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I. United States

1. US-DPRK Talks

The US Department of State Office of the Spokesman released a statement by James P. Rubin ("U.S., DPRK TO RESUME TALKS FOR HIGH-LEVEL VISIT," 3/1/00) which said, "Delegations from the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), led respectively by Ambassador Charles Kartman and Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye Gwan, will meet in New York beginning March 7 to finalize preparations for a DPRK high-level visit to Washington about a month from now. We will also hold talks on the margins of these discussions with the DPRK on terrorism issues. Ambassador Michael A. Sheehan, Coordinator for Counterterrorism, will lead the U.S. side in

these talks. In January, Vice Foreign Minister Kim formally conveyed the acceptance by his government of a U.S. invitation for a high-level DPRK delegation to visit Washington, reciprocating the May 1999 visit to Pyongyang by U.S. Presidential Special Envoy William Perry and State Department Counselor, Ambassador Wendy Sherman. The DPRK high-level visit will provide an important opportunity for serious talks and progress on issues central to peace and stability in Northeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific region, including improving U.S.-DPRK relations."

2. US-DPRK Relations

Agence France Presse ("NORTH KOREA THREATENS TO CUT US DIALOGUE OVER ALLEGED MILITARY PRESSURE," Seoul, 3/2/00) reported that the DPRK warned Thursday that it could review its dialogue with the US because the US was using military pressure to win concessions. The official DPRK Rodong Sinmun said, "the DPRK army and people strongly assert that the DPRK should not deal with the United States anymore as its deeds do not agree with its words, though it is talking a lot about 'dialogue' and 'improved relations.' The United States is seriously mistaken if it seeks to get any concessions from the DPRK in the dialogues through military pressure." The DPRK urged the US to clarify its stand on an alleged plan to equip US troops in the ROK with "a new type of laser weapon for intercepting missiles..." and warned that the DPRK was ready to "retaliate against any US strike." The report also said, "the United States should clearly tell the DPRK whether it stands for dialogue or war, and improvement of relations or confrontation. If the United States wants dialogue and improved relations with the DPRK without any prejudice, it should stop military threats and war moves against the DPRK at once." A US military source said that the accusations were misguided because the US had no immediate plan to deploy such laser weapons in the ROK.

3. DPRK Human Rights

Agence France Presse ("N. KOREA ACCUSES US OF ARROGANCE IN HUMAN RIGHTS CRITICISM," Seoul, 3/2/00) reported that the DPRK called the US State Department's annual human rights report for the DPRK as arrogant and imprudent and warned that it could cause a set-back to improve ties between the two countries. The report was released last week and sharply criticized the DPRK's record on human rights. A DPRK foreign ministry spokesman told the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) on March 1 that "what matters is that the United States does not bother to resort to such arrogant practices as arbitrarily commenting on human rights situation in other countries by its own standards. No one has given such right to the United States. The United States ... is imprudently finding fault with other countries over this issue while styling itself a world's judge of human rights. This is a height of folly." In another KCNA dispatch, the DPRK claimed that the US had murdered one million civilians in the ROK and more than that number in the DPRK during the Korean conflict 50 years ago. The report said, "these genocides are the most blatant breach of the wartime law, the international law on human rights and the international law of humanitarianism."

4. Korean War Massacre

The Associated Press ("NO GUN RI APOLOGY SOUGHT," Seoul, 3/2/00) reported that Chung Koo-do, the spokesman for more than 100 ROK citizens who say they either lost family members or suffered injuries at No Gun Ri, said Thursday that victims of the alleged mass killing by US soldiers during the Korean War plan to hire US lawyers to seek an apology and compensation from the US government. Four representatives left for the US on Thursday to discuss a contract with four Philadelphia-based law firms. Chung said, "we need lawyers who can represent us and ask questions to the U.S. government and if necessary, demand documents for reviewing." He did not rule out the

possibility of filing a lawsuit in a U.S. court demanding compensation.

