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I. United States

1. DPRK on Bolton as 'Human Scum'

Korea Central News Agency, "SPOKESMAN FOR DPRK FOREIGN MINISTRY SLAMS US MANDARIN'S INVECTIVE," Pyongyang, 08/02/03) reported that a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea today gave the statement on top US Arms Official, James Bolton. According to a press report, during his recent visit to the ROK and Japan, Bolton hurled malignant abuses at the top leader of the DPRK. Bolton asserted that "while he lives like royalty in Pyongyang, he keeps hundreds of thousands of his people locked in prison camps with millions more mired in abject poverty" and "for many in north Korea, life is a hellish nightmare." Bolton's remarks make one doubt whether he is a man with an elementary faculty of thinking and stature as a man or not, to say nothing of whether he is a politician belonging to a hawkish faction or to a dovish one. We know that there are several hawks within the present US administration but have not yet found out such rude human scum as Bolton. What he uttered is no more than rubbish which can be let loose only by a beastly man bereft of reason. Bolton was so completely seized with the inveterate habit of rejecting others out of reason that he made a malignant personal attack even on the top leader of other country. If he is allowed any longer to speak for the US policy on the nuclear issue, this would adversely affect not only the fate of the policy but that of the administration itself. Bolton's reckless remarks cast a doubt as to whether the US truly wants to negotiate with the DPRK or not.

2. US Response to 'Human Scum' Comment

Agence France-Presse ("US TURNS OTHER CHEEK AFTER NORTH KOREA BRANDS TOP OFFICIAL 'HUMAN SCUM,'" Washington, 08/04/03) reported that the US declined to be drawn into a shouting match with the DPRK, electing not to reply in kind after the DPRK blasted its top arms negotiator as "human scum" and a "bloodsucker." The DPRK launched the attack after the official, John Bolton, slammed DPRK leader Kim Jong Il last week as a "tyrannical dictator" who made life a "hellish nightmare" for his people. "We're not going to dignify DPRK comments about our undersecretary of state," said State Department deputy spokesman Philip Reeker. "I think the undersecretary's speech speaks for itself ...it was a speech that reflected, I think, some obvious truths, and let's just leave it at that."

3. Armitage on DPRK Kim Jong Il

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA'S KIM NOT 'UNSTABLE' BUT 'CANNY': ARMITAGE," Washington, 08/04/03) reported that the DPRK's Kim Jong Il is not "unstable" but a "canny" operator who has played weak cards well, US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said. Armitage was asked how the US should deal with Kim on a radio show compared by conservative host Sean Hannity, who described the reclusive leader as "unstable." "I wouldn't call him 'unstable,'" Armitage replied on the nationally syndicated program. "You can call him a lot of things, but this guy has played a weak hand very well for years. And so he may be many things, but he is a canny character." His comments came as US officials declined to be drawn into a war of words with Pyongyang, which branded top State Department arms negotiator John Bolton as "human scum" following a speech in which he disparaged Kim last week. Armitage declined to be drawn into criticism of the previous Clinton administration, which reached an anti-nuclear deal with Pyongyang in 1994 that has since been violated. "(Kim) partied on. But that's a different ball game and a different administration and we're trying to approach this in a way that it will actually make sense and that is multilaterally,"

Armitage said. "It's not just our problem, others have a more immediate problem because they are in more immediate proximity," he added.

4. Powell on DPRK Diplomacy

Agence France-Presse ("NO SECRETS AND NO TRADING AT NORTH KOREA CRISIS TALKS: POWELL," Washington, 08/04/03) reported that the US will not begin trading aid for security assurances at upcoming six-party nuclear crisis talks with the DPRK Secretary of State Colin Powell said in a interview with US media. Moreover, "there will be no secrets," although the six-party format of the talks may provide opportunities for one-on-one exchanges, Powell told selected US media outlets in a private interview released by the State Department on Sunday. "There will certainly be an opportunity at a six party-meeting for them to say something directly to us if they choose to do so," Powell said of Pyongyang, which had insisted on bilateral talks until agreeing to a larger format Friday. The talks -- at a time and venue still to be decided -- will include the DPRK, the US, the PRC, Russia, the ROK and Japan. "There will be no secrets," Powell told his interviewers Friday. "Anything the North Koreans say to us will be shared with our friends and partners, because this is going to be an open, transparent process." He ruled out the non-aggression pact which Kim Jong-Il's government has demanded, while remaining vague on what the US might offer the DPRK, and when, as an incentive for giving up its nuclear program and addressing other concerns. "We're not doing non-aggression pacts ... we, as a practice, don't do that. But there are ways to talk about security, and there are ways to talks about intent." "All of us are concerned about the plight of the DPRK people ... There are benefits for North Korea for moving away from this kind of activity." But, he cautioned, "I don't want to ... suggest that we're going over there with a shopping bag and there's a trade -- trading is about to begin at the very next meeting." "There are a number of issues that have to be solved," Powell said -- among them an illegal drug trade, weapons proliferation and the North's nuclear program. "If we see progress in this set of discussions, then I believe the opportunities do open up for us to help the people of North Korea."

