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Asia in Review

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Dear Readers,

Welcome to this week's Asia in Review (AIR) updating you on the latest happenings and developments in geopolitics and international relations as well as constitutional politics, law reform and governance in Asia.

I wish you an informative read and hope you all stay healthy and safe.

With the best wishes,

Henning Glaser

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Law and Politics in East Asia

China: Beijing passes Hong Kong national security law

(dql) As widely expected, the Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress, the country's top legislative body, on Tuesday unanimously passed the national security law for Hong Kong which criminalizes acts of secession, subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign forces to endanger national security. Critics of the law, whose text has not yet been made public, fear that it will erode Hong Kong's autonomy and curtail democratic spaces of the city. [South China Morning Post] [AiR No. 25, June/2020, 4]

In an immediate response to the law's passage, leaders of the pro-democracy political party Demosisto announced that they resigned from their party posts and left the party. Following their move, the party disbanded. Demosisto has been widely believed to be targeted as one of the first organizations by the law as it has been active in reaching out to US politicians for their support for the passage of the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act last year which allows – among other China-critical provisions – for sanctions against Chinese officials held responsible for human rights violations in Hong Kong. [AiR No. 49, December/2019, 1]

Joshua Wong, Demosisto's founder and leader, who vowed to continue to fight for the city's autonomy in private capacity, warned that "[f]rom now on, Hong Kong enters a new era of reign of terror, just like Taiwan's White Terror, with arbitrary prosecutions, black jails, secret trials, forced confessions, media clampdowns and political censorship." [Reuters 1] [BBC]

In another reaction to the law, the pro-independence organizations Hong Kong National Front and Studentlocalism announced that they will stop their work in Hong Kong but continue offices and operations abroad. [Financial Times]

In an earlier development, more than 50 protesters were arrested on Sunday during rally against the security law. [Reuters 2]

South Korea: Ruling party heads 17 out of 18 parliamentary committees

(dql) In a show of force, the ruling Democratic Party of Korea (DPK) made use of its absolute majority of 181 seats in the country's 300-member parliament to take the chair posts of 17 out of 18 committees, following the failure in talks with the main opposition United Future Party (UFP) which holds 103 seats. The remaining 18th committee, the chief of the Intelligence Committee, was not elected as the law requires that seat is to be filled only after consultation among the National Assembly speaker, deputy speakers and negotiation.

Both parties blamed each other for the failed agreement which seemed close on Sunday with a compromise under which the DPK would have got 11 committee chairs and the seven for the UFP. The the chairmanship of the Legislation and Judiciary Standing Committee, which has the power to oversee judiciary-related bills and to examine the legality and terminology of bills passed by other committees and which is traditionally allocated to a member of the main opposition party to ensure a certain degree of power balance, turned out to be the stumbling block as the UFP rejected the DPK's offer to share the chair for two years each. [Korea Herald]

Japan: Ruling party uses snap election rumors as party-internal disciplining measure

(mp) Members of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) rumored the possibility that their head, Prime Minister Abe, might dissolve the House of Representatives for a snap election within this year. This happens at a time when Abe receives sharp criticism over problems in domestic politics as well as over his management of the coronavirus crisis.

However, precisely because the country is facing enormous challenges like restoring its economy after the pandemic, experts raised doubts over the likelihood of new elections and consider the rumors as a measure to tighten party-internal discipline and unity in times of public pressure. [Nippon]

Taiwan: Opposition party occupies parliament

(ef) To protest against the nomination of a member of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) as the new head of the Control Yuan – one of the five branches of the government in Taiwan which functions as an investigative agency monitoring the other branches of government – members of the opposition Kuomintang Party (KMT) occupied the Legislative Yuan for one day by locking doors with chains and chairs before being overwhelmed by energetic interbvention of members of the DPP. The Deputy Secretary-General of the KMT stated that the occupation was staged in order to show the disapproval of the nomination of the candidate to her policy mismanagement during her time as Taiwan's labour minister and mayor of Kaohsiung. [Taiwan News] [Reuters]

Mongolia: Mongolian People's Party retains majority in parliament

(ef) In last week's parliamentary election, held under special Covid-19 related health and safety measures, the ruling Mongolian People's Party, although loosing three seats compared with the election in 2016, retained its majority securing 62 out of 76 seats. Voters turnout was high at more than 73 percent of the electorate. [AKI Press]

For more details on the composition of the new parliament see Julian Dierkes at [East Asia Forum] who sees the outcome of the election as a "sign that Mongolian democracy is starting to heal from the corruption-induced frustrations of the 2010s."

Law and Politics in South Asia

India: Outrage mounts over police custody deaths

(lm) The death of a father-son duo in police custody has sparked outrage and a debate on custodial deaths in India, with many drawing parallels with the killing of George Floyd in the United States.

According to a first information report, father and son were arrested on June 19 for allegedly keeping their store open past permitted hours in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, which is still observing a lockdown to curb the spread of the coronavirus. Both men died in hospital a few days later, with their family alleging in written complaints that they had been subjected to brutal torture and sexual abuse. The deaths in the small town of Sathankulam have generated waves of uproar on social media, and shops in Tamil Nadu were shut on Wednesday in protest. [Reuters] [SCMP] [DW]

The state government announced on Sunday that it had appealed to the Madras High Court to transfer the case to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). On Tuesday, then, citing the post-mortem report, the Madras High Court said it had sufficient grounds to press murder charges against three policemen allegedly involved in the incident. Another three officers will be facing contempt action for reportedly trying to obstruct the Judicial Magistrate's inquiry by destroying evidence and attempting to intimidate the judicial team. [NDTV]

India: Workers' rights under lockdown pressure

(dql) In this critical analysis at [IPS], Sanjay Karpor argues that Modi's coronavirus lockdown has not only led to an economic disaster, but also to worker's rights coming under attack with – among others – shifts having been increased from 8 to 12 hours, welfare schemes withdrawn and safety standards have been lowered.

