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I. United States

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1. DPRK Military

Reuters ("N.KOREA SAYS ITS ARMY READY TO FIGHT AGAINST U.S.," Tokyo, 12/03/98) and the Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA SAYS IT'S ON FULL ALERT," Seoul, 12/03/98) reported that DPRK Vice Defense Minister Jong Chang-yol said on Thursday that morale in the DPRK army was high. Jong stated, "Under the prevailing touch-and-go situation, the Korean People's Army (KPA) is now bracing itself for a fight against the US imperialist aggressors. All the KPA officers and men are full of the fighting spirit and vigor to give an annihilating blow to the aggressors and make them forlorn wandering spirits." He accused US President Bill Clinton of telling US troops stationed in the ROK during his trip there to prepare for a war. He added, "If they finally unleash a war, our People's Army will blow up the US territory as a whole and demonstrate the mettle of the great Marshal Kim Jong-il's army." He warned, "Our army has been in full readiness to defeat any aggression of the US imperialists. The US imperialist aggressors should be mindful that this planet will never exist without Korea."

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2. DPRK Missile Launch

The Washington Times (Bill Gertz, "NORTH KOREA READY TO TRY SECOND TEST OF LONG-RANGE MISSILE, OFFICIAL SAYS," 12/03/98, 4) reported that an anonymous US intelligence official on Wednesday confirmed reports in Japanese newspapers that the DPRK is preparing for a second test launch of a long-range missile that could take place this month. The official stated, "They're making preparations, and there is information they might do something before the end of the year." Walter Mondale, former US vice president and former US ambassador to Japan, said such a test would "set off all kinds of anxiety in the region." [Ed. note: This article also appeared in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news summary.]

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3. Japanese Emperor's Trip to ROK

Reuters ("POLL: JAPANESE WARY OF EMPEROR VISITING SOUTH KOREA," Tokyo, 12/02/98) reported that a survey published by the Yomiuri Shimbun on Thursday showed that 48 percent of the Japanese public opposed an early visit by Emperor Akihito to the ROK. Only 31 percent of respondents supported such a visit before the 2002 World Cup soccer finals.

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4. US Arms Sales to Taiwan

US State Department Spokesman James Rubin ("STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING, DECEMBER 2," Transcript, 12/02/98) said that the US remains committed to fulfilling the security and arms transfer provisions of the Taiwan Relations Act. Rubin stated, "We will continue to assist Taiwan in meeting its legitimate defense needs in accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act and the 1982 joint communique with the PRC. Consistent with our obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act, we regularly consult with Taiwan on its defense requirements. It would be premature to comment further about AEGIS or any other specific systems at this time. The Taiwan authorities are currently addressing their own capabilities and needs."

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5. US Military in Asia

The International Herald Tribune (Michael Richardson, "IN ASIA, A NEW MUTUAL DEFENSE,"

Singapore, 12/03/98, 1) reported that US defense officials said that they intend to negotiate new agreements with Southeast Asian countries to increase US access to local military bases and support services, instead of seeking bases under US military control. They said that in return, the US will offer the armed forces of host nations better training and supplies, as well as financing to buy US military equipment, services, and training. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Kurt Campbell said recently in Washington that the US wanted to "increase our engagement with Southeast Asian militaries, particularly given the financial crisis and the lack of resources that are going to the militaries throughout Southeast Asia." He added, "We believe that in order for the U.S. to be a presence in Asia, it's important not just to have an important foothold in both Korea and Japan, but also to have the ability to engage actively in Southeast Asia as a whole." Under a formal memorandum of understanding signed last month, Singapore offered the US use of piers in a new naval base now under construction. When completed in 2000, it will be able to accommodate aircraft carriers and other very large naval ships. Singapore Defense Minister Tony Tan stated, "The U.S. has indicated that it would be useful for the U.S. Navy, which currently does not have any facilities between Guam, Japan and the Middle East where aircraft carriers and other deep-draft vessels can berth alongside for maintenance and logistics support." [Ed. note: This article also appeared in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news summary.]

