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I. United States

1. ROK-DPRK Summit

The Associated Press (Sang-Hun Choe, "KOREAS CLOSER TO AGENDA FOR SUMMIT," Seoul, 5/4/00) reported that the DPRK strongly indicated on Thursday that it will try to include the withdrawal of US troops from the ROK in the agenda for the inter-Korean summit in June. The DPRK reacted negatively to the statement that ROK Ambassador to Japan Choi Sang-ryong made last week that the issue of US troops will not be on the agenda at the summit. The DPRK's official foreign news outlet, Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), said, "such irresponsible utterances made by senior diplomats of South Korea cannot be construed otherwise than deliberate moves to throw a wet

blanket over the meeting and summit and insult their dialogue partner. This will only cast a dark shadow over the prospect of the meeting and summit."

2. Korean Demilitarized Zone

The New York Times (Calvin Sims, "BEHIND KOREA MEETING, A MILLION TROOPS IN A STANDOFF," Panmunjom, 5/4/00) reported that US and ROK soldiers stationed in the demilitarized zone that divides the DPRK and the ROK still say that the danger of another all-out conflict remains high despite the approaching inter-Korean summit. Lieutenant Kwon Byung-su of an elite ROK front-line unit on border patrol said, "with such a heavy concentration of manpower and weapons located in this relatively small area, there is great potential for fighting to break out at any time." More than 1,000 ROK, 50 US, and numerous DPRK Nationals have died in skirmishes along the border since the armistice officially ended the fighting. Phillip McNeal, 21, a US Army specialist from Chicago said, "I think most people don't know very much about the Korean War, and they take freedom for granted, or they just don't realize the costs." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 4, 2000.]

3. PRC Strategic Situation

Agence France Presse ("PROBLEMS ON ALL FRONTS FOR CHINA: IISS REPORT," London, 5/4/00) reported that the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) released its annual report, which said that the PRC is confronting economic troubles, continued tension with Taiwan, and the repression of the Falungong group. The report said, "China's President Jiang Zemin encountered a series of disparate and perhaps unpredictable political problems during 1999. Although individually none was enough to challenge the regime's capacity to rule, each illustrated China's deep and continuing weaknesses." The group said the PRC was "uneasy with the outside world and with its own society." IISS analysts said that some 200 PRC cruise missiles pointed across the Taiwan straits "could become a threat in the near future," but added that a large-scale military operation was unlikely, given the US support of Taiwan.

4. PRC Political Structure

Agence France Presse ("CHINESE PRESIDENT JIANG ZEMIN TO QUIT TOP PARTY JOB IN 2002," Hong Kong, 5/4/00) reported that the South China Morning Post said Thursday that PRC President Jiang Zemin will step down as head of the communist party in 2002 in a move designed to encourage the emergence of a new generation of leaders. Jiang, 73, told senior party figures that he would not seek a third term as the party's general secretary in 2002 and wanted vice president Hu Jintao to step into the job. In a private talk with members of the Politburo and senior cadres, Jiang reportedly said that only two of the existing seven member of the politburo standing committee should remain: Hu and Li Ruihuan, 65, chairman of the advisory body of the PRC People's Political Consultative Conference. The paper said that despite giving up the party post, Jiang would remain state president until early 2003 and was likely to remain as the PRC's de facto top leader until 2007. Jiang has hinted that after 2003 he might hang on to the chairmanship of the military commission.

II. Republic of Korea

1. Summit Preparation Talks

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "TWO KOREAS FAIL TO STRIKE DEAL ON DETAILS FOR JUNE SUMMIT," Seoul, 05/04/00), Joongang Ilbo (Kim Suk-hyun, "SOUTH AND NORTH HOLD SECOND PREPARATORY TALKS," Seoul, 05/03/00) and The Korea Times (Lee Soo-jeong, "TWO KOREAS FAIL TO SIGN ACCORD ON SUMMIT PROCEDURE," Seoul, 05/03/00) reported that the ROK and the DPRK failed to strike a deal on May 3 on procedural matters for the June inter-Korean summit, and agreed only to continue their discussions on May 8. ROK chief delegate Yang Young-shik said, "the next meeting will be a crucial point in determining whether the two sides will be able to produce an agreement." Yang said that the two sides agreed to hold working-level contacts on procedural issues, including communications, as soon as possible after the fourth round of talks. Chief DPRK delegate Kim Ryong-song, however, indicated that the two sides failed to iron out their differences over the agenda for the summit.

