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CONTENTS

I. United States

1. ROK on DPRK Diplomatic Strategy
2. ROK-Russia-PRC on US Role in DPRK Diplomacy
3. PRC on US-DPRK Diplomacy
4. ROK-US DPRK Talks
5. Japan-PRC Mustard Gas Victim Compensation
6. PRC People's Liberation Army Troop Reduction
7. PRC Flood Victims
8. US on PRC Currency
9. US on PRC Tibetan Railway
10. PRC-Philippines on Spratly Islands
11. Op-Ed: US-DPRK War Possibility

II. Republic of Korea 1. DPRK on Multilateral Talks
2. US Response to DPRK Multilateral Talks
3. PRC Activism

III. CanKor E-Clipping Service 1. CanKor Issue #131

I. United States

1. ROK on DPRK Diplomatic Strategy

Reuters (Martin Nesirky, "S. KOREA SAYS NORTH'S NO-TALKS STANCE A TACTIC," 09/01/03) reported that the DPRK's hostile reaction to last week's six-way talks on its nuclear program was an initial response and probably a negotiating ploy, the ROK said Monday. The DPRK said Saturday a hard-line US stance at the Beijing meeting meant there was no point in further talks. A DPRK foreign ministry spokesman said Pyongyang was left with no choice but to enhance its nuclear deterrent force. "It is their first response," Ban Ki-moon, ROK President Roh Moo-hyun's foreign policy adviser, told reporters. "There is a great chance they did it as a strategic move." ROK national security

adviser Ra Jong-yil said the countries involved in the talks - the DPRK, the US, China, Japan, Russia and the ROK -- would immediately embark on follow-up diplomacy to work toward another meeting. All six agreed Friday to a further round, but did not decide when or where. It is not yet clear whether Pyongyang has officially reneged on that agreement or is using past tactics that mix bluster and brinkmanship with gradual steps forward. "The North Koreans' post-conference verbal offensive was nothing but a stupid repeat of their habitual negotiating strategy," the Korea Herald said in an editorial. ROK Foreign Minister Yoon Young-kwan, due to visit Washington for talks with Bush administration officials, said Monday much still depended on the DPRK's attitude before a fresh round of talks is arranged. The DPRK kept up its rhetorical barrage Monday. Rodong Sinmun, the communist party daily, said it was "balderdash" to suggest -- as US officials have done -- that the North might use its nuclear weapons to threaten other countries or sell them to others, including those intent on terrorism in US cities.

2. ROK-Russia-PRC on US Role in DPRK Diplomacy

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREA, RUSSIA WANTS DIPLOMATIC PUSH, CHINA BLAMES US POLICY," 09/01/03) reported that the ROK and Russia called for a new diplomatic push to keep the DPRK nuclear crisis talks afloat as China's senior envoy warned US policy was the biggest obstacle to progress. "From now, the parties concerned are expected to engage in active diplomacy to address differences and misunderstandings," said Ra Jong-Yil, the ROK's national security advisor. Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov joined the ROK's calls Monday for more talks to follow the three-day negotiations which ended last week, dissipating pesimism over the DPRK nuclear crisis. "It was just the first round but the dialogue is continuing," Ivanov said. "We expect that participants from the six nations will hold talks on North Korea in the near future and can then determine when these negotiations can continue," he said. PRC Vice-Foreign Minister Wang Yi, on a visit to Manila Monday, blamed Washington for the absence of progress. Asked what he thought was the biggest obstacle to progress at the talks, he said: "The American policy towards DPRK (North Korea) -- this is the main problem we are facing." "We want the US to make clear about its position," he said. But Wang, the chief PRC delegate at the six-nation talks, expressed confidence the DPRK wanted to work for a peaceful solution. "They may not be so satisfied but they also want to continue the peace process," he said. "So what we are going to do is see how we can narrow the difference and how we can enlarge our common consensus, common ground."

3. PRC on US-DPRK Diplomacy

Agence France-Presse ("US POLICY ON NKOREA KEY OBSTACLE TO ENDING NUCLEAR CRISIS: CHINA," 09/01/03) reported that US policy on the DPRK is the biggest obstacle to resolving the nuclear crisis in the Korean peninsula, the PRC's chief delegate to the six-nation talks on the stand-off said here. Asked by reporters what he thought was the main obstacle to progress, PRC Vice Foreign Minister Wang Yi, said: "The American policy towards DPRK -- this is the main problem we are facing." The DPRK had said its expectations at last week's talks also involving the PRC, Japan, Russia and the ROK had been "betrayed" by "hostile" US policy. The DPRK also described the discussions as "pointless" and threw into doubt its participation at the next round of talks. The US has reportedly rejected the DPRK's demand for a non-aggression pact and other concessions as a precondition to dismantling its nuclear programmes. Wang, who is accompanying the PRC's number two leader Wu Bangguo to an Asian parliamentary meeting in Manila, indicated that Washington might have to make its position on the DPRK clearer. "We want the US to make clear about its position," he said.

