, one in which the G8 would tackle political issues and the G20, which accounts for 85 percent of global wealth, would focus on economic management. It's nice in theory; in practice, both suffer the same flaw -- the stubborn ability of national interests to trump high-fallutin' statements of global concern and purpose.

We have long been critics of the G8 process. This year's meeting gave us no reason to change our minds. In their post-summit statement, the leaders noted the beginning of "a fragile recovery from the greatest economic crisis in generations," and then turned to other global challenges. In addition to almost blaming Pyongyang for the *Cheonan* attack, they also condemned Iran and North Korea for their defiance of international nuclear norms, and urged both to comply with UN resolutions. They set a five-year deadline for the stabilization of Afghanistan and demanded an end to inhumane conditions in the Gaza Strip. The declaration noted that dealing with climate change is the top priority, and the group strongly supported UN negotiations on a new global climate treaty.

This meeting produced the Muskoka Initiative, so named for the Canadian town where the meeting was held. In it, G8 nations committed to provide \$5 billion over the next five years to improve maternal, newborn, and child health globally, a sum that will be topped off by \$2.5 billion from other partners. In addition, the leaders launched the Muskoka Accountability Report, which aims to increase the transparency and implementation of commitments. We would have more faith in that effort if the leaders had turned their attention to their previous commitments. Not surprisingly, the group did not mention an \$18 billion shortfall in meeting the G8's own 2010 target of \$50 billion in aid promises.

Worrying signs from the G20

Meanwhile, the G20 has been steadily rising in prominence in the aftermath of the global economic crisis. Previous meetings demonstrated a consensus on how to respond to the crisis; the ability to respond as one and to outline common steps was an important signal of political will. Unfortunately, there has been a gap between rhetoric and reality: while the leaders agreed to keep their economies open at the G20 Summit hosted by President Obama last year, the World Bank uncovered protectionist measures in 17 of the 20 members within months.

This year's meeting, held in Toronto, made plain the difficulties in mobilizing 20 nations. World leaders are divided between those who worry about the fragility of the recovery and those concerned about the snowballing deficits. Thus, the Toronto declaration warned that "while growth is returning, the recovery is uneven and fragile, unemployment in many countries remains at unacceptable levels, and the social impact of the crisis is still widely felt." It urged leaders "to follow through on delivering existing stimulus plans, while working to create the conditions for robust private demand."

It then took up the deficit hawks' case, highlighting "the importance of sustainable public finances." The declaration called for "credible, properly phased and growth-friendly plans to deliver fiscal sustainability . . . tailored to national circumstances." The developed countries agreed to halve their annual fiscal deficits as a percentage of gross domestic product by 2013.

Equally important was agreement among G20 members to redistribute power at the IMF: at the last meeting they agreed to shift 5 percent of voting rights to emerging economies. Final confirmation will come at the next G20 meeting, which will be held in Seoul in November, and then the decision has to be ratified by the IMF itself. (Most observers think a 5 percent shift

doesn't reflect the new balance of economic power. A greater shift is unlikely as it would come at Europe's expense and those governments are unprepared to accept such a move.)

It is tempting to be skeptical about the G20's prospects. The Toronto statement took up both sides of the economic debate, providing little real guidance for policy makers. Then look back at the last quote from the declaration and note that last clause: "tailored to national circumstances." That phrase pretty much neuters the statement. It means that no consensus on economic policy exists and that each government can go its own way. It provides little, if any, guidance beyond common sense and self-interest.

2010 Nuclear Posture Review: moving toward "no first use"

The long-awaited Pentagon *Nuclear Posture Review (NPR)*, released in early April, was the latest in a series of speeches and initiatives (including the US-Russia New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) outlined last quarter) aimed at de-emphasizing nuclear weapons in the US security strategy. Continuing a trend that existed (but was not widely recognized) in the earlier George W. Bush administration iteration, the 2010 NPR devotes an entire chapter to "Reducing the Role of US Nuclear Weapons" and highlights this effort as one of the five "key objectives" of the Obama administration's nuclear weapons policies and posture, even while acknowledging that nuclear weapons remain a critical component of US extended deterrence. It also states unequivocally that the US "will not develop new nuclear warheads" and "will not support new military missions or provide for new military capabilities."