5. DPRK on Nuclear Talks

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA SAYS NUCLEAR TALKS WILL TAKE PLACE SOON IN BEIJING," Seoul, 08/04/03) reported that the DPRK said that talks on ending a prolonged crisis on its nuclear ambitions would take place soon in Beijing, according to the ROK's Yonhap news agency. "Six-party talks on resolving the nuclear issue between (North Korea) and the US will be held soon in Beijing," Yonhap quoted a DPRK foreign ministry spokesman as saying through Pyongyang's state media. Details and timing of the talks are still being discussed, but US and ROK officials have said they could come as early as this month. Other officials have mentioned September as a target date for talks. Pyongyang said Friday it had accepted a six-way forum for talks to include the ROK, the DPRK Russia, Japan, the PRC and the US.

6. DPRK UN Talks Warning

The Associated Press (Jae-Suk Yoo, "NORTH KOREA ISSUES WARNING ON U.N. TALKS," Seoul, 08/02/03) reported that the DPRK on Saturday warned that any moves to discuss its suspected nuclear weapons programs at the United Nations would "hamstring" efforts for dialogue and be a "prelude to war." The warning came a day after the communist country agreed to multilateral talks over the nuclear standoff. The DPRK has accused the world body of siding with the US. "The US intention to bring up the nuclear issue ... at the U.N. at any cost is a grave criminal act to hamstring" the DPRK's efforts at opening a dialogue, the official KCNA news agency said. "Any move to discuss

the nuclear issue at the U.N. Security Council is little short of a prelude to a war," it said, reiterating past comments. Meanwhile, the US and Japan are discussing forming a multinational inspection team to ensure the DPRK eliminates its nuclear weapons development program.

7. Pentagon Nuclear Arms Private Meetings

Reuters (Will Dunham, "PENTAGON NUCLEAR ARMS SESSION WORRIES CRITICS," Washington, 08/04/03) reported that with the Bush administration pushing to study possible new types of atomic bombs, the Pentagon is set to hold a meeting this week on the US nuclear arsenal as arms control advocates say Washington is only encouraging the global spread of nuclear weapons. Maj. Michael Shavers, a Pentagon spokesman, said on Monday roughly 150 senior officials from the Defense Department and other parts of the government will meet in private on Thursday at Offutt Air Force Base, headquarters of US Strategic Command near Omaha, Nebraska. Arms control advocates worried that the Pentagon will use the meeting as a key next step toward creating a new generation of atomic bombs and resuming nuclear testing. Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, said the meeting could produce a formal determination of a military requirement for a new or modified type of nuclear weapon. "Traditionally, once there has been a stated need by the uniformed military for a new weapon to deal with some contingency or some threat that's out there, that has been the catalyst for design, engineering, development and testing of nuclear weapons," Kimball said. Arguing that new threats such as deeply buried bunkers and enemy chemical and biological weapon stockpiles may require new weapons, the administration has asked Congress to permit research on possible new low-yield (less than 5 kiloton) nuclear bombs and on modifying two existing higher-yield ones. Administration officials, citing concerns about the aging US nuclear stockpile, also have said they can foresee conditions under which they would urge President Bush to resume nuclear testing. The US has observed a nuclear test moratorium since 1992. "Why in the world would we move toward manufacturing small, usable nuclear weapons and show how valuable they are, and then expect that no one will ever try to steal, beg or borrow one and use it against us?" asked Robert Musil, executive director of the Physicians for Social Responsibility advocacy group. "It really stirs up proliferation, and that is one of our key concerns," Musil said. Shavers said this week's meeting will be chaired by Pentagon official Michael Wynne. Shavers said others taking part come from the departments of state and energy, the National Nuclear Security Administration and the White House National Security Council.

8. US-Japan Multilateral DPRK Nuclear Inspection Team

Agence France-Presse ("US, JAPAN MULL MULTILATERAL NUCLEAR INSPECTION FOR NORTH KOREA," Tokyo, 08/03/03) reported that the US and Japan are considering forming a nuclear inspection team for the DPRK that comprises weapons experts from the two countries, as well as the PRC, the ROK and Russia. The team would act independently of nuclear inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) but would cooperate with the UN nuclear watchdog if necessary, Japan's top-selling daily Yomiuri Shimbun said, quoting government sources. The decision to launch the multilateral probe came after the DPRK on Friday accepted a proposal to start six-nation talks to end the nuclear crisis. The six parties include the US and its allies, Japan and ROK, and DPRK, along with the PRC. With the presence of the PRC and Russia in the team, the daily said the DPRK would find it easier to accept nuclear inspections. The team plans to inspect facilities in the nuclear complex at Yongbyon, north of Pyongyang, and other sites, including undeclared plutonium and uranium-enrichment plants, the Yomiuri said.

