

PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

JUNE 04 2005

ALGERIA, IRAN AGREE ON MILITARY COOPERATION

June 2, 2005 The Middle East Newslite reported: "Algeria and Iran have agreed to begin military cooperation. The agreement came during a three-day visit in March by Iranian Defense Minister Ali Shamkhani to Algiers. Shamkhani held talks with the Algerian leadership on military cooperation with the North African country.

This has been the first visit by an Iranian defense minister to Algeria since the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979. For more than a decade, Algeria has charged that Iran was supporting the Islamic insurgency in the North African country.

Over the last year, relations between Algiers and Teheran significantly improved and officials from both countries described Shamkhani's current visit as seminal. In 2000, the two countries restored diplomatic relations and discussed economic and energy cooperation..."

U.S. SEIZES NUKE SHIPMENT FOR IRAN

June 2, 2005 The Middle East Newslite reported: "The United States has succeeded in capturing a shipment of nuclear material bound for Iran. The Bush administration said the U.S.-led Proliferation Security Initiative halted missile and nuclear shipments to Iran and other adversaries. Officials said some of the shipments were sent by North Korea.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said the shipments to Iran were seized in 2005. Ms. Rice said that over the last few months the United States and 10 of its PSI partners cooperated in 11 successful interdiction efforts. In an address to foreign diplomats on Tuesday, Ms. Rice said PSI participants seized a shipment of materials and equipment destined for ballistic missile programs in Iran and other countries. She did not elaborate..."

SCHROEDER URGES EU TO FORGE AHEAD

June 2, 2005 BBC News reported: "German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder has urged EU nations to continue ratifying the EU constitution despite "No" votes in France and the Netherlands. Mr Schroeder spoke in Luxembourg where he met PM Jean-Claude Juncker, who currently holds the EU presidency. The constitution must be put to all 25 states, he said, adding: "Every form of over-reaction at this stage is wrong."

The "No" votes of two founding members of the European Union could effectively kill the constitution, analysts say. The Netherlands on Thursday withdrew a bill proposing ratification of the draft constitution from parliament.

European leaders will meet on 16-17 June for a summit that could decide the future of the constitution, drawn up over two years.

On Wednesday evening, Mr Juncker described the EU as in "a dangerous position". BBC European affairs correspondent William Horsley says Mr Juncker seemed so distressed that he could hardly take in the fact of the second "No" vote. The mood in Brussels is deep gloom, our correspondent says.

The charter needs to be approved by all 25 of the EU's member states by the end of October next year in order to become law. Some EU officials tried to put a brave face on the Dutch result, but others were more plain-spoken. "The French slapped the left cheek of Europe, the Dutch have now slapped the right," Graham Watson, Liberal leader in the EU Parliament, told Reuters news agency.

Provisional results from the Netherlands show nearly two-thirds of voters were against the draft treaty. Turnout was 62.8%.

The euro fell to an eight-month low against the dollar as the Dutch results came out.

UK Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said the double rejection "now raises profound questions for all of us about the future direction of Europe". Britain will take over the rotating presidency of the European Union next month..."

RUSSIA AGAINST 'MILITARIZATION OF SPACE'

June 2, 2005 Associated Press reported: "Taking aim at the United States, Russia's defense minister Thursday threatened retaliatory steps if any country puts weapons in space and said Moscow won't negotiate controls over tactical nuclear arms with nations that deploy them abroad, Russian media reported.

While he mentioned no country by name, Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov's comments reflected persistent wariness over U.S. intentions, despite arms control deals and increased cooperation between the Cold War foes since the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union. "Russia's position on this question has not changed for decades: We are categorically against the militarization of space," the Interfax news agency quoted Ivanov as saying during a visit to the Baikonur space facility in Kazakhstan.

"If some state begins to realize such plans, then we doubtless will take adequate retaliatory measures," ITAR-Tass quoted Ivanov as saying..."

IRAN REPORTS GAIN IN TEST OF MISSILE FUEL

June 1, 2005 The New York Times reported: "Iran said Tuesday that it had successfully tested a solid-fuel motor for its medium-range ballistic missile known as Shahab 3, raising concerns that it could reach its enemies, including American forces in the region and Israel, with more precision.

Defense Minister Ali Shamkhani told state television the test was a success but did not say when it had been carried out. "When you fill a missile with liquid, you have to use it quickly," he said. "With solid fuel, a missile can be stored for years. And in addition, it makes the missile more accurate and cheaper."

Iran's ambition to develop its nuclear program and its missile industry has been a major concern for the West. Iran announced large-scale production of the Shahab 3 last year. If Iran were to develop nuclear weapons, the missile would make it possible to deliver them to targets more than 1,200 miles away.

The new fuel technology is a breakthrough for Iran's military. Solid-fuel missiles can be stockpiled for much longer than liquid-fuel weapons, making mass production much more practical..."

INDIA, CHINA, AND RUSSIA DECIDE TO COMBAT TERRORISM

June 2, 2005 Press Trust of India (PTI) reported: "Seeking to upgrade their cooperation to a qualitatively new level, India, Russia and China today decided to cooperate to combat terrorism and other new threats and agreed on the "objective requirement" for comprehensive UN reforms covering expansion of the Security Council.

At the over two-hour tripartite meeting of External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh with his counterparts from Russia, Sergei Lavrov and Li Zhaoxing from China, they agreed to intensify efforts to step up economic cooperation in the trilateral format particularly in the fields of transport, agriculture, energy and high technologies.

A two-page joint communique issued at the end of the talks said the ministers expressed satisfaction at the "dynamic development" of bilateral relations between India and Russia, Russia and China and India and China. "This opens up possibilities for India, Russia and China to raise their trilateral cooperation to a qualitatively new level," it said.

The three ministers "declared the intention of India, Russia and China to cooperate in trilateral format in combating new threats and challenges," the communique said. They stressed that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and irrespective of its origins and motivations posed one of the most serious threats to international peace and security."

CHINA, RUSSIA BACK INDIA FOR SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT

June 3, 2005 The Hindu: International reported: "India, Russia and China on Thursday upgraded their trilateral dialogue, deciding to move from discussion to joint action and add an economic dimension to their political cooperation.

The Foreign Ministers of the three countries saw their first stand-alone meeting as a quantum jump in their triangular dialogue. The previous three meetings were on the sidelines of various international forums. For the first time, the Ministers adopted a joint communiqué setting out a common agenda....

The U.N. reform was discussed at great length, with the three countries registering their agreement "on the objective requirement for comprehensive reforms of the U.N., including of the UNSC."

But while Russia and China both support India's bid for permanent membership of the Security Council, the Indian and Russian Ministers failed to persuade China to lift its objections to Japan as a member of the quartet of Security Council candidates promoted by India, informed sources said.

Speaking after a bilateral India-Russia meeting later, Mr. Lavrov said that "talks are not over yet" and the three sides had agreed "to continue efforts to bring closer positions" on U.N. reform..."