While the *NPR* contains a great deal of continuity and consistency in terms of US nuclear policy and strategy – it is far from the revolutionary document that some had hoped for (and others had feared) – it contains a number of significant departures from past policies. For one thing, it is unclassified. This year's document also avoids the discussion of nuclear weapons contingencies that caused so much consternation and misinterpretation in the Bush administration's report.

The 2010 *NPR* lists "*preventing nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism*" as the first of five key objectives, based on the understanding that "the threat of global nuclear war has become remote, but the risk of nuclear attack has increased." Nuclear terrorism is "today's most immediate and extreme danger" and the least susceptible to traditional deterrence. This raises the importance of countering nuclear proliferation, "reversing the nuclear ambitions of North Korea and Iran" being cited as key to this effort.

As alluded to earlier, "*reducing the role of nuclear weapons*" was listed as the second key objective in the *NPR*. It was here that the disarmament community's hopes were highest (and its disappointment most loudly expressed). Many were hoping for a "no first use" declaration; a clear statement that nuclear weapons would only be used in response to a nuclear attack by others. Instead, the *NPR* promised to "reduce the role of nuclear weapons in deterring non-nuclear attacks, *with the objective* of making deterrence of nuclear attack on the United States or our allies and partners the sole purpose of US nuclear weapons." [emphasis added] While the administration was not prepared to rule out first use against other nuclear weapons states, it did, however, state that the US "would only consider the use of nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the United States or its allies and partners."

Regarding negative security assurances, it states: “The United States will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states that are party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and in compliance with their nuclear nonproliferation obligations.” Note the important caveat here: these assurances specifically do not apply to Tehran or Pyongyang unless they come into full compliance with the NPT. While acknowledging that this was intended to apply even in the event of a chemical or biological attack – which would be met with “a devastating conventional military response” – it did “reserve the right to make any adjustments in the assurance” based on the evolution and proliferation of biological weapons.

The third objective calls for “*maintaining strategic deterrence and stability at reduced nuclear force levels.*” The NPR calls attention to the New START with Russia as a significant step in this direction, and promises to pursue follow-on talks with Moscow that will also address non-strategic and non-deployed nuclear weapons. While China was a “contingency” in the last NPR, here its main role is as a partner with whom Washington wants to promote “strategic stability.”

“*Strengthening regional deterrence and reassurance of US allies and partners*” is the fourth objective. Again dashing some hopes, the NPR states that forward-deployed nuclear weapons will remain in Europe at present although their role “will be discussed” with alliance members. Dialogues are also underway with Asian allies “to reassure them that US extended deterrence is credible and effective.” While the US “will retain the capability to forward-deploy US nuclear weapons on tactical fighter-bombers and heavy bombers,” nuclear-tipped, sea-launched TLAM-N cruise missile will be retired “as redundant in the overall mix of capabilities.” The bottom line: “As long as regional nuclear threats to our forces, allies, and partners remain, deterrence will require a nuclear component.”

The final NPR objective deals with “*sustaining a safe, secure, and effective nuclear arsenal,*” not through the development of new systems but by modernizing the nuclear weapons infrastructure and sustaining the science, technology, and engineering base. Most significant here is a pledge not to conduct nuclear tests and to seek ratification and entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

The NPR ends with a reaffirmation that “the long-term goal of US policy is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.” Most disarmament advocates are likely to see the NPR as a necessary and welcomed but still too modest step in this direction. For Asia it represents a reaffirmation of US extended deterrence, including but not limited to its nuclear dimension as long as nuclear threats exist. While it *de facto* offers negative security assurances to Pyongyang (or Tehran) if it chooses to come back into the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state, it is likely to have little effect – positively or negatively – on the Korean Peninsula denuclearization effort.

US National Security Strategy: getting America’s house in order

The NPR’s release was followed in May by the Obama administration’s first *National Security Strategy* (NSS) report. Not surprisingly, it reinforced the NPR’s themes regarding the nature of today’s most imminent threat: “This Administration has no greater responsibility than the safety and security of the American people. And there is no greater threat to the American people than

weapons of mass destruction, particularly the danger posed by the pursuit of nuclear weapons by violent extremists and their proliferation to additional states.” (Hence our earlier reference to halting WMD proliferation as a core US national security interest.)