Nepal further stirs anti-Indianism with controversial Cross-Border Marriage Bill

(lm) Amidst ongoing border tensions with India, Nepal's ruling Communist Party (NCP) on Sunday introduced a long-dormant Citizenship Bill to Parliament. The revised bill mandates foreign women married to Nepali men to wait seven years before becoming naturalized residents, while at the same time not granting Nepali women the right to similarly extend their citizenship to foreign husbands. The bill was recently approved by the State Affairs and Good Governance Committee and is now expected to pass in the lower and upper houses. [The EurAsian Times] [The Times of India]

As cross-border marriage is particularly prevalent along a southern plane known as the Terai region, pro-India opposition parties Nepali Congress (NC) and Janata Samajwadi Party-Nepal (JSP) issued a note of dissent, citing fears that an amended citizenship law would ultimately reduce the population of the Terai region and diminish the plane's political sway. [The Himalayan Times]

Pakistan: High-profile corruption cases

(dql) An arrest warrant has been issued on Monday against former president Asif Ali Zardari for failing to appear before court in a 2008 luxury vehicles case in which he is accused of purchasing luxury vehicles from the Toshakhana (state treasure house) at only 15% of the price of the cars. [New Indian Express]

In an earlier move last week a corruption case has been filed against deposed prime minister Nawaz Sharif over allegations of being involved in the unlawful allotment of land in Punjab mor than 30 years ago. [Times of India]

Pakistan: Tensions in Balochistan province turn violent

(cf/lm) Four heavily armed gunmen attacked the Pakistan Stock Exchange in the city of Karachi on Monday in a bid to take hostages, killing two guards and a policeman and wounding seven others before being shot dead. According to a senior counter-terrorism official, the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) had posted a photograph and claimed the attack on Twitter. The men in the photo were later identified as member's BLA's so-called Majeed Brigade, named after BLA commander Abdul Majeed Baloch. Tensions in Balochistan had been heightened, when protests had erupted last week over so-called death squads, which are allegedly backed by the Pakistani military. [AiR No. 25, June/2020, 4] [Reuters]

The BLA is only one of several secessionist militant groups fighting for Balochistan's independence from Pakistan. If the claims turn out to be true, this would be the BLA's second time in Karachi, after the group staged a previous attack on the Chinese consulate in 2018. Other Majeed Brigade/BLA attacks have targeted Pakistani government or Chinese targets in Balochistan province before. Last year the Majeed Brigade attacked a five-star hotel in the port city of Gwadar in Balochistan. The hotel is the centrepiece of a multi-billion-dollar Chinese project and normally hosts the Chinese delegations. [The Indian Express] [bbc]

Sri Lanka: Concerns over final report review of Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact (MCC) Agreement

(cf) The Expert Committee of Sri Lanka recently submitted their final report of the MCC Agreement to President Gotabaya Rajapaksa. The agreement aims to reduce poverty by the United States granting a $480 million Compact within five years to the Government of Sri Lanka. The grant would be used to aid specific transport and land projects.

However, there are concerns over the final report. It stated that the MCC had signed 7.4 million USD in 2017, and 2.6 million USD in 2018. However, the US Embassy in Colombo clarified that no grant has been transferred to the Sri Lankan Government. Moreover, a former Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary states the government should not sign the agreement due to

intrusive clauses, such as US personnel would be granted extensive immunities or special privileges, and Sri Lankan law would be substituted with international law. Dr Gunaruwan, chair of the committee, states this would violate the Sri Lankan Constitution.

The President Gotabaya Rajapaksa plans to review the matter and make the final report public for all citizens to view. [MCC Government] [Colombo Page 1] [Colombo Page 2]

Sri Lanka: Curfew lifted along with safety measures in place

(cf) On Sunday, the Sri Lankan government lifted curfews after the severe lockdown since March 20 to battle the coronavirus. The ease of curfews was due to confirmation of control on the virus in the Indian Ocean island nation. However, Sri Lanka's plans to open the international airport will be postponed to "meet the needs of some stranded Sri Lankan workers returning home", and has extended visas for foreign citizens to 11 July. The Ministry of Health has additionally granted public health inspectors the right to take legal action against citizens who violate the election guidelines for health and safety. [Colombo Page 1] [Miami Herald] [Colombo Page 2]

Sri Lanka launches probe on rebel leader turned politician

(lm) According to Human Rights Watch, Sri Lankan authorities have ordered an investigation into a former commander of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), after he publicly boasted of killing thousands of Sri Lankan soldiers as part of the LTTE's capture of Elephant Pass in 2000. Addressing a political rally in the East, pro-government paramilitary leader Karuna Amman reportedly said that he had killed more soldiers during the country's civil war than Sri Lankans had died from the coronavirus. [HRW] [Tamil Guardian]

Law and Politics in Southeast Asia

Cambodia's Hun Sen prepares son as successor

(jn) Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen, 67, has said that he was grooming his eldest son Hun Manet, 42, to become Prime Minister himself once he stepped down which would, however, not happen for another decade. He also vowed that his ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) would rule the country for as long as a century telling the opposition it should wait for the next life if it wanted to take over the country's leadership.

Being one of the world's longest-serving leaders after more than 35 years in power, Hun Sen said the CPP would not be challenged as governing party. Speaking of himself at another event he asked: "Who has the capability to replace Hun Sen right now? Let's be honest and come out. There is no one."

Hun Manet already holds the rank of a three-star general and the positions of deputy commander-general of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF), army commander, commander of the anti-terrorism special forces, and deputy commander of bodyguards. He was appointed by Hun Sen to the position of the party's central youth leader earlier this month, already being a member of the CPP's standing committee.

The CPP has been in power since 1979 and holds every seat in the 125-member legislature after the main opposition party, the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), was dissolved in November 2017 ahead of the 2018 general election. [Radio Free Asia] [South China Morning Post]

Indonesia: Sub-optimal handling of corona crisis exposes governance weaknesses

(ls) Indonesia's handling of the Covid-19 outbreak has largely been criticized as not suitable. The crisis has exposed limitations in the state's capacity to address the immediate risks for public health and longer-term socio-economic consequences. An ISEAS Perspective argues that the crisis is a reminder for the government to initiate a comprehensive overhaul of administrative structures and decision-making processes. In particular, data collection and information management would need to be improved. [ISEAS]

Over the weekend, President Joko Widodo addressed his Cabinet in an unusually fiery tone, saying that he was prepared to take extraordinary political and governmental steps to address the current crisis, including a Cabinet reshuffle. The president is under increasing public pressure due to the still rising number of infections in the country. [Jakarta Post]

Malaysia: Mahathir abandons PM candidacy and backs Sabah chief minister

(cm/ls) After weeks of uncertainty between Anwar Ibrahim and Mohamad Mahathir over each's possible candidacy against Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin, Mahathir has apparently abandoned his plans to become prime minister for a third time. Not without surprise to observers, he stated on the weekend that he will back Shafie Apdal as PM candidate. Shafie is the Chief of Minister of the state of Sabah and the leader of the Parti Warisan. The decision was a collective agreement between three opposition parties. PKR, however, was not in agreement as they proposed Anwar as prime ministerial candidate and refused Mahathir's initial proposal to elect him for six months as prime minister. [South China Morning Post] [Straits Times 1] [AiR No. 25, June/2020, 4]