4. ROK-US DPRK Talks

Agence France-Presse ("ROK FM LEAVES FOR WASHINGTON FOR TALKS ON NORTH KOREA," 09/02/03) reported that ROK Foreign Minister Yoon Young-Kwan left here for Washington to discuss the outcome of last week's multilateral talks on the crisis over the DPRK's nuclear weapons drive, officials said. Yoon will meet US Secretary of State Colin Powell on Wednesday, national security advisor Condoleezza Rice the following day and Deputy Secretary of State Paul Wolfowitz on Friday, Foreign Ministry officials said. He will also have talks with Congressional leaders including Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Richard Lugar and Henry Hyde, chairman of the House International Relations Committee. The ROK and Russia have called for a new diplomatic push for a peaceful solution to the 10-month-old crisis.

Agence France-Presse ("SKOREA WANTS DIPLOMATIC PUSH TO KEEP NUCLEAR TALKS AFLOAT," 09/01/03) and Agence France-Presse ("SEOUL GIVES UPBEAT ASSESSMENT TO SIX-WAY TALKS ON NUCLEAR CRISIS," 08/30/03) reported that the ROK called for a new diplomatic push to keep the nuclear crisis talks afloat after the DPRK called them "useless" and said it would a step up its nuclear weapons drive. "From now, the parties concerned are expected to engage in active diplomacy to address differences and misunderstandings," Ra Jong-Yil, the ROK's national security advisor, told a meeting of top presidential aides here. The DPRK's ruling party newspaper, Rodong Sinmun, said Monday that Pyongyang's nuclear deterrent force was purely defensive in nature and designed to cope with "a US preemptive nuclear attack." "Unless anyone provokes the DPRK (North Korea), its nuclear deterrent will remain unused. There is no need for a country not hostile but friendly to the DPRK to worry about its nuclear deterrent," it said in a commentary.

5. Japan-PRC Mustard Gas Victim Compensation

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN PLANS TO PAY MONEY TO MUSTARD GAS VICTIMS IN CHINA," 09/02/03) reported that Japan plans to pay about 100 million yen (857,000 dollars) to the relatives of a PRC man who died and others who were injured by mustard gas left by retreating Japanese troops in World War II, a report said. The government is considering offering financial support to a PRC medical team and "sympathy money" to the bereaved family of a man who died, the Yomiuri newspaper said, quoting Cabinet Office and foreign ministry sources. A PRC man who came in contact with the lethal gas died from massive burns last month. Some 32 victims remain in hospital. The Yomiuri reported that Japan was also considering paying hospital bills and the cost of sealing the gas containers to prevent further leaks. The money is not considered formal compensation by Tokyo but as part of Japan's project to dispose of left-over weapons by 2007, the daily said. The Japanese government maintains the PRC does not have the right to claim war-related compensation as it forfeited that right when the 1972 Sino-Japan joint declaration was signed to normalize diplomatic ties. A Japanese government official said the government had not decided on the payment of any money but added: "We will deal with the matter sincerely in close cooperation with China." "The PRC side has asked us to send a delegation there to discuss remedial measures, and we are considering (it)," said the official who declined to be named. The Yomiuri said the government was expected to allocate a total of some 100 million yen, mostly from a 30.7 billion yen Cabinet Office budget allocated this year for disposing of leftover chemical weapons in the PRC.

6. PRC People's Liberation Army Troop Reduction

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA TO CUT PLA BY 200,000 TROOPS BY 2005," 09/01/03) reported that the PRC's top military leader Jiang Zemin announced that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) will reduce its numbers by 200,000 troops before 2005 and put more focus on building a high-tech army,

state press reported. Jiang told a meeting of the Central Military Commission (CMC) that the troop reductions would follow an earlier 500,000-man cut to military personnel between 1996 and 2000, Xinhua news agency said. According to the information office of the PLA, the demobilization would reduce the PRC's army to 2.3 million soldiers, while Western analysts said the cuts could bring the PRC's ground forces to as low as 1.8 million soldiers. Despite this, the PLA remains the world's largest standing army, albeit one badly in need of technological transformation. "The state of war is being transformed from mechanized warfare to information warfare with the information capabilities of the military increasingly playing a decisive role," Jiang was quoted as telling the meeting. "Reducing the scale of our military is beneficial to the concentration of our limited strategic resources and will quicken the pace of constructing our military's information technology."