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6. Asian Financial Crisis

The New York Times (Mark Landler, "SOCIAL IMPACT OF ASIA CRISIS IS WORSENING, REPORT SAYS," Hong Kong, 12/03/98) reported that a report issued on Tuesday by the International Labor Organization (ILO) said that the social costs of the Asian economic crisis are far higher than initial estimates and are "dramatically worsening." The ILO said the economic collapse had resulted in a rising unemployment, spreading poverty, and dashed expectations. The lack of social welfare programs in affected countries made them "fertile ground for breeding social unrest." Eddy Lee, an ILO economist, who wrote the report said, "I would veer to the pessimistic side." The report called on governments to increase spending on social programs, particularly unemployment insurance.

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7. US-Pakistan Talks

The Washington Post (Thomas W. Lippman, "CLINTON, PAKISTANI PRIME MINISTER MEET," 12/03/98, A34) reported that Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met with US President Bill Clinton at the White House on Wednesday. Senior US officials said that Clinton told Sharif that the US wants further commitments that Pakistan will refrain from testing and deploying nuclear weapons before it will extend economic and military ties. Clinton also said that the US could not intervene to help resolve the conflict between Pakistan and India over Kashmir. Clinton said that US mediation "only works when both parties wish the United States to be involved. Otherwise we can't be effective." US Assistant Secretary of State Karl F. Inderfurth stated, "The president reaffirmed our view that more progress needed to be made on [nuclear] issues before we would be in a position to remove all of the sanctions that had been put on Pakistan in the wake of the [nuclear] test." [Ed. note: This article also appeared in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news summary.]

II. Republic of Korea

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1. ROK's Concern about DPRK

Chosun Ilbo ("KIM EMPHASIZES DEFENSE AGAINST DPRK," Seoul, 12/03/98) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung said Thursday that the country should reinforce its military capability against the DPRK through an appropriate defense policy. Kim made the comment during a meeting with 42 major military post leaders at the rank of lieutenant general and above at Chongwadae. Kim pointed out that the DPRK regime is beefing up its military strength in spite of the fact that its people are starving. Kim said that the ROK's defense posture against the DPRK cannot be emphasized enough. The president also warned the generals against repeating the failure to capture a DPRK vessel that had recently infiltrated into ROK waters off the west coast.

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2. Possible Tension on Korean Peninsula

Korea Times ("DEFENSE MINISTER WARNS OF POSSIBLE CRISIS NEXT YEAR," Seoul, 12/03/98) reported that ROK Defense Minister Chun Yong-taek on Wednesday ordered military units to maximize their combat readiness to deal with any crisis that might take place on the Korean peninsula. In a letter entitled "The Establishment of Strong Readiness" sent to the commanders and staff of ROK units at the regimental level and above, Minister Chun observed, "Next year we may see inter-Korean military tensions go up as a result of the DPRK's possible missile and nuclear weapons development." Chun sent the letter after he presided over a meeting of senior commanders of the armed forces at the Defense Ministry. He pointed out that the DPRK has continued large-scale construction of a suspected underground nuclear facility in Kumchang-ri, defying international calls to open it to an inspection, a situation that could lead to a crisis on the peninsula unless transparency is established promptly. However, Chun stopped short of drawing a comparison between next year's possible crisis and that which occurred in the lead-up to the 1994 Agreed Framework.

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3. ROK Defense Industry

JoongAng Ilbo ("DEFENSE INDUSTRY TO BE RESTRUCTURED," Seoul, 12/03/98) reported that the ROK government intends to restructure the defense industry. According to the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Industry and Energy on December 3, the government decided on a basic principle to restructure the defense industry and to make concrete plans, including mergers between defense industry companies. The two ministries will make a final plan by the end of this year. The government has already sent a revised bill for the special defense industry law to the National Assembly. Following the revision, it is forecast that considerable changes in the industry will occur. Defense industry analysts are saying that mergers and acquisitions in the defense industry companies have been impossible until now, but if the bill passes through the National Assembly, takeovers in defense industry companies would be possible.