9. US PRC Dissident Trial

Agence France-Presse ("US OFFICIALS DENIED ACCESS TO DISSIDENT'S SPY TRIAL IN CHINA," Beijing, 08/02/03) reported that the US embassy in Beijing will be barred from the trial of US-based democracy activist Yang Jianli and his wife will be arrested if she tries to enter China for the case, people close to Yang said. Yang is due to appear Monday at the capital's No. 2 Intermediate People's Court facing charges of espionage, which can result in the death penalty. "The US embassy has been denied access to the trial. The PRC said that since the trial involved state secrets, it will be closed," said Jared Genser, Yang's US-based legal adviser and president of the rights group Freedom Now. "It's a sad, but not unexpected development, given the lack of transparency with which the PRC side has dealt with this case," he said. The PRC's refusal to allow US embassy officials to observe the trial comes despite what is reported to be high-level US pressure. Both Lorne Craner, the State Department's top human rights official, and James Kelly, its leading East Asia hand, have met with PRC embassy officials to urge more transparency in the case, sources said. This week the US Senate unanimously passed a resolution warning that cases like Yang's could harm relations between the PRC and the US. "China took what could have been a minor issue and turned it into a major one," said Genser.

10. PRC-Hong Kong Relations

The New York Times (Joseph Kahn, "CHINA NAMES 2 NEW HONG KONG AIDES," Beijing, 08/04/03) reported that the PRC's state council appointed a new security chief and financial secretary in Hong Kong today to replace officials who resigned after mass protests rocked the PRC-installed government in the former British colony. The appointments of Ambrose Lee as security chief and Henry Tang as financial secretary confirmed nominations by Hong Kong's chief executive, Tung Chee-hwa, and were announced this afternoon in Beijing and Hong Kong. The PRC has sought to restore normalcy to Hong Kong after demonstrations involving half a million people at their peak in early July were seen as a vote of no-confidence in Tung, the man handpicked by Beijing to govern Hong Kong after the British handed it back to the PRC in 1997. Protesters opposed a national security law that Tung had sought to push through Hong Kong's legislature at Beijing's behest. Tung was summoned to Beijing after the protests, the largest by far in the territory since it returned to PRC rule. He received firm backing from China's president, Hu Jintao, and other leaders. But Tung accepted the resignations of the two least popular members of his cabinet. Antony Leung, the former finance secretary, was embroiled in a tax scandal after it emerged that he bought a luxury car days before he announced a tax increase on vehicle purchases. Regina Ip, the former security chief, had strongly supported the security legislation despite concerns that it would erode press and religious freedoms in Hong Kong. Tang, the new financial secretary, formerly served as secretary for commerce. Lee headed Hong Kong's Independent Commission against Corruption. Lee will inherit the task to trying to shepherd the security bill through a newly combative legislature. Tung has already agreed to water down the bill and consult public opinion before re-introducing it, but opposition groups say they will fight it.

11. DPRK Domestic Politics

Agence France-Presse ("LEADER KIM JONG-IL WINS LANDSLIDE IN NORTH KOREA-STYLE ELECTIONS," Seoul, 08/04/03) reported that ROK Leader Kim Jong-Il won a seat on the DPRK's rubber-stamp parliament with a widely expected 100 percent of the vote in the DPRK's legislative elections, Pyongyang's official media said. Kim was one of 687 single candidates handpicked by the ruling Workers Party who stood unopposed and each of whom won 100 percent of votes cast for the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) on Sunday. The only blackspot, the official Korean Central News Agency admitted, was the turnout. It stood at 99.9 percent. The stayaway 0.01 percent were living abroad or at sea, KCNA explained. The people gave their "absolute" support to hereditary dictator

Kim, who has run the country since the death of his father Kim Il-Sung in 1994. Kim won a seat from constituency 649 in the capital, Pyongyang. "The voters registered at constituency no. 649 all went to the polls and 100 percent of them voted for Kim Jong-Il ..., " the agency said. "This is an expression of the absolute support and trust of all the servicemen and the people in him."

