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I. United States

1. US on New Korean Armistice

Agence France-Presse ("US PROPOSING NEW PEACE MECHANISM TO REPLACE KOREAN ARMISTICE: REPORT," 11/05/03) reported that the US has proposed creating a new multilateral peace mechanism on the Korean Peninsula to replace the armistice that ended the 1950-53 Korean War, a newspaper said Wednesday. The US made the offer to the DPRK at the three-nation talks, which included the PRC in April, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun said. Washington has proposed the mechanism as a way to officially end the war and to break the impasse over Pyongyang's nuclear arms development -- an issue that continues to threaten East Asia's stability, the business daily said. With Seoul never having signed the armistice that concluded the Korean War, the DPRK and the ROK technically remain at war. Washington has indicated it would negotiate such a framework on the condition that Pyongyang unilaterally abandons its nuclear weapons program and resolves other pending issues, such as concerns surrounding biological and chemical weapons and the test-firing of missiles. The US is believed to be weighing a legally binding peace agreement or treaty signed by armistice signatories -- US, the DPRK, the PRC as well as the ROK and Japan, the daily said. It would also stipulate how the ROK and DPRK should co-exist.

2. ROK on KEDO Project Suspension

Agence France-Presse ("SKOREA WANTS TO SUSPEND, NOT END, NKOREA POWER PROJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER," 11/05/03) reported that ROK Foreign Minister Yoon Young-Kwan said his government wants a one-year suspension, not an end, to a multi-billion dollar energy project in the DPRK. Yoon's remarks came after the US, Japan, the ROK and the European Union met inconclusively in New York this week to discuss the fate of the controversial project. "Our government's position is to temporarily suspend it for one year. That means work could resume after one year," Yoon said during a briefing here. An international consortium, called KEDO, set up to build two nuclear reactors for North Korea under a now ruptured 1994 pact on Tuesday delayed a decision on a US request to suspend the 3.72-billion-dollar project. Executive members of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation (KEDO) consortium which groups the US, Japan, the ROK and the European Union instead decided to reach an agreement by November 21.

3. US DPRK Defector on Kim Jong-il

Reuters ("DEFECTOR SAYS NORTH'S KIM WANTS TO RULE ALL KOREA," Washington, 11/04/03) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's biggest ambition is to rule over a unified, Communist Korea, the DPRK's highest-ranking defector said in an interview published on Tuesday. Hwang Jang-yop, speaking through an interpreter, also said that Kim Jong-il was "brilliant" as a dictator but a failure as a leader and has turned his country into a prison. A former mentor to Kim Jong-il, Hwang told The Washington Times that Kim's "priority in life is to become the supreme ruler of the unified Chosun, or as you call it, Korea." Hwang, 81, was a mentor to Kim and was a confidant of Kim Il Sung, the North's late leader and father of the current leader. "Before Kim Jong-il came to power, there was his father, Kim Il Sung. No one starved to death under Kim Il Sung. However after Kim Jong-il came to power, millions of people starved to death. The economy has been destroyed and the whole government and the country became one big prison," Hwang said. "As a leader of his people, this man has been a failure. However, as a dictator, in maintaining his dictatorial regime, this man has been brilliant," Hwang told The Washington Times. Hwang said in the interview that he does not believe Kim Jong-il would initiate a war against the ROK unless he was certain that he would prevail. He also said that the DPRK leadership's failures led it to seek nuclear weapons to maintain its grip on power and that Kim would be willing to use nuclear weapons in a conflict with the South. "I would think that by having these warheads, it would be possible to maintain the status quo of the

dictatorial regime of North Korea." Hwang said " And also possibly use them against South Korea, to occupy South Korea by force." Concluding a weeklong visit to the US on Tuesday, Hwang also told the newspaper that he believes the US war against terrorism is essentially a fight for human rights and should be extended to the DPRK. "I believe we need to have a common cause where we are fighting against the dictatorship for the purpose of establishing human rights and restoring human rights for people, and that is the principle of democracy that I believe that should be applied when it comes to North Korea," Hwang said.

4. PRC on DPRK Diplomacy

Asia Pulse ("CHINA, N. KOREA 'SHARED WIDE SPECTRUM OF VIEWS': WU BANGGUO," 11/03/03) reported that Wu Bangguo, chairman of the PRC's parliament, issued upbeat comments on the results of his recent visit to the DPRK, the DPRK's official broadcasting station reported Saturday. The Korean Central Broadcasting Station said the PRC leader, who returned home Friday after a three-day visit, sent thank-you letters to DPRK leader Kim Jong-il and Kim Yong-nam, the DPRK's president of parliament. "I would like to express appreciation for the warm hospitality of your country. We have exchanged views on various issues concerned, and shared a wide spectrum of views on them," the letter was quoted as saying. The PRC and the DPRK on Thursday agreed in principle on the need to hold a second round of multilateral talks aimed at resolving the standoff over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program.

