

## DAILY TRACKER

### NUCLEAR ISSUES

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1. According to sources quoted by the Financial Times, China has tested a hypersonic orbital glider with nuclear capacity in August 2021. With concerns about the weaponization of space increasing, the United States, Russia and China are all accusing each other of disturbing the relative peace of space, while also developing their own capacity. In September 2021, the secretary of the United States Air Force Frank Kendall raised concerns that China could be developing a “first strike” nuclear capability from space, without providing more details. A report by the Financial Times, citing sources familiar with US intelligence, does give more insight into China’s mysterious space weapon program.

*Source: <https://www.aerotime.aero/29223-china-nuclear-capable-hypersonic-orbital-glider>*

2. With nuclear talks stalled between Washington and Pyongyang while Kim Jong-un advertises his growing arsenal to the world, doubts about America’s “nuclear umbrella” over the Republic of Korea are increasing in both the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK). Washington’s promise to risk a nuclear attack on the American homeland—which will become vastly more dangerous if the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea fulfills the prediction that it will have 200 nuclear weapons by 2027—looks increasingly shaky.

*Source: <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/korea-watch/stop-reassuring-south-korea-about-us-nuclear-umbrella-195159>*

3. North Korea would not likely have nuclear capability without the earlier proliferation of nuclear technology by Abdul Qadeer Khan. At age 85, Khan died this October 9 from COVID-19. Honored and celebrated in Pakistan as the “father of Pakistan’s nuclear weapons program,” Khan was also responsible for providing technical information to North Korea, Libya, and likely Iran.

*Source: <https://salinapost.com/posts/fccbb9c1-b996-407f-b2fc-0569ec34b8ee>*

4. Israel has warned of the danger of a nuclear arms race in the Middle East if Iran succeeds in building a nuclear bomb. “The Iranians today are closer to creating fissile material for nuclear weapons than they ever were in the past,” an Israeli security official said. “This fact has significant implications for the security of the state of Israel.”

*Source:* <https://warisboring.com/regional-arms-race-to-follow-if-iran-completes-nuclear-weapon-israel-says/>

5. The world’s leaders “cannot allow” themselves to be “spectators to violence and war, to brothers killing brothers, as if we were watching games from a safe distance,” Archbishop Gabriele Caccia told a U.N. committee session discussing nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction Oct. 13. “The lives of peoples are not playthings. We cannot be indifferent onlookers,” the Vatican’s permanent observer to the United Nations added.

*Source:* <https://www.catholicsun.org/2021/10/18/u-n-nuncio-denounces-nuclear-weapons-ot-her-weapons-of-mass-destruction/>

## NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

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1. According to the new trilateral security pact (AUKUS) between the US, the UK and Australia, Washington and London will “help” Canberra to develop and deploy nuclear-powered submarines. The highly controversial \$66 billion deal is expected to trigger arms races and nuclear proliferation in Asia. It violates the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ, 1995), effective since 1997. It would seem to violate the Philippine Constitution. And it is strongly opposed by China.

*Source:* <https://qrius.com/philippines-from-peaceful-nuclear-free-asean-to-battle-ready-indo-pacific/>

2. One key question is unlikely to go away despite the passing of A.Q. Khan, the world’s biggest nuclear proliferator, who developed COVID-19 complications. Why did the United States never indict this Dutch-trained Pakistani metallurgist for stealing western nuclear secrets and operating an illicit international nuclear-smuggling network for more than a quarter of a

century? After all, the U.S. has indicted lesser known individuals, including as recently as last year, for conspiring to smuggle nuclear goods to Pakistan.

*Source:* <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/the-nuclear-proliferator-who-was-never-indicted/article37061556.ece>

## MISSILES/BIO WEAPONS

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1. Global Missiles and Missile Defense Systems Market to 2031 report provides the market size forecast and the estimated Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) for the next ten years. The report covers industry analysis including the key market drivers, trends, emerging technologies, and major challenges faced by the industry participants. It also offers insights regarding key factors and government programs that are expected to influence the demand for missiles and missile defense systems market over the forecast period.