7. PRC Flood Victims

Agence France-Presse ("TENS OF THOUSANDS VICTIMIZED AS MORE FLOODS TO STRIKE CHINA," 08/01/03) reported that at least 10,000 homes have been destroyed and thousands of people victimized by floods and landslides in the PRC's northwestern Shaanxi province, and worse is on the way, state media reported. Thirty-two counties in the province -- a third of the total -- have been affected by floods since torrential rains began pelting the region on August 28, the Wenweipao newspaper reported. The situation remains serious, with 26 people killed so far and estimated economic losses reaching 550 million yuan (66 million US dollars). The heavy rain has caused water levels in rivers in the middle and northern parts of Shaanxi to rise. Many of the rivers are tributaries of the Yellow River, China's second longest river, and the largest tributary, the Wei River, is experiencing its worst flood peak in 22 years, according to the report. From Thursday to Saturday, 93 counties and cities in Shaanxi were pounded by torrential rain, with some areas seeing the heaviest rainfall in 40 years. In the worst hit county, 40,000 households involving 280,000 people were affected and the county's telecommunications services were halted. The county's police chief was killed while rushing to the frontlines, when the vehicle he was in drove onto a bridge damaged by flood waters and plunged into the river below. A police officer and a soldier were also killed in the accident. At least 120,000 people have been evacuated, the China News Service reported.

8. US on PRC Currency

Reuters (Glenn Somerville, "SNOW TURNS UP HEAT ON CHINA OVER CURRENCY," Beijing, 09/02/03) reported that US Treasury Secretary John Snow turned up the heat on the PRC on Tuesday to move to a more flexible currency regime but Beijing officials ruled out quick change in its currency peg, offering some easing of some capital controls. "It's critical that they move to a flexible currency because one sure way to build in adjustment problems in an economy ... is to have open capital flows and a rigid exchange rate," Snow told reporters traveling with him on a week-long visit to Asia. The US Treasury chief earlier met People's Bank of China Governor Zhou Xiaochuan, Vice Premier Huang Ju and Finance Minister Jin Renqing to press the Bush administration's case that China's pegged currency rate is no longer appropriate to its status as a growing world trade power. Snow, who flew to Beijing on Tuesday from Tokyo, is under pressure at home to urge China to revalue the yuan, which is pegged to the dollar, to save jobs at hard-pressed US factories. "We expressed our view that it is in China's interest to have a more flexible currency system and it's in their interest to continue the process of opening up capital flows, in and out, reducing their controls on capital," he said.

9. US on PRC Tibetan Railway

Agence France-Presse ("US ACTIVISTS LAUNCH NEW ATTACK ON TIBET RAILWAY," 09/02/03) reported that a high-altitude railway the PRC is building to Tibet is a ruse to increase control over the region, and does not even enjoy the support of Beijing's Ministry of Railways, US activists said here. The International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) made the claim in a new 70-page report on the 1,142-kilometer (713-mile) railway to the Tibetan capital of Lhasa, just days before Tibet's spiritual leader the Dalai Lama is due to visit the US. "This is another example of Communist central planning in Tibet that puts Sino-centric security and development before the interests of the Tibetan people, most of whom will not benefit from a railway under the present conditions," said John Ackerly, ICT President. "This railway not only lacks broad support among the Tibetan people, but it also lacks the support of the PRC Ministry of Railways," he said. The ICT backed up its complaints about the railway with interviews with transport analysts and satellite imagery in the report, titled "Crossing the Line." It urged Beijing to ensure that the railway does not result in a greater influx of non-Tibetans into Tibet, and to prevent the persecution of Tibetans who oppose the railway. ICT also urged other governments to avoid involvement in construction of the 3.2 billion dollar line, and to deny relevant export licenses. It said economic data indicated the railway was a poor investment and the decision to build it was taken for political reasons. Several PRC railway experts, some of whom work with the Ministry of Railways, helped anonymously in the preparation of the report, ICT said. Main beneficiaries of the line will be the People's Liberation Army which will welcome a new supply route to its tens of thousands of troops in Tibet, and PRC settlers and migrants, the report claimed. Rights groups accuse China of orchestrating a wave of immigration of Han PRC settlers into Tibet in order to dilute the region's ethnic identity. The line will link the Tibetan capital of Lhasa with Golmud in Qinghai province, becoming the longest railway at the highest elevation in the world.

