

DAILY TRACKER**NUCLEAR ISSUES**

1. As a former denizen of Washington working in the nuclear weapons space, I know how it can seem as though the only important conversations about nuclear weapons are happening in the U.S. capital, or Omaha, or Brussels, or in capitals of the other nuclear-armed states. Yet, two recent books on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), often called the nuclear ban treaty, demonstrate that activists around the world and diplomats from non-nuclear-weapon states have also been engaging in serious discussions about the future of these weapons. Both books make clear why so many diplomats and activists came together in 2017 to negotiate a treaty banning nuclear weapons despite significant criticism from nuclear-armed states and their allies. Understanding their arguments matters for the future of nuclear deterrence and U.S. alliance relationships, the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), and global governance of nuclear weapons more broadly.

Source: <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-11/book-reviews/banning-bomb-smashing-patriarchy-treaty-prohibiting-nuclear-weapons>

2. In early 2020, Italy's empty streets and overwhelmed hospitals showed the world just how devastating COVID-19 was going to be. Now, this weekend, Italy is hosting the first in-person G-20 summit since the pandemic began, and the pandemic was certainly a main focus at the gathering of the world's biggest economies with discussions about supply chains and vaccine distribution. Also on President Biden's agenda was this issue of easing a tariff war with Europe and restarting a nuclear deal with Iran. My fellow White House correspondent Scott Detrow has been traveling with President Biden, and joins us now from Rome. Good morning, Scott.

Source: <https://www.npr.org/2021/10/31/1050919633/tariffs-taxes-and-nuclear-weapons-are-big-to-pics-at-the-g-20-summit>

3. The award was established in 2016 with a goal to urge international actors to pursue more vigorous efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons. King Abdullah II of Jordan was the first person to receive the prestigious award back in 2017 during his visit to Kazakhstan. In 2019, the award went to former International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Yukiya Amano, who passed away in July 2019, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO) Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo for their efforts towards nuclear non-proliferation and security.

Source: <https://astanatimes.com/2021/11/mohamed-bin-zayed-receives-nazarbayev-prize-for-a-nuclear-weapon-free-world-and-global-security/>

4. The Biden administration has publicly released the total number of nuclear weapons in the U.S. stockpile, a sharp reversal of the previous administration's refusal to do so for the past three years. "Today, as an act of good faith and a tangible, public demonstration of the U.S. commitment to transparency, we will present data which documents our own record of continued progress toward

the achievement of the goals” of the 1968 nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), said Bonnie Jenkins, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, on Oct. 5.

Source: <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-11/news/us-discloses-nuclear-stockpile-numbers>

MISSILES/BIO WEAPONS

1. A Houthi ballistic missile attack on the Yemeni province of Marib has killed and injured 29 civilians, including women and children, according to the country’s information minister. In a tweet on Monday, Muammar al-Iryani said the two ballistic missiles used in the attack hit a mosque and a religious school.

Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/11/1/houthi-missile-attack-on-mosque-kills-29-says-yemen-minister>

2. The first ship of the four Project-15B state-of-the-art stealth guided missile destroyers, Visakhapatnam, being built at the Mazgaon Docks Limited (MDL), was delivered to the Navy last Friday. Delayed by three years, the ships will be commissioned very soon. “The 163-metre-long warship has a full load displacement of 7,400 tonnes and a maximum speed of 30 knots. The overall indigenous content of the project is approximately 75%,” the Navy said on Sunday.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/navy-takes-delivery-of-guided-missile-destroyer-visakhapatnam/article37270547.ece>

3. Recent reports in *Financial Times* claimed that China tested two hypersonic missiles in August 2021. They mentioned that the first flight missed its target by about two-dozen miles. However, the *FT* report acknowledged the flying of the vehicle through low-earth orbit. The Chinese government denied having tested any missile, but agreed to have test launched a spacecraft to verify its reusability.

Source: <https://theprint.in/opinion/if-us-sees-chinas-hypersonic-missile-test-as-sputnik-moment-it-must-help-allies-friends/759826/>

4. Hypersonic missiles can fly in the upper atmosphere at more than five times the speed of sound. These weapons are capable of traveling much more swiftly than current nuclear-capable ballistic and cruise missiles at low altitudes. They can also shift direction mid-flight and do not particularly follow a predictable path the way conventional missiles do. This makes hypersonic munition, especially missiles that can travel at over five times the speed of sound, much harder to track and intercept.

Source: <https://eurasianimes.com/chinas-hypersonic-glide-vehicle-is-the-biggest-challenge-for-the-us/>

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

1. While allies do not believe the review will include a “no first use” declaration, they fear he is considering a policy known as “sole purpose”. The policy, which Mr Biden campaigned on in 2020, would dictate that the sole purpose of the country’s use of nuclear arsenal “should be to deter — and, if necessary, retaliate against — a nuclear attack”.

Source: <https://www.news.com.au/technology/innovation/military/us-allies-fear-biden-will-adopt-no-first-use-nuclear-weapons-policy/news-story/386861db2f5a052e4d0e643233b3c342>

2. Today the UK published its National Report ahead of the 10th Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This report reviews the progress that the UK has made against the NPT’s 3 pillars: disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It will be submitted to the UN before the 10th Review Conference that will take place in New York in January 2022.

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/treaty-on-the-non-proliferation-of-nuclear-weapons-uk-report-for-the-10th-review-conference-james-cleverlys-statement>

UN REFORMS

1. Dozens of countries have called for the United Nations Human Rights Council to host a special session on Sudan, following a deadly crackdown on mass rallies against last week’s military coup. In a letter to the council president sent on behalf of 48 countries on Monday, British ambassador Simon Manley stressed the urgent need for the top UN rights body to discuss the situation in Sudan since the army’s October 25 power grab.

Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/11/1/demand-for-special-un-rights-council-meet-after-sudan-coup>

2. In August 2021, the Taliban took control of Afghanistan once again. It marked the end of 20 years of relatively democratic governance in Afghanistan. Since then, the Taliban have portrayed their government as legitimate in hopes of attracting international recognition and occupying Afghanistan’s seat in the United Nations.

Source: <https://thediplomat.com/2021/11/should-the-taliban-be-given-afghanistans-un-seat/>

3. India has fully inoculated 23.6 percent of its population so far and 52.6 percent of its people have already received the first dose. Currently, around 59 lakh doses are being administered — on an average — every day in the country. If this pace is maintained, India would easily be able to fully vaccinate more than 40 per cent of its population before the end of 2021.

Source: <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/data-stories/data-focus/india-well-on-track-to-meet-uns-covid-vaccination-targets/article37301147.ece>