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Related Categories: Democracy and Governance; Human Rights and Humanitarian Issues; Intelligence and Counterintelligence; International Economics and Trade; Public Diplomacy and Information Operations; Science and Technology; SPACE; China; Russia; South Korea

CHINA AND THE VATICAN EXTEND SECRET DEAL

China and the Vatican have extended their provisional agreement governing Catholic affairs in China for two years. Although the details of the deal, which was inked in 2018, remain secret, some elements are known. The Vatican has recognized the formerly illicit bishops of the CPC-controlled Catholic Patriotic Association, and agreed to the party's role in the naming of future bishops. For its part, Beijing promised more tolerance for Chinese Catholics and legal protections for the unofficial "underground" church, which is loyal to Rome. Yet, after four years many Chinese dioceses are without a bishop, the underground church remains under threat, localities continue to bulldoze churches, and bishops have been arrested or disappeared. Hong Kong's former bishop, Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-Kiun, is on trial for "colluding with foreign forces." Pope Francis supports the deal with Beijing. (*Wall Street Journal*, October 24, 2022)

CHINESE FISHING BOATS TRY TO RAM A U.S. COAST GUARD VESSEL

This August, a heavily-armed U.S. Coast Guard cutter confronted a few hundred Chinese squid-fishing boats near Ecuador's Galapagos Islands to inspect them for illegal fishing. Several boats sped away, while one turned aggressively toward the U.S. vessel, forcing it to take evasive action to avoid being rammed. The U.S. considers the high-seas confrontation a dangerous breach of international maritime protocol, while China demanded that "the U.S. side stop its dangerous and erroneous inspection activities." But the U.S. warned fisheries officials that it would conduct boardings in the area and filed pictures of the crew's badges and the flag the cutter would be hoisting. Five other countries, including Chile and New Zealand, have filed similar paperwork under rules allowing members fishing in the south Pacific to inspect each other's vessels. (Associated Press, November 1, 2022)

[EDITOR'S NOTE: The Coast Guard's unprecedented voyage was prompted by growing alarm from activists and governments in Latin America over the activities of China's distant water fishing fleet. Since 2009, the number of China-flagged vessels spotted fishing in the south Pacific, sometimes for months at a time, has surged eightfold, to 476 last year. The size of its squid catch has increased from 70,000 to 422,000 tons, a level that scientists fear is unsustainable.]

SAMSUNG EMPLOYEES INDICTED FOR PASSING CHIP TECH TO CHINA

The Seoul Central District Prosecutor's Office has indicted two Samsung Engineering researchers and two other former Samsung engineers on charges of violating South Korea's unfair competition prevention act and the industrial technology protection act. A former employee is accused of receiving the blueprints for an ultrapure water system and other technologies from two Samsung Engineering workers and giving them to a rival Chinese semiconductor firm that he later joined. Ultrapure water, which is used for cleaning in the semiconductor manufacturing process, is purified of any ions, organic matter or microbes. Each year since 2006, Samsung invested more than \$21.2 million to develop its proprietary system. (Yonhap News Agency, October 27, 2022)

CHINA AND RUSSIA ADVANCE THEIR PARTNERSHIP "AT ALL LEVELS"

China is eager to deepen relations with Russia "at all levels," Foreign Minister Wang Yi told his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov in a call. Wang said China firmly supports Putin's efforts "to unite and lead the Russian people in overcoming difficulties" and "further establish Russia's status as a major power on the international stage." Lavrov congratulated Xi on his "utter success" at the 20th Party Congress, updated Wang on Russia's "special military operation in Ukraine," and "expressed gratitude to the Chinese side for supporting Russia's position." Meanwhile in Moscow, Putin said: "China understands very well what the desire of the West to advance the infrastructure of the NATO bloc to our borders means for Russia." He called Xi a "close friend," and said bilateral relations have reached an "unprecedented level of openness, mutual trust and efficiency" in all spheres, from the military and technology to economics and culture. (*Wall Street Journal*, October 28, 2022)

CHINA, RUSSIA DEEPEN SATELLITE NAVIGATION COOPERATION

China and Russia have agreed to host ground stations for each other's global navigation satellite systems – BeiDou and GLONASS, respectively – which are alternatives to the U.S.-run Global Positioning System (GPS). The stations will improve the performance of both systems, which provide both military and civilian navigation timing services. Under the deal, both countries will place three ground monitoring stations at various locations throughout each other's territory. An agreement was also signed "on the joint provision of information support services" to BeiDou and GLONASS customers. Both militaries are working to "break the U.S. 'hegemony' in satellite navigation" and integrate their domestic navigation services into their weapons and command-and-control systems. (Foundation for Defense of Democracies, October 20, 2022)