10. PRC-Philippines on Spratly Islands

Asia Pulse ("CHINA, PHILIPPINES PUSH FOR JOINT DEVELOPMENT OF SPRATLYS," Manila, 09/02/03) reported that the Philippine and the PRC governments today pushed for a joint exploration and development of the much-contested Spratlys Island. This developed as both governments commence bilateral talks to discuss the possibilities of enhancing the vast resources of the cluster of islands in Palawan. In a news conference in the recently convened Association of Asian Parliaments for Peace (AAPP), House Speaker Jose de Venecia said the joint exploration and development would even extend to the South China Sea. "We have also agreed on drafting a common code of conduct in the South China Sea," he added. De Venecia opined that the Spratlys group of islands have long been long unused, which may be due to the stalemate between countries in the Southeast Asian Region claiming in whole or in part the islands. "I have been proposing this 10 years ago now China is proposing that we conduct the joint exploration," he added. De Venecia said that they would be consulting the said joint venture with other stakeholders in the islands like Malaysia and Singapore.

11. Op-Ed: US-DPRK War Possibility

USA Today (Jimmy Carter, "US-NORTH KOREA WAR SEEMS 'STRONG POSSIBILITY,'" 09/02/03) carried an Op-Ed by former US President Jimmy Carter who wrote that we face the strong possibility of another Korean war, with potentially devastating consequences, so the endangered multilateral talks in Beijing are of paramount importance. It is vital that some accommodation be reached between Pyongyang and Washington. The DPRK is an isolated country, poverty stricken, paranoid, apparently self-sacrificial and amazingly persistent in international confrontations, as is now being demonstrated. It is a cultural and almost sacred commitment for its leaders not to back down, even in the face of international condemnation and the most severe political and economic pressure. A previous example of this stubbornness occurred in 1968, when North Korea captured the USS Pueblo, a Navy intelligence-gathering ship. Despite the best efforts of President Lyndon Johnson to

marshal international support and to prevail with economic punishment and military threats, President Kim il Sung never deviated from his basic demands, which included an embarrassing public apology from the US for "spying" on his country. After 11 months, President Johnson accepted all the demands, and the crew was released. Notwithstanding their abysmal economic failures and the resulting hardships of their people, DPRK leaders have never deviated from a commitment to military strength. They maintain a formidable army, with artillery and missiles able to wreak great destruction on Seoul and the northern portion of South Korea, regardless of how much punishment North Koreans might have to absorb during a US attack or counterattack. The development of advanced rocketry and now a potential nuclear capability is further proof of their scientific resources. There was another crisis in 1994, when Kim il Sung expelled International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors and threatened to begin reprocessing 8,000 spent fuel rods from a nuclear power plant. The US government refused to talk to DPRK leaders, and made plans for economic sanctions and a military attack. As the crisis escalated, The Carter Center was finally given reluctant permission from President Clinton for me to visit Pyongyang. A satisfactory agreement was concluded and later confirmed by both governments, with participation by the ROK, Japan and others. But neither side honored all the commitments. The situation is rapidly deteriorating again. North Korea feels increasingly threatened by being branded an "axis of evil" member; deployment of anti-ballistic missiles in Alaska; Washington voices expressing military threats; interception of DPRK ships; ad hominem attacks on President Kim Jong Il; condemnation of previous efforts by President Clinton and ROK leaders to resolve issues peacefully; and US refusal to negotiate directly with the DPRK. America's newly declared policies of pre-emptive war and first use of nuclear weapons also concern North Koreans. Even before these more recent threats, the North Koreans began a secret and illicit nuclear program. They have initiated a concerted effort to develop a nuclear arsenal, with the possible production of a half-dozen weapons by the end of 2003 and similar annual numbers thereafter. These could be used by the DPRK or sold to other nations or terrorist groups. This is now by far the most serious threat to regional and world peace. There are other issues, but the basic DPRK demand is a firm non-aggression commitment from the US, which US officials continue to reject. The US insists first on a complete end to the North Koreans' nuclear program, which the North Koreans have refused to accept. If neither side will yield or compromise, then an eventual military confrontation seems likely. The US can prevail, but with terrible human casualties in both the DPRK and the ROK. There must be verifiable assurances that prevent the DPRK from becoming a threatening nuclear power, with a firm commitment that the US will not attack a peaceful DPRK. This is a time for sustained and flexible diplomacy between our two governments, to give peace and economic progress a chance within a nuclear-free Korean peninsula. Former US president Jimmy Carter chairs The Carter Center in Atlanta, a non-governmental organization that advances peace and health.