2. DPRK-US Talks

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "U.S., N.K. TO FOCUS ON IMPLEMENTING GENEVA NUCLEAR ACCORD AT ROME TALKS," Seoul, 05/04/00) and Chosun Ilbo (Choo Yong-joon, "U.S. AND NK RESUME NUCLEAR TALKS," Seoul, 05/03/00) reported that ROK diplomatic observers said on May 3 that the US and the DPRK are expected to discuss the DPRK's nuclear and missile programs during their meeting on May 24 in Rome. An anonymous analyst said, "Washington will likely focus on the implementation of the 1994 Geneva Agreed Framework in the meeting, and relegate bilateral negotiations on a ranking North Korean official's visit to Washington to the sidelines." He cited the remarks of US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher, who said on May 2 that the US would use the talks to improve relations and push for the implementation of the Agreed Framework on the DPRK's nuclear and missile programs. The US move is an apparent departure from its earlier stance, in which it focused on arranging the schedule and agenda for the high-level talks between the two sides. The analyst said, "Washington appears to have changed its strategy due to the lack of concrete progress in its efforts to finalize the visit by a ranking North Korean official."

3. DPRK Computer Development

Joongang Ilbo (Chung Chang-hyun, "IT SECTOR GROWING IN NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 05/03/00) and Joongang Ilbo (Hong Seung-il, "SAMSUNG TO BUILD INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX IN NK," Seoul, 05/03/00) reported that the DPRK established an Electronic Industries Ministry on November 24, 1999. The move demonstrates its acceptance of the information age and its commitment to the electronics industry. Sources from DPRK computer sectors said that DPRK Leader Kim Jong-il personally commanded the nation "to focus on the computer industry. There is no way to avoid ignorance without the aid of computers." The place for the software industry is the Korea Computer Center (KCC) which was established in October 1990 and has 4,500 employees and 900 young computer programmers. Local computer centers have been established in Hamhung and Shinuiju. The DPRK plans on establishing computer centers in each of the nation's provinces by October 2000. The DPRK is also expecting the cooperation of the ROK in the field of software development.

4. ROK-US Talks

Chosun Ilbo (Kang Hyo-sang, "NO U.S. TOPICS AT SUMMIT TALKS," Seoul, 05/03/00) reported that the ROK and US governments agreed on May 3 that the withdrawal of the US forces in the ROK (USFK) would not be a topic at the inter-Korean summit. ROK Deputy Foreign Minister Pan Ki-moon, currently visiting the US, met with US Secretary of State Madeline Albright to discuss policy coordination with regard to the talks. Following a series of meetings with US officials, Pan told ROK

reporters that in contrast to the Four Party Talks, where the USFK issue can be discussed, the Summit Talks were purely an inter-Korean affair. He said that if the matter were raised, he would reply that the USFK presence was part of the mutual defense treaty between the ROK and the US. Pan confirmed that nuclear and missile issues could be included on the agenda.

III. People's Republic of China

1. DPRK-Australian Relations

China Daily ("TIES FOR DPRK, AUSTRALIA," Seoul, 5/2/00, P8) said that ROK media reported on May 1 that the DPRK and Australia have agreed to normalize ties following a 25-year freeze, reflecting efforts by the DPRK to break out of its diplomatic isolation. The ROK-based Korea Herald reported that Australia and the DPRK agreed to re-establish diplomatic relations this month and that the Australian government would make an announcement soon.