Meanwhile, opposition parties are calling on Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin for snap polls. Malaysia's upcoming elections are due before or in September 2023. However, the opposition questions whether Muhyiddin is holding an effective majority in parliament. [Straits Times 2] [Channel News Asia]

Myanmar: Thousands of villagers flee army operation in Rakhine state

(jn) Some 10,000 villagers have fled their homes in Myanmar's Rakhine state after the government

allegedly ordered them to leave their homes as part of a larger military campaign against combatants of the rebellious Arakan Army (AA) in the state. The mass exodus set in after a local administrator had warned village leaders that the army had planned “clearance operations” against insurgents. However, a government spokesman said on Saturday that the original evacuation order issued by border-affairs officials had been revoked. Border affairs officials acknowledged issuing the order through the local administrator but said it affected fewer villages.

"Clearance operations" is the term that Myanmar authorities used in 2017 to label the forceful crackdown against insurgents from Rakhine state’s Muslim-minority Rohingya people which led to the large-scale refugee crisis in the region. [Radio Free Asia] [Bangkok Post]

Philippines: Child victims of the drug war

(ls) Two NGOs, the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and the Philippine-based Children’s Legal Rights and Development Center, have documented 122 incidents in which children have been killed in the Philippines’ drug war between July 2016 and December 2019. The NGOs also said that the actual number is likely higher. The report says that some children were directly targeted, sometimes for witnessing other killings. Others were killed as proxies when real targets could not be found, or they were victims of mistaken identity. Some have also been killed by stray bullets during police operations. [OMCT-Report] [PhilStar]

In addition, ahead of the three-week session of the U.N. Human Rights Council, thirty-one U.N. special rapporteurs and other experts called for an independent and impartial investigation into the drug war. In response, presidential spokesman Harry Roque, himself a former human rights lawyer, said the human rights mechanisms of the United Nations “lack impartiality” when it comes to the Duterte administration. [Benar News]

Philippines: Police kills four soldiers in the south

(ls) In an apparent friendly fire incident in the southern Philippines, four army intelligence officers were killed by policemen on Monday. The intelligence unit operated in the area in search of Abu Sayyaf suicide

bombers. There are different accounts of what happened, one side saying the army intelligence men threatened the police while the other side said no such threat had occurred. The respective police officers are now investigated by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG). A parallel investigation by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) was also requested. [Benar News] [Manila Bulletin]

In a separate development, four suspected terrorists and their supporters with alleged links to the Abu Sayyaf and Islamic State (ISIS) groups were killed in a police raid in Parañaque City, which is close to the capital Manila. The Philippine Congress recently passed a new anti-terrorism bill which still needs to be signed by President Rodrigo Duterte. It gives law enforcement and military agents greater liberties in surveilling, arresting, and prosecuting terrorism suspects. [Rappler]

Singapore: Opposition parties release manifestos with PM's brother joining one of them

(cm/ls) After Singapore's Parliament was dissolved last Tuesday, opposition parties have released their manifestos. The Worker's Party (WP) and the Progress Singapore Party's (PSP) particularly conveyed their manifestos against plans and policies of the ruling People's Action Party (PAP). The opposition parties advocate against an increased tax plan, for a national minimum wage and the abolition of retirement age.

Meanwhile, Lee Hsien Yang, brother of current PM Lee Hsien Loong, has become a member of the PSP. He stated, "I think sometimes we need to speak truth to power," and said that his decision to join the opposition party was due to the PAP Government serving mainly the elites of society. The Lee family has seen several splits and feuds over the last years since the passing of the brothers' father and former Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew, in 2015. [Reuters] [South China Morning Post 1] [South China Morning Post 2]

Thailand: State of emergency extended another time

(ls) The Thai government has decided to extend the state of emergency in place since late March in order to contain the spread of Covid-19, until the end of July. Though the country has not seen any locally

transmitted infections for almost five weeks, the government considered it necessary to keep the special powers in order to prevent a second wave and manage the further opening-up of the country. [Straits Times]

Though a period of emergency can usually not exceed three months from its declaration, successive extensions of no more than three months can be imposed by the prime minister with the consent of the Cabinet. Critics have argued that the invocation of the Emergency Decree results in unnecessary restrictions of rights and a lack of accountability of state authorities, arguing that existing legal frameworks could be used or, if necessary, amended for managing the situation. [Verfassungsblog]

Thailand: Prawit elected leader of Palang Pracharath

(ls) As expected, Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwon has been elected the new leader of the ruling Palang Pracharath Party. He had so far been the party's chief strategist. Several executives who had been dismissed ahead of the election were reinstated, except for the deposed party leader and Finance Minister Uttama Savanayana and seven of his confidants. Ahead of the leadership reshuffle, internal power struggles had been reported. Meanwhile, however, the party was able to win several by-elections, thereby increasing its parliamentary majority. [Bangkok Post 1] [Bangkok Post 2]

Thailand: Pro-democracy groups commemorate transition to democracy in 1932

(ls) Thai pro-democracy groups in Bangkok and other provinces have held gatherings to commemorate the peaceful "revolution" by the People's Party of 24 June 1932 when Thailand transited from an absolute to a constitutional monarchy. Observers said that the gatherings were more widespread than in the past, possibly also displaying growing general dissatisfaction with the state of Thai democracy. In February, the dissolution of the Future Forward Party had triggered a wave of anti-government protests among university and high school students. These came to an end when measures to contain Covid-19 were ordered. [Straits Times] [Khaosod English]

For a critical account of the current situation of social media as public space of political discussion and expression in Thailand see Supalak Ganjanakhundee at [ISEAS].

