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### I. United States

#### 1. Japan-DPRK Relations

Reuters ("JAPAN, NORTH KOREA MAY RESUME TALKS SOON-REPORT," Tokyo, 04/02/04) reported that a long-term Japanese ruling party heavyweight said on Friday that he expects bilateral talks between Japan and the DPRK will resume soon. The two nations are locked in a feud over Japanese citizens abducted by DPRK agents decades ago. Kyodo news agency quoted Taku Yamasaki, a former lawmaker and Vice President of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), as saying he met North Korea's top negotiator for normalization talks with Japan during a surprise visit to China this week. "Talks between the governments of Japan and North Korea might resume in the near future," Yamasaki, who lost his parliamentary seat last November, was quoted as saying after returning to Japan on Friday. No further details were immediately available and Foreign Ministry officials were not available for comment. Tokyo proposed early in March to hold talks with North Korea on the abduction issue, which Japan said must be resolved before diplomatic relations can be normalized,

but officials said later in the month that Pyongyang had not yet responded. DPRK leader Kim Jong-il admitted at a 2002 summit with Koizumi that Pyongyang had kidnapped 13 Japanese in the 1970s and 1980s to train spies. Five returned to Japan a month after that summit, leaving their children behind, but a potential thaw in bilateral relations never materialized after they refused to return to North Korea. Japan has repeatedly said it wants Pyongyang to resolve the abduction issue, abandon its nuclear arms programs and halt its ballistic missile development. Talks on establishing diplomatic relations have stalled over these problems.

## **2. Japan-DPRK "Secret" Abduction Talks**

Agence France-Presse ("JAPANESE RULING PARTY MEMBERS RAPPED FOR TRYING TO MEET NORTH KOREANS," 04/02/04) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi criticised two leading members of the ruling party for visiting China in order to make unauthorised overtures to DPRK officials. Two members of the Liberal Democratic Party had secretly gone to the PRC to meet the North Koreans to seek the resumption of stalled talks on the DPRK's abduction of Japanese nationals, news reports said. Taku Yamasaki, former secretary general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and lawmaker Katsuei Hirasawa arrived in China Thursday, Japanese media reported. The visit angered Koizumi because Hirasawa left Japan without authorization although he is a junior minister in the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications. Koizumi told reporters he only learned of the visit from newspapers. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda, also a senior LDP member, said the government had not been able to confirm the whereabouts of Hirasawa and Yamasaki. The Japan-North Korea bilateral talks "must be conducted by the two governments. If (Hirasawa and Yamasaki) give the wrong message, it would only complicate our relationship," Fukuda told reporters. Staff at the offices of Hirasawa and Yamasaki declined to comment on the reports and their whereabouts. The pair were trying to meet DPRK officials in Dalian on Thursday and Friday, Kyodo News agency said. Had they succeeded, they were expected to demand an early resumption of bilateral talks that have been stalled since officials of the two countries met in February in Pyongyang and Beijing, Kyodo said.

## **3. ROK Parliamentary Elections**

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREA OPENS RACE FOR CRUCIAL PARLIAMENTARY POLLS," 04/02/04) reported that the ROK opened the race for the April 15 parliamentary elections, with opinion polls showing that a small progressive party backed by President Roh Moo-Hyun could secure a big victory. Support for the Uri Party, which had only 49 seats in the outgoing 270-member National Assembly, surged dramatically after Roh was impeached and suspended from office by the opposition-controlled parliament last month. Surveys show the Uri Party, founded only six months ago, could take control of the National Assembly as the majority party in a victory for the embattled Roh that would alter the political landscape here. The party leads its closest rival, the conservative Grand National Party (GNP), by a 2-1 margin in media polls. Support for the Uri Party hovers at around 45 percent, according to polls, against about 23 percent for the GNP. In the outgoing parliament the GNP held 137 seats and the former ruling Millennium Democratic Party (MDP) 61 seats. The remaining 23 members include independents and lawmakers from splinter groups.

