

# NAPSNet Daily Report 03 February, 1998

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### **I. United States**

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#### **1. DPRK Defector**

Reuters ("NORTH KOREAN SOLDIER CROSSES INTO SOUTH, U.N. SAYS," Seoul, 02/02/98) and the Associated Press ("NORTH KOREAN ARMY OFFICER DEFECTS," Seoul, 02/03/98) reported that UN Forces Command Spokesman Jim Coles said that a DPRK soldier crossed into ROK territory on Tuesday at the truce village of Panmunjom. A spokesman for the ROK Defense Ministry confirmed that DPRK Captain Byun Yong-kwan entered the southern side of the Joint Security Area at 0730 a.m. It was the first case of a DPRK soldier defecting through Panmunjom. The ROK news agency Yonhap reported that the DPRK demanded Byun's return during an armistice commission meeting Tuesday, arguing that he accidentally crossed the border.

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#### **2. DPRK Participation in Olympics**

Reuters (Brian Williams, "JAPAN NOT WINNING GOLD MEDALS FROM TWO KOREAS," Nagano, 02/03/98) reported that both the ROK and the DPRK have complained about the treatment received by the Japanese organizers of the Winter Olympics. A source close to the DPRK delegation said that organizers should not underestimate the damage that any slights could do to the DPRK's participation in the Nagano Olympics, as well as to Japan-DPRK relations. Last week the DPRK threatened to boycott the games due to a reference in the official database of the Nagano Games which said that DPRK troops invaded the ROK to trigger the Korean War. The reference was subsequently removed from the database. Meanwhile, the ROK complained that the database incorrectly identified the title of the ROK's national anthem. The DPRK was also upset over an incident in which an ROK interpreter omitted the word "Peoples" from the country's title during welcoming ceremonies, and an accident during a training session involving one of its athletes.

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### **3. ROK Financial Crisis**

The AP-Dow Jones News Service (Park Kyung-hee, "S. KOREA, IMF AGREE ON INTEREST-RATE CUTS IN STAGES," Seoul, 02/03/98) reported that ROK Minister of Finance and Economy Lim Chang-yuel and Hubert Neiss of the International Monetary Fund agreed Tuesday to lower the ROK's interest rates in stages. However, ministry officials declined to mention whether Lim and Neiss discussed criteria on targets for the ROK's macroeconomic figures, including gross domestic product and inflation targets.

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### **4. PRC-Taiwan Battle for Diplomatic Recognition**

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN TRYING TO KEEP MALAWI AWAY FROM CHINA," Blantyre, 02/03/98) reported that Taiwan Foreign Minister Jason Hu was due in Malawi on Tuesday for a three-day official visit. Hu's trip comes shortly after Taiwan warned Malawi that it risked severing diplomatic ties following a visit to the PRC last month by Malawi's Information Minister Sam Mpasu. Malawi officials said that President Bakili Muluzi was expected to reassure Hu of his country's commitment to maintaining relations with Taiwan.

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### **5. Nuclear Disarmament**

The Washington Post (Bradley Graham, "CARTER, GORBACHEV JOIN CALL TO REDUCE NUCLEAR THREAT," 02/02/98, A15) reported that 117 former or current heads of state and civilian leaders from 46 nations signed a statement Monday calling for reducing the threat of nuclear weapons. Signatories included former US president Jimmy Carter, former Russian president Mikhail Gorbachev, former German chancellor Helmut Schmidt, former French prime minister Michel Rocard, former British prime minister Lord James Callaghan, former Canadian prime minister Pierre Trudeau, and former South African president F.W. DeKlerk. The document advocates placing all atomic warheads in storage away from launchers, halting production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons, and initiating US-Russian talks immediately to achieve deeper reductions in arsenals. It also urges that serious consideration be given to repatriating nuclear weapons deployed abroad, adopting a policy of "no first use" of atomic weapons, and banning production and possession of long-range ballistic missiles. Accompanying release of the statement, retired US General George Lee Butler planned to deliver a speech at the National Press Club denouncing the concept of nuclear deterrence. Butler criticized the revised guidelines for nuclear weapons recently released by the

Clinton administration, saying, "What better illustration of misplaced faith in nuclear deterrence than the persistent belief that retaliation with nuclear weapons is a legitimate and appropriate response to post-Cold War threats posed by weapons of mass destruction."

## **II. Republic of Korea**

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### **1. Light-Water Reactor Project**

ROK officials said February 2 that the ROK is expected to manifest its incapability to finance over two-thirds of the total costs for the construction of two light-water nuclear reactors in the DPRK. The ROK, the US, and Japan are scheduled to open an executive council meeting of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) in New York on February 5, to discuss the burden-sharing of the project. In an earlier KEDO executive meeting last December, Japan pledged to make a lump-sum contribution amounting to US\$1 billion, while the US did not make any financial pledges. (Korea Times, Son Key-young, "SEOUL SET TO REDUCE FINANCIAL BURDEN IN NK REACTOR COSTS," 02/03/98)

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### **2. Global Land Mine Ban**

A four-member delegation from the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) arrived in Seoul February 2 for a four-day visit. The ICBL delegation, headed by Jody Williams, who was awarded the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize, will meet ranking officials from the ROK Foreign and Defense ministries on February 3. The ROK government hopes to take this opportunity to promote understanding of the unique situation in the ROK to the activists. (Korea Herald, "INTERNATIONAL ANTILANDMINE ACTIVISTS IN SEOUL," 02/03/98)

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### **3. ROK-Japan Fisheries Disputes**

The ROK National Assembly, during its extraordinary session on February 2, unanimously adopted a resolution denouncing Japan's recent scrapping of a bilateral fisheries accord. The statement also said Japan should take full responsibility for any possible incidents that may occur as a result of its scrapping of the accord. (Korea Herald, "ASSEMBLY CONDEMNS JAPAN'S ABOLITION OF FISHERIES ACCORD," 02/03/98)

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.

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

Wade L. Huntley: [napsnet@nautilus.org](mailto:napsnet@nautilus.org)

Berkeley, California, United States

Timothy L. Savage: [napsnet@nautilus.org](mailto:napsnet@nautilus.org)

Berkeley, California, United States

Shin Dong-bom: [dongbom.shin@anu.edu.au](mailto:dongbom.shin@anu.edu.au)

Seoul, Republic of Korea

Choi Chung-moon: [cily@star.elim.co.kr](mailto:cily@star.elim.co.kr)

Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hiroyasu Akutsu: [akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp](mailto:akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp)

Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: [icipu@glas.apc.org](mailto:icipu@glas.apc.org)

Moscow, Russian Federation

Chunsi Wu: [dlshen@fudan.ac.cn](mailto:dlshen@fudan.ac.cn)

Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: [dlshen@fudan.ac.cn](mailto:dlshen@fudan.ac.cn)

Shanghai, People's Republic of China

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Nautilus Institute

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

[nautilus@nautilus.org](mailto:nautilus@nautilus.org)