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I. United States

1. DPRK-US Relations

The Associated Press (George Gedda, "US OFFICIAL SEES TALKS WITH NORTH KOREA," Washington, 02/04/03) and the Washington Post (Doug Struck, "NORTH KOREA SAID TO SEE OPPORTUNITY IN IRAQ CRISIS," Tokyo, 02/04/03) reported that the US State Department's second ranking official said Tuesday he has no doubt that the US and the DPRK will open a dialogue on the

DPRK's nuclear development programs. "Of course we're going to have direct talks with the North Koreans," Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage told a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing. He said the initiative would be carried out in concert with other nations so that the DPRK's weapons program is not perceived as strictly a US-DPRK problem. Armitage ruled out US acceptance of the DPRK's demand for negotiations leading to a non-aggression treaty. Noting that treaties require Senate ratification, Armitage said there was "zero chance" of a proposed treaty receiving the required two-thirds majority support for Senate confirmation. Committee Chairman Richard Lugar said he favors direct talks with the DPRK.

Reuters ("NORTH SAYS US PURSUES 'POLICY OF EVIL' ON KOREA," Seoul, 02/04/03) reported that the DPRK said Tuesday that the US approach to Korea was a "policy of evil against the DPRK, its reunification and peace" that aimed to dominate the peninsula. "The US policy toward the DPRK (North Korea) is a policy of aggression and a policy of war to stifle the DPRK and its basic goal is to strangle the DPRK by force," said a commentary in the DPRK's Rodong Sinmun. The excerpt from the commentary carried by the Korean Central News Agency made no mention of the nuclear crisis unfolding on the peninsula. The US "aimed to swallow up the DPRK and put the whole of Korea under its domination," it said.

2. US Military on Reinforcements

The Associated Press (Paul Shin, "US COMMANDER SAYS TROOPS NOT REQUESTED," Seoul, 02/04/03) and BBC News ("US CONSIDERS KOREAN MILITARY BUILD-UP," 02/04/03) reported that the top US military commander in the ROK said Tuesday he has not requested reinforcements, despite a deepening crisis over the DPRK's suspected nuclear weapons development. Gen. Leon J. LaPorte made the statement after US officials in Washington said Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld is considering sending an aircraft carrier to the waters off the Korean Peninsula and adding bombers in Guam. LaPorte said he does not expect any immediate change in the level of US troops on ROK soil, which currently stands at 37,000. "We did not request additional forces," LaPorte said in response to a question from South Korean media. "If we do, we will consult with the (South Korean) Ministry of National Defense and then refer to the Pacific Command." LaPorte did not respond to US media reports that the Pentagon has decided to dispatch additional B-1 bombers and F-16 fighter jets to the western Pacific in a show of force against North Korea. "We at (US-South Korea) Combined Forces Command continually monitor all situations on the peninsula and maintain a readiness level to ensure deterrence and preserve the peace of the Korean Peninsula," he said.

3. ROK US Military Reinforcements

The Associated Press (Paul Shin, "TOP US MILITARY COMMANDER IN SOUTH KOREA DENIES REQUESTING ADDITIONAL FORCES," Seoul, 02/04/03) reported that the top US military commander in the ROK said Tuesday he has not requested reinforcements, despite a deepening crisis over the DPRK's suspected nuclear weapons development. Gen. Leon J. LaPorte made the statement after US officials in Washington said Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld is considering sending an aircraft carrier to the waters off the Korean Peninsula and adding bombers in Guam. The moves are intended to deter the DPRK from provocations during any US war with Iraq, the Pentagon officials said. LaPorte's statement indicated that there would no immediate change in his troop level, which currently stands at 37,000. "We did not request additional forces," LaPorte said in response to a question from ROK media. "If we do, we will consult with the ROK of National Defense and then refer to the Pacific Command." LaPorte did not respond to US media reports that the Pentagon has decided to dispatch additional B-1 bombers and F-16 fighter jets to the western Pacific in a show of force against the DPRK.