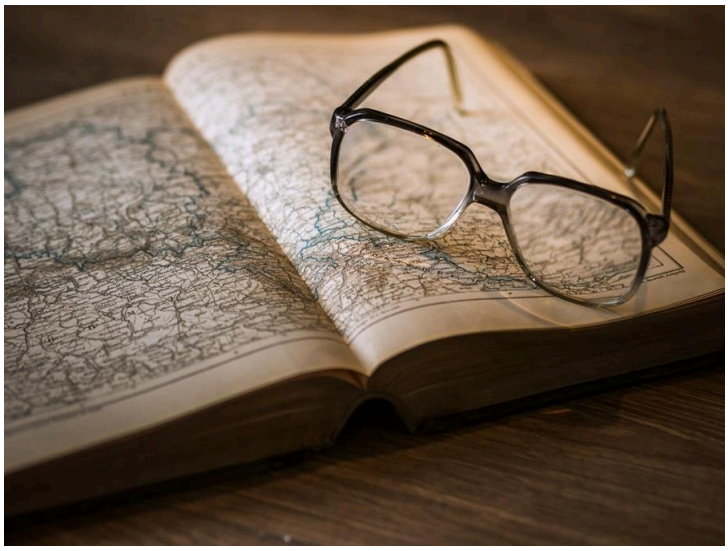
Thailand: Redshirt protesters found guilty for 2007 protests

(ls) Thailand's Supreme Court has affirmed the prison sentences of five Redshirt leaders for a 2007 protest. The group had been sentenced to two years and eight months each. In the incident, the defendants had laid siege to the residence of then Privy Council President Prem Tinsulanond in a protest against Prem's alleged involvement in the coup against Thaksin Shinawatra in 2006. The protest then turned violent. [Khaosod English]

Vietnam: Open and proactive communication strategy behind pandemic success

(dql) Vietnam is internationally celebrated for its success in containing the coronavirus pandemic, with 355 cases and no deaths. For Hong Kong Nguyen and Tung Manh Ho at [ISEAS], one major reason for the success lies in a proactive communication strategy of the government that was carried out from the beginning and applied through a multitude of communication platforms. The open communication facilitated "public understanding of and support for the government response, thereby facilitating effective government-citizen cooperation."

International Relations, Geopolitics and Security in Asia



China-USA relations: Tensions high over Hong Kong and Taiwan

(dql/ef) In the latest sign of escalating tensions between China and the USA over Beijing's national security law for Hong Kong, US State Secretary Pompeo on Monday announced that the USA will stop exports of defense equipment to Hong Kong, originating from the USA, and impose new restrictions on the export of dual use items to the city, a move by which Washington signals that Hong Kong no longer enjoys the special trade status with the USA. [Politico]

In an earlier Hong Kong-related move last week, Washington announced visa restrictions on Chinese officials over Hong Kong, a move Beijing was quick to condemn and to announce to retaliate with similar visa restrictions targeting certain US individuals. [CNN] [BCC]

Meanwhile, several moves in the last week on US side further worsened already sour Sino-US relations over Taiwan. The US Army took a rare action and posted a promotional video of a joint training session of Taiwanese and US-American special forces soldiers, showing – among others – how a mock casualty is carried by Green Berets to what appears to be Taiwanese Army helicopter as well as a soldier carrying a Type 91 assault rifle, the Taiwanese military's standard individual arm. [Taiwan News] [The Drive]

In response to the video footage, Chinese state-run news outlet Global Times cited Chinese experts who see the joint military exercise as proof that "it was the US and the separatist authorities on the island that first changed the status quo and provoked the mainland." Washington and Taipei would have to "bear full responsibility" for a possible reunification by force in the future. [Global Times]

Further complicating the situation over Taiwan, three American military planes were spotted over a strategic waterway that is used by Chinese submarines while US. lawmakers have introduced the Taiwan Fellowship Act to both chamber of the US Congress. The Act aims to help US government officials obtain deepened understanding about Taiwan by offering federal government employees fellowships for taking part in an exchange program which provides opportunities to learn, live and work in Taiwan. [Focus Taiwan 1] [Taipei Times]

Meanwhile, Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen President announced that she will take measures to provide the regular military force with a stronger military reserve force. Measures under consideration include ensuring the reserve force having similar combat capabilities like to regular Armed Forces as well as synchronizing human and strategic resources mobilization and establishing closer cooperation between the reserve force and government bodies. [Focus Taiwan 2]

China to conduct military exercises around Paracel Islands

(dql) Past Sunday China announced that it will conduct military training around the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea, an area disputed between China and Vietnam. The drills are scheduled for July 1 to 5, with all vessels prohibited from sailing in the area during that period, an assertive move which provokes strong Vietnamese reaction.

The announcement came shortly after ASEAN leaders at the ASEAN Summit in Hanoi last Friday expressed in some of their strongest remarks their opposition against China's claim to virtually the entire South China Sea on historical grounds and emphasized "the importance of non-militarization and self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability, and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation."

It also comes as the USS Nimitz and USS Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Groups on the same day kicked off joint exercises in the Philippine Sea to bolster the United States' "'responsive, flexible, and enduring commitments' to mutual defense agreements with allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific." [Nikkei Asian Review] [Bernar News] [Japan Times]

China-USA/EU relations: Bridging Washington's and Brussel's diverging approach towards Beijing

Last week AiR reported on the China-EU summit at which both sides agreed on joint efforts to conclude a comprehensive bilateral investment agreement in this year. [AiR No. 25, June/2020, 4]

Picking up this outcome of the summit Paul Gewirtz at [Brookings] acknowledges that the EU is maintaining a different approach towards China than the USA as it is pursuing a "vital and complex" partnership with China whereas US strategies and policies on China revolve around competition and rivalry. He argues that only if Washington clearly understands the Brussel's approach towards Beijing, it can identify spaces for common policies with the EU to enter into a collaboration that would help the USA to face China with the strength that stems from the transatlantic alliance.

Japan considers preemptive strike as an alternative to Aegis Ashore

(mp) After the Aegis Ashore missile shield´s deployment has been halted permanently [AiR No. 24, June/2020, 3], Tokyo keeps looking into alternatives. Besides installing the missile defense shield on warships and floating platforms, as reported last week [AiR No. 25, June/2020, 4], preemptive strikes could be another inexpensive option to defend against persistent threats from China and North Korea. The attacking of hostile launch facilities in advance is expected to massively reduce costs compared to the less reliable conventional way of shooting down missiles in flight. Despite concerns over the legitimacy of preemptive strikes within the international legal framework, such attacks are widely understood to be justified under Article 52 of the United Nation´s charter.