5. Japan Domestic Politics

Agence France-Presse ("KOIZUMI'S COALITION SET TO WIN MAJORITY IN JAPAN ELECTION: POLLS," 11/03/03) reported that Japan's ruling coalition of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and two small parties should win a comfortable majority in November 9 elections, new polls showed Monday. The three-party coalition -- the LDP, New Komeito party and New Conservative Party -- is likely to win 269 seats in the 480-seat lower chamber, a weekend survey of 134,000 people by Japan's top-selling daily Yomiuri Shimbun showed. A separate poll of 64,500 people by the business daily Nihon Keizai Shimbun also found Koizumi's coalition parties could secure "a comfortable majority of 252 seats or more". In the upcoming election, Koizumi faces his first direct test at the ballot box of public support for his reform-minded government since he took office in mid-term in April 2001 in after an LDP leadership election. Koizumi has said that under the LDP, Japan would achieve two percent economic growth in 2006, create 5.3 million jobs and reform the nation's pension and medical systems as well as government agencies. The country's biggest opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), a liberal party as opposed to the conservative LDP, has argued it would put more government money to help small- and mid-sized firms create a strong economy. The LDP had a razor-thin overall majority of 247 lower house seats at dissolution of the last parliament in October, and is very likely to secure a simple majority of 241 seats on its own, according to polls by the Asahi and Mainichi newspapers.

6. US-PRC Relations

The Associated Press ("CHINA ASSURED THAT US POLICY UNCHANGED," Washington, 11/04/03) reported that the Bush administration offered assurances Tuesday that Secretary of State Colin Powell's handshake with Taiwan's president did not change US policy on the PRC. Powell shook hands and exchanged pleasantries Monday with Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian in Panama City during a celebration of the 100th anniversary of Panamanian independence. PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing then requested Powell telephone him, which Powell did, a State Department spokesman

said Tuesday. They talked mostly about the DPRK, spokesman Adam Ereli said. The US and the PRC are working together to try to negotiate restraints on the DPRK's nuclear program. Taiwan was mentioned only briefly in the conversation, Ereli said. "Our policy on China has not changed. We remain committed to a one-China policy and this encounter in no way calls that into question," he said. Ereli said "there was no meeting or discussions" between Powell and the Taiwanese president.

7. PRC-ROK on DPRK Nuclear Crisis

Asia Pulse ("PRC ENVOY TO VISIT SEOUL TO DISCUSS NK'S NUCLEAR CRISIS," Beijing, 11/05/03) reported that a PRC envoy will visit the ROK next week to discuss a new round of multilateral talks aimed at resolving the DPRK's nuclear crisis, a PRC foreign ministry spokesperson said. Vice Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo will be traveling to Seoul Nov. 9-12 for talks with ROK officials on when and where to hold the next six-nation meeting, said Zhang Qiyue at a press briefing on Tuesday. "We expect the countries concerned to take a practical approach toward the DPRK nuclear program and resolve the issue at the second meeting," Zhang said. "Holding another talks in Beijing should come first, as the PRC and the DPRK have agreed on the matter," she said.

8. DPRK-ROK Economic Cooperation

Agence France-Presse ("ROK TEAM LEAVES FOR NORTH KOREA FOR TALKS ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION," 11/05/03) reported that an ROK delegation has left for the DPRK to pursue talks on reconciliation and economic cooperation as diplomatic efforts were renewed to set up another round of nuclear crisis talks. The ROK's chief delegate, Kim Gwang-Lim, said in a statement that discussions would include a year-long crisis over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program. "I will stress that progress should be made to solve the nuclear issue and other pending problems," he said. The four-day meeting in Pyongyang will also cover economic cooperation, relinking cross-border railways severed during the 1950-1953 Korean War and an industrial park under construction in the DPRK's border city of Kaesong. The two sides have agreed to reconnect the railways by the year's end. ROK delegates will visit a food distribution center near Pyongyang. In May, Seoul agreed to send 400,000 ton of rice to the DPRK, of which 290,000 tons has already been delivered. The ROK has also promised to send 100,000 tons of free fertilizer aid worth 26.6 million dollars to North Korea, on top of 200,000 tons sent so far this year.