5. US Views of PRC Threat to Taiwan

Agence France Presse ("ALBRIGHT SEES CHINA 'MUCH MORE AGGRESSIVE' ON TAIWAN THAN IN THE PAST," Washington, 3/2/00) reported that US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said Thursday before a US Senate appropriations subcommittee that the PRC has adopted a "much more aggressive" stance on Taiwan in recent years. However, Albright said, the hardening position was not necessarily a prelude to war. Albright said, "we have to assess the context in which they (the warnings) are being given. We obviously are concerned, but some of it has to do with elections in Taiwan, some with internal issues in China." Albright hinted that she was aware of some PRC leaders who were demanding a tougher line on Taiwan. She stated, "Taiwan has been a huge issue to them, its come up at every single discussion I've had with them over the years. They are clearly much more aggressive about saying that Taiwan is a part of China then they were maybe four years ago. They know that the only acceptable course here is a peaceful reunification and it has to be through a peaceful dialogue."

Inside The Pentagon (Richard Lardner, "DIA INTELLIGENCE CHIEF DOWNPLAYS CHINA'S THREATS AGAINST TAIWAN, US," 3/2/00, P.2,) reported that Vice Admiral Thomas Wilson, director of the US Defense Intelligence Agency, said on March 1 that the PRC threats expressed against Taiwan in the white paper should not be interpreted explicitly. Wilson said, "I don't think China's more of a threat than it was two weeks ago. Not capabilities-wise, they're certainly not. I'm not sure that anybody would benefit [from] my trying to analyze the white paper, or the [People's Liberation Army remarks]. I think it's best to say that we need to continue and improve our ability to really understand China's capability and intent, and to understand how things that are written can be used for signal sending ... and it may be for that as opposed to really a change in intent." Wilson said that the statements in the white paper should be examined carefully, but he advised against underreacting or overreacting to the situation. He stated, "China is of enormous importance to the U.S., and to the world. We have great security interests in Asia. And there are some difficult issues that China and the U.S. have to face together. I think with regard to the latest stuff coming out of China we're still pretty much in the examination phase. I also think that neither China nor Taiwan wants a military engagement. They understand each other pretty well. They're relatively patient.... So hopefully they will solve these issues peacefully." Wilson said that it is unlikely that the PRC would mount a large-scale military operation against Taiwan but estimated that the PRC conventional force modernization will provide "an increasingly credible threat against Taiwan (though probably not the large amphibious capability necessary for an invasion) by 2015." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 2, 2000.]

6. PRC Threat to Taiwan

Agence France Presse ("CHINA INSISTS ARMY IS READY TO CONQUER TAIWAN," Beijing, 3/2/00) reported that PRC foreign ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao said Thursday that its military was capable of invading Taiwan, rejecting Western military analysts' view that it will take at least five years before it can launch an invasion. Zhu said, "the People's Liberation Army of China is fully capable and determined to maintain the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China. This brooks no doubt."

7. PRC-Russia Military Trade

Agence France Presse ("RUSSIAN VICE PREMIER IN CHINA TO DISCUSS MILITARY TRADE," Beijing, 3/2/00) reported that a Russian official said Thursday that Russian Vice Premier Ilya Klebanov arrived in Beijing Thursday for three-day talks about Russian-PRC military trade. The official said that Klebanov met with PRC State Councillor Wu Yi and vice chairman of the Central Military Commission Zhang Wannian on Thursday and will meet with PRC President Jiang Zemin and Premier Zhu Rongji on March 3. The meetings will also set dates for the annual exchange of heads of government between the two countries. Other Russian sources said that two agreements are expected to be signed during the visit: an agreement for the provision of Russian nuclear fuel to the Russian-made Tianwan nuclear power plant currently being built in eastern Jiangsu province and a technology and science cooperation agreement. Klebanov was accompanied by Yevgeny Adamov, Russia's minister of atomic energy, and a large delegation of oil and gas officials. The source said, "Russia wants to balance its trade with China so that it does not depend so much on military sales. Klebanov also hopes to attract Chinese investment into Russia." No military deals are expected to be reached during the visit but both sides will make an extensive review of existing projects, possibly including the delivery of a second "Sovremenny-class" missile destroyer this fall and an ongoing project to build "Sukhoi 27" fighter jets in the PRC.