The necessity of up-to-date defense capacities was also brought up by Japanese defense minister who warned of China´s military intentions in the South China Sea, after the spotting of a submarine near Japanese territory, which later has been identified as Chinese. [Nikkei Asian Review 1] [Nikkei Asian Review 2]

The Japanese army will launch an electronic warfare unit as a response to the increasing tension over the

Senkaku Islands, which are claimed by both Japan and China. The new unit, which consists of 80 soldiers, will be in charge of jamming hostile communication signals ahead of a potential attack. Since the occupation of an island requires sophisticated communications between troops, the disruption of both human communication and missile signals is deemed necessary for successful self-defense. [Nikkei Asian Review]

Japan´s Defense Ministry plans to establish a new post for issues associated with the ASEAN and the Pacific islands to bolster security in the region after an increased quantity of joint maneuvers with ASEAN countries over the past years. By the new position, Tokyo hopes to oppose Chinas "attempts to change the status quo," as stated by Defense Minister Taro Kono. [Japan Times]

Japan: Trade negotiations with the UK

(mp) Japan and the United Kingdom have entered into negotiations over a trade deal, urging its completion within only weeks since their current agreement will lose its effect after Brexit by the end of 2020. Both countries also seek to include enhancement of digital regulations such as an agreement over the non-disclosure of software source codes to promote free data handling. Focus points will further include cars and agricultural products. [Japan Times]

Japan opposes South Korea joining the G7

(mp) A high-ranking Japanese government official has raised his objection towards the United States against Korea joining the G7 group after US President Donald Trump had proposed to expand the group by permanently inviting Korea, Australia, India, and Russia to the annual meeting since the current seven countries would not represent the world´s real power structure, according to Trump.

Tokyo, which is the only Asian member of the G7, criticized that South Korea´s political attitude towards China and North Korea differed from that of the other member countries. Japan´s opposition against Trump´s initiative will most likely further intensify tensions between Tokyo and Seoul, while these are already heightened amid disputes over wartime history. [Kyodo]

Inter-Korean relations: Pyongyang reinstalls propaganda loudspeakers along demilitarized zone

(dql) In the latest sign of deteriorating inter-Korean relations, Pyongyang has started to reinstall loudspeakers along the inter-Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), shortly ahead of the 70th anniversary of the begin of the Korean War on June 25. The loudspeakers, used to disseminate proclamations on the superiority of the North's socialist regime, had been removed in 2018 at the height of inter-Korean peace and cooperation talks. [The Diplomat]

The move comes a week after North Korea had blown up a joint liaison office that has been built on North Korean soil by South Korea and used for talks between the two Koreas. [AiR No. 25, June/2020, 4]

For an explanation of Pyongyang's resolve to recent tensions and its motives see the podcast with former CIA analyst and Brookings Senior Fellow Jung Pak at [Brookings].

North Korea's and Iran's common enemy: the USA

(yo) North Korea's new ambassador to Iran met President Hassan Rouhani to discuss about their common enemy, the USA. Rouhani after the meeting communicated his willingness to further bilateral ties to strengthen their abilities to confront US hegemony. Iran and North Korea have consistently been corresponding about deepening relations and have dispatched numerous delegations throughout the past few years. [NK News]

Meanwhile, according the North Korea state media North Korea is willing to use nuclear weapons against the USA, as it believes it to be the only option that is left to counter nuclear threats from Washington after diplomatic efforts have failed to yield results. [US News]

UN experts urge India to release protest leaders

(lm) A group of UN human rights experts on Friday called on India to release activists who had been

arrested last February for protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). "These defenders, many of them students, appear to have been arrested simply because they exercised their right to denounce and protest against the CAA," the press statement released by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights said.[UN]

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, passed into law by India's federal parliament in December 2019, lays out a path to citizenship for people who came to India from one of the following three neighbouring countries while fleeing persecution: Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan. However, citizenship can be granted provided that they had arrived before 2015, and that they are of any other religious community in those countries apart from the Muslim one. This last caveat triggered mass protests across India and resulted in a fierce police crackdown.

During the nationwide protests against the CAA, targeted violence against Muslims had erupted in February in capital New Delhi in which 53 people, mostly Muslims, were killed. Several anti-CAA activists were arrested in connection with the New Delhi violence and later charged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), a stringent anti-terror law. [AiR No. 9, March/2020, 1]

India asks Russia to speed up delivery of missile system, jets amid China border tensions

(lm) Amid worsening ties with China following the worst military face-off between the Asian nations in four decades, India is reportedly seeking an early supply of a Russian anti-aircraft missile defence system – currently set for December 2021 – and to speed up the purchase of Russian made fighter jets. Visiting Moscow to attend the 75thanniversary of the Victory Day Parade, Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh also met with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov to ask Russia to speed up the delivery of the S-400 deal that was originally signed in 2018. [Bloomberg] [The Hindu]

India asks Pakistan to cut embassy staff by half over spying charges

(lm) India last Tuesday summoned Pakistan's Charge d'Affaires and asked him to halve the strength of

Pakistan's High Commission in Delhi within seven days, saying it would do the same in for the Indian mission in Islamabad. New Delhi justified the decision by accusing Indian diplomats of spying and dealing with terrorists, and further expressing concerns over the alleged torture of two Indian staffers working at India's embassy to Pakistan who were arrested following an alleged hit-and-run in Islamabad last week. According to the Indian Foreign Ministry, the two men returned to India last Monday after they had been detained by Pakistani authorities, where they "provided graphic details of the barbaric treatment that they experienced". [Al Jazeera] [The Tribune] [SCMP] [AiR No. 24, June/2020, 3]

The Pakistani Foreign Ministry in a statement on Tuesday brushed aside the mistreatment allegations saying its staff in New Delhi had maintained compliance with diplomatic conventions and international law. On Thursday, then, Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi in an interview accused India of trying to divert attention at home after Indian troops got a "battering" at the hands of Chinese forces in a clash on their disputed Himalayan border. [The Straits Times] [Reuters] [SCMP]

India bans Chinese-made apps, as tensions with Beijing further deteriorate

(lf/lm) Citing security concerns, the Indian government on Monday announced that it had blacklisted 59 apps, including popular platforms such as the messenger WeChat and the social media platform TikTok. Although the order did not explicitly mention China by name, it is only Chinese-made apps that have been blacklisted. The decision is therefore considered to be part of sweeping anti-China measures, after 20 Indian soldiers were killed in the confrontation with Chinese troops along their disputed Himalayan border earlier this month. [AiR No. 24, June/2020, 3] [The Guardian] [Reuters]

Earlier, the Indian government had already announced plans to impose higher trade barriers and raise import duties on about 300 products from China, as well as entertained the idea to bar Chinese companies from bidding on 5G infrastructure projects in India. Further, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade is preparing a list of low-quality imports from China to be substituted with imports from other countries or manufactured locally, according to government officials. [The Economic Times 1] [The Wire]

Earlier last week, the Delhi Hotel and Restaurant Owners' Association, which represents more than 3,000 establishments in the capital, announced that Chinese nationals will no longer be provided accommodation in hotels and guest houses owned by its members. [The Times of India] [hindustantimes]

For an analysis on the current standoff between China and India in the border dispute see Tanvi Madan at [Foreign Affairs] who concludes that the fatal clashes in mid-June has reflected a new quality of the Sino-Indian border conflict which makes an agreement only a "distant possibility". In the meantime, India "will warily watch its mountainous northern border for any sign of Chinese aggression."

