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I. United States

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Reuters ("S.KOREA RED CROSS IN BEIJING FOR FOOD TALKS," Seoul, 5/2/97) reported that a ROK Red Cross team arrived in Beijing Friday for the first talks in almost five years with their counterparts from the DPRK. The talks, due to begin Saturday, are aimed at speeding up food aid from South t

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I. United States

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3. DPRK Spy Sentence Upheld

Reuters ("SEOUL HIGH COURT UPHOLDS SENTENCE FOR N.KOREAN SPY," Seoul, 5/2/97)

reported that a ROK high court on Thursday upheld the 15-year sentence of Chung Su-il, 62, a DPRK spy who posed as a Filipino university professor in Seoul. Chung lied about his name, age and nationality for more than a decade after arriving in the ROK in 1984 using forged documents, and taught history at Dankook University from 1990 under the alias Mohamad Ali Kansa. The prosecution had originally demanded a death sentence for Chung. Court statements reportedly said that, although Chung had caused serious harm to ROK national security, he was entitled to a lenient sentence because he had converted from communism while living in the South. Chung was arrested in a Seoul hotel last July while faxing information to a Pyongyang agent in Beijing on the deployment of recently imported Apache helicopters and the test firing of self-propelled artillery. Chung kept his identity secret even from his ROK wife of eight years, who thought he was 11 years younger than he really was and had no idea he was already married with three daughters in the DPRK.

4. ROK Receives DPRK Dirt

The Associated Press (Ju-yeon Kim, "N. KOREANS SOIL PROVIDES SOLACE," Seoul, 5/1/97) reported that thousands of ROK citizens turned up Thursday for the distribution of two-pound packages of dirt from the DPRK. Recipients were principally from families of the millions who fled the DPRK during the 1950-53 Korean War and cannot return, who are known as "shilhangmin" -- people of lost homes. There are no direct phone or mail links between North and South, and most Red Cross efforts to reunite separated families have failed due to the long-standing political tensions. Hence, the dirt provides the only solace to many Koreans with strong ties to their ancestral homes. One recipient, Kim Yong-sun, was quoted as recalling her promise to her dying father. "I promised him that I would cover his grave with earth from North Korea, earth from home," said Kim, 43, her eyes rimmed red from crying. "Although he couldn't live to see the earth, he knew it was coming, and it gave him comfort as he died." The dirt was provided by the Hyowon Mulsan Co., an importer of DPRK products, which said that the DPRK gave it 102 tons of dirt from eight provinces in a humanitarian gesture. The trading company had tried to import the dirt in 1995, but failed when the DPRK became angry over ROK news reports that it was selling the dirt because of economic hardship. Shinsaegy Department Store, which sells goods imported by Hyowon Mulsan, took charge of packaging the dirt in plastic containers and giving it to 50,000 refugees and their families as part of a publicity campaign. [Ed. note: For information on the initiation of negotiations for the transfer, see "DPRK Dirt To Go To ROK" in the US section of the September 6, 1996, Daily Report.]

5. Okinawa Rape Appeals Rejected

The Associated Press ("COURT REJECTS U.S. MARINE'S APPEAL," Seoul, 5/2/97) reported Friday that Japan's Supreme Court rejected requests by two US Marines to reinstate appeals of their prison sentences for raping a 12-year-old girl on Okinawa in September 1995. Marine Pfc. Rodrico Harp, Marine Pfc. Kendrick Ledet, and Navy Seaman Marcus Gill were convicted of the rape last year. Harp, sentenced to seven years in prison, and Ledet, who received 6 1/2 years, appealed their penalties. Gill was sentenced to seven years, but did not appeal. Harp and Ledet had dropped their appeals in October 1996, and asked the Supreme Court to reinstate the appeals on the grounds that they had been coerced into dropping the case by US military authorities. US military officials have refused to comment on the allegations. The rape sparked mass protests against the heavy US military presence on Okinawa, which covers less than 1 percent of Japan's land but houses 30,000 of the 47,000 US troops in the country.