## **4. PRC Legislature on Hong Kong Democracy**

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA'S LEGISLATURE OPENS MEETING ON FATE OF HONG KONG DEMOCRACY," 04/02/04) reported that the top committee of the PRC's legislature began a meeting which is expected to reject growing calls in Hong Kong for the territory's next leader to be elected

by universal suffrage. The move by the National People's Congress' Standing Committee is aimed at quelling demands for more democracy in the former British colony -- something Beijing fears will result in it losing control over Hong Kong. "The NPC standing committee meeting has opened," Wang Xiaoyun, a spokesman of NPC's news division told AFP. "There are many agenda items. Interpreting the Basic Law is one of them." Ahead of the five-day meeting police in Hong Kong Friday scuffled with around 50 pro-democracy protesters camped outside government offices. The incident came after up to 3,000 people gathered at the city's legislative building Thursday for a candlelight vigil against the deliberations in Beijing. The PRC's official news agency, Xinhua, had said the April 2-6 meeting of the parliament committee would give its interpretation of two articles of Hong Kong's mini-constitution, the Basic Law. The articles concern how the chief executive and legislative council should be selected in Hong Kong.

## **5. PRC "Tiananmen Mothers" Release**

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA RELEASES TWO OF THREE ARRESTED MEMBERS OF 'TIANANMEN MOTHERS,'"") reported that PRC authorities have released two of three women arrested for seeking justice for victims of the brutal 1989 crackdown on Tiananmen Square, relatives said. Huang Jinping was released Thursday and Zhang Xianling Friday after being detained since Sunday, two family members told AFP. The women are part of the "Tiananmen Mothers" activist group which for years has petitioned the government to reassess and take responsibility for sending troops to crush the 1989 pro-democracy protests in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, killing hundreds, perhaps as many as a thousand people. A relative of Huang, who declined to be identified, said: "Three uniformed state security police officers brought her home Thursday afternoon." Zhang and her family could not be reached for comment, but the husband of the third woman arrested, Ding Zilin, said Zhang's husband had informed him that the elderly woman had been released. Authorities gave no word on when Ding, the founder and most active member of the group, would be released, her husband Jiang Peikun said. He said she was allowed to call him Friday to inquire about his health. Jiang recently had heart surgery. "She could not say much. I guess the people in the detention center wouldn't let her," Jiang said. "She asked about my health. I asked her when she would come home, but she said 'Don't ask.'" Ding told him she was still in east China's Wuxi city, which she was visiting when she was arrested. The release of Zhang and Huang came after the US on Wednesday called for the "immediate release" of the three women.

## **6. PRC-Saudi Arabia Oil Relations**

Agence France-Presse ("SAUDI ARABIA EAGER TO BOOST OIL AND MINING BUSINESS WITH CHINA," 04/03/04) reported that Saudi Arabia is eager to increase oil sales to the PRC and set up joint refining projects there and mining ventures in the kingdom, Saudi Oil Minister Ali al-Nuaimi told the official SPA news agency. "The Kingdom supplies China at present with more than 300,000 barrels of oil per day but we are seeking to increase this amount given the rising demand in China," said Nuaimi who arrived in the PRC on Thursday for a three-day visit. He said that "an agreement was being finalized to build a refinery in China's Fujian (southeast) province to process Saudi crude, and to supply and market products inside and outside China." State-owned Saudi Aramco, as well as PRC and international companies, would invest in the refining project, according to Nuaimi. The kingdom is also looking for partnerships with PRC companies to mine for phosphate in northern Saudi Arabia and build railway tracks to transport the raw material to Jubail and Dammam on the Gulf coast. There it would be used for making fertilizers that would be shipped to PRC and Asian markets, according to Nuaimi. He said PRC companies have expressed interest in bauxite crude and ammonium projects in Saudi Arabia.

## **7. Japan Free Trade Agreements**

The Associated Press (Audrey McAvoy, "CHINA PROMPTS JAPAN ON FREE TRADE DEALS," Tokyo, 04/02/04) reported that suddenly, free trade agreements are all the rage in Japan. Before a pact with Mexico in March, Japan had signed just one trade agreement, with Singapore in 2001. But by year's end it hopes to wrap up talks with Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines. It also wants a trade deal with the ROK in 2005, and has begun negotiating with Indonesia. After years of sparring between farmers who want to keep cheap foreign produce out and industrialists eager to export more, free traders now appear to be gaining the upper hand in a country with a long history of erecting walls around its markets. Toyota Chairman Hiroshi Okuda, who also heads Japan's most powerful business lobby, said he was "extremely delighted" by Japan's deal to liberalize trade with Mexico. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi hailed the pact as "very meaningful." Few expect the haggling over how open Japan will be toward Thai rice or ROK beef to be easy. Japan is still home to 2 million-plus politically influential farmers keen on protecting their livelihoods. But a realization is spreading that Japan needs to break down trade barriers to keep with the times. The biggest reason for the shift is the PRC, which has already quickly moved in to sign free trade pacts with 10 countries in Southeast Asia - including some of Japan's most important trading partners. At stake is Japan's influence, or even relevance, as an economic power. "The fear of being left behind, of 'missing the bus,' has really accelerated the process," said Toshiya Tsugami, a senior fellow at REITI, a government-funded think tank. "The signing of free trade agreements between China and the ASEAN countries was a big shock." By concluding individual free trade deals with all of the countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations by 2010, Japan hopes to directly counter the the PRC challenge. The prime minister's office says a free trade pact with ASEAN would add as much as 2 trillion yen (\$18 billion) to Japan's economic output and create as many as 260,000 jobs.

