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# NAPSNet Daily Report 02 August, 2000

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## I. United States

### 1. US-ROK SOFA Talks

The Korea Times (Son Key-young, "KOREA, US TO REOPEN SOFA TALKS TODAY," 8/2/00), Agence France Presse ("SKOREA, US NEGOTIATE ON TROOP AGREEMENT AMID ANTI-US HOSTILITY," Seoul, 8/2/00) and the Associated Press (Jae-Suk Yoo, "U.S., S. KOREA MAY REVISE AGREEMENT," Seoul, 8/2/00) reported that US and ROK officials on Wednesday held Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) talks in Seoul. US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Frederick Smith began two days of discussions with ROK officials by saying that the US was prepared to make some changes to SOFA. However, US Defense Department spokesman Ken Bacon, speaking in the US several hours before the talks, suggested that the negotiations would be tough. Bacon said, "We would like to get it wrapped up, but we want to get it wrapped up in a way that protects the interests of our soldiers and protects the interests of the Koreans, and so far we haven't been able to achieve that balance. They obviously have their own issues, legal and political issues to deal with, but so do we." ROK chief negotiator Song Min-soon said after the morning session that both sides had agreed in principle to revise the agreement. Another area of contention is the environmental damage caused by the US military, with the ROK pushing for an amendment to SOFA to punish offenders. The ROK and the US are also at odds over the labor rights of ROK nationals hired to work at US bases and food quarantine issues. [Ed. note: The Korea Times article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for August 2, 2000.]

## **2. US Port Visits in PRC**

Agence France Presse ("US WARSHIP VISITS CHINA FOR FIRST TIME SINCE BELGRADE BOMBING," Qingdao, 8/2/00) reported that guided missile cruiser USS Chancellorsville docked in Qingdao on Wednesday, the first US navy port call to the PRC since the NATO bombing of the PRC embassy in Belgrade last May. At the Qingdao navy base, US Pacific Fleet Commander Admiral Thomas Fargo described the port call as "a particularly important step in our nation's bilateral relationship." Fargo, who held talks in Beijing with PRC admirals earlier this week, said that he made "excellent progress in the ways we can communicate at sea." Fargo said that the talks touched on ways to build engagement and understanding through mutual search and rescue missions and cooperation in fighting piracy and drug trafficking, as well as in ensuring the safe passage of oil from the Persian Gulf to Asian countries.

## **3. Cross-Straits Relations**

Reuters ("CHINA MARKS ARMY DAY WITH PLEA, WARNING TO TAIWAN," Beijing, 8/2/00) reported that the PRC state media marked the 73rd anniversary of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) with commentaries urging the PLA to fight Taiwan separatism and step up indoctrination against Western and "anti-Marxist" ideas. The PLA Daily carried an article on August 1 which called on Taiwan to march along the "bright path" of reunification with the PRC, but added that it would crush any move toward independence for the island. The paper said, "The hostile Western forces' desire to subjugate China has not died off and they vigorously pursue Westernization and division policies against us. Taiwan independence elements have not changed course or abandoned plotting to split the motherland." PRC Defense Minister Chi Haotian, who gave an army day speech, said that the PLA was "determined to stop all separatist activities that promote Taiwan independence."

# **II. Republic of Korea**

## **1. ROK-DPRK Talks**

The Korea Times ("THE SOUTH-NORTH JOINT PRESS RELEASE (TEXT) ," Seoul, 07/31/00) reported that the delegations of the DPRK and the ROK released a joint press release on July 31 following the first ministerial talks between the two countries. The two parties stressed the significance of the Joint Declaration and pledged its full implementation. The joint release said that the DPRK and the ROK "will carry out ministerial-level talks in a spirit that coincides with the historic June 15 Joint Declaration [and] will be directed toward reunification and peace as stated in the Joint Declaration." Both countries also announced the reopening of liaison offices at Panmunjom. The joint statement also said that the DPRK and the ROK will cooperate in forming and exchanging visits of displaced family members and will establish necessary measures for those reunions. They also announced that they would launch negotiations as soon as possible on the reopening of severed railway links. The two countries will hold a second round of inter-Korean ministerial talks in Pyongyang for three days starting on August 29.

## **2. Reunion of Separated Families**

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Jun-byung, "FINAL LIST OF 100 SEPARATED FAMILY MEMBERS TO BE REVEALED AUGUST 4," Seoul, 08/01/00) reported that on August 4 the ROK Red Cross will reveal the final list of 100 people who will get to visit their DPRK kin as members of the DPRK-ROK separated family exchange program. The exchange of visits will take place on Liberation Day, August

15. The visits will last for four days. Park Ki-ryun, secretary general of the ROK Red Cross, said that the DPRK would reveal on August 1 or 2 whether or not the families of 62 ROK citizens who applied to visit the DPRK under the program are still alive.

### 3. Pro-DPRK Groups in Japan

The Korea Times ("NK AIMS TO STRENGTHEN KOREAN PRO-PYONGYANG GROUPS IN JAPAN," Seoul, 08/01/00) reported that ROK analysts said on July 31 that the DPRK is apparently seeking to reinforce the organization of pro-DPRK Korean residents in Japan by opening the way for them to visit the ROK to meet their relatives here. Chin Hee-gwan, research fellow at the Institute for Peace Affairs, said, "Chongnyon, the association of pro-North Korean residents in Japan, has played a significant role in helping the poverty-stricken North Korea alleviate its financial burden."

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](#).

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