The *NSS* defines the foreign policy goals of the Obama administration in broad terms and stresses that security rests not just on maintaining “military capabilities with global reach and unsurpassed resources” but also relies heavily on diplomacy and engagement, economic development and other methods of influence (i.e., US “soft power”) as well.

The strategy identifies real or potential security challenges that include: countering violent extremism and insurgency; stopping the spread of nuclear weapons and securing nuclear materials; combating climate change while sustaining global economic growth; reducing the danger of cyber threats; helping countries feed themselves and care for their sick; ending dependence on fossil fuels; resolving and preventing conflict; and reducing destabilizing risks to economic interdependence.

The *NSS* stresses the need for the US to start at home – “Our strategy starts by recognizing that our strength and influence abroad begins with the steps we take at home” – and, unlike previous editions, includes a priority to strengthen the US economic system in the era of globalization. It identifies the G20 as “the premier forum for international economic cooperation” and stresses the need to “rebalance global demand” to prevent another global economic crisis.

It is no less idealistic or evangelical than previous editions, noting that an additional facet of US national security is enhancing and supporting human rights and democratic values among nations: “We see it as fundamental to our own interests to support a just peace around the world — one in which individuals, and not just nations, are granted the fundamental rights that they deserve.” While promising “principled engagement with non-democratic regimes,” the 2010 *NSS*, like those of the Bush administration before it, puts a high priority on “the expansion of democracy and human rights abroad, because governments that respect these values are more just, peaceful, and legitimate.”

While it carefully avoids the word “preemption,” which caused a distraction and misreading of the previous administration’s reports, it does not rule out unilateral action as a last resort to protect US interests: “We will exhaust other options before war whenever we can, and carefully weigh the costs and risks of action against the costs and risks of inaction. We will seek broad international support, working with such institutions as NATO and the UN Security Council.” But, it warns, the US “must reserve the right to act unilaterally if necessary to defend our nation and our interests.” Some things never – and shouldn’t – change!

Also unchanged is the role of US alliances as “the foundation of United States regional and global security.” Chinese accusations of “cold war mentality” notwithstanding, the Obama administration, like all its predecessors over the past 50 years, see the US bilateral alliances as “fundamental to our collective security.” US alliances in the Asia-Pacific – and five out of the seven formal US alliances are located in this region – are “the bedrock of security” and “a foundation of prosperity.” The *NSS* notes the US is “modernizing” its alliances with Japan and

South Korea “to reflect the principle of equal partnership” – with a tip of the hat to former Prime Minister Hatoyama – and “to ensure a sustainable foundation for a military presence there.”

The *NSS* stresses the importance of good relations with “other 21st century centers of influence,” with the three specifically named all in the Asia-Pacific region: China, India, and Russia. It stresses the “positive, constructive, and comprehensive relationship with China that both nations seek, even while warning that “we will monitor China’s military modernization program and prepare accordingly.” It highlights the shared values and shared interests that underpin the “strategic partnership” the US is building with India, while also seeking “a stable, substantial, multidimensional relationship” with Russia. Indonesia (along with the G20) is singled out as among “emerging centers of influence” with whom the US is “deepening our partnerships.”

It ends as it begins, by stressing the need for the US to get its own house in order, noting that a “sense of common purpose is at times lacking in our national security dialogue” which puts the US at a “strategic disadvantage.” Nonetheless, it promises to “renew American leadership in the world,” a pledge many in Asia will welcome but which some still view as suspect.

Nuclear nonproliferation to the fore

Building on the momentum of the US-Russia New START, President Obama hosted a Nuclear Security Summit in April. The meeting gathered 49 world leaders in Washington – the largest international gathering hosted by a US president since the end of World War II – to enhance international cooperation to prevent nuclear terrorism. The summit aimed to create a common understanding of the threat posed by nuclear terrorism, to agree to effective measures to secure nuclear material, and to prevent nuclear smuggling and terrorism; other important topics, such as nonproliferation, disarmament, and peaceful uses of nuclear technology, were left off the agenda.

The Summit produced a communiqué that backed Obama’s call to secure all vulnerable nuclear material in four years through: focused national efforts to improve security and accounting of nuclear materials and strengthen regulations, the consolidation of stocks of plutonium and highly enriched uranium (HEU), reduction in the use of HEU; promoting the universality of key international treaties on nuclear security and nuclear terrorism; calls for additional aid for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to develop nuclear security guidelines and provide advice to members on how to implement them; and calls for the nuclear industry to develop and share best practices for nuclear security while ensuring that countries enjoy the benefits of peaceful nuclear energy (as is their right under the NPT).