US report says Pakistan continues to serve as a "save haven" for regionally focused terrorists

(lm) The US State Department on Wednesday released its latest Country Report on Terrorism, saying that Pakistan is yet to take "decisive action" that would undermine the operational capability of India and Afghanistan focused terrorist groups. In its report, the State Department acknowledged the "modest steps" Pakistan had taken last year to tackle terror financing and restrain India-focused terrorist groups from conducting large-scale attacks, however, it also emphasised that the country continues to "serve as a safe haven" for other regional terrorist groups. Specifically, the report took note of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) leader Hafiz Saeed's arrest last year but pointed out that Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) founder Masood Azhar, who was designated a global terrorist by the United Nations last year, and Sajid Mir were still at large. [The Statesman]

The reaction came on Thursday, with Pakistan in a statement rejecting the United States' annual report, saying the paper ignored the country's "crucial role" in degrading Al Qaeda in the region, further "calling it 'self-contradictory' and 'selective' in its characterisation of Pakistan's efforts to counter terrorism and terror financing. [The Express Tribune]

Following the publication, Indian officials on Sunday said that New Delhi had repeatedly asked Pakistan to extradite Mir, who was indicted for serving as chief planner and controller of the 2008 Mumbai three-day attacks on hotels, a train station and a Jewish centre which left 166 people dead. [The Straits Times]

The report's publication came on the heels of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) plenary on Wednesday deciding to hand Pakistan another extension on the "Grey List" until October 2020, given its failure to completely implement the FATF's 27-point action plan. [The Hindu] [The Times of India]

US Report on Sri Lanka's Maritime and Border Security

(cf) The 2019 Annual Report on Terrorism from the US Department State places Sri Lanka in a vulnerable stance. The report refers to the 2019 Easter Sunday event in the Batticaloa and Colombo area. Sri Lankan citizens had pledged allegiance to ISIS and killed approximately more than 260 people by detonated backpack suicide bombs in three churches and four hotels.

Sri Lanka aims to strengthen their border management systems at their Colombo International Airport by working with Japan and the United Nations. Furthermore, Sri Lanka has secured its maritime border by partnering with the United States to train Sri Lankan navy personnel and Coast Guards on security operations and maritime law enforcement. [Colombo Page]

At summit, ASEAN leaders stress importance of international law for South China Sea dispute

(jn) Leaders of the members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Friday emphasized the importance of maintaining and promoting "freedom of navigation and overflight" above the South China Sea. The passage in their vision statement is seen as a response to reports of China planning to establish an air defense identification zone (ADIZ), something the country has also not ruled out publicly. The prospect of an ADIZ was not only decried by ASEAN members, but also the US military in the region.

ASEAN members explicitly stressed "the importance of non-militarization and self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability, and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation." They also agreed to work on "an effective and substantive Code of Conduct" for the South China Sea, a framework that

would go further than the 2002 Declaration of Conduct that the ASEAN once agreed on with China.

On Saturday, another ASEAN statement authored by chairing member Vietnam pointed out that the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) should be "the basis for determining maritime entitlements, sovereign rights, jurisdiction and legitimate interests over maritime zones" in the South China Sea. Such remarks can be seen as a strong repudiation to China's controversial historical claim to most of the disputed waters, and it is no coincidence that Vietnam as one of the most vocal critics of China's encroachment was the drafter. As a sign of increasing geopolitical tensions, Chinese vessels harassed Vietnamese fishing boats this month and in April, and in the earlier case sunk one of them [AiR No. 24, June/2020, 3] [AiR No. 14, April/2020, 1].

The UNCLOS defines certain water areas as exclusive economic zones (EEZ) where coastal states are given the exclusive right to explore and use marine resources. The leaders said in the statement that the "UNCLOS sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out".

There was no immediate response from China, but according to AP, Southeast Asian diplomats said that the statement marked a significant strengthening of ASEAN's assertion of the rule of law in the region. In 2016, the Permanent Court or Arbitration in The Hague had ruled that China's vast claims in the South China Sea had no legal basis. However, Beijing did not recognize the ruling.

For a number of different interpretations and evaluation of the ruling see [ISEAS]. Among them is a piece of Clive Schofield who refers to China's refection of the ruling to point to the fact of "fundamentally opposed, overlapping and contested spatial visions of maritime rights in the SCS" which "sets the scene for ongoing maritime incidents and disputes" with China not giving up its claims of historic rights.

The ASEAN leaders also dedicated themselves to tackling the economic collateral damage wreaked by the Covid-19 pandemic by establishing a regional pandemic fund, building medical supply stockpiles and reasserting the need for open trade links.

The vision statement reaffirmed the importance of implementing free trade agreements and comprehensive economic partnerships between ASEAN and key economies. It mentioned India as a major trading partner (alongside China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and Hong Kong),

although PM Narendra Modi had said last year that India would withdraw from the negotiations to sign up for the 16-nation Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership trade pact [see also AiR No.45, November/2019, 1].

The 36th ASEAN Summit themed "Cohesive And Responsive ASEAN: Rising Above Challenges And Sustaining Growth" was convened as a video conference on June 26 under the chair of Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc. [The Guardian] [South China Morning Post] [South China Morning Post 2] [Radio Free Asia] [Asia Nikkei Review]

Philippine President Duterte calls ASEAN not to escalate South China Sea dispute

(mp) Echoing ASEAN's general stance on the South China Sea (see above), also Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte called the parties involved in the conflict to exercise self-restraint and respect the rule of law to avoid "escalating tension." He stressed that the conflict needed to be solved peacefully and in accordance with international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Duterte, the country coordinator for ASEAN-China dialogues, demanded to work with China closely and to achieve an early conclusion with the other member states to reduce the tensions in the region that have continuously risen. [Inquirer]

Construction of Chinese BRI deep-sea port in Myanmar to start soon

(jn) According to Myanmar's Ministry of Commerce, preparations are in the final stages for a Chinese-Myanmar joint venture that will establish a deep-sea port in the Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Rakhine State. The SEZ is central to the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC) which itself is embedded in China's global Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

The port is envisaged to be a lifeline for the landlocked Chinese province of Yunnan and would give China an alternative connection to the Indian Ocean instead of the Strait of Malacca. The entire project is going to encompass 4300 acres including an industrial zone for the garment sector and several other industries.

When Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Myanmar in January, concession and shareholder agreements were signed. But the state-owned Chinese counterpart, the China International Trust and Investment Corporation (CITIC), already struck a shareholder agreement as early as 2015 with the previous Myanmar government in which CITIC was granted an 85% share in the project.

After it was criticized that this arrangement could lead Myanmar into a debt rap with China, the latter accepted to cede 30% of the shares to Myanmar under a readjusted agreement with the new NLD-government. What is more, the initial investment costs of up to $10 billion were scaled down to $1.5 billion. In February, however, the Ministry of Commerce said that CITIC will own 51% of the industrial zone while the Myanmar government will own 49%. [The Irrawaddy]

Malaysia wants no more Rohingya refugees – APHR calls ASEAN's limited help shameful

(cm/ls) Malaysia's Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin has said that Malaysia did not have the resources and capacity to allow further Rohingya refugees be admitted to the country. Malaysia implemented strict border control since April when an influx of Rohingya refugees attempted to enter. Many of the refugees have been detained. Muhyiddin urged "the UN Refugee Agency to speed up the resettlement of Rohingya in Malaysia to third countries" as there are more than 100,000 refugees currently in Malaysia. [Bangkok Post] [South China Morning Post] [Air No. 23, June/2020, 2]

Meanwhile, Indonesian fishermen have rescued nearly 100 Rohingya refugees, including 79 women and children, in Aceh province. Officials said they planned to push them back out to sea with a new boat, gas and food, but these plans have not been realized following protests from the local fishermen. [Reuters]

The chairman of ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHR), Charles Santiago, called the ASEAN response to the refugee crisis "totally shameful". The Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network said the crisis was exacerbated by the pandemic due to travel restrictions and the closure of borders across the region. [Jakarta Post]

Upcoming Online Events

1 July 2020 @ 2:00 pm ET, Foreign Policy Research Institute, USA

Asia's New Geopolitics: A Conversation with Michael R. Auslin and Robert D. Kaplan

In this event, best-seller author Robert D. Kaplan will present his latest book on issues changing the Indo-Pacific region and how America's strategy in Asia has developed since the 18th century.

Please find further information at [FPRI].

1 July 2020 @ 2:00 pm PDT, Pacific Council on International Policy, USA

The 23rd anniversary of the handover & the future of Hong Kong

This webinar will discuss changes that have happened in the past 23 years since Britain's handover of Hong Kong and Hong Kong's citizens' identity in the light of rising tensions with mainland China, Hong Kong's future, and the United States' role in this diplomatic conflict.

Details are accessible under [Pacific Council].

1 July 2020 @ 12:00 pm CEST, Institute for Economics & Peace, Australia

Global Peace Index 2020: COVID-19 & Peace webinar with INCIPE

This event will present the latest Global Peace Index and discuss its conclusions; an extra focus will be on the Covid-19 pandemic's impact on peace.

The online seminar will also be streamed on YouTube. If you are interested in joining, please visit [Vision of Humanity] for details.

1 July 2020 @ 6:00 pm IST, Observer Research Foundation, India

Towards an India-US consensus on counterterrorism cooperation

This event explores the environmental and policy-level challenges in the counterterrorism cooperation between the United States and China.

Further event information is available at [ORF].

1 July 2020 @ 6:00 pm, UTC+8, Institute of Policy Studies, Singapore

IPS-Nathan Lectures by Professor Chan Heng Chee — Lecture II: "US-China Rivalry: Inevitable War or Avoidable War?"

This lecture will analyze the relationship between the United States and China over the years, examine how the period of flourishing partnership has ended, and whether we must fear a war. Further points of interest are the developments in Taiwan and the South China Sea.

For more information on this event, which will be broadcasted on Facebook Live, see [NUS].

1 July 2020 @ 11:00 am ET, Center for Strategic & International Studies, USA

Government Accountability in the Age of Covid-19

This event examines how the recent pandemic has affected government accountability in South Africa, Mali, and Nepal, and its impact on governance and

trust, as well as the fight on misinformation, so-called fake news.

Please visit [CSIS] for details about the event.

1 July 2020 @ 1:00 pm ET, Center for Strategic & International Studies, USA

Main Street Defense Series - Bringing Innovation and Adaptability to the Fight with General Atomics' David Alexander

This online talk informs about recent developments in the defense industry, emerging technologies, and general factors of a modern defense and security sector. The event will be open to questions from the public.

Please see [CSIS] for more information.

1 July 2020 @ 12:00 pm EDT, Hudson Institute, USA

The Once and Future West: A Discussion with Peter Berkowitz and Michael Kimmage

This video event will discuss Michael Kimmage's new book *"The Abandonment of the West: The History of an Idea in American Foreign Policy"* which gives rise to questions about the actual meaning of "the West" as a geopolitical organizing principle and to "Western civilization" as a cultural and political heritage. The author asks whether the "West" has a future in the modern world.

Follow [Hudson] for further details.

1 July 2020 @ 11:00 am EDT, Brookings, USA

Assessing the state of the Air Force: A conversation with General David Goldfein

In this online talk, General David Goldfein will discuss how the Pentagon plans to ensure the military's newest branch, the Space Force, is fully integrated and interoperable with the Air Force and its mission.

For more information, please see [Brookings].

2 July 2020 @ 8:00 pm EDT/3 July 2020 @ 7am ICT, Center for Global Studies, New York University, USA, and German-Southeast Asian Center of Excellence for Public Policy and Good Governance (CPG), Faculty of Law, Thammasat University, Thailand

What comes next for Asia and the global order?

Is the so-called liberal international order, formed at the end of the Second World War and solidified at the end of the Cold War, coming to an end? Is Pax Americana – never really about peace and more about power – about to be replaced by a new model, potentially with Chinese characteristics? The online panel discussion explores these questions and what they mean for Asia.

More details on the event are available at [CPG].

2 July 2020 @ 12:00 pm ET, Center for Strategic & International Studies, USA

Korea Chair Capital Cable #5

This public conversation, co-hosted with the Korea Foundation, will bring you the knowledge of three experts discussing the latest developments and happenings in Korea.