8. PRC-India Security Talks

Agence France Presse ("INDIA, CHINA TO BEGIN FIRST EVER SECURITY DIALOGUE IN BEIJING," New Delhi, 3/2/00) reported that Indian Foreign Ministry spokesman R.S. Jassal announced on Thursday that India and the PRC will hold their first ever two-day security dialogue in Beijing on March 6. Jassal said, "the broad-based meeting is more a dialogue on international security issues," and would also include a discussion about nuclear proliferation. Jassal said that the PRC and India agreed to the talks during Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh's visit to Beijing in June 1999. Jassal noted that the Sino-Indian border disputes would not be discussed because "there is a separate forum headed by the foreign secretaries of the two countries on that subject." Indian President K.R. Narayanan plans to visit the PRC in May to mark the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations with the PRC.

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-US Talks

The Korea Times ("US, N.KOREA COULD DISCUSS TERRORIST LIST, LIAISON OFFICES," Washington, 03/01/00) reported that the US State Department said on March 1 that the US could discuss taking the DPRK off its terrorist list and establishing mutual liaison offices during a planned upcoming visit to Washington by a top DPRK official. US State Department spokesman James Rubin said, "We've expressed a willingness to work on counterterrorism issues, by explaining in some detail to the North Koreans what steps they need to take to remove North Korea from the terrorism list." However, Rubin could not pinpoint the exact date of a working level New York visit to pave the way for the top-level DPRK official's trip to Washington. A top ROK government official cautioned on March 1 that the proposed meeting, probably by the DPRK's first vice foreign minister, could be delayed until at least April.

2. DPRK Embassy in Hong Kong

Chosun Ilbo (Hahm Young-joon, "NORTH KOREA OPENS HONG KONG MISSION," Seoul, 02/29/00)

reported that an active diplomatic battle is expected to ignite between DPRK and ROK senior protocol-expert diplomats in Hong Kong. The DPRK Consulate General in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China was established on February 16, and former ambassador to Thailand Lee Doh-sup was appointed as its first consul general on February 24. Consul General Lee is a protocol expert who served as chief protocol officer and ambassador to Thailand. The ROK consul general in Hong Kong since 1998 is Shin Doo-byong, a senior diplomat who was director general of American Affairs, chief protocol officer, and ambassador to Yugoslavia, and Italy. Local diplomatic sources said that it will be interesting to see the two Korean protocol experts confront each other, as both have been ambassadors, adding that the DPRK must consider Hong Kong extremely important to send such an experienced diplomat. Thailand is considered the DPRK's operational foothold in Southeast Asia and Lee had only been sent there last March as a special ambassador after diplomatic relations with Thailand were harmed due to the DPRK Embassy's involvement in the kidnapping of a defector and his family. Lee had used his diplomatic abilities to keep at bay planned strong measures by the Thai government, which was determined to take judicial action against the DPRK embassy employees involved in the kidnapping case. The 59-year-old diplomat made his first official appearance on March 1 at a reception celebrating the opening of the consulate at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Hong Kong. Consul General Lee told ROK reporters, "Let's meet later since I am busy these days as it's the first time we are opening an office in Hong Kong." The Hong Kong government sent civil administration affairs head David Lenn as its representative to the reception and showed less interest compared to that given to the ROK consulate general.

