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I. United States

1. PRC-US DPRK Talks

Agence France Presse ("CHINA, US HOLD TALKS ON NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR CRISIS," Washington, 05/03/04) reported that the PRC's special envoy for the DPRK flew in here for talks Monday with US officials ahead of an international meeting on the nuclear crisis gripping the Korean peninsula, the US State Department said. Special envoy Ning Fuqun met with Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and other officials to set the pace for a working group meeting next week among the PRC, Japan, the ROK, the DPRK, the US and Russia to help end Pyongyang's nuclear drive. "They discussed the progress of the six-party talks and the upcoming working group meeting beginning in Beijing on May 12th," US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said. He said Ning would have further consultations with US Special Envoy for the DPRK Joseph DiTrani, and also meet with James Kelly, the US point man at the high-level six-party talks that the PRC had been hosting to help resolve the nuclear question.

2. ROK on DPRK Diplomacy

Associated Press (Soo-Jeong Lee, "S.KOREA HOPES TO DISCUSS NUKES WITH NORTH," Seoul, 05/04/04) reported that the ROK a high-level ROK delegation flew to North Korea on Tuesday to urge its neighbor to work toward resolving an international standoff over its suspected nuclear weapons development. ROK Unification Minister Jeong Se-hyun led the delegation to Pyongyang. The Cabinet-

level talks run Wednesday through Friday. Six nations involved in the nuclear dispute are expected to hold a third round of talks before the end of June. "I will advise (North Korea) that results must come out of the third round of six-nation talks," Jeong Se-hyun said. The six nations are scheduled to hold low-level meetings on May 12 in Beijing to lay the groundwork for the third round, Jeong said. During the Cabinet-level talks in Pyongyang, the ROK plans to appeal for military cooperation with the DPRK, in addition to joint economic initiatives that are already underway, Jeong said. The ROK is expected to call for military talks to ease tensions between the nations. The two sides agreed to military talks in the last round of Cabinet talks, but did not fix a date.

Reuters ("SOUTH KOREA LOOKING TO EASE MILITARY TENSION AT TALKS," Seoul, 05/04/04) reported that steps to ease military tension between the DPRK and the ROK will be a key item on the agenda on Tuesday when the neighbors resume ministerial talks in Pyongyang, the ROK's unification minister said. The four-day talks, the first face-to-face contact between the two governments since last month's deadly train explosion north of Pyongyang, will also be used to urge the DPRK to cooperate on achieving substantive progress in multinational talks on its suspected nuclear arms programs. "We will be urging the North so that there could be progress in military issues", to match the level of exchanges in commercial, social and cultural areas, Unification Minister Jeong Se-hyun said before leaving Seoul. Jeong noted a lack of progress in military issues between the two Koreas had caused concern in the ROK and colored some people's views about relations with the DPRK.

3. DPRK Ballistic Missile Base Development

AFP ("NORTH KOREA BUILDING NEW BALLISTIC MISSILE BASES," 05/04/03) reported that the DPRK is building two underground bases for new ballistic missiles with a range of up to 4,000 kilometers (2,500 miles), a newspaper report, citing a ROK intelligence official. The DPRK has completed 80 percent of the work on the bases, indicating deployment of the new intermediate missiles was imminent. "US intelligence satellites have spotted about 10 new ballistic missiles and mobile launching pads kept at the two places," an unidentified official was quoted as saying. One of the new bases was in Yangdok, 80 kilometers east of the capital Pyongyang, and the other was in Hochon in South Hamgyong province, the official said. There were no details about the new intermediate missiles but previous US intelligence reports have said they were an improvement on the Scud and Rodong-type weapons that are the mainstays of the DPRK's arsenal. A missile is normally classified as intermediate if it has a range of between 500 and 5,500 kilometers. If the new missile's range is confirmed, its deployment would represent a major boost for the DPRK. The country has already deployed short-range Scuds and Rodongs with a range of 1,300 kilometers, while actively developing longer-range Taepodong missiles with a range of up to 6,000 kilometers, according to ROK analysts.

4. DPRK-Japan Abduction Talks

AFP ("SECOND DAY OF 'SINCERE' JAPAN-NKOREA ABDUCTION TALKS UNDERWAY," Beijing, 05/03/04) reported that senior diplomats from Japan and North Korea opened a second day of "sincere" talks over the DPRK's abduction of Japanese nationals, reports said. The two sides, meeting at the government level for the first time since February, held lengthy discussions Tuesday described by Japan's point man on North Korea as "sincere and straightforward", Kyodo news agency reported. "The two sides have been carrying out negotiations in a straightforward and sincere manner to solve the problem," Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau director general Mitoji Yabunaka told reporters. Yabunaka, along with Deputy Foreign Minister Hitoshi Tanaka, are heading Japan's delegation. The DPRK is understood to be represented by Jong Thae-Hwa, the DPRK's envoy in charge of talks on normalizing ties with Japan.

5. ROK Labor on ROK Troops in Iraq

AFP ("ROK WORKERS CALL FOR REPEAL OF PROMISE OF TROOPS FOR IRAQ," 05/01/04) reported that thousands of ROK workers, buoyed by the first-ever election of a pro-labor party to parliament, have marked May Day with a fresh call for the cancellation of a planned dispatch of troops to Iraq. Around 20,000 workers, mostly members of the militant Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, rallied at a downtown public park, demanding the withdrawal of Seoul's promise to send more than 3,000 troops to Iraq. They also urged the government to punish employers who violate workers' rights to organize, strike and negotiate collectively, and called for an end to discrimination against workers with irregular employment who do not receive the same benefits as full-time employees. "Don't send our boys to Iraq," they chanted, waving anti-war banners. Some sang peace songs. ROK Foreign Minister Ban Ki-Moon on Wednesday reaffirmed the ROK's commitment to dispatch the troops to Iraq despite growing dissent from a newly elected parliament.

6. ROK Domestic Trade

Reuters ("SOUTH KOREA'S APRIL TRADE SURPLUS AT RECORD HIGH," Seoul, 05/04/04) reported that the ROK's trade surplus jumped to nearly US\$3bil in April on exports which stood at a record monthly high, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Energy said yesterday. The trade surplus was US\$2.91bil in April, up 34% from US\$2.17bil in March on the back of brisk exports of semiconductors and other key items to the PRC and the US, the ministry said in a preliminary report. The April surplus was the largest since December 1998 when it hit US\$3.77bil and was the 13th consecutive monthly surplus. Customs-cleared exports grew 38.3% year-on-year to US\$21.74bil, a new monthly high, while imports rose 27.6% to US\$18.83bil, the ministry said.

7. PRC-Pakistan Nuclear Power Plant Deal

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA INKS DEAL TO BUILD SECOND NUCLEAR PLANT IN PAKISTAN," Islamabad, 05/04/04) reported that the PRC agreed to build a second nuclear power plant in Pakistan, a day after a car bomb killed three PRC engineers working at a port project in southwest Pakistan, officials said. Under the deal the PRC will build a second plant at Chashma, some 270 kilometers (167 miles) south of Islamabad, capable of producing 300-megawatts of electricity. The agreement was signed by PRC National Nuclear Corporation president Kang Rixin and Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission chairman Pervez Butt, an official statement said on Tuesday. Prime Minister Zafarullah Jamali and PRC Vice Minister for Science and Technology Zhang Huazhu also attended the ceremony. The 600-million-dollar C-2 (Chashma-2) project is likely to be completed in six years. A similar capacity plant built in Chashma with PRC help became operational in 1999. "The plant is for civilian use," a Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission spokesman stated.

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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