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I. **United States**

1. **ROK Statement on Missile Defense**

The Office of International Information Programs at the US Department of State ("28 FEBRUARY 2001 TRANSCRIPT: STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING," Washington, 2/28/01) reported that US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said that the ROK was reviewing its position on the proposed US missile defense program but had not taken a position in the joint statement signed with the Russian government. Boucher stated that the US would continue its ongoing security

consultations with the ROK when ROK President Kim Dae-jung visits the US next week.

The Asian Wall Street Journal ("KIM'S MISTAKE," 3/1/01) argues in an editorial that ROK President Kim Dae-jung made a mistake in siding with Russia on the issue of the proposed US missile defense program. The article argues that the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty is outdated, and further argues that the DPRK has done little to allay the fears of other countries despite Kim Dae-jung's Sunshine policy and US overtures. [Ed. Note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 1, 2001.]

2. DPRK Missile Program

The New York Times (Patrick E. Tyler, "NEWS ANALYSIS: RUSSIA MAY HELP PERSUADE NORTH KOREA TO GIVE UP MISSILES," Seoul, 2/28/01) reported that ROK analysts believe that the ROK government is looking to Russia for assistance in maintaining the inter-Korean peace initiative and in averting a crisis over the DPRK's missile program, in exchange for offering Russia support against the US missile defense proposal. Ha Yong-chool, a political scientist at Seoul National University, said, "Frankly, I was surprised. Russia seemed to be trying very hard to put Kim Dae Jung on the spot.... But from the South Korean perspective it was inevitable for Kim to go along with Putin because in return, Putin is working very hard to convince Kim Jong-il to give up this missile program." Tyler states that ROK officials are as skeptical about missile defense as many Europeans, and ROK government officials said that Putin and Kim have made plans to pursue an intense and coordinated strategy focused on solidifying an agreement with the DPRK under which it would give up its missile program in return for outside assistance in launching satellites. [Ed. Note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 1, 2001.]

3. Alleged PRC Aid to Iraq

The Washington Post (John Pomfret and Philip P. Pan, "CHINESE FIRM IS FOCUS OF U.S. IRAQI SUSPICIONS," Beijing, 3/1/01) reported that diplomatic sources identified the Huawei Technologies Co., based in Shenzhen province, as being culpable for aiding Iraq's air defenses. Analysts have stated that the situation is complex because the company claims to be privately owned, though there is no public list of stockholders, which makes it difficult to demonstrate official PRC government involvement.

4. US Arms Sales to Taiwan

The Washington Times (Bill Gertz, "BEIJING SAYS SALES OF ARMS TO TAIWAN COULD HURT TRADE," 3/1/01) reported that Zhou Mingei, Beijing's senior specialist on Taiwan affairs, said during a press conference in the US that growing business ties between US companies and the PRC had raised the stakes in the debate over US arms sales to Taiwan, and warned that sales of advanced weapons to Taiwan could lead to "explosive" relations between the US and PRC.

5. Russia-Vietnam Relations

The Associate Press ("VIETNAM, RUSSIA SIGN DEAL," Hanoi, 2/28/01) reported that Vietnamese President Tran Duc Luong met with visiting Russian President Vladimir Putin. The two countries signed a deal expanding their strategic ties, opened after Vietnam agreed to pay back a US\$1.7 billion debt over 23 years. This was the first visit by a Russian or Soviet leader despite 50 years of ties. Putin said, "Vietnam not only needs to maintain its weaponry and military equipment supplied

by the Soviet Union, it also needs to modernize its army and also needs new and modern technologies." The strategic accord spells out plans to expand relations in many areas and also states Vietnam's support of Russia in holding up the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK Stance on Missile Defense

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "KOREA PLANS TO SET OUT NMD STANCE BEFORE KIM EMBARKS ON U.S. VISIT," 3/1/01) reported that an ROK government source stated, "The government's formal position on the NMD issue will be formulated before a visit by President Kim to Washington for summit talks." While opponents in the ROK have claimed that a US anti-missile shield will undermine the ongoing peace process on the Korean Peninsula and cause an arms buildup in Northeast Asia, the ROK is hesitant to oppose the NMD plan given its strong ties with the US. [Ed. Note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 1, 2001.]