II. People's Republic of China

1. PRC's Stance on Diaoyu and Taiwan Islands

China Daily (Shao Zongwei, "ISLANDS ISSUE RESURFACES", 08/02-03/03, P1) reported that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has responded to a reported Japanese deal on the disputed Diaoyu Islands by reasserting PRC's sovereignty over them. Foreign ministry spokesman Kong Quan on August 1 called on Japan to "properly handle" the issue of the Diaoyu Islands by following the Sino-Japanese Joint Statement and the one-China principle. Taiwanese media reported recently Taiwan and Japan had reached a consensus to designate the area between the 27th and the 29th parallel north as a region where both can fish. However, the Japanese foreign ministry on Wednesday denied the report. "The Chinese Government has all along attached importance to safeguarding the interests of the Taiwan compatriots, including the interests of fishermen," said Kong. Kong reaffirmed in June that PRC has indisputable sovereignty over the Diaoyu Islands and its adjacent islands and that any attempts to seize the Chinese territory will not succeed. Kong also commented on a Pentagon annual report released on July 30 on PRC's military power, which said the country is rapidly boosting its ballistic missile stocks to prepare for a possible future conflict across the Taiwan Straits. "There is nothing wrong with the build-up of defense and military deployments by China, a sovereign state, to safeguard national security and territorial integrity," said Kong, stressing that PRC's national security policy is defensive. Some people in the US exaggerate the mainland's military power and its threat to Taiwan to provide an excuse for selling weapons to Taiwan, said Kong. He said PRC hopes the US will honor its commitments to adhere to the three Sino-US joint communiques and the one-China policy, and oppose Taiwan's independence, said the report.

2. DPRK Nuke Issue

People's Daily ("DPRK WARNS US AGAINST TAKING NUCLEAR ISSUE TO UN", Beijing, 08/03/03, P3) reported that the DPRK warned on August 2 that any attempt by the US to take the nuclear issue to the UN Security Council would "hamstring" all the efforts of the DPRK for dialogue, as the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said in a commentary. US Undersecretary of State John Bolton said on July 29 in ROK that the nuclear issue of the DPRK should be discussed at the UN Security Council, which indicates that the US is trying to abuse the UN and build increasing international pressure upon the DPRK in a bid to isolate and suffocate it, the commentary said. The commentary warned the DPRK will take strong self-defensive measures if the nuclear issue is partially handled at the United Nations under the pressure of the US, said the report.

China Daily ("PYONGYANG AGREES TO 6-PARTY TALKS", Pyongyang/Seoul, 08/02-03/03, P1) reported that the DPRK agreed on August 1 to hold six-party talks to solve the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula. "At the recent DPRK-US talks, the DPRK put forward a new proposal to have six-party talks... And to have the DPRK-US bilateral talks there," said a DPRK Foreign Ministry spokesman in an interview with its official Korean Central News Agency, referring to the meeting between the DPRK and the US officials in New York on July 31. Earlier at a press conference in Seoul on August 1 afternoon, Lee Soo-hyuk, assistant foreign minister of the ROK, said the DPRK had informed the ROK Foreign Ministry on July 31 of its intention to attend multilateral talks. The

six parties include the US, the DPRK, PRC, the ROK, Japan and Russia, but the time and place for the talks have not been finalized yet, the report said. Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Kong Quan said on August 1 that parties involved were supportive of launching a second round of Beijing talks.

3. PRC-US Talks

People's Daily ("PRC, US PRESIDENT TALKS ON PHONE", Beijing, 07/31/03, P1) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao talked with his US counterpart through telephone on July 30. Bush said his meeting with Hu last month is fruitful, and the bilateral relations are developing smoothly. US would like to continue cooperation with PRC. Hu said PRC also like to maintain the good bilateral relationship, with joint efforts from both sides. The two leaders also exchanged views on resolving DPRK issue through peaceful talks, said the report.

China Daily (Guo Nei, "CO-OPERATION WITH US STRESSED", 07/30/03, P2) reported that the strengthening of consultations and co-operation between PRC and the US in dealing with key international security issues is good for global and regional peace and stability, Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said on July 29, after meeting visiting US Undersecretary of State John Bolton. Bolton was quoted as speaking highly of the constructive role PRC is playing in international issues. He agreed that the two sides should strengthen their co-ordination and co-operation on international peace and security, and with the heated issues in the Asia-Pacific region in particular, said the report.

China Daily (Jiang Zhuqing, "JOHN BOLTON DISCUSSES SECURITY ISSUE", 07/29/03, P1) reported that the visiting US Undersecretary of State John Bolton on July 28 held talks with two Chinese vice-foreign ministers on topics including the nuclear stand-off on the Korean Peninsula and other arms-related issues. The top US arms-control official held talks with Zhang Yesui and Wang Yi in the second round of Sino-US security talks. The timetable has not been settled for a new round of multilateral talks on the Korean nuclear issue, Bolton told a Beijing press conference held after yesterday's talks. He told the press conference that US has no intention of invading the DPRK and that people should focus on Pyongyang's alleged nuclear weapons program. He said that US President George W. Bush has made clear for quite some time that what the US seeks in the case of DPRK is the peaceful dismantlement of this country's nuclear weapons program.

