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I. United States

1. KEDO Delegation's Visit to DPRK

The Associated Press ("NUCLEAR OFFICIALS VISIT NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 6/02/97) reported that the DPRK's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said that a team of US, ROK and Japanese nuclear experts arrived in the DPRK on Saturday to discuss construction of two nuclear reactors by the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), under the 1994 accord between the DPRK and the US. "The negotiation will finally discuss the technical and practical issues concerning the start of the construction project," KCNA said, giving no further details. KEDO has said its 44-member delegation and DPRK officials will discuss the use of postal and communications systems, employment of North Korean workers, and the use of hospitals during the visit, which ends June 7.

2. DPRK Food Aid

United Press International ("RED CROSS BOOSTS N.KOREA AID FIVE-FOLD," Seoul, 5/31/97) reported that the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) announced plans to supply enough food aid to the DPRK to feed 700,000 people, five times as many as it currently assists. The

announcement followed an assessment of the current situation that calls the lead-up to October's harvest "the most critical period." Geoff Dennis, a former IFRC representative in Pyongyang who led a recent three-person visit to the DPRK, said Sunday, "With the substantial donations from particularly the S

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1. KEDO Delegation's Visit to DPRK

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The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("S. KOREA TO SEND 11,200 TONS OF FOOD TO N. KOREA," Seoul, 6/02/97) reported that the ROK Red Cross said Monday it will send 7,000 tons of corn and 4,200 tons of powdered corn to the DPRK later this month. The shipment is the first of 50,000 tons of relief aid the ROK Red Cross will provide to the DPRK by the end of July under the agreement reached last week in Beijing. The ROK said it will ship the first batch by train through the PRC between June 12 and 19. Unlike earlier shipments, the sacks of corn will bear labels showing that they come from ROK donors, a provision the DPRK had previously refused to accept. ROK Red Cross officials also will travel to the North to hand over the food to International Red Cross officials for distribution. Under the Beijing deal, the ROK donors also designated specific provinces in which the food must be distributed.

3. ROK Financial Scandals and Domestic Turmoil

The Associated Press ("11 SENTENCED IN S.KOREA CASE," Seoul, 6/01/97) and Reuters ("SEOUL COURT JAILS HANBO PATRIARCH FOR 15 YEARS," Seoul, 6/02/97) reported that Chung Tae-soo, the patriarch of the ROK's troubled Hanbo Group, was jailed for 15 years on Monday after he was convicted of bribing top aides to President Kim Young-sam, bankers and others in a financial scandal that has rocked the nation. Chung was one of 10 people handed stiff prison sentences by a Seoul court in the loans-for-kickbacks scandal. The others are a former cabinet minister, three lawmakers with the ruling New Korea Party and one with the main opposition party, three ex-bankers, and Chung's son, Bo-kun. Father and son were found guilty of siphoning off a combined US\$408 million for bribes to bankers and politicians that were to keep money rolling in to Hanbo Steel Co., which collapsed in January under debts of US\$5.6 billion, setting off a chain of corporate failures and shaking the banking system. The elder Chung, 74, was convicted of giving bribes, embezzlement and fraud, while his son, 43, who is Hanbo Steel's current chairman, was jailed for three years for embezzlement. The scandal has shattered President Kim's credibility and unearthed other bribery

scandals that led to the arrest of his son, Kim Hyun-chul. One related scandal, concerning Kim Young-sam's spending on his 1992 election campaign, which opposition parties say was bankrolled in part by Hanbo, has sparked a wave of violence by students demanding the president step down. [Ed. note: See following item.] Under Korean law, both the defendants and prosecution have one week to appeal. The prosecution sought prison terms of up to 20 years for all those involved.

The Associated Press ("KOREAN POLICEMAN KILLED IN CLASH," Seoul, 6/02/97) reported that in the fourth consecutive day of anti-government demonstrations in the ROK, students demanding the ouster of President Kim Young-sam hurled firebombs and beat police with metal pipes today, killing one policeman. Students in separate groups engaged in running battles with police, chanting "Kim Young-sam step down!" The students are angry over Kim's refusal to disclose funding amounts and sources for his 1992 presidential election. Some police responded with tear gas; dozens of other officers pulled back. In one encounter, students stopped about 10 officers and stripped them of their gear. Officials at Minjoong Hospital said police Cpl. Yoo Ji-wong was dead on arrival at the hospital's intensive care unit. MBC, the national TV station, quoted police witnesses as saying the officer collapsed after students beat him repeatedly with metal pipes. Other policemen were seen bleeding at the scene. In the past, deaths of policemen in clashes with students have led the government to crack down on student movements and often triggered violent clashes on campuses.

