



## ***London Institute of Peace Research***

### **January 2021 Newsletter**

#### **Peace in Afghanistan**

At the request of US Congress, a group of distinguished experts and former policy-makers met to develop policy recommendations how to reach a peace settlement in Afghanistan — or the failure to reach one — could affect Afghanistan's future. The group's co-chairs are Senator Kelly A. Ayotte, General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr. and the Honourable Nancy Lindborg.

According to its final report, the Study Group align U.S. policies and actions to achieve a durable peace settlement to end four decades of violent conflict in Afghanistan. This new approach would protect U.S. national interests in the region by reducing terrorist threats, promoting regional stability, and protecting important gains in human rights and democratic institutions in Afghanistan.

*[Report Courtesy US Institute of Peace]*



#### **2021 will see more global protests !! Will the protestors remain peaceful?**

Since the start of 2021, a growing number of countries have seen street demonstrations, some of which have turned violent, against government measures implemented to fight COVID-19. Over the same period, nearly 100 countries have imposed nationwide lockdowns or stay-at-home orders, nearly one year since the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic.

Pandemic-driven economic recession and increasing job losses are likely to spur increased demonstrations. It will be up to governments to respond in

ways that can keep mass action peaceful and introduce measures to redress their grievances. It is believed that 2021 will continue to see high levels of mass mobilization.



If current trends hold, 2021 is likely to see significant increases in non-violent action worldwide. Deepening economic recessions, skyrocketing unemployment and rising inequalities due to COVID will likely become even more salient drivers for social unrest. Whether these future demonstrations remain peaceful will mainly depend on how governments respond. Clamping down on dissent through force is likely to remain a critical driver for primarily peaceful protests to devolve into clashes.

## **Challenges for Biden Administration ahead?**

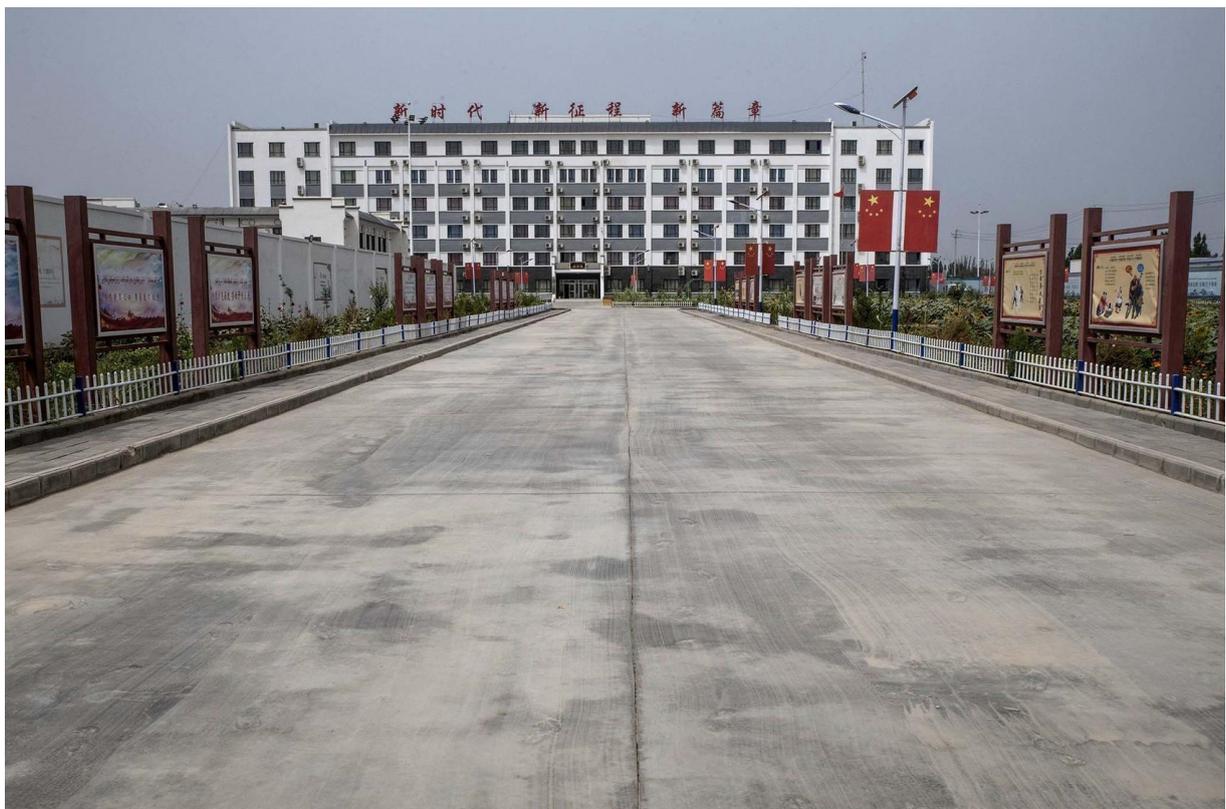
The incoming U.S. administration face a difficult landscape when it comes to nuclear arms control and negotiations. Experts take a look at three of the toughest, most urgent nuclear diplomacy challenges ahead.