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4. DPRK Participation in Asian Games

JoongAng Ilbo ("DPRK REDUCES NUMBER OF COMPETITORS FOR ASIAD," Seoul, 12/03/98) reported that the New China News Agency reported on December 2 that the DPRK canceled part of its delegation to the 13th Asian Games. The story quoted Yoo Sung-il, the head of the DPRK Olympic Committee, as saying in an interview, "An athlete spends 50 dollars a day for dining and

accommodations. The total cost for the 300 people delegation would be 300,000 dollars. So, we decided to cancel certain teams from participating at the games. We appreciate the PRC's providing foods to our athletes." Yoo refuted a report that the DPRK may boycott the games because it is supposed to enter the stadium after the ROK in the opening ceremony. He said, "We respect the host nation's decision on the entering order. We have never quarreled over this kind of problem before." He added that the DPRK will participate in 17 events, including football, softball, women's handball, ping pong, judo, weightlifting, wrestling, boxing, track and field events, shooting, rowing, canoe, diving, gymnastics, golf, bowling, and fencing.

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5. Concert for DPRK Famine

Korea Herald ("BENEFIT CONCERT FOR DPRK CHILDREN TO BE HELD AT LINCOLN CENTER," Seoul, 12/03/98) reported that a star-studded gala concert to raise funds for the children of the DPRK will be held on December 14 at the Lincoln Center in New York. Organized by Korean Americans for Global Action (KAFGA), the event will be hosted by Korean-American actress/comedian Margaret Cho with special guest appearances by electric violinist Eugene Park, ROK's folk band "SamulNori and Kim Duk-soo," and the Ahn Trio. Promoting the "Hands of Hope" concert in the ROK is KAFGA member Susan Kim, who also serves as a senior manager for the American Chamber of Commerce in the ROK. "We're coming together to show our concerns for the widespread famine in DPRK," says Kim. "A generation of children are being lost to starvation. Not only do we want to heighten awareness but also raise funds to help feed the children in the DPRK." The event is expected to raise US$100,000 from sales of concert tickets, CDs, individual donations and corporate sponsors. All proceeds of the event will go to Mercy Corps International, a non-profit voluntary organization that has played a leading role in the DPRK and currently chairs the 35 member Interaction Working Committee on the DPRK. Sponsors of the event include: Budweiser, Korean Airlines, Metlife, The Korea Society and others. For further information, please contact Susan Kim at (82-2) 774-7432.

III. People's Republic of China

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1. DPRK Underground Construction

People's Daily ("DPRK STRONGLY CONDEMNS US FOR 'OPERATION PLAN'," Pyongyang, 12/3/98, A6) reported that a spokesman for the General Staff of the DPRK's People's Army strongly accused the US of working out a "5027 operation plan", which aims to launch the second Korean war. The spokesman stated that recently the US took a hard-line stance toward the DPRK's "underground nuclear construction" issue, which does not exist at all, and the DPRK's launch of a man-made satellite. The purpose of the US was to use them as an excuse to start a war. According to the spokesman, the DPRK has its own operation plan. The DPRK neither wants nor avoids a war. If a war is imposed, the spokesman said, the DPRK will not miss the opportunity and will answer it with an annihilating blow.

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2. Plot to Influence ROK Election

China Daily ("NEW RIVALRY ROCKS ROK POLITICAL COMMUNITY," Seoul, 12/2/98, A11) reported

that a fresh rivalry hit the ROK political circle after prosecutors threatened to question opposition leader Lee Hoi-chang over a suspected election plot. The political standoff was sparked by court testimony given on Monday by Han Song-ki, a former supporter of the main opposition Grand National Party (GNP), who alleged the GNP head received written reports twice on a plot to stage a border shoot-out. Han claimed the reports spelled out his contact with DPRK officials before presidential polls in December last year. The opposition leader angrily denied his alleged involvement, accusing President Kim Dae-jung's ruling coalition of resuming a smear campaign against him. But prosecutors said an investigation would be needed to determine whether Lee received the reports. If confirmed, Lee could stand trial, with his political life in jeopardy. The prosecution's move came as the opposition was hit by bitter internal disputes between rival factions. Lee's opponents boycotted party affairs, claiming they should be given more slots in the GNP's hierarchy. Some legislators threatened to quit and form a separate party.