4. ROK-Japan Island Dispute

The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("JAPAN REGRETS S. KOREA'S PLAN TO BUILD ON DISPUTED ISLAND," Tokyo, 6/02/97) reported that Japan's Foreign Ministry summoned ROK Embassy Minister Kim Yon-gyu Monday to tell him Japan is upset about plans by the ROK government to build on islands in the Japan Sea that both countries claim. Ryozo Kato, who heads the ministry's Asia Bureau, told Kim that Japan is seriously disappointed in South Korea's plans to use construction to tighten its grip on the group of tiny islets, called Takeshima by Japan and Tokdo by the ROK. "Takeshima is part of Japan's native land," Kato said of the islands, according to a bureau official who declined to be named. Kato's action was a response to Friday's announcement by Seoul of long-term maritime policies that include building accommodations that will turn the islands into a fisheries base. The ROK, which has effective control over the islands, also said it will spend US\$8 million from next year to 2001 to build weather survey facilities there.

5. Broader US-Japan Alliance Urged

The Wall Street Journal Interactive Edition (Eduardo Lachica, "STUDY RECOMMENDS U.S., JAPAN FORM ALLIANCE TO MANAGE CRISES," Washington, 6/02/97) reported that a study sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations is calling for a more resilient US-Japan alliance that can respond effectively to a crisis on the Korean peninsula or in the South China Sea. Harold Brown, a former US defense secretary and the co-chairman of a group of US and Japanese security experts that produced the study, said that the alliance should be redefined so that US commanders can count on the availability of Japanese military and logistic support up "to the point where the crisis is taking place." Brown warned that the relationship could "fracture" if the US finds itself without such help from its ally during a major emergency. According to the study, currently the US cannot count on Japanese assistance in its contingency planning because Japanese forces, operating on guidelines based on constitutional grounds, are not allowed to engage in "collective self-defense." This means that if a Japanese destroyer and a US Navy destroyer are patrolling together and the US warship is fired upon, the Japanese destroyer couldn't fire back or otherwise come to the aid of the US ship, the study says. Brown acknowledged that the study is meant to encourage both governments to spell out clearer guidelines for defense cooperation. An interim report on these guidelines is expected to be jointly issued by US and Japanese authorities early this week.

6. New US Nuclear Weapon

The New York Times ("Matthew L. Wald, "U.S. REFITS A NUCLEAR BOMB TO DESTROY ENEMY BUNKERS," Washington, 5/31/97, A1) reported that the US has deployed a new nuclear weapon with the capability to destroy underground facilities while causing relatively little surface damage. The B-61, also called the "bunker buster," while repackaging the B-53 hydrogen bomb that has been in the US arsenal for thirty years, represents the first US deployment of a new nuclear capability since the end of the Cold War. Earlier this year, the warhead was refitted with a needle-shaped depleted uranium case enabling the weapon to burrow up to 50 feet into the soil before exploding. Critics contend that the B-61 is a new weapon designed specifically for use against states like the DPRK, Libya, or Iraq, which the US suspects of developing nuclear, chemical or biological weapons in underground complexes. The US Defense Department denies such an intention, and asserts that it has merely improved a delivery system for a weapon intended for use against traditional targets, such as the command-and-control headquarters of other nuclear powers. Dr. Ashton B. Carter, until recently the US Secretary of Defense for International Security, said the B-61 "is a smaller-yield replacement for an older, dirtier, bigger, less safe bomb," and described it as merely "a better mousetrap." However, one US Government official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, described the B-61 as "a new rogue-state weapon" designed to meet the needs of "a new world order." William M. Arkin, a non-governmental expert on nuclear weapons, said, "Of course it's new," adding that he feared that the B-61 was "signaling to the Russians that we're still in the business of nuclear weapons production," particularly mistaken at a time when the US is trying to persuade the Russian Parliament to approve the Start II weapons limitation agreement. Both Arkin and Thomas Cochran, a proliferation expert at the Natural Resources Defense Council, suggested that the new capability might increase the chances that nuclear weapons would be used against underground facilities in the DPRK, Libya, or Iraq. Arkin also noted that conversion of B-52 bombers to launch cruise missiles at distant targets deprived the 9000-pound B-53 of its only delivery system. The new B-61, weighing only 750 pounds, can be carried by the B-2 bomber, which has modern stealth technologies to penetrate into enemy territory.

Greg Mello, director of the Los Alamos Study Group, a nuclear weapons policy research and education organization, wrote an opinion article for The Washington Post ("SHADES OF DR. STRANGELOVE! WILL WE LEARN TO LOVE THE B61-11?," 6/01/97, C01), questioning US deployment of the B61 "mod-11" nuclear bomb intended to penetrate the earth and destroy underground facilities. Mello argued that the B61-11 provides the US with "a substantial new military capability," and "was developed and deployed without public or congressional debate, and in contradiction to official assurances that no new nuclear weapons were being developed in the United States." Mello offered three reasons for the significance of this development. First, from a military standpoint, "the B61-11 is uniquely able to destroy underground targets, and it can be set to do so with a small nuclear yield." Mello noted that this capability was used to threaten Libya even before the weapon development was completed. Second, from a diplomatic standpoint, "this new weapon violates the spirit of the delicately forged international ban on nuclear testing" -- the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), signed by President Clinton last September and due to be considered for final ratification by the Senate this fall -- and "further undermines the long-standing U.S. commitment to nuclear disarmament embodied in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)." Mello noted that, although the CTBT language is silent on the question of new weapons, US negotiators "have explicitly said it is intended to prohibit such development." Third, from a development and production standpoint, the B61-11 "opens the way for other new weapons now under development in the Department of Energy's massive 'stockpile stewardship and management program.'" Mello noted that, last month, nuclear pioneer Hans Bethe, joined by Frank von Hippel of Princeton and others, warned that some of the research under this program could lead to entire new classes of weapons and should be stopped. Mello described the B61-11, deliverable "by the B-2A

