NAPSNet Daily Report 04 December, 2001

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 04 December, 2001", NAPSNet Daily Report, December 04, 2001, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-04-december-2001/

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I. United States

1. DPRK Arms Build-Up

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA VOWS ARMS BUILD-UP TO COPE WITH U.S.," Seoul, 12/4/01) reported that the DPRK warned the US on Tuesday that it would build up its military to counter what it said was the US "strong-arm policy" against the DPRK. The DPRK daily newspaper Rodong Sinmun said in a commentary, "The Bush government is still pursuing the hardline policy to contain the DPRK though it calls for the 'resumption of dialogue without any precondition'." The commentary continued saying that the US was using its anti-terrorism campaign as an excuse to boost its forces in the ROK and creating a "war atmosphere."

2. ROK-Britain Relations

Agence France-Presse ("BRING ME SUNSHINE: BLAIR BACKS KIM DAE-JUNG," 12/5/01) reported that during their talks with ROK President Kim Dae- Jung, British Prime Minister Tony Blair expressed support for Kim's policy of rapprochement with the DPRK. An ROK embassy spokesperson said that the talks between Kim and Blair focused on international diplomacy, the security situation

in Northeast Asia and the Korean peninsula in particular, and trade. The spokesperson also said that Britain had an "important role" to play in engaging the DPRK to "help open its doors to the outside world." Kim stated, "It is true that, on an emotional level, the North Koreans and Americans do not have a very good relationship, but both sides realize that they must resume dialogue with each other."

3. PRC View of US Missile Defense

Deutsche Presse-Agentur ("CHINA RESOLUTE AGAINST MISSILE SHIELD AFTER U.S. TEST," Beijing, 12/04/01) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue on Tuesday criticized the US for its latest test of its proposed missile defense system. Zhang stated, "Our position on missile defense is very clear and consistent: We are opposed to the United States building a missile defense system." She added, "We believe that relevant sides should, through sincere and serious dialogue, seek a solution that does not compromise any side's security interests, nor harm international arms control and disarmament efforts." The US shot down a dummy warhead on an intercontinental ballistic missile over the Pacific Ocean. The test was conducted so that it would not directly violate the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

4. PRC-US Anti-Terror Talks

Deutsche Presse-Agentur ("U.S. ANTI-TERRORISM ENVOY TO HOLD TALKS IN CHINA," Beijing, 12/04/01) reported that the PRC's Foreign Ministry said that US State Department special envoy for counter-terrorism, General Francis Taylor, will hold talks with PRC officials in Beijing on December 5 and 6. Taylor and his delegation plan to meet Vice Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing and senior defense, finance and central bank officials. Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue stated, "Taylor will exchange views with the Chinese side on strengthening bilateral cooperation against terrorism."

5. Cross-Straits Relations

Deutsche Presse-Agentur ("TAIWAN PRESIDENT REPEATS WISH TO SHAKE HANDS WITH CHINA'S LEADER," Taipei, 12/03/01) reported that Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian said on Monday after Taiwan's parliament election that he was still willing to hold dialogue with the PRC. Chen stated, "My sincerity to improve ties with China remains unchanged, and I am still waiting to shake hands with China's leaders."

6. Taiwan Cabinet

Taipei Central News Agency ("TAIWAN PREMIER SAYS CABINET TO RESIGN EN MASSE," Tapei, 12/04/01) reported that Taiwan Premier Chang Chun-hsiung said that his Cabinet will resign en masse sometime in January before the next Legislative Yuan is sworn in. However, he said that the exact date for the resignation was still under consideration. In response to Legislator Lin Jih-jia's comment that several outstanding legislators were not re-elected partially because pre-election opinion polls led their supporters to believe that the popular candidates would have no problem winning the elections, Chang said that he agreed with Lin "100 percent" and that a draft amendment to the Public Officials Election and Recall Law to help create a fairer and more objective election environment in the future has already been sent to the Legislative Yuan.

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK–KEDO Accord

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "N.K., KEDO SIGN ACCORD ON QUALITY ASSURANCE AND WARRANTIES FOR NUCLEAR REACTORS," Seoul, 12/04/01) reported that ROK officials said on Monday that the DPRK and the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) concluded an accord on quality assurance and warranties for the two light-water reactors being built in the DPRK. The agreement was signed by KEDO Executive Director Charles Kartman and Kim Hui-mun, the DPRK official who is responsible for the project, ROK officials said. The agreement on quality assurance stipulates the rights and responsibilities of both KEDO and the DPRK and immunity for KEDO officials and their contractors. Officials said that the accord on warranties covers electricity output, key parts, initial fuel supply and related facilities.

2. DPRK E-mail Service

The Korea Herald ("N. KOREA BEGINS E-MAIL SERVICE," Seoul, 12/04/01) reported that the DPRK has launched an Internet e-mail service, allowing foreigners to exchange electronic messages with people in the DPRK, according to service providers. Silibank (www.silibank.com), an Internet service provider based in Shenyang, PRC, announced on its homepage that it has allowed foreign members to exchange e-mail with DPRK citizens since December 1.

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 in partnership with:
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