4. PRC's Commentary on the Peace of the Korean Peninsula

China Daily (Hu Xuan, "WORK TOGETHER FOR NUCLEAR-FREE PENINSULA", 07/28/03, P4) carried a commentary saying that the day of July 27 marked the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Korean War Armistice, which, for half-a-century, has contributed to maintaining peace and stability on the peninsula as well as Northeast Asia at large. However, the peace process on the Korean peninsula since the end of the Korean War has never been a smooth one, the article said. The trading of criticism and conflicting stances between the DPRK and US has pushed the situation nearer to a precarious impasse and pushed the world to the brink of an abyss of uncertainty, which has caused deep concern among the international community, in particular neighboring Asian countries. A Korean peninsula free of nuclear weapons is crucial not only to the security and stability of Northeast Asia but the whole world. It is in the interests of all parties concerned to resolve this issue as early as possible through peaceful means. Even now, a solution lies within reach, one which can unravel the current stand-off as long as both sides are flexible and sincere. For this process to succeed, the DPRK's concerns for its security should be respected, the article commented. It is our implicit hope that all the relevant parties can work together to seek a peaceful resolution to this complex issue and eventually establish a comprehensive security consultation mechanism on the

peninsula, and throughout the region.

5. PRC's Commetary on Relations Across Taiwan Straits

China Daily (Huang Yao, "ONE-CHINA PRINCIPLE JUSTIFIED", 07/30/03, P4) carried a commentary saying that the Taiwan question is purely China's internal affair by its very nature. The Chinese mainland for its part has always adhered to this one-China principle, however, by advocating "Taiwan independence," some people in Taiwan trumpet that Taiwan is a "sovereign state" called the "Republic of China." But Taiwan is not a sovereign state and Taiwan's legal status as a part of China is clear. In today's international community, the one-China principle and that Taiwan is part of China is widely recognized by the majority of nations worldwide, the article said. Taiwan's foreign exchanges have not gone beyond the level of a non-state entity, and similar links exist between Hong Kong and other nations. The Taiwan authorities have tried hard to promote the so-called "expanding international living space." To prevent the attempts by some of Taiwan's politicians to create "Taiwan Independence" and especially foreign forces from intervening in China's reunification, the central government has never agreed to renounce the possible use of force with regard to solving the Taiwan question. Item 4 of Article 2 of the Charter of the UN does not apply to the use of force by a nation to maintain law and order within their own countries. The Chinese Government, which has sovereignty over the island, should maintain the right to use force against any internal separatist activities. The Chinese Government's position of not agreeing to renounce the use of force neither violates the UN Charter nor international law. Peaceful reunification is indisputably the best option for ensuring the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation. But the choice as to which approach is adopted to solve the Taiwan question is a solely internal affair of China's and the basic right of any sovereign state seeking to safeguard its own sovereignty and territorial integrity.

6. Japan's Security Measures

China Daily ("TROOP PLANS PUT IN DOUBT BY KOIZUMI", Tokyo, 07/30/03, P1) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on July 29 cast doubt on plans to send Japanese soldiers to help rebuild Iraq, saying a controversial law just enacted made the dispatch possible but did not mean it was certain. After two days of opposition stalling, parliament on Saturday passed a law allowing the dispatch of troops, which critics say could violate Japan's pacifist constitution. At a news conference to mark the end of the latest parliamentary session, Koizumi said: "The bill is not one that requires the sending of Self-Defense Forces... It's a bill that allows the dispatch of the SDF." If Japan's military - called the Self-Defense Forces - does go to Iraq, Koizumi reiterated that troops would only be sent to non-combat areas and that the government would give proper consideration to the troops' safety. Koizumi has been determined to keep his promise to the US to send troops, despite a recent poll showing more than half of Japanese voters oppose the move. Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba said on Sunday that no decision would be made on the role of Japanese troops until a fact-finding mission had surveyed the situation in Iraq, but he said Japan's role at first would be weighted more towards humanitarian aid than logistical support for the US military.