Participants also agreed on a work plan that lays out specific steps that will turn commitments into reality. They include: ratifying and implementing treaties on nuclear security and nuclear terrorism; working through the UN to implement and assist others in connection with Security Council resolutions; working with the IAEA to update and implement security guidance and carry out advisory services; reviewing national regulatory and legal requirements relating to nuclear security and nuclear trafficking; converting civilian facilities that use highly enriched uranium to non-weapons-usable materials; research on new nuclear fuels, detection methods, and forensics techniques; development of corporate and institutional cultures to prioritize nuclear

security, and ensure that individuals are properly trained to protect those materials; and joint exercises for law enforcement and customs officials to enhance nuclear detection approaches.

Finally, numerous countries took steps – “house warming presents” – to show their sincerity and move the process forward. For example, Argentina joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism; the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam announced their intention to do the same; China announced cooperation on a nuclear security Center of Excellence; and Ukraine announced it would remove all highly enriched uranium by the next summit – half of it by the end of 2010. Looking ahead, each participating country identified a “sherpa” who would check on their country’s progress and begin working toward the next summit, which will be held in 2012 in South Korea. Participants will reach out to countries not in attendance to explain the meeting’s goals and outcomes.

And now for something completely different

Buoyed by the new mood in Washington, the New START, and the success of the Nuclear Security Summit, the eighth Review Conference (RevCon) of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty was a success. More than 170 states parties attended the month-long meeting at UN headquarters in New York. Following the virtual collapse of the last RevCon (held in 2005), the nuclear community feared that a second failure would fatally undermine the NPT process.

Fortunately, all participants appreciated the stakes. Some complain that the final document was just a report of the Conference president, but the conclusions and recommendations did enjoy consensus support. Most important were the 64 action items that states must follow up on to strengthen all three pillars of the NPT regime: disarmament, nonproliferation, and access to the peaceful nuclear technology. Among the action items are ratification of the New START by the US and Russia, ratification of the CTBT by the US and China (along with others), expeditious conclusion and entry into force of IAEA 21 additional protocols, and resolution of all cases of non-compliance with safeguards obligations.

Success of the RevCon may well have rested on agreement – struck in a deal with Egypt – to implement the 1995 Middle East Resolution, which calls for a conference among all concerned parties on nuclear weapons in that troubled region. The meeting will be convened by 2012; Israel, the primary target of that resolution, has said that it will not attend. Of course, there were complaints. Nonnuclear weapons states want more concrete steps toward disarmament from nuclear weapons states; in particular, specific timelines are still missing. Many governments would like to see the creation of an international legal norm that makes use of nuclear weapons illegal. Others complain that the final document did not specifically identify Iran and its failure to honor its nonproliferation obligations.

Two elements of the RevCon should be highlighted. First, while many consider disarmament a pipe dream, the terrain of the debate has been transformed. Ideas only recently considered patently idealistic are now seriously discussed. Second, the success of the RevCon shows the need to consider the NPT holistically: the only way to move forward on nonproliferation efforts is to take seriously the demand that the nuclear weapons states honor their disarmament obligations. The world cannot have one without the other.

Bruising political developments

Thailand. Tensions in Thailand boiled over this quarter. In response to protests of increasing intensity by the “red shirts” (supporters of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, deposed in a 2006 coup), Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva invoked emergency rule in Bangkok on April 7, a move that banned public gatherings of more than five people and gave broad powers to the police and military, including the right to detainee suspects for 30 days without charge. That seemed to have little effect as 21 were killed and hundreds injured when police attempted to remove protesters several days later. On May 19, the army moved in to remove protestors from encampments in downtown Bangkok. That produced a paroxysm of violence that left 90 people dead, mostly civilians, and nearly 1,900 injured. In early July, the government extended the state of emergency for another three months in Bangkok and 19 provinces; it was lifted in five others. The crackdown ended the immediate challenge to the Bangkok government but it revealed the real size of the divisions in Thailand and made them deeper. The violence has since spread outside of Bangkok to the “red” strongholds in northeast Thailand. (For a fuller description, see Sheldon Simon’s analysis in his chapter on US-Southeast Asia relations)