With relations between the United States and Russia at a low point, the incoming Biden Administration faces the challenge of finding the right balance between showing firmness toward the Kremlin and engaging on issues of mutual interest, above all arms control. President Joe Biden has indicated he may agree to extend the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty

(New START) for five years, a decision that could clear the way for further negotiations. The three major challenges are:

		
<p>Iran's June election provides the Biden administration with a short window to get negotiations on track.</p>	<p>Washington's and Pyongyang's domestic challenges might limit bilateral engagement.</p>	<p>The prospects for arms control with Russia amid competition on other issues.</p>

**International Community concerned over human right abuses in China**



The strategies the international community and the United States typically deploy to prevent atrocities have failed to stop large-scale human rights abuses in China's Xinjiang region. China has issued a blanket denial of accusations from United Nations experts that it had detained more than a

million ethnic Uighur Muslims in re-education camps in the western region of Xinjiang.

## **Israel's political crisis deepens as it prepares to hold fourth election in two years**



registration in Israel's parliament, the Knesset,

to delay the deadline. Israel has tumbled into a fourth round of elections within a space of two years after efforts to keep a fractious coalition government intact failed. Beset by infighting and distrust, the government was unable to pass a budget triggering a snap election next March and lurching the country back into a protracted political crisis. A last-ditch attempt failed to pass a

## **Global pandemic – highly fragile & uncertain**



able to build on and expand research into the management of pandemics, protect vulnerable populations through international laws/treaties and reinforce and align the development agenda to prevent and mitigate future pandemics

The relentless spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and its penetration into the least developed, fragile and conflict-affected countries is bound to happen. Expansion of the pandemic will be expedited by factors such as an abundance of at-risk populations, inadequate COVID-19 community mitigation strategies and

## **UN report on Kashmir calls for probe into human rights violations, reports Aljazeera**

The United Nations has accused India again of human rights violations in Kashmir and has called for the formation of a commission of inquiry into the allegations.

A report released by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) also called on Pakistan for detaining Kashmiri separatists in its portion of the disputed region.



## **One Year Later, Human Rights Violations Continue in Indian Kashmir: VOA**



According to Voice of America (VOA), one year after India revoked partial independence for a territory under its control, residents and human rights groups say the situation in Indian-controlled Kashmir remains deeply disturbing.

“Hundreds of people remain detained without charge, critics are threatened with arrest, and access to the internet is limited,” wrote Human Rights Watch, an international rights monitoring group, in a press release.

Local authorities enacted a curfew Tuesday and Wednesday in anticipation of protests marking the one-year anniversary of a change in the Indian constitution that revoked article 370, which granted the Muslim-majority Jammu and Kashmir state special status.

## **Amnesty International exposes Human rights’ violations in IIOJK**

The government revoked Jammu and Kashmir’s special status and launched a widespread crackdown, detaining opposition leaders and activists, denying them due process, severing communication links, and preventing access to services. Nearly two million people were pushed to the brink of statelessness in procedures that were arbitrary and discriminatory.

Human rights defenders faced huge challenges, including arbitrary arrest, detention and prosecution as a means of silencing them while freedom of expression was censored with draconian laws. Millions of indigenous forest dweller families were threatened with forced eviction. Women were not adequately protected from sexual and domestic violence, harassment and discrimination. There was a serious lack of accountability for murders and other attacks carried out by vigilante mobs against

hundreds of people based on their religious, ethnic, caste and gender identities.



## **India's double standards on human rights: Violations at home even as its diplomacy preaches liberty, writes India's national magazine 'Frontline'.**

India has consistently followed double standards on human rights and people's right to self-determination and refused to brook questions on its own conduct while taking the liberty to preach to others.

Can you imagine the uproar in India if the world had protested against India's maltreatment of a public figure as the world has in the case of the Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny? Or the Saudi journalist Jamal Kashoggi? In India a cry would have rent the sky: "None of your business. It is our internal affair."

This false plea never inhibits India from shouting aloud in similar cases, but for political reasons. India never spoke up for Boris Pasternak or any Soviet or Russian dissident, nor for the oppressed Uighurs of Xin Jiang. There is not one neighbour who has not suffered from India's interference—some by intervention through force, open or covert through the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW). Yatish Yadav's very informative book (RAW: A History of India's Operations; Westland Publications; Rs.799; pages 391) proves that. It documents the deeds. It has extensive quotation from official records.



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