7. PRC's Commentary on Japan's Security Measures

China Daily (Hu Xuan, "JAPAN MOBILIZES ITS MILITARY", 07/30/03, P4) carried an analyzing article saying that despite a last-ditch protest by all the opposition parties, Japan's Upper House approved a controversial bill on Saturday to send the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to help rebuild Iraq. The article asked: is there any specific need to utilize the SDF in the rebuilding operations, which is banned under the peace principles of its own Constitution, not to mention the justification for the

US-led invasion of Iraq, a still hotly contested issue? With the US and allied casualties from guerrilla attacks in Iraq occurring almost daily, it will be difficult to distinguish combat from non-combat zones amid the volatile Iraqi situation. Furthermore, there is no assurance, for now at least, that the SDF personnel will not get bogged down in combat-like scenarios where lurking dangers could necessitate the use of force. To build confidence among its Asian neighbors, Japan needs to rethink its security policies on expanding its international presence, the article commented.

8. US-PRC Relations on Taiwan Issue

China Daily (Xing Zhigang, "PRESSURE TAIWAN, US URGED", 07/29/03, P1) reported that US and PRC should band together to press Taipei to abandon its highly proactive referendum plan in a bid to ensure stable cross-Straits ties, according to leading experts on Taiwan studies speaking on the matter on July 28. Yu Keli, director of the Institute of Taiwan Studies under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, told China Daily that US should closely work with Beijing and state its opposition more clearly against Taipei's plans to hold an island- wide referendum, saying that the referendum serves as "a creeping pro-independence move that threatens to trigger a crisis in cross-Straits ties." Yu made the remarks after Taiwan leader Chen Shui-bian reaffirmed on Saturday his commitment to holding a referendum to determine whether to finish a partially built nuclear power plant before his four-year term ends next March. In the latest move to show its worry about Taiwan's proposed referendum, Beijing sent two senior envoys to US last week in hopes of seeking understanding and co-operation from the US. Yu added that recent developments have demonstrated that Beijing has apparently gained growing support from US on its clear-cut stand on the referendum issue. The US has begun to voice strong disapproval of the Taiwanese move, both at official and non-official occasions, according to the researcher, said the report.

9. Russian Stance on DPRK Issue

People's Daily (Song Shiyi, "RUSSIA STRESSES A TOTAL SETTLEMENT OF DPRK ISSUE", 07/29/03, P3) reported that Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov on July 28 said that Russia stressed a total settlement of the DPRK nuke issue through providing necessary aids to DPRK, while maintaining the nuke-free condition of the peninsula and abiding by international principles. The package of settlement also includes: to cooperate with international organizations; guarantee security of concerned countries, including DPRK.

III. Japan

1. Tariff on Imported Beef

Asahi Shinbun ("BEEF FARMS GET TARIFF, BUYERS GET BILL,"08/02/03) reported that Japan's government ignored strong opposition and went ahead with a tariff on imported beef Friday. The nation's domestic farmers are welcoming the tariff hike, to 50 percent throughout this fiscal year from the regular 38.5 percent. But restaurants, supermarkets and consumers are angry because the recent surge in beef imports was not the result of dumping-for which the so-called safeguard measure was intended-but is simply a recovery of beef consumption following the mad cow scare. "The government is shifting the blame for its poor handling of the BSE issue by passing the burden to consumers and us. This is blatant protectionism," one retail official said. "This is all because of the BSE scare," said a 40-year-old man eating at a yakiniku barbecue restaurant in Tokyo's Nihonbashi district. "How in the world can the government do this? I'm angry." Beef consumption nosedived

after Japan's first case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or mad cow disease, was reported in September 2001. The crisis also hurt beef imports, which fell sharply before bottoming out in January 2002. Imports have been slowly recovering ever since. Even though beef imports are far from regaining their pre-BSE levels, the government nevertheless says they are surging and must be curbed in accordance with the World Trade Organization safeguard provisions. "The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is just shifting the blame for their mismanagement to consumers and the food industry," said Kiwamu Yokokawa, who heads the Japan Foodservice Association. The association estimates the safeguard measures will cost the restaurant industry an additional 35 billion yen. Given the current deflationary environment, most restaurants will not be able to pass the higher costs on to consumers, and will have to bear it themselves. One such company is Gifu Prefecture-based Yakinikuya Sakai Co., which operates about 200 outlets and handles about 2,200 tons of imported beef a year. The company estimates the tariff hike will have cost it an additional 70 million yen by the time the emergency safeguard measure expires next March. "We should absorb the costs on our own," said Masayuki Niwa, Yakinikuya Sakai's administration division chief. "We are angry, but we cannot lose our trust among our customers by bringing up our price."On a Web site it set up to respond to critics of the safeguard move, the ministry said, "The impact on consumers can be kept to a minimum if distribution, retail and food industries are to make necessary efforts at their respective stages."Neither the ministry nor the ruling coalition parties, however, have made any real effort to find alternatives to the tariff hike since it was first floated as a possibility last year, analysts say.