III. Russian Federation

1. RF President in ROK

Nezavisimaya gazeta's Dmitriy Kosyrev ("MOSCOW WILL PROLONG TRANSSIB TO THE SOUTH OF KOREAN PENINSULA," Seoul, 1, 6, 2/28/01) reported that RF President Putin, on an official visit to the ROK, had meetings with ROK President Kim Dae-jung and other top ROK leaders, as well as Park Yon-song, Chairman, ROK Chamber of Trade and Industry. Meeting with ROK businessmen, he said, "I am deeply convinced that settlement of Korean problems will be done by the Korean people themselves. We are prepared just to assist and create the necessary conditions." Kim Dae-jung told Putin, "Russia recently has been more consistently rendering assistance to solution of the Peninsula's problems." In a joint statement, the two leaders said that the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty was a cornerstone of strategic stability, that position principally being not a new one for Seoul. Yet, the emphasis during the visit was made on big economic projects as a prerequisite for the Korean settlement. Those included connection of the future trans-Korean railway to the trans-Siberian railway of the RF., the Irkutsk (Kavvytkinsk) natural gas project, possible participation of the ROK in oil and gas projects in Sakhalin, and some others. Almost all of those implied DPRK participation, which is expected to lead to more inter-Korean cooperation. Nezavisimaya gazeta's author described also, outside the RF-ROK summit context, the situation with RF arms sales to ROK and concluded with reference to RF Presidential Press Secretary Aleksey Gromov's information that Mr.Putin was not going to visit Pyongyang prior to visiting Seoul.

Izvestia's Viktoria Sokolova ("THE OTHER HALF OF KOREA," Seoul, 4, 02/28/01) commented on RF President Vladimir Putin's visit to the ROK. Just a few hours prior to his arrival "a financial mini-scandal" emerged in Seoul, as the Korean Development Bank refused to postpone the payment by the RF of US\$100 million interest from the RF's US\$18 billion debt to the ROK. The issue is to be settled by late February, "therefore Putin came just on time." Prior to the visit, RF officials suggested paying the debt by arms deliveries to the ROK and "such exotic means" as RF investments to restoration of DPRK economy, as if telling ROK, "anyway you will restore the North after reunification." Concerning the project to restore Seoul-Pyongyang railway to the RF Trans-Siberian railway, the RF President said the project was "close to issues of a humanitarian nature." In

Izvestia's author's opinion, Putin thus hinted that "money and effort invested in the railway will help find a more useful employment for about 700,000 soldiers of the army of Beloved Leader Kim Jong-il." He said that he was sorry, though, that of 126 joint RF-ROK projects worth US\$273 million "promised" by the ROK, only 91 projects worth US\$137 million, about a half, had been undertaken. Symbolically, Putin started his visit by coming to the memorial dedicated to ROK servicemen who died during the Korean War, thus showing the RF's impartial approach to inter-Korean affairs. "By that Putin hardly claims the Nobel Prize. The goal is more pragmatic: establishment of peace in Korea will deprive the administration of [US President George W.] Bush of one of its main trump-cards in favor of National missile defense deployment (aimed, in US words, against the 'rogue-states' like the DPRK). In that sense, the South Korean President's publicly voiced opposition to US plans is Putin's big diplomatic success."

2. Inter-Korean Railway

Nezavisimaya gazeta's Dmitriy Kosyrev ("MOSCOW WILL PROLONG TRANSSIB TO THE SOUTH OF KOREAN PENINSULA," Seoul, 1, 6, 2/28/01) reported that, during his visit to the ROK, RF President Vladimir Putin mentioned his recent journey via the Trans-Siberian railway, its excellent condition, and the US\$1 billion invested in it in 2000. He said that the RF was prepared to invest several hundred million US dollars in renovation of the railway in the DPRK. RF Railways Minister Nikolai Aksyonenko, who accompanied him, will go to Seoul on March 1 to negotiate arrangements for an RF-ROK-DPRK meeting on the subject. Upon completion of the project, container transportation by railway from Asia to Europe is to take just 12 days, while now it takes 22-25 days, with a cheaper cost of US\$300 per a container. The RF advocates linking the Trans-Siberian with the inter-Korean railway near the lake of Khasan to make the unified railway pass through its Primorsk territory, while the PRC lobbies for the conjunction to be made at Manchuria station, much further to the West. The RF President unexpectedly said in Seoul that both options were good.