4. DPRK Rumsfeld US Bombers Alert

The New York Times (David E. Sanger and Thom Shanker, "US BOMBERS ON ALERT TO DEPLOY AS WARNING TO NORTH KOREANS," Washington, 02/04/03) reported that US Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has put 24 long-range bombers on alert for possible deployment within range of the DPRK, both to deter "opportunism" at a moment when the US is focused on Iraq and to give President Bush military options if diplomacy fails to halt the DPRK's effort to produce nuclear weapons, officials said today. The White House insisted today that Bush was still committed to a diplomatic solution to the crisis. Any decision to bolster the considerable US military presence near the DPRK was simply what Ari Fleischer, the president's spokesman, called making "certain our contingencies are viable." Rumsfeld, who Pentagon officials emphasized had not yet made a decision to send the bombers, was acting on a request for additional forces from Adm. Thomas B. Fargo, the Pacific commander, who concluded that the DPRK's race to produce a nuclear weapon had significantly worsened the risks on the Korean Peninsula. "This puts them on a short string," said a senior Pentagon official, who explained that the aircraft and crews were now ready to move out within a set number of hours should they receive the final deployment order. The additional bomber force, which would be sent to Guam from bases in the US along with surveillance planes, brings a potent capability to the region should Bush decide that he cannot allow the DPRK to begin reprocessing its nuclear fuel into weapons.

5. US Citizens on DPRK

The Program on International Policy Attitudes ("Americans on North Korea," College Park, MD, 02/04/03) released a report today that according to a new poll by the Program on International Policy Attitude, the US public favors negotiation with North Korea, but are divided on whether the DPRK is willing to forego it's nuclear ambitions. 83% of respondents rejected the Bush administration's argument that "the US should not talk with North Korea until it first proves it is not developing nuclear weapons, because talking first would be submitting to blackmail." 76% of respondents expressed a readiness to sign a non-aggression commitment with the DPRK in exchange for the DPRK giving up its nuclear weapons program. And more broadly, an overwhelming majority favors trying to get the 1994 Agreed Framework back on track.

For the full report: http://www.pipa.org/OnlineReports/N_Korea/report_nkr.pdf

6. Russia on US Missile Defense Plans

The Associated Press ("RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SAYS WASHINGTON'S MISSILE DEFENSE PLANS DESTABILIZING," Moscow, 02/04/03) re[ported that Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov on Tuesday reaffirmed Russia's criticism of the US missile defense plans, saying they were harmful for Russia's security and global strategic stability. "Some negative trends in global politics challenge Russia's security interests," Ivanov said on a visit to the Khrunichev State Research and Production Center, Russia's top rocket manufacturer. "There are many unresolved issues in the sphere of strategic stability, and they are exacerbated by unilateral US actions." US plans to develop a missile shield "may trigger a new race of missiles and counter-missiles," Ivanov said in speech before space officials.

7. Russia on DPRK and UN Security Council

The Associated Press ("RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY WARNS IT WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE TO REFER THE NORTH KOREA STANDOFF TO THE UN SECURITY

COUNCIL," Moscow, 02/04/03) reported that the Russian Foreign Ministry warned Tuesday that it would be counterproductive to refer the nuclear standoff with the DPRK to the United Nations Security Council. "As before, we still believe that the possibility for diplomatic dialogue between the interested sides is not exhausted," Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander Yakovenko said, according to the Interfax news agency. "In this connection, submitting the question about North Korea to the U.N. Security Council now would be counterproductive." The US wants to bring the issue before the U.N. Security Council, which could impose sanctions against Pyongyang. The 35-nation board of governors of the U.N. International Atomic Energy is due to meet February 12 in Vienna to discuss the standoff, a meeting that could refer the dispute to the Security Council.

8. PRC on US-Iraq Situation

CNN News (Willy Wo-Lap Lam, "CHINA'S MEDIA SLAMS US 'ARROGANCE' ON IRAQ," 02/04/03) and The Washington Post (John Pomfret and Glenn Kessler, "CHINA'S RELUCTANCE IRKS US,BEIJING SHOWS NO INCLINATION TO INTERVENE IN NORTH KOREA CRISIS," Beijing, 02/04/03) reported that there is an upsurge of stories and opinion-editorial pieces in the PRC media slamming the US "unilateralist" approach to the Iraqi crisis. The China Daily last week ran an editorial blasting the US' "arrogant and impatient" reactions to the findings of the United Nations weapons inspectors. Sina.com carried a provocative piece entitled "Do China's car owners have to foot the bill for the 'dump Saddam Hussein' [campaign]?" The article went further than saying oil prices would increase in the wake of war. It castigated the George W. Bush administration for hijacking the norms of international relations and forcing the rest of the world to subsidize its bid to punish Baghdad. Fang Ning, a political scientist at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) told the PRC media that Bush's motive in launching a possible attack on Iraq was none other than "the further control of the world's oil reserves." Fang, a noted nationalist, said, "The entire world is tired of watching [America's] hegemonic behavior."