2. Japan-DPRK Relations over Abduction Issue

The Asahi Shinbun ("MOVE ON KIN OF ABDUCTEES: A PLOY OR A BREAKTHROUGH?," 08/02/03) reported that once again DPRK implied it is ready to allow the families of returned abductees to visit Japan. Japanese officials are now trying to assess the motive behind Pyongyang's latest ploy. While the informal offer represents a tremendous breakthrough, diplomatic sources suggested it was an attempt by DPRK to gauge Japan's willingness to make concessions on the tricky abduction issue as this remains the chief stumbling block to efforts to resume negotiations on normalizing relations. Japanese officials don't want to be in the position of being on the cusp of resolving the abduction issue and then learn that its stand jeopardizes international moves to negotiate with DPRK on abandoning its nuclear weapons development program. On Thursday, during a meeting of those in charge of the abduction issue, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe reiterated that nothing less than total candor on the abductions was acceptable. "We have received 3.14 million signatures on petitions asking for a complete resolution of the abduction issue," Abe said. "We will continue to place priority on having the families of the five returned abductees come to Japan." The families of the abductees also are behind the government in its efforts for total resolution of the issue, officials say. For those reasons, officials will not accept the return of the family members as closure to this highly charged issue, one that has dogged Japan for decades. Meantime, informal contacts with DPRK by government and ruling coalition officials have led to speculation that Pyongyang will offer some breakthrough before September, the first anniversary of the historic summit between Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and DPRK leader Kim Jong Il. Another sign of easing tensions was evident in a visit to Pyongyang in late July by a group of New Socialist Party members. They met with officials of the Korea-Japan Amity and Friendship Association as well as the Korean Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. Those DPRK officials said Pyongyang was prepared to engage Japan in dialogue and the regime understood the feelings of the families of the abductees. Because of Japanese concerns about remaining in step with other nations dealing with the North Korean nuclear crisis, Japanese officials have tried to keep the abduction issue quite separate from multilateral discussions on the nuclear question. A high-ranking U.S. official said Thursday that Washington understood Japan's position and would support whatever response was taken in

resolving the abduction issue.

Kyodo ("RETURNED ABDUCTEES RECEIVE LETTERS FROM CHILDREN IN NORTH," Kashiwazaki, 08/02/03) reported that Japan's government officials delivered Saturday to five repatriated Japanese abductees to DPRK letters from their children which a Japanese group providing humanitarian aid to DPRK brought back from Pyongyang. The officials visited Kaoru and Yukiko Hasuike in Kashiwazaki, Niigata Prefecture, Yasushi and Fukie Chimura in Obama, Fukui Prefecture, and Hitomi Soga in the Niigata prefectural town of Mano to hand them the letters and photos of their children. The government official who gave the letter and photos to the Hasuikes said the couple confirmed the correspondence was from their children and the photos were of them. The Chimuras immediately read their letter, which they confirmed was written by their daughter, and Fukie remarked as she looked at the photos, "Their hair has grown long," according to the official who visited them. Earlier in the day, the group Rainbow Bridge handed over to the government office supporting the abductees three letters from the children written in Korean and some 20 photos taken when the group's senior member Hiroyuki Kosaka met them on Monday in Pyongyang. Kosaka told a news conference Friday he had tried calling the returned abductees to see if he could hand the material over in person but was only able to speak with Soga, who told him she is willing to wait to meet him when he returns from an overseas trip. The secretary general of the nongovernmental organization said he met the children at a hotel he was staying at in Pyongyang after a DPRK official arranged for him to meet them as he had repeatedly asked about their well-being. Kosaka said the children he met are the daughter and son of Kaoru Hasuike, 45, and Yukiko, 47, the daughter and one of the two sons of the Chimuras, both 48, and the two daughters of Soga, 44. The Chimuras' younger son was apparently attending summer camp. The children, who are in their teens and early 20s, remained in DPRK when their parents returned to Japan last October for their first homecoming since being abducted to the North in 1978. Soga's American husband, 63-year-old Charles Robert Jenkins, is also still in DPRK with their daughters. He is listed as a deserter by the US military.