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3. Jiang Zemin's Visits to Russia and Japan

People's Daily issued an editorial ("TAKING A LONG-TERM VIEW AND GEARING TO THE FUTURE," A1) on December 1 saying that PRC President Jiang Zemin's visit to Russia and Japan was an important diplomatic event of far-reaching historical significance at the turn of the century. During the visit, Jiang proceeded from a long-term strategic point of view and held in-depth and candid exchanges of views with leaders of both countries on the prospects of developing bilateral issues of mutual concern by summarizing the past. China and Russia reached a new understanding on strengthening the strategic prospects of bilateral cooperation and enriched the PRC-Russia strategic cooperative partnership. After Jiang and Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi's talks, a joint statement between the PRC and Japan was issued as the third important document governing PRC-Japan ties. The positioning of bilateral ties set the direction of future development and signifies that bilateral relationship has entered a new stage of development.

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4. Taiwan Issue

China Daily ("SPOKESMAN OPPOSES SEPARATIST ACTIVITIES," 12/2/98, A1) reported that the PRC respects the Taiwan people's interests and wishes, but is opposed to activities aimed at splitting the motherland carried out by Taiwan separatist forces in the name of democracy. PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Tang Guoqiang said on December 1 that no matter what political activities are carried out in Taiwan, there can be no change to the basic fact that there is only one China in the world, and that Taiwan is an inalienable part of Chinese territory. When asked to comment on the report that Taiwan is seeking to buy four or five destroyers from the US, Tang urged the US to abide earnestly by its "clear promises" in the PRC-US August 17 Joint Communique issued in 1982. The PRC is firmly opposed to the sale of any arms to Taiwan by any country, including the US, Tang said.

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5. US Security Strategy

Jie Fang Daily ("COLD WAR LOGIC", 11/26/98, A3) carried an article commenting on the US Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region 1998, published by the US Department of Defense. The article, written by Professor Yang Jiemian, Director of Department of American Studies, Shanghai Institute for International Studies, said that the report stressed that the US should play the role of an active participant, a partner and beneficiary in the region. Unlike the reports delivered in

1990 and 1992, this report still claims the importance of keeping 100,000 troops stationed in the Asia-Pacific region and maintaining its deterrent power in the ROK. The report is a reflection of the US Government's views of the situation in the Asia-Pacific region following the Cold War, reinstating US leadership in the bilateral security system in the Pacific region. However, while emphasizing the necessity and feasibility of establishing a strategic partnership with the PRC, the report imposes a double standard on the Taiwan issue, Yang said. On the one hand, it reiterates the principle of "one China," putting the Taiwan issue under the PRC's authority. On the other hand, it brags about the so-called great contribution that the US has made in creating a harmonious atmosphere between the PRC and Taiwan through selling limited weapons to Taiwan.

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6. US-Pakistan Talks

China Daily ("NUCLEAR ISSUES TOP SHARIF'S VISIT TO USA," 12/03/98, A4) said that Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met US President Bill Clinton in Washington on December 2 with the issue of nuclear non-proliferation expected to top the agenda of their talks. Sharif's US trip comes in the midst of allegations by Islamic groups that he will "sell out Pakistan's nuclear capability to the US." Qazi Hussain, head of the influential Jamat-e-Islami, has warned the government against signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and vowed to foil "all conspiracies against the national nuclear program." However, Pakistani Foreign Secretary Shamshad Ahmed, who has been holding talks with the US on the non-proliferation issue, said, "The speculation that the prime minister will sign the CTBT in Washington is totally baseless. We have not and will not barter away our security for economic gains. There is no question of any compromise on Pakistan's strategic nuclear and missile programs."

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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