Japan. The big news this quarter was the June 2 resignation of Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio, who stepped down as his Cabinet’s approval ratings and the ruling Democratic Party of Japan’s prospects in the July 11 Upper House election plummeted in tandem. While the immediate reason for his resignation was the prime minister’s handling of the Okinawa base relocation issue – policy reversals will do that – dissatisfaction with Hatoyama went beyond bumbling regarding the Futenma relocation. The real issue was the DPJ government’s inability to govern, a perception magnified by Hatoyama’s indecisiveness and seemingly feckless behavior. Scandals surrounding Hatoyama’s funds and those of DPJ Secretary General and election mastermind Ozawa Ichiro also undermined the DPJ’s claim that it represented a new form of politics.

Kan Naoto stepped into the breach. His reformist credentials immediately boosted the government’s standing. Approval ratings jumped, although they have since declined. Kan has shifted focus to Japan’s economic plight, calling for restraint and getting the budget under control. The July 11 ballot will show how successful this “housecleaning” has been. (While Ozawa stepped down along with Hatoyama, his influence within the party is likely to continue without a formal position; indeed, Ozawa may prefer to work behind the scenes....so much for new politics.)

Philippines. Benigno S. Aquino III, the third generation of a distinguished political family, won the May 10 Philippines national election and was sworn in as the country’s 15th president on June 30. While Aquino had an undistinguished career as a politician, he rode to victory largely on the reputations of his parents: his father was a human rights campaigner who was assassinated on the tarmac of the Manila airport in 1983 when he returned from exile to fight the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos; his mother, Cory Aquino, took up the struggle after her husband’s death and was elected president on the People Power tide that it triggered. Many attribute his election victory to the groundswell of goodwill that followed her death last August. His simple lifestyle and an implicit repudiation of his predecessor Gloria Macapagal Arroyo (whose family members have long been suspected of corruption), was another source of appeal.

Upon taking office, Aquino promised to tackle the enduring issues of poverty and corruption. High on his list of priorities is creating an environment that favors investment and taps the skills of Philippines – millions of whom are forced to go abroad to make a living. He also promised to improve his country's human rights record. That means breaking the power of the militias and clans that rule in some parts of the Philippines. The record to date does not offer much hope. This political change is not expected to result in any dramatic change in US-Philippine relations.

Australia. On June 23, Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd resigned, a move that marked a stunning fall from grace for the man who led Labor's return to power after 11 years in the political wilderness. In fact, Rudd's resignation was the result of a coup within his party. As approval ratings plummeted– they were halved in a few months – party officials feared defeat in upcoming elections. They drafted Julia Gillard, his deputy, to take over. Knowing that he didn't have the numbers, Rudd withdrew his name for consideration at a leadership ballot, leaving office after two years, the shortest term for an Australian prime minister in some 30 years.

Rudd was victim of his own policy reversals. Calling climate change “the toughest moral and economic challenge” of our time, Rudd's first move in office was to reverse the previous government's stand on the issue and ratify the Kyoto Protocol and he played a key role in the Copenhagen Climate negotiations last year. But in recent weeks he pulled from consideration a carbon emissions trading scheme, a step that effectively neutered the country's climate change plan. The second and final nail in his political coffin came when Rudd called for a tax on the “super profits” of Australia's mining industries. While they have recorded impressive results in the recent commodity boom, the tax was an affront to the heart of the economy in the western part of the country. Moreover, Rudd had launched a campaign to win support for the levy, which also violated a pledge to not use tax monies for government PR campaigns.

Gillard is expected to put a more human face on the government. She is said to be one of the best communicators in Parliament; Rudd was considered wonkish and somewhat isolated. She was part of Rudd's circle of confidantes and, apart from attempting to undo the damage done by his reversals, is expected to maintain many of the former government's positions. One of her first phone conversations after taking office was with President Obama and they reassured each other of the centrality of the alliance to their relationship. It has been rumored that she will drop Rudd's call for an Asia Pacific Community. Relations with China will continue on their current trajectory. When he took office, there were fears that Rudd, a fluent Mandarin speaker with experience in China, might move Canberra's foreign policy line closer to that of Beijing. The relationship remains much as it was: growing economic interdependence is balanced by Australian suspicions about long-term Chinese intentions.