3. Russian Arms Sales to ROK

Segodnya's Yekaterina Katz ("WITH A SENSE OF NON-PAYABLE DEBT," Moscow, 3, 02/28/01) commented on RF President Vladimir Putin's visit to ROK that at a session of RF-ROK intergovernmental commission before the visit an agreement was reached to RF to partly pay its US\$1.6 billion debt to ROK by deliveries of some unspecified RF- made arms and equipment. Presently the RF company "Kamov" is participating in a tender to sell 36 combat helicopters to the ROK. The price of a possible deal could fully cover the debt. Also, the RF military aircraft complex "Sukhoi" is participating in a tender to deliver 40 Su-35 fighters to ROK. The results of the tender are expected by mid-summer. As for civilian projects, the RF believes creation of a railway linking Seoul-Pyongyang to be connected to the RF Trans-Siberian railway, the development of Kovytkinsk natural gas and its subsequent deliveries to the ROK, and plans to create "a Russian-Korean industrial complex in Nakhodka" the most promising.

4. RF-ROK Economic Cooperation

Izvestia's Oleg Zhunusov ("A NEIGHBOR IS MORE IMPORTANT THAT FAR RELATIVES," Moscow, 4, 02/28/01) reported a project to create a industrial technopark to cover several hundred hectares in "Nakhodka" free economic area with ROK participation became a topic for discussion during RF President Vladimir Putin's visit to the ROK. The ROK parliament ratified the relevant intergovernmental agreement in 1999, while RF State Duma has not yet. The project including car-repair, wood-procession and other enterprises is expected to create jobs in Primorsk territory, where

quite a number of ethnic Koreans live now. Construction of a modern village is in full swing in Primorsk territory to accommodate ethnic Koreans coming there from the countries of Central Asia.

5. RF-PRC Relations

Segodnya ("RUSSIA AND CHINA GOING TO SIGN A TREATY ON FUNDAMENTALS OF THEIR RELATIONS," Moscow, 4, 02/22/01) reported that Zhang Vannian, Deputy of the PRC Central Military Council, had a meeting with RF Defense Minister Igor Sergeev, who after the meeting said, "Our positions on the issues of strategic missile defense and plans for further expansion of NATO to the East are similar." Sergeev informed Zhang on details of the RF proposal to create a non-strategic European missile defense. Zhang Vannian also had a meeting with RF President Vladimir Putin, who said that the parties were preparing to sign a treaty on the fundamentals of RF-PRC relations and that the RF was getting ready for PRC Chairman Jiang Zemin's visit to the RF in July.

Nezavisimaya gazeta ("RUSSIA AND CHINA DISCUSSED MILITARY-TECHNICAL PROBLEMS," Moscow, 1, 02/22/01) reported that RF Premier Mikhail Kasyanov met Zhang Vannian, Deputy of the PRC Central Military Council. They discussed issues concerning the settlement of payments for RF arms deliveries to the PRC. During the talks Kasyanov said: "We very carefully treat the mutual relations with China."

6. PRC Alleged Assistance to Iraq

Izvestia ("THEY BUILD AIRCRAFT DEFENSE TOGETHER," Moscow, 8, 02/22/01) reported that the US Defense Department obtained information proving that the PRC assisted Iraq in improvement of its aircraft defense. The Department made no comments, however. Anonymous sources in the department showed CNN that PRC experts were creating a fiber-optic communication network between Iraqi radar stations. By the time of US-British air-strikes against Iraq on February 16, some part of the network was already operational.

7. PRC-Germany Military Contacts

Nezavisimoye voyennoye obozreniye ("SCHARPING INVITED P.R.C. FOR COOPERATION," Moscow, 3, 02/23- 29/01, #7(229)) reported that German Defense Minister Rudolf Scharping meeting Zhang Vannian, Deputy Chairman of the PRC Central Military Council, during the latter's visit to Germany, and said that his country intended to broaden military and security cooperation with the PRC. In his words, the PRC played an important role in solving regional and global problems; therefore it is very important for EU countries and particularly Germany to maintain ties with the PRC.