9. ROK "Secret Funds" Investigation

The Associated Press (Paul Shin, "SOUTH KOREA PARTY SEEKS SUMMIT INVESTIGATION," Seoul, 02/04/03) reported that the ROK Grand National Party introduced a bill in parliament Tuesday that would appoint an independent prosecutor to investigate allegations that the ROK essentially bought a summit with the DPRK in 2000. The move to appoint an independent counsel came after state prosecutors decided Monday to drop an investigation into the alleged payoff scandal. "It's time to end illegal and abnormal South-North transactions," Park Hee-tae, acting chief of the Grand National Party, said on Tuesday. "Investigation by an independent counsel is inevitable." The opposition party, with 151 legislators, controls the 273-member single-house legislature, but still will likely have to negotiate with pro-government parties over the bill.

10. Japan Foreign Aid Reduction

The Associated Press ("JAPAN TO CUT FOREIGN AID AGAIN IN 2003," Tokyo, 02/04/03) reported that Japan, the world's second-biggest aid donor, is planning to cut its overseas assistance again this year, the Foreign Ministry said Tuesday. The move underlines how the nation's sputtering economy has strapped the government budget. Spending on official development aid in the proposed 2003 budget is slated to drop 9.4 percent to \$9.64 billion from \$10.6 billion last year. The government shaved 11.9 percent from foreign aid in 2002. The proposed budget includes cuts in both overseas loans and grants. Grant aid for 2003 is to fall 8 percent from last year, while loan assistance is slated for a 3.5 percent decrease, a Foreign Ministry official said on condition of anonymity. The 2003

budget, which takes effect April 1, must still be passed by Parliament. Japan was the world's top aid donor for 10 years but fell to second place behind the US in 2001 after the yen dropped in value against the dollar. While the Foreign Ministry official cited Japan's sour economy as the reason for the recent declines in aid spending, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has emphasized that donor countries should focus on the quality of aid, not the overall amount.

11. Russia Oil Production

The New York Times (Sabrina Tavernise, "RUSSIA UNABLE TO SHIP ALL ITS PLENTIFUL OIL," Moscow, 02/04/03) reported that Russia may be bumping up against a ceiling on its ability to export more oil. One big producer is already experiencing pipeline bottlenecks, and a senior executive of another warned today that the country would face a serious problem by autumn. As Russia steps up its oil production and takes more market share from producers in the Middle East, its means of exporting oil - ports, pipelines and rail lines - are running at or near capacity. Oil companies here earn far more from exports than from domestic sales, and the big producers are scrambling to find new routes out of Russia for their crude. Several companies want to build new pipelines, which until now have been owned exclusively by a state monopoly, Transneft. At a news conference today, Leonid Fedun, a vice president of Lukoil, currently the country's No. 2 oil producer (the leader is Yukos), said that by November the Russian oil industry would have a pool of 58 million to 131 million barrels of oil that it cannot export because Russia's pipeline system will have no room for it. By 2005, he said, Russian export needs will exceed capacity by 211 million barrels a year, or 580,000 barrels a day. "Transport is the common problem for all companies and for the entire oil industry," Fedun said. "For us, Priority No. 1 is preparing oil transportation infrastructure," he added. "In 2003, all the oil companies will be on their own, trying to save themselves."

II. Japan

1. Abduction Issue in Japan-DPRK Relations

The Asahi Shinbun ("US VIST SEEN AS CHANCE TI PRESS ISSUE OF ABDUCTIONS,"02/03/03) reported that the Association of Families of Victims Kidnapped by North Korea (AFVKN) fears interest in the issue will lose steam because world attention is focused on Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions, not the abductions. The two members of the support group National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Kidnapped by North Korea (NARKN) are carrying a message to be handed to U.S. President George W. Bush and one addressed to the American public. The association representing the families as well as the support group are working for the return of all Japanese abducted by DPRK, as well as family members. The two groups also plan to send the delegation to Europe to rekindle global interest in the issue. Since Pyongyang insists it will only deal with the US, the families of abductees decided their best course is to form a delegation to go to Washington to press US government officials and Congress to link the abductions to any settlement of the nuclear crisis.