9. DPRK Japanese Racial Slur

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA, AT UN, REFERS TO JAPANESE AS 'JAPS,'" United Nations, 11/04/03) reported that a DPRK diplomat set off sparks at the United Nations on Tuesday by referring repeatedly, in English, to the Japanese as "Japs" during a General Assembly discussion of its nuclear program. "The Japs are now turning the whole society to the right to resurrect militarism and fascism with a view to invade Korea," Deputy U.N. Ambassador Kim Chang Guk said at one point, accusing Japan of unfairly pressuring his country over its nuclear ambitions. Kim said he used the term "Japs" because a Japanese diplomat had referred incorrectly to his country the day before. North Korea's official name is the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. "They used the term 'Japs.' This is a derogatory comment -- simply because we used the term 'North Korea,'" Japanese Deputy Ambassador Yoshiyuki Motomura said. "It is a geographical concept and we have no intention of using a derogatory term in this particular sense." General Assembly President Julian Hunte said he hoped DPRK diplomats "would desist from using this kind of language in this honorable house."

II. Japan

1. Japan Iraq Troop Deployment

Kyodo ("SDF GOING TO SOUTHERN IRAQ IF LDP WINS ELECTION," Samawa, Iraq, 10/17/03) reported that Japan will send Self-Defense Forces (SDF) elements to the southern Iraq city of Samawa if the ruling coalition comes out on top in the upcoming election, according to a senior Dutch military officer quoting a Japanese fact-finding mission. The officer said that during a meeting earlier this month, senior SDF and Foreign Ministry members of the mission told him that Japan intends to set up an SDF operational base near the Dutch base in Samawa. The mission returned last week after spending nearly a month in Iraq to study the local security and other conditions. After its return, the government resumed working on its plan to send an advance team of about 100 SDF troops by the end of the year to either Samawa or Nasiriya, another city in the southern part of the country. Samawa has not experienced any attacks against occupation forces since April and is considered the safest area in Iraq, according to a senior official of the US-led Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) for the region. The CPA official, in charge of the province of Al-Muthanna, where Samawa is located, said the Japanese mission's interest was "80 percent to 90 percent" directed at Samawa. In a meeting with Samawa's city council on Oct. 2, the Japanese mission discussed the possibility of providing water supply and sewerage systems as well as repairing and updating old equipment at a hospital built there with Japanese aid in the mid-1980s, a city council official said. The discussions followed a 14-point request made by the Samawa council that included assistance in building 25 elementary schools, supplying food to schools, providing medical aid for women and children, sheltering orphans, and rebuilding roads in the city and its vicinity, according to the official.

2. Japanese Defense Chief on the Future SDF

The Japan Times (Nao Shimoyachi, "ISHIBA LOOKS TO WIDEN SDF'S GLOBAL REMIT," 10/16/03) reported that Japan should use its Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to contribute to world peace and stability, Defense Agency chief Shigeru Ishiba said. "I think there are ways to make use of the Self-Defense Forces other than in the exercise of the right to self-defense," Ishiba, 46, told The Japan Times in an interview. Ishiba also said the role of the SDF in Iraq is "becoming focused." The SDF is expected to help with "water and medical supply and the reconstruction of damaged buildings," Ishiba said, adding that "the repair of ports is not a high priority." He said some provinces of Iraq that have not seen attacks on US occupation forces were mentioned in the mission's report as "stable areas" in which the SDF could operate. The dispatch of SDF units "may or may not be made within this year, depending on whether conditions required under the (Iraq-reconstruction) law are met," he said. Meanwhile, "I think we should discuss and consider how Japan can act to meet the post-9/11 environment," Ishiba said. The new role of Japan's military could include participation in an international hunt for weapons of mass destruction and working to deter pirates, he added. The SDF could also be sent overseas to participate in multilateral forces "if the mission is within the framework of the Constitution and there is a law to permit it." A Defense Agency panel tasked with reviewing the nation's defense stance is debating these new roles. Ishiba said the panel's decisions will be reflected in an ongoing review of the nation's basic defense program. The panel is also discussing reforms to better deal with new threats such as terrorism and ballistic missile attacks.

3. Hibakusha's Protest on Bush's Tour

The Japan Times ("HIBAKUSHA STAGE PROTEST AHEAD OF BUSH'S TOKYO VISIT," 10/18/03)