II. Republic of Korea

1. Japan-US-ROK Meeting on DPRK Issues

The ROK and the US are likely to press Japan to join in providing humanitarian assistance to the

DPRK in a three-way meeting scheduled for Wednesday in Tokyo. A ROK Foreign Ministry spokesman announced yesterday that the three allies will hold a meeting to assess the DPRK's current situation, including food shortages, the proposed four-party peace talks and the construction of two light-water reactors in the DPRK. The three-way meeting is designed to enable the three allies to coordinate DPRK policies and take concerted steps in the future, the spokesman said. The US, responding to the United Nations' humanitarian appeal, has already announced its plan to offer 50,000 tons of corn, worth \$15 million, to the DPRK. The ROK may also provide additional aid, pending a meeting between ROK and DPRK Red Cross officials. However, Japan has been lukewarm about joining the international efforts because the DPRK's alleged abductions of Japanese nationals has become a thorny domestic issue. Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto expressed his strong displeasure with the DPRK when he met US President Bill Clinton in Washington on April 25. Although the Japanese Foreign Ministry favors humanitarian grain assistance to the DPRK, the Japanese political circle, sensitive to the negative public opinion toward the DPRK, believes that it is not time to join the international appeal, Yu said. At the same time, the ROK wants Japan to provide aid only through an international organization, fearing interference in inter-Korean ties. (Joong Ang Ilbo, "DURING TOKYO MEETING ON WEDNESDAY JAPAN TO BE PRESSED TO JOIN GRAIN AID TO NK," 05/02/97)

2. US Spy in ROK

The US State Department said it will provide consular assistance to a US businessman arrested in Seoul on military spy charges, adding that the US embassy in Seoul was closely involved in the case. Donald Ratcliffe, 62, director in charge of Asian operations at Litton Guidance and Controls Systems, is suspected of collecting military secrets in the ROK and was arrested while coming out of a US military base in Seoul. US officials denied ROK press reports that Ratcliffe had been hiding at the US military camp or that the US refused to turn him over to ROK authorities. US media made it a point to note that Ratcliffe was arrested at the same time that a trial was under way in the US on Korean-born American citizen Robert Kim who was arrested last September on espionage charges. Kim was accused of handing over secrets to a military attache at the ROK embassy in Washington. (Joong Ang Ilbo, "US CLOSELY FOLLOWING AMERICAN SPY SUSPECT IN KOREA: STATE DEPARTMENT," 05/02/97)

3. IAEA Post

A wrangle between the ROK Foreign Ministry and a former Science and Technology Minister, Chung Kun-mo, over his bid for the top post at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has lost heat after ROK President Kim Young-sam sided with the Foreign Ministry. Kim Thursday ordered the ministry to take steps to ensure that Chung would respect the ministry's opinion that his campaign for the director general post of the (IAEA) stands little chance of succeeding and would harm long-term national interests. In apparent response, Chung, on a visit to the US, reportedly said he will withdraw his bid, if the government continues to refuse to support it. The Foreign Ministry then wasted no time to reaffirm that it would not endorse Chung's candidacy. ROK President Kim intervened when concerns were growing here that the tussle between the ministry and Chung might taint the national image on the global stage. The discord began last week when Chung put forward his candidacy for the post of IAEA director general with the recommendation of Cameroon, despite Foreign Ministry objections that major IAEA member states have already reached a consensus to support a candidate from Egypt, Mohamed M. Elbaradei. (Korea Herald, "CHUNG PRESSED TO WITHDRAW BID FOR TOP IAEA POST," Kim Kyung-ho, 05/02/97)

4. ROK Elected to UNDP Board

The ROK has been elected to the 36-member executive board of the UN Development Program

(UNDP), the ROK Foreign Ministry said yesterday. The country won 45 votes to gain a three-year board membership beginning in 1998 after 54 member states of the UN Economic and Social Council cast votes in New York on Thursday, a ministry spokesman said. Along with the ROK, the PRC and Lebanon beat the Philippines to grab three seats allotted for the Asian region in Thursday's voting, he said. The board membership will strengthen the ROK's voice in projects for developing countries, including the DPRK, in which the UNDP maintains a representative office, the ministry official said. The ROK first served as UNDP executive member from 1993 to 1995. (Korea Herald, "SOUTH KOREA ELECTED TO UNDP EXECUTIVE BOARD," 05/02/97)

III. Japan

1. Japan May Link DPRK Abduction to Food Aid

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPANESE GOVERNMENT DETERMINES DPRK RESPONSIBLE FOR ABDUCTION," Evening Edition 1, 5/1/97) reported that the Japanese government revealed for the first time at an Upper House meeting May 1 that it officially regards Megumi Yokota, a high school girl who went missing in Niigata in November, 1977, as abducted by the DPRK. Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda and the heads of both the National Security Committee and the Police Agency all came to this conclusion after a year-long investigation. The report pointed out that there are a total of 10 Japanese civilians in 7 cases allegedly abducted by the DPRK.