Stealth bomber, or even by F-16 fighters," as "far more suitable for post-Cold War missions" than its predecessor, the B53. Mello observed that such missions could include attacking targets in "rogue states," despite US policy not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states that are signatories to the NPT (unless they are allied with a nuclear state engaged in an act of aggression). "The lower yields are said to enhance [the B61-11's] credibility as a deterrent. The B53, goes the tortured logic, was too big and too dirty to use. It would cause massive 'collateral damage' above ground -- or, in simpler language, the death of many innocent civilians. The more modest B61-11 is considered relatively 'useable' in such a context," Mello wrote.

II. Republic of Korea

1. Four-Party Peace Talks

At a working-level meeting of ROK, DPRK and US officials in New York last Friday, the DPRK reportedly reaffirmed its stance that it would accept, in principle, the commencement of the proposed four-party peace talks. In particular, the North also intimated that it might loosen its persistent claim for advance guarantees of food aid, the greatest hurdle to opening the four-party meeting, as a precondition for its participation. The ROK and the US called for the DPRK to comply with the early opening of an initial meeting and stated that if the DPRK agrees, the nations would then be able to begin discussions on the food aid issue. "The Friday contact was very fruitful," a diplomatic source said, adding that unlike its previous posture, the DPRK attended the meeting with sincerity, carefully considering offers related to the four-party talks by the ROK and the US. The source added that future working-level contacts will make it clearer as to whether a preliminary meeting for the four-party talks can be held. A US State Department spokesman positively evaluated the progress made toward achieving a four-party meeting, saying that the process was heading in the right direction. (Korea Times, "NK EASES STANCE ON FOOD AID IN RETURN FOR FOUR-WAY TALKS," 06/01/97)

2. Red Cross Aid to DPRK

The International Red Cross announced Saturday that it has increased food aid to the starving DPRK by five times, so that 740,000 of the most desperate people would have access to grain supplies. "Now that we have substantial donations from the South Korean Red Cross and other donors, we are able to increase our operation considerably," said Geoff Dennis, who returned from Pyongyang Saturday morning after leading an assessment team from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRCRC). "There is no doubt that there will be increased suffering over the next months until the harvest in October, and the food shortage is already very visible," he added. According to the IFRCRC and other aid agencies, the DPRK has already entered the early stages of famine after the combined woes of a steadily declining economy and the collapse of the Soviet bloc were compounded by three years of heavy flooding that obliterated grain harvests. (Korea Times, "RED CROSS BOOSTS NORTH KOREAN FOOD AID BY FIVE TIMES," 06/01/97)

3. DPRK Soldiers Seize Corn

DPRK soldiers took 5,000 tons of World Food Program (WFP) corn at gunpoint from workers at the port of Nampo last month, according to news reports confirmed by a ROK government official. The official stated that a group of DPRK soldiers seized sacks of corn that were part of the US contribution to the WFP while workers were unloading them off a ship on May 21. According to the official, the UN relief organization will lodge a formal protest with DPRK authorities, as similar instances of dubious DPRK behavior are causing concern by the WFP. With 50,000 tons of ROK National Red Cross food slated to be delivered to the North by the end of July, the Seoul government is reportedly planning to officially raise the issue of transparency of the international relief

organization's work in the DPRK. (Korea Herald, "NORTH KOREAN SOLDIERS REPORTEDLY SEIZED 5,000 TONS OF CORN," 06/02/97)

4. ROK, Canada Discuss Secrecy Cooperation

Defense officials from the ROK and Canada recently met to discuss a bilateral treaty for the protection of classified defense information, a ROK Defense Ministry official said Friday. Such an agreement, which is nearing a conclusion, is needed to promote cooperation in defense industries and arms trade between the two countries, he explained. The two governments have also begun negotiations on the training of ROK military officers at the Canadian Armed Forces' Command and Staff College. The ROK is also seeking to train its soldiers in UN peace-keeping operations at the Canadian peace-keeping operations center, the Defense Ministry official said. (Korea Times, "KOREA, CANADA TO CONCLUDE DEFENSE SECRETS PROTECTION ACCORD," 05/31/97)

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

Produced by [the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development](#).

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