Hong Kong. Little noticed was the vote by legislators in the Special Administrative Region to pass political reform, the first time the legislature passed major reforms to electoral arrangements since the city reverted to Chinese rule in 1997. Voting 46 to 12, the legislators agreed to add 10 seats to the legislature that would be directly elected from the 2012 election, meaning that 40 of the 70 seats would be directly elected by the public; the remaining 30 will continue to be selected by “functional constituencies” that represent business groups and associations. In addition, the committee that elects Hong Kong's chief executive will be expanded from 800 to 1,200.

The vote was won after a last-minute change: originally, the 10 new seats were to be divided, with half directly elected, the other five selected by functional constituencies. The decision to make all the new seats the result of direct elections won over some Democratic Party legislators – and earned them the label of “sellouts” from party hardliners who continue to demand universal suffrage – the abolition of all functional constituencies – by 2012. Beijing has said that it will allow universal suffrage by 2017 at the earliest, although some question whether that date will in fact be met.

America’s still not quite back!

As noted in past Regional Overviews, President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton had been fond of stressing that “America is back in Asia,” in a not-so-subtle dig at their predecessors. That sound bite continues to haunt them. After both cancelled Asia trips last quarter, Obama felt compelled to once again postpone his trip to Australia, Indonesia, and Guam as his spin doctors felt it unwise to be seen visiting the Indonesian playground of his youth (with wife and kids in tow) while oil continued to stream into the Gulf of Mexico in what he has called the worst environmental disaster in American history. Obama telephoned Prime Minister Rudd and Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to tell them he could not come but “looked forward to rescheduling so that he can visit both countries soon.”

He was originally scheduled to travel there in March but first delayed and then canceled at the last minute to stay in Washington to lobby for passage of his health care legislation. He also had passed up a likely whirlwind trip to Indonesia in connection with last year’s Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders Meeting in Singapore so that he could spend some quality time in Indonesia when he did go. The Indonesia visit now appears likely in November when President Obama goes to Japan for this year’s APEC gathering.

In its statement announcing the latest cancellation, the White House felt compelled to stress that it was not abandoning its allies: “President Obama underscored his commitment to our close alliance with Australia and our deepening partnership with Indonesia. He plans to hold full bilateral meetings with Prime Minister Rudd and President Yudhoyono on the margins of the G20 meeting in Canada,” which he did. But the damage has been done and critics of President Yudhoyono in particular have been criticizing him for being too accommodating to a fickle US president. The Obama visit, if and when it finally occurs, will be seen as largely anti-climatic rather than the soft power builder it would have originally been. Given that President George W. Bush made it to all eight APEC Leaders Meetings that occurred on his watch, a failure by President Obama to show up in November would strike a critical blow to US credibility in Asia.

Regional Chronology

April - June 2010

April 2, 2010: South Korean Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Yong Joon, Chinese Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs Hu Zhengyue and Japanese Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Kenichiro Sasae meet in Jeju, Korea to prepare for a trilateral summit and foreign minister talks.

April 2-5, 2010: Inaugural Mekong River Commission meeting held in Hua Hin, Thailand. Participants include political leaders, multilateral donors, and experts in the field of integrated water resources management from Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam along with dialogue partners Burma and China.

April 6, 2010: The US publishes its *Nuclear Posture Review*.

April 6-8, 2010: Riots break out across Kyrgyzstan, leading to the ouster of President Kurmanbek Bakiyev.

April 8, 2010: An interim coalition government is formed in Kyrgyzstan with Roza Otunbayeva as prime minister.

April 7, 2010: Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva invokes emergency rule in Bangkok.

April 8, 2010: Presidents Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev sign the New US-Russia Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) in Prague.

April 8, 2010: The United Nations Security Council begins negotiations on sanctions against Iran for its nuclear program.

April 8-9, 2010: The 16th ASEAN Summit is held in Hanoi.

April 9, 2010: North Korea's Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) convenes in Pyongyang. Kim Jong-il does not attend the session.

April 10, 2010: Twenty-one are killed and hundreds wounded in Bangkok when the government forces attempt to evict protesters from city streets.

April 10, 2010: Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force spots and tracks two Chinese submarines and eight destroyers heading southeast between the main island of Okinawa and Miyako Island, Okinawa prefecture.

April 12-13, 2010: President Obama hosts first Nuclear Security Summit in Washington. Obama meets several Asian leaders including Chinese President Hu Jintao, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, and Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev on the sidelines.