Please see [CSIS] for additional information.

2 July 2020 @ 7:00 am EDT, International Institute for Strategic Studies, USA

Instability in the Sahel: political and economic implications

This event will discuss the importance of the expected extension of the UN peacekeeping operation "Minusma" and its significance for the Sahel region. Further, a report about stability in the time of Covid-19 will be presented, giving several implications for the area.

Please check [IISS] for details.

2 July 2020 @ 9:30 am UTC+8, National University of Singapore, Singapore

The World Economy in Times of COVID-19

This public lecture shows the impact of Covid-19 on world economics and their long-term growth prospects. The lecturer will further discuss the options for policymakers to lessen such damage.

Further lecture information is accessible at [NUS].

2 July 2020 @ 11:30 am ET, Institute for Policy Studies, USA

Covid, Modernity, Lifeways, and Drug Use

This webinar, which is part of the series "covid, modernity, lifeways, and drug use," will reflect on changes in drug policies and which troubles might arise from them, especially in a time when countries around the globe have started so-called "wars on drugs."

If you are interested in joining the event, visit [IPS] for further information.

2 July 2020 @ 11:00 am DST, The United Service Institution of India, India

India-China relations: A reality check and options for India

This web discussion will look at the latest developments in the relationship between India and China and its military escalation. Experts will give their opinions on various fields such as diplomacy, economy, and military defense.

Event details are available at [USI].

2 July 2020 @ 11:00 am ET, Middle East Institute, USA

US Strategic Partnerships in the Black Sea

This webinar will examine the partnerships, the United States maintains in the Black Sea – namely Georgia, Ukraine, and Romania – and how they are currently facing challenges. An additional aspect will be the

priorities of US partnerships for future regional security.

If you are interested in joining the webinar, please find further details at [Mei].

2 July 2020 @ 12:00 pm ET, Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, USA

The Movement for Black Lives: Where Do We Go from Here?

This roundtable discussion will analyze the continuing fight for racial justice in the United States, considering Black American history as well as possible solutions to inequality. Questions from the audience are highly appreciated.

For further details, visit [Harvard].

3 July 2020 @ 11:00 am EDT, The German Marshall Fund of The United States, USA

China and the Mediterranean Region in and Beyond the Pandemic

This webinar will debate on China's relations, not only regarding Chinese investments, with the Mediterranean region and how they might change due to the coronavirus crisis. Another question will be whether the heightening tensions between the US and China will have effects on the territory.

Event information is accessible at [GMFUS].

3 July 2020 @ 12:00 pm CEST, Barcelona Centre for International Affairs, Spain

"COVID-19 and the international order: a European and German view" - Presentation of CIDOB International Yearbook 2020

This conference on CIDOB's annual International Yearbook will analyze Covid-19's impact on democracy, economy, and global power shifts and ask about the shape of the international community's future after the pandemic. Germany will be featured as the Yearbook's country profile.

The event will be streamed live in English and Spanish at [CIDOB].

3 July @ 11:00 am CEST, Danish Institute for International Studies, Denmark

The German Defence Minister on Europe and Transatlantic Relations

In this webinar, the German Minister of Defense will answer questions arising from Germany's Presidency of the EU starting on 1 July. Topics will include the reaction on the Covid-19 pandemic as well as examining the EU-US partnership and Germany's position on Europe's security and defense challenges.

Details are available at [DIIS].

3 July @ 3:30 pm UTC+8, National University of Singapore, Singapore

The Structure and Effectiveness of Local Governance in Rural China: Autochthonous Actors, Conflict Resolution and the Mechanisms of Check and Balance

This online event investigates differences in local government and their effects on social contention in Chinese villages. It shows which local authority structures seem to be desirable in assisting effective and good governance.

Please check [NUS] for more information.

6 July 2020 @ 1:00 pm CET, Chatham House, United Kingdom

The Future of Think-Tanks

This webinar will give rise questions about the future relevance of think tanks, the importance of their independence, and how they can adapt to the era of technological innovation.

Please see [Chathamhouse] for further information.

7 July @ 5:00 pm ACT, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, Australia

WPS in 2020 – Progressing implementation at a time of global uncertainty

This webinar will examine the implementation of women, peace, and security agendas under the impression of the coronavirus crisis. It is organized by ASPI's Women in Defence and Security Network (WDSN), which aims at supporting women's career development in defense and security.

Details are accessible at [ASPI].

7 July 2020 @ 4:00 pm CEST, Institute for Economics & Peace, Australia

COVID-19 and Conflict Trends: What Do We Know So Far?

This webinar will look at developments in peace and particularly the impact of Covid-19 on global conflict, political violence, and conflict as well as civil unrest. The event concludes with a discussion.

Visit [Vision of Humanity] for details.

7 July 2020 @ 9:00 am ET, Center for Strategic & International Studies, USA

CSIS Debate Series: Great Power Competition

This online debate will discuss with former US policymakers and African leaders about the implementation of US policies in sub-Saharan Africa and its effects on stability, prosperity, and security. Participants have the chance to vote live on debate points.

Please see [CSIS] for more information.

7 July 2020 @ 12:00 pm UTC, DiploFoundation, Malta

Permanent missions at global diplomatic hubs: Quo vadis in 2020?

This debate explores permanent missions' role in diplomatic hubs (such as New York, Geneva, Vienna) and reflects on the work of those missions in the light of the 75th anniversary of the UN in 2020. Another aspect are the challenges brought by the coronavirus crisis.

To access the discussion, please visit [Diplomacy].

7 July 2020 @ 9:00 am CDT, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, USA

Global Issues We Can't Ignore

This event deals with global challenges such as climate change, inequity, and poverty and how governments address these issues in the era of the coronavirus outbreak. The online conversation will be joined by three leaders who have received the Nobel Peace Prize for their works.

Please find further details here: [Chicago Council].

8 July 2020 @ 9:00 am EDT, Brookings, USA

EU Defense Washington Forum

This virtual forum will debate on security matters facing the trans-Atlantic allies and discuss Covid-19's impact on trans-Atlantic security, the technology challenge from China, and further actual topics.

See [Brookings] for additional information.

9 July 2020 @ 5:00 pm AEST, Australian Institute of International Affairs, Australia

Bolsonaro: Trump of the Tropics?

This discussion will compare Brazilian President Bolsonaro with his counterpart in the US and answer why both presidents are frequently compared to each other. Topics include their reactions to Covid-19, approaches to politics, and current issues of Brazilian politics.

Follow [AIIA] for further details.

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