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK on Multilateral Talks

Joongang Ilbo (Kang Chan-ho, "NORTH SAYS IT SEES NO USE IN ANY MORE TALKS", 09/01/03) reported that despite new denunciations from DPRK of the ongoing diplomacy to address the communist regime's nuclear weapons program, ROK, U.S. and Japan will begin a push this week for another round of talks on the crisis. Observers say the diplomatic initiative will face serious difficulty after DPRK bluntly dismissed the usefulness of further talks. On Saturday, a day after the six-party talks on DPRK's nuclear ambitions ended in Beijing, a Foreign Ministry spokesman in Pyeongyang declared: "We are no longer interested nor have expectations for the six-party talks," referring to the participation of Russia, PRC, Japan, ROK and U.S. The spokesman added the talks "reaffirmed more

strongly that we have no other choice but to strengthen nuclear deterrence capability to maintain our sovereignty." DPRK's assessment stands in contrast to the milder views of other countries involved. U.S. chief delegate, Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly, called the talks a "productive start.

2. US Response to DPRK Multilateral Talks

Chosun Ilbo(Joo Yong-jung, Washington, "NORTH'S THREATS NO SURPRISE, U.S SAYS", 08/31/03) reported that DPRK delegation to last week's Beijing talks let loose with a blast of cynical comments on Saturday before leaving PRC capital, but the U.S. team remained upbeat. The spokesman for DPRK team, Jeong Tae-yang, said, "It has become more apparent that the U.S. is slowly trying to disarm us through these talks. Therefore, there is no need for any more of these talks, which do more harm than good." DPRK's Foreign Ministry expressed similar sentiments in a report released by DPRK's Korean Central News Agency: "These talks were entirely different than what we had anticipated, and were only desk theories. They give us a stronger conviction that there is no other choice than to continue strengthening our nuclear deterrent power as a self-defensive measure to protect our autonomy." By contrast, U.S. Department of Defense said Friday (Washington time): "We are pleased that a the participating countries formed a joint understanding that the multi-lateral process can lead to the peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear problems. There was a joint understanding that the multilateral process is valuable and must be continued in negotiating further talks." The State Department also said in response to DPRK's threat to conduct nuclear tests that the announcement was unsurprising, and that the threats were in fact repeated messages that had been conveyed in April. "DPRK's statements show that it has acknowledged its possession of nuclear weapons," the State Department said. "We will not respond to threats or blackmail." The New York Times reported Sunday that U.S. officials, quoting President George W. Bush, said that if DPRK went ahead and tested a nuclear bomb, DPRK would inevitably be faced with an economic blockade, something that DPRK has warned would be interpreted as an act of war.

3. PRC Activism

Chosun Ilbo (Kwon Kyung-bok, "ACTIVISTS RALLY FOR CHINA-JAILED COMRADES", 08/31/03) reported that twenty activists from organizations supporting DPRK defectors demonstrated at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade on Saturday, calling for the government to pressure PRC to release ROK activists detained in PRC prisons. The activists rallied outside the ministry's rear gate, shouting criticism such as, "ROK NGO members have been moaning in PRC prisons for over a year while our government just waits for DPRK to take action." Some of the members tried to pull down the ministry's main signboard, but were stopped by police. The activists dispersed after about an hour. At least five ROK activists are now in PRC prisons for helping DPRK defectors. They are a Presbyterian pastor, Kim Hee-tae, a photojournalist, Seok Jae-hyun, another pastor, Choi Bong-il, a businessman, Choi Young-hoon, and an NGO official, Oh Yeong-pil.

III. CanKor E-Clipping Service

1. CanKor Issue #131

The long-anticipated 6-nation talks end in Beijing without disappointment, since expectations had been modest. US and DPRK delegates chat "unofficially" on the sidelines, no one walks out, all plan to meet again, despite DPRK threats to test a nuclear device. This week's FOCUS examines the talks

in the context of concurrent events, introduces the participants, and recaps opening statements. North-South economic talks conclude positively with plans to meet again in October. Skirmishes erupt between DPRK journalists and human rights protestors at the Daegu Universiade games, where North and South teams entered together a stadium filled to capacity. The DPRK team originally called off its participation, disturbed by anti-DPRK protests in Seoul earlier this month. Koreans in Japan experience anti-North terrorism, as bomb alerts force the evacuation of families in Fukuoka, in the latest of a series of threats and assaults against ethnic Korean individuals and businesses. Canada joins a team of international observers to monitor regional naval rescue drills. Not only is this the first time both Koreas to take part in a (peaceful) military action, it is also the first time Russia and ROK jointly field troops.

For back issues: http://www.cankor.ca

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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