3. Multilateral Talks on DPRK Nuclear Problem

The Asahi Shinbun ("TOKYO ENCOURAGED BY OFFER OF 6-WAY TALKS," 08/02/03) reported that Japan's government was rushing Friday to determine details of an announcement by Russia that DPRK has agreed to six-way talks aimed at defusing the nuclear standoff. While generally welcoming the announcement, officials noted that DPRK can be capricious and that many questions remain unanswered. In particular, they were trying to confirm when and where such multilateral talks would be held. The last round of talks, involving the US, PRC and DPRK, was held in April in Beijing. Japan, ROK and Russia have been earnestly angling to be brought in to the framework of discussions on Pyongyang's nuclear weapons development program. Japanese officials were trying to confirm DPRK's intentions through contacts with other nations involved in the process, namely the US, ROK and PRC. Officials had been expecting some movement on the issue, citing recent signals from DPRK that it is ready to allow the families of returned abductees to visit Japan. Prior to Thursday's announcement by Russia's Foreign Ministry, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi told reporters that he was confident of a breakthrough soon. Because PRC until now had served as the main liaison with DPRK, Japanese Foreign Ministry officials were trying to determine why the announcement was made through Russia, especially in light of reports that DPRK had not yet informed Beijing formally about its intentions. A visiting American official, meanwhile, expressed guarded optimism at the offer. "We don't have specifics really, but what we have heard so far is very encouraging in terms of the acceptance of the American proposal on multilateral talks," said Under Secretary of State John Bolton at a news conference Friday at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo.

4. Defectors from DPRK

The Asahi Shinbun ("10 SUSPECTED N.KOREANS TAKE REFUGE IN JAPANESE EMBASSY,"Bangkok, 08/01/03) reported that A group of 10 suspected North Koreans entered the grounds of the Japanese Embassy here Thursday morning, apparently to seek asylum, Japanese officials said. The 10-four men, four women, a boy and a girl-slipped through the embassy gates around 10:35 a.m. When guards tried to stop them, they shouted "North Korea" in English, and staff quickly decided to let them into the building. Embassy officials were waiting for a translator to arrive from the Japanese Embassy in ROK to question the 10 as to their identities and motive, officials said. Sources say many of the North Koreans fleeing their country do so by entering northeast PRC and traveling via other Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand before reaching ROK to defect. With PRC authorities cracking down, the number of North Koreans entering Southeast Asian countries with the help of NGOs is on the rise, sources said.

5. Japan-Peru Relations over Former Peru President

The Asahi Shinbun ("FUJIMORI SOUGHT BY PERU,"08/01/03) reported that Peru on Thursday officially demanded the extradition of former President Alberto Fujimori to face criminal charges, including murder and kidnapping, in Lima. The request was relayed by Peruvian Ambassador Luis J. Macchia Vello to Ken Shimanouchi, director-general of the Foreign Ministry's Latin American and Caribbean Affairs Bureau. Authorities in Lima contend Fujimori is responsible for the massacre of civilians at the hands of military death squads in Peru in 1991 and 1992. The ambassador handed over documents translated into Japanese detailing Fujimori's alleged crimes, sources said, adding that the record was approved by the Peruvian Cabinet in June 2002. The justice and foreign ministries, which must respond, are likely to reject the request because Fujimori holds Japanese citizenship, and Japanese citizenship holders generally are immune to extradition under law, sources said. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told reporters Thursday the government had not found a compelling reason to honor the request. "Generally speaking, when a fugitive has Japanese nationality, we can't extradite the person," he said. Foreign Ministry officials said Ambassador Macchia Vello intimated that Peru did not wish to impair relations with Japan over the issue of a single individual, sources said. Fujimori arrived in Japan after attending an APEC meeting in Brunei in November 2000.

6. Japan-PRC Relation over Train System

Kyodo ("JAPAN MULLING YEN LOAN TO CHINA OVER TRAIN SYSTEM," Tokyo, 08/03/03) reported that Japan is considering providing a low-cost yen loan to PRC to promote the Shinkansen bullet train system for a planned high-speed rail link between Shanghai and Beijing, Japanese government sources said Saturday. PRC is expected to decide around this fall whether to use the Japanese, French or German high-speed railway system, and Tokyo is hoping the provision of the concessionary loan will be favorable to Japan, the sources said. The plan, however, runs counter to the Japanese government's own policy of limiting its official development assistance (ODA) to PRC to projects in certain areas, including environmental protection and improving the livelihood of residents in economically backward inland areas. The current policy, adopted in October 2001 in response to growing criticism in Japan that governmental aid to the country may be used to expand its military, says China should undertake projects to improve infrastructure in its economically advanced coastal regions on its own. The 1,300-kilometer Shanghai-Beijing railway project falls into the category of coastal development. But the government decided to consider providing the loan to ensure that PRC would choose the Japanese railway system in its entirety so that the global competitiveness of the Shinkansen technology would not be jeopardized, the sources said. There have been indications from PRC that it may decide to order only parts of the Japanese technology, although Japan is promoting the combination of vehicle, signal and driving control systems. Japan's

Land, Infrastructure and Transport Minister Chikage Ogi is scheduled to visit PRC for four days from Sunday in a bid to pitch the Shinkansen bullet train system. She was initially said to be planning to offer the loan to PRC to win the order for the Shinkansen system, but gave up that strategy due to public resentment in PRC over recent press reports there that Beijing favors the Shinkansen over rival systems promoted by Germany and France.

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