2. View of Iragis to Irag

Kyodo ("GOV'T AFFILIATE INTERVIEWS ANTI-SADAM IRAQIS IN TOKYO," Tokyo, 02/04/03) reported that a Japanese Foreign Ministry affiliate has interviewed a number of Iraqis in Tokyo opposed to President Saddam Hussein, the top government spokesman said Tuesday. "The Middle East Institute of Japan invited" the Iraqis to meetings, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told a

press conference. Some media reports said the institute is gathering information through talks with the Iraqis about such topics as how to deal with a possible war in Iraq, but Fukuda said, "I have been informed of nothing" regarding the substance of the talks.

3. Japan's View to Iraq

Kyodo ("IRAQ NOT COOPERATING ON WEAPONS INSPECTORS, KAWAGUCHI SAYS, 02/04/03) reported Japan's Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi said Tuesday that she has no knowledge of improvement on the part of Iraq in terms of cooperation with U.N. weapons inspections. "It is not the case that there has been any visible change," Kawaguchi told a regular press conference.

4. Japan's Position to Economic Sanction to DPRK

Kyodo ("JAPAN TO SEEK CAUTIOUS STAND ON SANCTIONS AGAINST N.KOREA," Tokyo, 02/03/03) reported that Japan plans to ask countries looking to have economic sanctions imposed on DPRK at an early stage to proceed cautiously, senior Japanese government officials said Monday. Japan is adopting this stance as the IAEA is likely to decide at an emergency meeting of its board members on Feb. 12 to refer the DPRK nuclear standoff to the UN Security Council. Japan also intends to strengthen its call to have the DPRK issue discussed by the five permanent members of the Security Council together with Japan and ROK.

5. Lawsuit on Fast Breeder Reactor

Kyodo ("HIGH COURT NULLIFIES APPROVAL OF MONJU REACTOR PROGRAM," Kanazawa, 01/28/03) reported that the Nagoya High Court reversed a lower court decision and nullified the Japanese government's 1983 go-ahead for construction of the trouble-plagued Monju fast-breeder nuclear reactor in Tsuruga, Fukui Prefecture -- a ruling that could lead to the costly plant being mothballed. In a landmark decision favoring residents seeking to halt construction or operation of nuclear reactors, the ruling supported the claim of the plaintiffs, who blamed a massive leak of sodium coolant at the plant in 1995 on shortcomings in the government's preconstruction safety assessments. "Flaws exist in the safety assessments needed to prevent an accident like leakage of radioactive material inside a reactor to the neighboring environment," presiding Judge Kazuo Kawasaki said in the ruling at the court's Kanazawa branch. "Thus the possibility of concrete threats cannot be discounted." The governmental operator of the plant came under fire after it was revealed that it tried to cover up damage from the accident in 1995 and submitted a falsified report. The reactor has since been shut down. But, after receiving government approval in December, the staterun Japan Nuclear Cycle Development Institute was planning to start renovating the reactor, with a view to reactivating it in the near future. The high court said, however, that the government's approval of the renovation plan "will not affect the (court's) conclusion that the (government's original) approval is now annulled." By calling for the government to reassess the safety measures at Monju, the ruling is expected to make resumption of its operation extremely difficult. Atsuko Toyama, minister of education, culture, sports, science and technology, expressed regret over the ruling and insisted that perfecting fast-breeder reactor technology, which can produce more plutonium than it consumes, is essential to Japan, which lacks any natural energy resources of its own. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told a separate news conference that electric companies' nuclear power reactors will not be affected by the ruling.

The Japan Times ("PANEL MEMBERS AT ODDS OVER MONJU RULING," 01/29/03) reported that members of the Atomic Energy Commission voiced mixed views over a high court ruling the previous

day that nullified the government's approval in 1983 of the Monju fast-breeder reactor in Tsuruga, Fukui Prefecture. During the meeting, committee members Tetsuya Endo and Tetsuo Takeuchi stressed the importance of the fast-breeder reactor program, stating that the government should appeal the Nagoya High Court ruling to the Supreme Court. But Noriko Kimoto said that the government should "consider from scratch" why it should proceed with its nuclear fuel recycling program, while Akio Morishima said that the general public is now scrutinizing the questions raised by the ruling. Meanwhile, commission Chairman Yoichi Fujiie noted that while the ruling focused on the safety of one particular reactor and not the government's fuel recycling program as a whole, "government policies cannot be carried out without the public's understanding and support."