8. RF-Japanese Relations

Nezavisimaya gazeta's Dmitriy Gornostayev ("PUTIN DID NOT REPENT BEFORE MORI," Moscow, 1, 02/24/01) reported that Japan's Kyodo news agency alleged that RF President Vladimir Putin in a phone conversation with Japan's Premier Yoshiro Mori on February 13 called the takeover of the Kuril Islands a mistake. Almost immediately Mori himself denied the allegation, saying he "did not hear such words from Russia's President. Denials also came from Japanese Foreign Minister and the Secretary General of the Japanese Cabinet of Ministers. Actually the phone conversation concerned the date of the RF-Japanese summit, scheduled for March 25 in Irkutsk, and nothing else. Yet, Japanese officials did not comment on another piece of news by Kyodo, namely that Putin confided to Mori that there were serious discords between him and the RF Foreign Ministry. Nezavisimaya

gazeta's author speculated that the reason for all that was the existence of certain politicians in Japan who wished to probe RF positions before the summit, as well as to give indirect advice to Mori to invite Putin to make the above-mentioned apologies for Soviet action of 1945.

Segodnya's Aleksandr Chudodeyev ("SCANDALS ON FRIDAYS," Moscow, 3, 02/24/01) reported that Japanese Premier Yoshiro Mori denied Japanese media allegations that RF President Vladimir Putin in their phone conversation called the Soviet takeover of the Kuril Islands a mistake. Aleksandr Losyukov, Deputy Foreign Minister of RF, said "there was nothing said even close to that" and expressed appreciation to Mori for settling the matter "in a dignified way." Segodnya's author recalled that a week before on Friday Japanese ambassador in Moscow Minoru Tama said that the two countries were discussing the issue of a possible transfer of Iturup and Kunashir isles to Japan. Igor Ivanov, RF Foreign Minister, reacted sharply by saying that it was difficult for him "to understand what are the grounds for the Ambassador's statement." He stressed that the territorial issue along with other matters was to be discussed at the RF-Japanese summit on March 25 in Irkutsk and that "in the diplomatic practice it's not customary for ambassadors to anticipate the negotiations of leaders."

9. Japanese Politics

Nezavisimaya gazeta's Andrey Ilyashenko ("IN TOKYO THEY THINK OVER; WHO WILL BE AFTER MORI," Tokyo, 6, 02/22/01) reported that while Japanese Premier Yoshiro Mori's retirement was considered to be inevitable next month, there was much less clarity who were to succeed him. Hiromu Nanaka, 75, is considered the most possible successor, but there are others, such as Juniro Kojumi, 59, as well as former Premier Ryutaro Hashimoto, present Economy Minister Taro Asou and present Industry minister Takeo Hiranuma.

Izvestia's Natalia Tsvetova ("MORI MUST GO," Moscow, 8, 02/22/01) reported that according to public opinion polls, 82.4 percent of Japan's population believed that Japanese Premier Yoshiro Mori must resign. The ruling Liberal Democratic Party seemingly does not wish to participate in parliamentary elections scheduled for July with its leader being the least popular premier since WW2.

10. RF Navy in Indian Ocean

Nezavisimoye voyennoye obozreniye ("WE'LL DO WITHOUT THE INDIAN OCEAN," Moscow, 1, 02/23-29/01, #7(229)) reported that Vladimir Kuroyedov, Commander-in-Chief of the RF Navy, while in Bombay, India, where three RF naval ships came to participate in celebration of the 50th anniversary of India's independence, ruled out the permanent presence of RF naval ships in the Indian Ocean, saying, "there's no necessity for that." He also said that he had no information on the alleged possibility of RF lending India one of its nuclear submarines.

11. RF-Vietnam Relations

Nezavisimoye voyennoye obozreniye ("VIETNAMESE OPTION," Moscow, 6, 02/23-29/01, #7(229)) reported that Vietnam intended to buy 12 Su- 27 and Su-30 fighters from RF. Earlier, Vietnam bought 12 Su-27 fighters of SK and UB versions.

Izvestia ("VIETNAMESE STILL FEEL NOSTALGIC ABOUT U.S.S.R.," Moscow, 4, 02/28/01), referring to Reuters news agency, reported that on the eve of RF President Vladimir Putin's arrival in Hanoi from Seoul, the population of Vietnam felt nostalgic about the past times when Vietnam was a most

staunch ally of Soviet Union. Since 1950 over 35,000 state and party officials and 25,000 workers underwent training in USSR. Yet, despite strong cultural affection, the Russian language has been pushed from school curricula by English and the number of Russian-speaking Vietnamese is small.

The NAPSNet Daily Report aims to serve as a forum for dialogue and exchange among peace and security specialists. Conventions for readers and a list of acronyms and abbreviations are available to all recipients. For descriptions of the world wide web sites used to gather information for this report, or for more information on web sites with related information, see the collection of [other NAPSNet resources](#).

We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

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