## **8. ROK Death of Last "Communist Rebel"**

The Associated Press (Sang-hun Choe, "LAST COMMUNIST REBEL DIES IN SOUTH KOREA, AMID NORTH'S DEMAND FOR HER RETURN," Seoul, 04/02/04) reported that Chung Soon-duk, whose bloody capture in 1963 marked the end of the ROK's prolonged battles against communist guerrillas, died this week. She was 71. Chung died Thursday night of a heart attack in a hospital west of Seoul, her advocacy group said in a statement Friday. She had been in a coma for two weeks after suffering a stroke last month. Chung, the wife of a peasant farmer, followed her husband into the Chiri Mountains in southwestern ROK, to become a communist guerrilla shortly after the Korean War broke out with the DPRK's invasion of the ROK in June 1950. The couple were among thousands of leftist farmers who believed in the DPRK's promised "liberation" from landlords and took up arms in Chiri's thick forests and jagged ravines. They kept fighting, long after DPRK troops retreated and even after the Korean War ended in 1953 with an uneasy truce. Her husband died in battle in 1952. By 1955, most of the Chiri Mountain guerrillas had been killed or surrendered, but Chung and others continued raiding police stations and villages, even though they had no communication with the DPRK. Chung's life on the run ended in a shootout with police on Nov. 12, 1963. "Disoriented communist bandit caught!" read headlines at the time. Chung was wounded in the gunbattle and lost her right leg. With her arrest, the ROK finally declared an end to drawn-out operations against peasant "partisans" who fought the pro-US government in the ROK. After 23 years in jail, Chung was released on parole in 1985, when she signed a statement disavowing her ideology. In a rare interview, she told The Associated Press last August that she signed the statement in hopes of getting better medical care and a reduced sentence. She still believed in communism and wanted to be repatriated to the DPRK, "my ideological home town." To her last day, she stuck to her wartime ideological tenets, calling the ROK "a colony of US imperialists."

## **II. Japan**

### **1. Japan Iraq Troops Dispatch**

The Asahi Shimbun (Tsutomu Ishiai, "KEY IRAQI SEEKS LONGER STAY FOR SDF," Baghdad, 03/23/04) reported that the president of the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) has asked Japan to continue stationing Self-Defense Forces (SDF) in Iraq even after sovereignty is transferred from the US-led Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in late June. Seyyid Muhammed Bahr ul-Uloom, a respected Shiite cleric, made the request during an interview with The Asahi Shimbun. "As long as the purpose of the SDF's activities to support (Iraqi) reconstruction is humanitarian assistance, I hope the SDF will continue to stay in Iraq even after the transfer of sovereignty," Bahr ul-Uloom said. Bahr ul-Uloom also sought closer cooperation between Iraq and Japan in the development and trade of natural resources, such as gas and oil. To that end, he said he plans to send a group of high-ranking officials, including his son, Interim Oil Minister Ibrahim Bahr ul-Uloom, to Japan next month.

### **2. Japan Lift of Arms Export Ban?**

Mainichi Daily News ("LDP HAWKS WANT JAPAN TO LIFT ARMS EXPORT BAN," 03/24/04) reported that defense experts at the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) proposed that Japan should ditch one of its pacifist principles of not exporting arms. The controversial report, "Changing Japan's Defense Policies," was compiled by an influential LDP panel headed by House of Representatives member Toshio Kojima. Japan introduced a comprehensive arms export ban in 1976. Seven years later, in 1983, the Cabinet under then Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone amended the rule to make it possible to export technologies convertible to arms development to the US to beef up the Japan-US Security Treaty. The proposal suggested that export partners should be expanded to European countries. "Countries are exporting arms under strict international regulations. It is possible to do the same by applying strict rules and controls," the report read. The report emphasized that no weapons or technologies that could be used to develop arms would be exported to states that are: sponsoring terrorism; violating human rights; entangled in an international conflict; and have no strict export control system. The report also urged the government to amend Article 9 of the Constitution to officially make the Self-Defense Forces into armed forces and allow Japan to exercise the right of collective self-defense.