April 13, 2010: North Korea expels the staff and seals off South Korean government-owned ventures at the Mt. Kumgang resort.

April 20, 2010: South Korea's Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan, says that evidence of North Korean involvement in *Cheonan* incident would further hinder progress on the stalemated Six-Party Talks.

April 21, 2010: Japan's Ministry of Defense announces that a Chinese helicopter approached a Japanese destroyer conducting surveillance activities.

April 23, 2010: North Korea announces the seizure of South Korean-owned buildings at Mt. Kumgang resort, accusing Seoul of heightening cross-border tensions.

April 30, 2010: The 2010 World Expo opens in Shanghai.

April 30, 2010: Burma's Prime Minister Thein Sein and about 20 other ministers reportedly retire from their military posts and apply to register a new political party ahead of elections scheduled for later this year.

May 3-7, 2010: North Korean leader Kim Jong-il visits China and meets President Hu Jintao.

May 3-28, 2010: Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference held in New York.

May 4, 2010: Taiwan Strait Tourism Association opens an office in Beijing.

May 7, 2010: China National Tourism Administration and the Cross-Strait Tourism Association (CSTA) open an office in Taipei.

May 8-9, 2010: President Hu Jintao visits Russia as the guest of President Medvedev for the ceremony marking the 65th anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945. Hu meets Prime Minister Putin on May 8 and President Medvedev the following day.

May 10, 2010: US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell visits Burma and meets detained democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi. He warns the ruling junta that planned elections would not be recognized by the international community and calls for the release of all political prisoners.

May 10, 2010: *Russkiy Newsweek* releases a "secret" Russian government document "Program for Effective Utilization of Foreign Political Factors on a Systematic Basis for Purposes of Long-Term Development of the Russian Federation."

May 12, 2010: Israeli officials say Pyongyang has been supplying anti-tank missiles, surface-to-surface rockets, and shoulder-fired air defense systems to Hamas and Hezbollah.

May 12, 2010: The Thai government extends a state of emergency to cover 17 provinces to prevent rural protesters from joining an anti-government rally in Bangkok.

May 12, 2010: North Korea claims it has accomplished "successful nuclear fusion." No details are given, but outsiders are skeptical.

May 13, 2010: Maj. Gen. Khattiya Sawatdiphol, who is allied with Thailand's red shirt protesters, is shot during an interview in Bangkok and later dies.

May 14, 2010: The US closes its embassy in Bangkok and says it is “very concerned” about the violence between the Thai government and protesters there.

May 15-16, 2010: Foreign ministers of Japan, China, and ROK meet in Gyeongju Korea. During a bilateral meeting Japan Foreign Minister Okada challenges China’s nuclear arms reduction.

May 17, 2010: South Korean Unification Ministry announces that it has requested all South Korean ministries to suspend all government-sponsored aid to North Korea.

May 18, 2010: South Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism announces it requested that China exclude North Korea’s Mt. Kungang resort from its approved group tour destinations while it seeks understanding on a dispute over the North’s recent freeze of South Korean assets there.

May 19, 2010: Thailand authorities put Bangkok and 23 provinces under curfew after red-shirt protest leaders surrender to troops storming their barricades. Arsonists set fires in many Bangkok areas, including a shopping mall, a TV station, the stock exchange, and bank branches.

May 19, 2010: Japanese Foreign Minister Okada and Defense Minister Kitazawa Toshima meet Australian counterparts Stephen Smith and John Faulkner in a “two-plus-two” meeting in Tokyo and sign an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA), under which their armed forces will provide each other with food, fuel, and logistical support during peacekeeping and disaster-relief missions.

May 20, 2010: South Korea announces that an international panel of experts has concluded that the corvette *Cheonan* was sunk by a North Korean torpedo, offering analysis of the damage to the ship and a fragment of a torpedo with a Korean serial number found in the area where the ship sunk as evidence.

May 21-26, 2010: Secretary of State Hillary Clinton travels to Japan (May 21), China (May 21-26), and Korea (May 26).

May 22, 2010: The US and Japan reach an agreement on the plan for relocating Futenma Air Base to another location on Okinawa.

May 23-26, 2010: Secretary Clinton and Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner and their co-chairs, State Councilor Dai Bingguo and Vice Premier Wang Qishan, gather for the second meeting of the US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue in Beijing. Over a dozen US cabinet members and agency heads make up the US delegation.