2. ROK-PRC Relations

People's Daily ("ZHU RONGJI MEETS ROK GUESTS," Beijing, 4/29/00, P1) reported that PRC Premier Zhu Rongji met on April 28 with ROK foreign and trade minister Lee Joung-binn, who is on an official visit to the PRC. Wang Guangya, PRC vice-minister of foreign affairs, and Kwon Byong-hyon, ROK ambassador to the PRC, were present at the meeting.

China Daily ("DPRK-ROK TIES," Beijing, 4/28/00, P2) reported that PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan said on April 27 that the PRC is sincerely pleased that tensions in the Korean Peninsula are easing. While meeting with visiting Lee Joung-binn, Foreign and Trade Minister of the ROK, Tang said that the PRC hopes that both sides on the peninsula will continue to try to resolve their differences to make the upcoming summit in June a success.

People's Daily ("SHI GUANGSHENG MEETS ROK MINISTER," Beijing, 4/29/00, P2) reported that PRC Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Shi Guangsheng and ROK Foreign and Trade Minister Lee Joung-binn had an in-depth exchange on April 28 about views on further promoting bilateral trade. Shi said that the two economies are highly complementary, noting that remarkable progress has been registered in bilateral trade, mutual investment and economic and technological cooperation in recent years. Shi said, "we are happy to see that the ROK has tided over the impact of the Asian financial crisis with fast economic growth," stressing that this has provided a strong backing for facilitating a sound and balanced growth of trade between the two countries. Lee said that he shared Shi's view on two-way trade and was satisfied with the rapid development of trade relations in recent years. Lee added that ROK officials are interested in the PRC's strategy to develop its western region. An investment study mission made up of ROK officials and business executives will visit the PRC's western region in May to explore potential areas of cooperation there.

3. DPRK-PRC Relations

China Daily ("DPRK GUESTS," Beijing, 5/3/00, P2) reported that Ding Guangen, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, met on May 2 with a delegation from the Working People's Journal, an organ of the Workers' Party of the DPRK, led by its Chief Editor Ryang Kyong-bok. Ding briefed the guests on the PRC's political and economic situation as well as its publicity and ideological work.

4. PRC-Japanese Relations

People's Daily ("JAPAN CRITICIZED FOR ISLE INCIDENT," 4/30/00, P4) reported that a PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman said on April 29 that the PRC was indignant because Japanese right-wing activists violated the PRC's territorial sovereignty by once again illegally setting foot on the Diaoyu Islands. The spokesman's remark was in reaction to a report that members of the Japan Youth League landed on the Diaoyu Islands on April 20 to establish a so-called shrine. The spokesman said that the Diaoyu Islands and their adjacent islets have been an integral part of China since ancient times. He added that the PRC strongly resents the Japanese Government's disregard of the consensus reached by the two countries, and its irresponsibility in taking a laissez-faire attitude towards "the misdeeds" of the Japanese right-wing activists. He said that the PRC has made its stance clear to Japan through diplomatic channels. The spokesman quoted Japanese officials as saying that it still needs to be determined if the group did establish a shrine on the island. The PRC has urged Japan to promptly investigate the incident and provide an explanation, the spokesman said.

5. The Taiwan Issue

People's Daily (Li Nanling and Chen Binhua, "TANG SHUBEI ON ONE-CHINA POLICY," Shenzhen, 4/28/00, P4) reported that Tang Shubei, the PRC's Vice-President of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits, said in Shenzhen on April 27 that an early endorsement of the one-China principle will bring opportunities for stability and development in cross-Straits relations. He made the remarks on the sideline of a two-day seminar on fighting against Taiwan independence and promoting reunification. Tang said, "we have noticed some people in Taiwan have said some soft words like 'peace' and 'goodwill.' But if they do not admit Taiwan is part of China and do not accept the one-China principle, we think the consequence will not be peace, but disaster; not goodwill, but hostility." Tang said that cross-Straits negotiations under the one-China principle are not talks between the central government of the People's Republic with local authorities on Taiwan, but negotiations on an equal basis.