### **3. Japan SDF Anti-Guerrilla Commandos**

The Asahi Shimbun ("EXPANDING MISSIONS: THE GROUND SDF STRUGGLES TO REDEFINE ITS ROLE AND TRAINING IN A CHANGING WORLD OF POTENTIAL ENEMIES AND THREATS," 03/22/04) reported Japan's anti-guerrilla commandos. Gerikoma, made from "guerrillas" and "commandos," represents a new hypothetical enemy that GSDF troops across the nation are being trained to fight. Under defense operations in the event of a foreign attack on Japan, SDF members would not hesitate to kill or injure invading enemies. However, guidelines for anti-terrorist activities require the SDF members to act as police. And in such security-maintenance, or policing, operations, SDF members are not supposed to use weapons that far exceed the power of the enemy. That is why the GSDF members had to tackle, instead of shoot, the knife-wielding enemy during the drill at Ojojihara. "In policing operations, we inevitably worry about overkill," said a young GSDF member, Sergeant 1st Class Katsuaki Suzuki. The GSDF was prompted to conduct anti-guerrilla drills following a 1996 intrusion by the DPRK submarine crew members into the ROK and a 1999 "suspicious ships" incident off Noto Peninsula, Ishikawa Prefecture. In 2000, the Defense Agency and the National Public Security Commission revised a cooperation agreement on joint police and

SDF operations against intrusions of armed foreign agents. In 2002, the annual proportion of GSDF anti-terrorism drills to all drills was 14.3 times more than in 2000.

#### **4. Japan Anti-Terrorism**

The Asahi Shimbun ("TERROR THREAT GROUNDS KOIZUMI," 03/22/04) reported that the rising threat of terror attacks at home has opened up another front in Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's defense of his decision to send Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to Iraq. A source close to Koizumi said: "It used to be he only had to worry about terror attacks in Iraq. Those days are gone. If Japan is hit, Koizumi goes down." But, in the face of rising opposition at home to the occupation, an embattled Koizumi fights on to justify his firm support for the Iraq War. Addressing graduating cadets at the National Defense Academy, Koizumi stressed the significance of the SDF presence in Iraq: "Japan must actively pursue its role of promoting world peace and prosperity." He told the students, "The SDF forces are now working hard for the Iraqi people, providing humanitarian support and aid." Katsuya Okada, Secretary-General of the Democratic Party of Japan, was quick to point out on March 19: "I am sure that (Koizumi) dispatched SDF troops to Iraq well aware of the possibility (of a terrorist attack taking place in Japan). He is responsible to make sure that will never happen."

#### **5. Japan-PRC Yasukuni Controversy**

The Japan Times ("KOIZUMI FEARS BACKLASH OVER YASUKUNI IRE," 03/24/04) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi indicated that the PRC's anger over his visits to Yasukuni Shrine could fuel anti-Chinese sentiment in Japan and thus hurt bilateral ties. "I would not say this or that to other state leaders over their ways of paying homage to their war dead," the prime minister told a Diet session. "But I've been criticized (in this matter by the PRC). What do the Japanese people feel (about this)?" Yet Koizumi also told that he does not think Japan-PRC ties have stagnated. "I don't subscribe to the view that my visits to Yasukuni are souring friendly ties with China," he said. Koizumi said recently that he does not dwell on the difference between war criminals and the war dead when visiting the shrine.

#### **6. Yamasaki on Next Elections**

Kyodo ("YAMASAKI NOT TO RUN FOR UPPER HOUSE," Fukuoka, 03/22/04) reported that former Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Vice President Taku Yamasaki said he will not run in the House of Councilors election in July but in a House of Representatives election to be held sometime by fall 2007. "I will prepare for the dissolution of the Lower House and a general election," he told reporters in Fukuoka, adding that he "had once wondered" whether to run in the upcoming Upper House election. But he said he will also prepare to run in a possible Lower House by-election if Junichiro Koga, the lawmaker who defeated him, gives up his seat due to a scandal over his academic career. Yamasaki, who was a close ally of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, resigned as LDP vice president after losing his seat in the last general election.

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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