2. Hwang Claim that DPRK Would Attack Japan

The Evening Fuji ("HWANG JON YOP REVEALS DPRK INTENTION TO MAKE NUCLEAR AND CHEMICAL ATTACKS ON JAPAN," Seoul, 1, 4/23/97) cited an Associated Press article as pointing out that an essay written last August by defected DPRK official Hwang Jang-yop revealed that the DPRK already has nuclear and chemical weapons capable of destroying the ROK, and that the DPRK may threaten to attack Japan if the US intervenes after a DPRK blitzkrieg against the ROK. The Fuji report pointed out, however, that the Hwang paper is not specific on the capability and amount of the DPRK's nuclear and chemical weapons. The Fuji report added that given the uncertainty surrounding the DPRK's nuclear weapons development, the ROK intelligence community and the US and Japanese governments are highly concerned about the Hwang paper.

3. US East Asia Defense Policy

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("US DEFENSE SECRETARY SUBMITS DEFENSE REPORT TO CLINTON," Washington, 1, 4/30/97) reported that the 1997 US Defense Report, submitted April 29 to US President Bill Clinton by US Defense Secretary Robert Cohen, states that the US presence in the Asia-Pacific region should be maintained to keep the region stable, and because the US presence is contributing to the region's economic development and to job creation in the US. With regard to the Theater Missile Defense (TMD) initiative, the article pointed out that the Defense Report revealed a need for cooperation among US allies, but that the Report lacks specificity on Japan-US consultations on the initiative.

4. Japan-Australia Discussions on Asia-Pacific

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPANESE AND AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTERS AGREE TO STRENGTHEN JAPAN-AUSTRALIAN SECURITY DIALOGUE," Canberra, 1, 4/30/97) reported that visiting Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and hosting Australian Prime Minister John Howard agreed April 29 to expand Japan-Australia dialogue on defense and security issues. In particular, they agreed that securing the US presence in the Asia-Pacific region is the most important stabilizing factor in the region. The report added that the Japan-Australia cabinet

ministerial meeting slated for this August in Japan will focus on details of bilateral, regional, and global cooperation in areas of security, science and technology, education, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

5. Japan-New Zealand Discussions on Asia-Pacific

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("NEW ZEALAND SUPPORTS US PRESENCE IN ASIA- PACIFIC," Wellington, Evening Edition 1, 4/30/97) reported that in response to visiting Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto's emphasis on the importance of the US presence in the Asia-Pacific region April 30, New Zealand Prime Minister James Bolger said that New Zealand supports the US presence in the Asia-Pacific to maintain security in the region. With regard to the PRC, they agreed to encourage the PRC to participate in the international community as a constructive partner and also to participate in the World Trade Organization (WTO).

6. Japan-ROK Relations

The Nikkei Shimbun ("JAPANESE AND ROK DEFENSE HEADS AGREE TO EXPAND DEFENSE EXCHANGES," Seoul, 2, 4/30/97) reported that visiting Japanese Defense Agency Director General Fumio Kyuma, meeting with the ROK Prime Minister and Foreign Minister April 29 in Seoul, agreed to expand defense personnel exchanges. Kyuma also conveyed to the two Korean ministers Japan's view that Japan continue to seek more understanding from the ROK and other countries concerning the review of the Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation.

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("ROK PRIME AND FOREIGN MINISTERS EXPRESS UNDERSTANDING OF REVIEW OF JAPAN-US DEFENSE COOPERATION GUIDELINES," Seoul, 5, 4/30/97) reported that in response to Kyuma's request for the ROK's understanding of the review of the Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation, ROK Foreign Minister Yoo Chong Ha expressed his understanding of the review by saying that the ROK will contribute to the security and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

7. Japan's Emergency Law

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPANESE DEFENSE HEAD SAYS THAT LEGISLATION FOR EMERGENCY IN JAPAN SHOULD COME FIRST," Seoul, 5, 4/30/97) reported that the Japanese Defense Agency Director General said with regard to the review of the Guidelines of Japan-US Defense Cooperation April 29 in Seoul, that there are more cases that require the law to be refined to cope with contingencies on Japanese territory than in neighboring areas. He also pointed out the immediate need for multi-ministerial cooperation for the necessary legislation and revisions of government ordinances.

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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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