The Japan Times ("GOVERNMENT APPEALS RULING ON MONJU NUCLEAR REACTOR," 02/01/03) reported that the Japanese government appealed on last Friday a ruling by the Nagoya High Court nullifying its approval for construction of the trouble-plagued Monju experimental nuclear reactor, according to the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). "We carried out our safety checks carefully and properly," METI chief Takeo Hiranuma said, "so we cannot accept the ruling." Plaintiffs in the case -- mainly residents living near the reactor in Tsuruga, Fukui Prefecture -- are confident the Supreme Court will uphold the ruling. "The (government's) move was expected," said Miwako Ogiso, secretary general of the plaintiffs' group, based in Fukui. "It is disappointing, though, that the government appealed the ruling simply to save face at a time when the lack of benefits from fastbreeder reactors is becoming increasingly evident." METI officials said the court should have run tests to discern the possibility of all control equipment malfunctioning in a steam generator accident, as well as calculating the likelihood of a core-disruptive accident -- both of which the ministry believes are unrealistic. "It's lamentable that the ruling gave the general public an impression that a core-disruptive accident could occur at the Monju reactor," a METI official said. The government will continue administrative procedures at the reactor as scheduled, including plans to resume operations there, the METI officials said.

6. Plutonium in Japan

The Japan Times ("PLUTONIUM EXTRACTED FROM SPENT FUEL IS 206 KG SHORT," 01/29/03) reported that a tally of plutonium extracted at a nuclear fuel reprocessing plant in Tokai, Ibaraki Prefecture, since it began operating has come up 206 kg short, the government said. The Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Ministry reported the finding to the government's Atomic Energy Commission, and has also reported the case to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It denied the possibility, however, that any plutonium had been illicitly removed from the facility. Since operations started in 1977, the Tokai reprocessing facility, run by the governmental Japan Nuclear Cycle Development Institute, has extracted 6,890 kg of plutonium from spent nuclear fuel -- falling 206 kg short of initial projections. Ministry officials said part of the discrepancy may have been caused by a dilution of plutonium into waste water and other factors, including errors in omputation. The officials said it is difficult to make an accurate calculation of the exact amount of plutonium to be extracted, because comparable data from reprocessing plants in the US and Europe are not available. The officials, concerned that similar discrepancies could occur at the Rokkasho reprocessing plant under construction in Aomori Prefecture, said they are having discussions with the IAEA to improve the measuring equipment and evaluating methods of plutonium.

Kyodo ("PLUTONIUM SHORTFALL AT TOKAI MATCHES ESTIMATE, IAEA SAYS," Vienna, 01/30/03) reported that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) ruled out the possibility of nuclear proliferation emanating from the Tokai nuclear fuel reprocessing plant, saying the plutonium shortfall detected at the plant matches an agency estimate. The UN nuclear watchdog has long bemoaned the inaccuracy of measurements conducted at nuclear fuel reprocessing plants, and has cited discrepancies at the Tokai plant between the calculated amount of plutonium in spent nuclear

fuel prior to reprocessing and the actual amount extracted.

7. Japan on UN Inspection against Iraq

The Japan Times ("JAPAN AGREES WITH CONCLUSION DRAWN BY U.N. INSPECTORS," 01/29/03) reported that Japan agrees with the conclusion of the UN inspectors that Iraq has failed to cooperate sufficiently with their probe into its suspected weapons of mass destruction program. "Judging from the result of the report and previous findings, we believe (Iraq) has not cooperated fully," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told a news conference after the inspectors' report to the UN Security Council was made public in New York. However, Fukuda said the report must be studied further and Japan continues to urge Iraq to clear up suspicions about its development and possession of weapons of mass destruction. Fukuda declined comment on whether UN inspectors should be given more time to conduct their investigations. "It's up to the Security Council to decide. We'll wait and see that discussion." Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi, in a separate news conference, said the period of time inspectors should be allowed depends on how much Iraq actively cooperates in the process. Japan remains silent about whether it supports a threatened US-led war on Iraq. Government sources said Japan hopes war can be avoided, but they couldn't clarify its position at this stage because it will not directly participate in the military action because of the warrenouncing Constitution, and because it is not a member of the UN Security Council.

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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