People's Liberation Army Daily ("KMT WANTS TO KICK OUT ITS EX-LEADER," Beijing, 5/1/00, P4) reported that recent remarks by Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui about his Kuomintang (KMT) Party continue to fuel the indignation of KMT members at all levels who want to kick him out of the party. Lee, forced to step down from the KMT's top post, recently launched a verbal attack against the Party, saying that it is an "outsider" with an old-fashioned name that should be changed. Many senior KMT members, including those from the KMT Central Standing Committee, have strongly condemned Lee's remarks. They said that Lee has been more in favor of "Taiwan independence" than the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and that the "evil legacy" of Lee must be thoroughly erased if the KMT hopes to be reformed.

IV. Australia

1. Australia-Indonesia Relations

The Australian (Don Greenlees, "JET INTERCEPTION A RUPIAH RUSE?" Jakarta, 5/02/00, 9) reported that analysts see a link between complaints made by the Indonesian air force about violations of Indonesian airspace, and the air force's push for better resources, particularly radar to cover blackspots. The Indonesian air force chief Air Chief Marshall Hanafie Asnan spoke to reporters in March, outlining suspected air incursions by Australia, particularly by an Australian P-3 Orion

surveillance plane and a C-130 Hercules over Ambon in November 1999, and allegations have been made by Indonesia officers of "blackflights" (spying) by Australia. Analysts point to the air force's battle to upgrade its assets, noting that it is now awaiting delivery of six new Hawk-trainer fighters from Britain. The issue of unauthorised flights had been dying down, until four unarmed Australian F-18s were intercepted by Indonesian jets last week.

The Australian Opposition Leader Kim Beazley (Don Greenlees, "BEAZLEY WORKS THE NEIGHBORHOOD," Jakarta, 5/03/00) outlined his vision for managing Australia's relationship with Indonesia on a visit to Jakarta. "I would like to reframe our bilateral relationship with Indonesia in terms of neighbourliness - two nations living side by side, neighbours in geography and neighbours in democracy," he said, embracing Indonesian President Abdurrahaman Wahid's notion of "good neighbourhood policy." Beazley raised the issue of the interception of Australian F-18s by Indonesia jets in talks with Indonesian ministers. Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer ("REGIONALISM NOT VIEWED AS A CREED" The Asutralian, 5/04/00, 9) reiterated his argument made in Beijing last week for an Australian foreign policy based on "practical" rather than "emotional" regionalism. Australia "will never get closer to our region by simply wishing it so - rather, we have to show how practical actions can benefit both Australia and our neighbors."

2. Australian Military

The Australian (Gabrielle Chan and Vivienne Reiner, "THE FORCE IS WITH COSGROVE," 5/03/00, 5) reports that Major-General Peter Cosgrove, the former Interfet commander and current land commander, has been appointed to the most senior job in the army, lieutenant-general and chief of army for the Australian Army. In addition, Admiral Chris Barrie was reappointed Chief of the Defence Force for another two-year term, Major-General Des Mueller was Vice-Chief of the Defence Force, and Air Marshall Errol McCormack was reappointed Chief of the Air-Force. Michael O'Connor (The Australian, "A HEALTHY WIN FOR THE MILITARY OVER AN ARMY OF BUREAUCRATS," 5/03/00, 13), argues that the appointment of Cosgrove, with his experience in combat command, indicates a move to reform the defence force to decrease the influence of the civilian bureaucracy, and separate the civilian and military components of administration into distinct and separate roles.

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.
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International Policy Studies Institute Seoul, Republic of Korea
The Center for Global Communications, Tokyo, Japan
Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China
Monash Asia Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Gee Gee Wong: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Kim Hee-sun: khs688@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hiroyasu Akutsu: akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@glas.apc.org
Moscow, Russian Federation

Chunsi Wu: cswu@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

John McKay: John.McKay@adm.monash.edu.au
Clayton, Australia

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