3. Korean-Japanese Remittances to DPRK

Chosun Ilbo (Park Jong-hoon, "NK SUPPORTERS IN JAPAN SMUGGLING BILLIONS IN YEN," Tokyo, 02/29/00) reported that Chosoren (Japanese vernacular for Chochongryon), an organization of pro-DPRK residents in Japan, is using the Mankyongbong 92, a periodical passenger boat that runs between Nikata in Japan and Wonsan in the DPRK, to transport up to hundreds of billions of yen to the DPRK. An anonymous former high official of the Chosoren told the Japanese weekly magazine, "Weekly Kendai," that Chosoren collects the money from Korean residents living throughout Japan and sends it to the DPRK by boat. The official said that for the last 20 years, he was in charge of money transfers to the DPRK and had personally passed on at least 3 billion yen in cash.

4. DPRK-Italy Relations

The Korea Times (Son Key-young, "ITALY TO PASS ALONG MESSAGES OF OPENNESS TO N.KOREA," Seoul, 03/01/00) reported that Italian Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema said that Italy would pass along messages of "moderation and openness" to the DPRK via its newly established diplomatic channel. He assured the ROK public that Italy had launched close consultation with the ROK President Kim Dae-jung administration in the process of normalizing diplomatic ties with the DPRK. He hoped that Italy's diplomatic ties and assistance would help the DPRK to join the international community as a responsible member and to alleviate security concerns in this part of the world.

5. ROK Poll on Inter-Korean Relations

The Korea Times ("OVERWHELMING MAJORITY SUPPORTS NK'S RAPPROCHEMENT WITH WESTERN COUNTRIES" Seoul, 02/29/00) reported that an ROK Unification Ministry spokesman

said on March 1 that an overwhelming majority of citizens surveyed responded in favor of the DPRK's improvement of diplomatic ties with Western countries. Marking the second anniversary of the Kim Dae-jung administration's inauguration, the ministry conducted the poll of some 1,500 people, aged 20 or older, throughout the country between February 26-27. Over 62 percent reacted positively to the Kim Dae-jung administration's engagement policy toward the DPRK and stated that the "sunshine policy" helped reduce tensions and the chances of another war on the Korean peninsula. Those surveyed also chose "reunions of separated families," as the main task the government has to tackle this year, and a majority of them reacted favorably toward the government's efforts to hold inter-Korean dialogue and the formation of an inter-Korean economic community.

6. DPRK Internet Site

The Korea Times (Lee Soo-jeong, "DOOSAN ALLOWED TO JOIN N. KOREAN INTERNET SITE" Seoul, 02/29/00) reported that the ROK Unification Ministry has recently given official approval to a local brewing company which sought permission to join a DPRK Internet site as a member to collect data on the DPRK. In this year's white paper on unification, the ministry stated that the Doosan Corporation would be officially authorized to seek membership of DPRK's Internet site, "Choson Infobank." The ministry stated, "simply visiting the Internet site does not require authorization from the ministry, but in case of applying for membership, approval is required." The Internet site was launched last October in commemoration of the creation of the DPRK Workers' Party in Beijing to provide prime news and data on industry, trade, science and technology. Chang Ho-cheol, an official of Doosan Corporation said, "in order to access the site, North Korea has to issue an ID for us. Now that the ministry has given us official approval, we plan to contact the North in the near future to discuss our plan. We hope to provide the most recent information concerning North Korea to citizens by having access to the updated information concerning all areas."

III. Clarification

1. PFO #00-02A

Policy Forum Online 00-02A should have mentioned that the article will appear as a chapter in in a forthcoming book entitled "Solving the North Korean Nuclear Puzzle" by the Institute for Science and International Studies.

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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International Policy Studies Institute Seoul, Republic of Korea
The Center for Global Communications, Tokyo, Japan
Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Asian Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Gee Gee Wong: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Kim Hee-sun: khs688@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hiroyasu Akutsu: akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@glas.apc.org
Moscow, Russian Federation

Chunsi Wu: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Leanne Paton: anjlcake@webtime.com.au
Clayton, Australia

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Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org