May 24, 2010: The US announces that the US Navy and the ROK Navy will conduct joint naval exercises in the Yellow China (West) Sea beginning in June.

May 24, 2010: President Obama directs all US agencies to conduct a review of their “existing authorities and policies related to the DPRK.”

May 24-25, 2010: The Indonesian-US Security Dialogue focuses on the roles of militaries in disaster relief, peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and bilateral military relations.

May 27, 2010: The US releases its *National Security Strategy*.

May 28, 2010: The final declaration of the NPT review conference urges Pyongyang “to fulfill [its] commitments under the Six-Party Talks, including the complete and verifiable abandonment of all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs in accordance with the September 2005 Joint Statement.”

May 29-30, 2010: ROK President Lee Myung-bak, Japanese Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio, and Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao meet in Jeju, South Korea for the third trilateral summit.

May 30, 2010: A UN panel accuses North Korea of continuing to export nuclear and missile technology in defiance of UN sanction. The preliminary report was compiled by a seven-member group that monitors Pyongyang's compliance with sanctions.

May 30-June 1, 2010: Prime Minister Wen visits Japan and meets Prime Minister Hatoyama and Emperor Akihito.

May 31, 2010: A Russian team, including torpedo and submarine experts, arrives in Seoul to begin its investigation into the sinking of the *Cheonan*.

June 2, 2010: Japanese Prime Minister Hatoyama announces his resignation.

June 4, 2010: The White House announces that President Obama has postponed a trip to Australia and Indonesia.

June 4, 2010: Kan Naoto is elected prime minister of Japan.

June 4, 2010: South Korea officially refers the sinking of the corvette *Cheonan* to the UN Security Council.

June 5, 2010: US and ROK postpone planned joint naval exercises in the Yellow Sea.

June 5-6, 2010: G20 meeting of finance ministers and central bank governors in Busan.

June 7, 2010: North Korea's Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) convenes in Pyongyang. Kim Jong-il's brother-in-law, Jang Song-thaek, who heads a Workers' Party Department, is appointed vice chairman of the National Defense Commission.

June 7, 2010: The UN Security Council approves a measure to extend for another year the authority of a UN body charged with overseeing sanctions against North Korea.

June 7, 2010: National Security Council Asia Director Jeffrey Bader says US policy on arms sales to Taiwan will not change.

June 9, 2010: Twelve of the 15 members of the UN Security Council, including China and the US, vote to apply sanctions against Iran.

June 10, 2010: A South Korea rocket carrying a climate observation satellite explodes seconds into its flight, the country's second major space setback in less than a year.

June 10-11, 2010: The 10th annual Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit is held in Tashkent.

June 11, 2010: Myanmar's ruling junta says it has no intention of building a nuclear weapon, saying that "Myanmar is a country that always respects UN declarations and decisions as it is a UN member country. Myanmar is not in a position to produce nuclear weapons. Myanmar has no intention to become a nuclear power."

June 21, 2010: The State Department releases its *Human Trafficking Report 2010* which criticizes several ASEAN countries for labor trafficking and prostitution.

June 22-24, 2010: Russian President Medvedev visits the US at the invitation of President Obama and attends events in San Francisco and Silicon Valley. He also attends several "summit-level negotiations" in Washington.

June 23-Aug. 2, 2010: *RIMPAC* 2010 is held in the waters off Hawaii.

June 24, 2010: Julia Gillard is elected through a leadership vote by the Labor Party as Australia's first female prime minister.

June 26, 2010: The US and South Korea announce that the transfer of wartime operational control of ROK military forces will be delayed from 2012 to 2015.

June 25-26, G8 Summit is held in Muskoka, Canada.

June 26-27, 2010: G20 Summit is held in Toronto.

June 27, 2010: The FBI arrests 10 people for allegedly serving for years as Russian secret agents with the goal of penetrating U.S. government policymaking circles.

June 28-July 9, 2010: Russian military conduct a series of drills in the Sea of Japan as part of the *Vostok 2010* strategic exercises in Russia's Far East.

June 29, 2010: China and Taiwan sign an Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) that will cut tariffs on a range of goods and services.

June 30, 2010: Benigno Aquino III is sworn in as the 15th president of the Philippines.