*Source:* [https://finance.yahoo.com/news/global-missiles-missile-defense-systems-170500525.html?guccounter=1&guce\\_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce\\_referrer\\_sig=AQAAAJoXJ6u7Yo52MozrFweGBMQ0kpPHdZ-VfD1wr8uZqAg0j0ZbyKZB3VyF9HP2KSRL\\_JazZ1ZemfkVLrmYUEfO0IgGneI8a5d\\_1gKVzwlJg9Xo4chX\\_OF6i-A8ED99x47kMjYABO6lnx1ZsitKysZTFZut3XgbD24jpHLEbB2Q\\_jb](https://finance.yahoo.com/news/global-missiles-missile-defense-systems-170500525.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAJoXJ6u7Yo52MozrFweGBMQ0kpPHdZ-VfD1wr8uZqAg0j0ZbyKZB3VyF9HP2KSRL_JazZ1ZemfkVLrmYUEfO0IgGneI8a5d_1gKVzwlJg9Xo4chX_OF6i-A8ED99x47kMjYABO6lnx1ZsitKysZTFZut3XgbD24jpHLEbB2Q_jb)

2. Hypersonic missiles are much faster and more agile than normal ones, meaning they are more difficult to intercept. It comes as concern grows around China's nuclear capabilities. On Monday, foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a media briefing that a routine test had been carried out in July to verify different types of reusable spacecraft technology. "This was not a missile, this was a spacecraft," he said. "This is of great significance for reducing the cost of spacecraft use."

*Source:* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-58953352>



3. China on Monday said it had tested a spacecraft and not a nuclear-capable hypersonic missile as reported by the Financial Times, which said the testing of the advanced projectile had caught the US intelligence community by surprise.

*Source:* <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/china-trashes-ft-report-says-it-tested-spacecraft-not-hypersonic-missile-101634582192835.html>

## UN REFORMS

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1. Countries should remove obstacles to investment and step up collaborative action to ensure that the global recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic is green, inclusive and sustainable, a United Nations forum heard on Monday. Government officials, business leaders and UN representatives gathered online during the opening summit of the seventh World Investment Forum with the theme of “Investing in sustainable recovery” to address the key challenges facing investors in a post-pandemic world grappling with the looming threat of climate change.

*Source:* <https://www.thenationalnews.com/business/2021/10/18/remove-obstacles-to-investment-and-ensure-a-sustainable-post-covid-recovery-un-forum-says/>

2. In a landmark move, the UN Human Rights Council formally recognized that access to a healthy environment is a fundamental human right. Ambassadors from Costa Rica, the Maldives, Morocco, Slovenia, and Switzerland drafted Resolution 48/13, which passed with 43 votes in favor. China, India, Japan, and Russia abstained. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, insisted: “Bold action is now required to ensure this resolution on the right to a healthy environment serves as a springboard to push for transformative economic, social, and environmental policies that will protect people and nature.”

*Source:* <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/un-human-rights-council-declares-access-to-a-clean-environment-a-human-right>

3. Colin Powell will be most remembered for the act he most regretted, his 2003 presentation to the UN security council laying out US evidence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, which turned out not to exist. It did not directly lead to the Iraq invasion because George W Bush was



going to invade anyway, and the presentation did not succeed in its goal of persuading the council to pass a second resolution backing military action against Iraq.

*Source:* <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/oct/18/colin-powell-un-security-council-iraq>

4. The UN mission's mandate expires next month, and Mr. Ndiaye said an extension is especially needed to assist with local elections, which have not been held in more than 30 years. The extension, alongside strong determination by the government and engagement by international partners, are also essential for the adoption of lasting political solutions in the CAR. "With the support of all the members of the Council, we will work hard to make the best use of our good offices in order to promote a transparent coordinated and coherent approach in order to generate necessary contributions to the resolution of the crisis in the CAR," he said, speaking through an interpreter.

*Source:* <https://indianexpress.com/article/world/un-climate-conference-issues-which-need-to-be-resolved-7577982/>