reported that a group of people who survived the US atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki urged the US to scrap its nuclear weapons at a protest rally ahead of President George W. Bush's visit to Tokyo. Some 30 protesters led by the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations gathered in front of the US Embassy in Tokyo around 11 a.m., carrying a banner reading, "No More Hibakusha." "We, the hibakusha, never tolerate the threat of nuclear weapons by any party, notwithstanding if it is the United States or North Korea," group leader Eiji Nakanishi read from a statement. Two other members approached the embassy's gate and handed a letter to a staff member, saying they want Bush to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki and witness their suffering. Meanwhile, an American veteran and peace activist who published a popular comic book about US militarism urged Japan to play no part in the US military policy concerning Iraq. "The war is wrong and illegal. The US invaded Iraq and immorally killed innocent people," 55-year-old Frank Dorrel, who served in the US Air Force and was stationed in the Philippines during the Vietnam War, told reporters in Tokyo. Dorrel revived and updated in 2002 the out-of-print "Addicted to War: Why the U.S. Can't Kick Militarism," which was written in 1992 by American sociologist Joel Andreas. He has sold more than 100,000 copies of the new edition in the US. The comic was translated into Japanese, with 70,000 copies of the Japanese version having since been sold.

4. Japan's Nuclear Power Reactor

Kyodo ("TEPCO PLANT LEAKS RADIOACTIVE WATER," Niigata, 10/19/03) reported that a nuclear power plant in Kashiwazaki, Niigata Prefecture, leaked radioactive water on Oct. 18 but no radiation was released into the surrounding environment, its operator said. The accident occurred around 11:05 a.m. when about 2 liters of water were found leaking from the drain of a cooling device into a container that houses a reactor, Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO) said. The No. 1 reactor at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear plant was being checked as part of a regular inspection at the time of the accident, TEPCO said.

5. US Bases in Japan

Kyodo ("U.S. MARINE PETITIONS FOR FAIR TRIAL IN RAPE CASE," Naha, 10/19/03) reported that a US Marine Corps major on trial for attempted rape has sent a petition to US Ambassador to Japan Howard Baker, maintaining that he is not receiving a fair trial and calling on the US government to lodge a formal complaint. According to a lawyer for 40-year-old Michael Brown, the petition was submitted in person by the major to the US consulate general in Okinawa. In the petition, Brown said Japanese prosecutors "have fabricated evidence and are lying." Brown stands accused of attempting to rape a woman in a parked car in the city of Gushikawa on Nov. 2 last year. While he admits to being with the woman, he has denied trying to rape her. Brown, who is based at Camp Courtney in Gushikawa, was handed over to Japanese authorities on Dec. 19 and released on bail in May. During the ongoing trial at Naha District Court, prosecutors submitted as evidence statements by the woman during police questioning in which she expressed strong desire for the defendant to be punished. During the trial itself, however, the woman said she did not intend to file criminal charges against Brown. As for details of the alleged assault that appear in the statement, she testified in court that "it was too dark to see anything." Brown asked the court to remove the three judges currently hearing the case on the grounds they decided to accept the woman's statements to police as evidence, but the request was rejected. He has appealed this decision to the Fukuoka High Court.

6. Japanese Imperial Army's Chemical Weapons in the PRC

The Japan Times ("JAPAN TO PAY CHINA 300 MILLION YEN OVER MUSTARD GAS," Beijing, 10/20/03) reported that Japan has agreed to pay 300 million yen to the PRC for the recent fatal leak of poison gas from chemical weapons left behind by the Japanese military at the end of World War II. The embassy in Beijing announced that Japan will make the payment as "fees for operations to dispose of abandoned chemical weapons," and the PRC has said it would "appropriately distribute" the funds to the victims and their families. The embassy stated that the payout "is not compensation." Asked to comment on the deal, the PRC's Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said, "The incident seriously damaged the safety and national feelings of Chinese citizens and cannot be compensated with any sum of money." Zhang also urged Japan to understand the severe consequences and political impact of the issue, promptly carry out its promise and expedite the disposal of the chemical weapons it abandoned in the PRC. In August, a group of Chinese workers at a construction site in Qiqihar, Heilongjiang Province, dug up five decayed drums, including one containing mustard gas. The gas killed one man and injured 43 people. The incident sparked public outrage against Japan. In early October, Premier Wen Jiabao urged for an early settlement of the issue when meeting Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in Bali, Indonesia. The PRC says the abandoned weapons have killed at least 2,000 people since 1945. Japan promised to dispose of them under a 1997 international convention, and experts from both countries have worked together in recent months to dispose of some. Japan had proposed paying 100 million yen but the PRC disapproved. The two sides then reached an accord in principle about the 300 million yen payment in working-level negotiations in Beijing. Meanwhile, in early October, the Japanese government appealed a Tokyo District Court ruling awarding 190 million yen in damages to a group of Chinese victims of abandoned chemical weapons. The action drew immediate criticism from the PRC Foreign Ministry.

7. Bin Laden's Threat to Japan

The Japan Times ("BIN LADEN REPORTEDLY THREATENS JAPAN," Cairo, 10/20/03) reported that the TV network Al-Jazeera broadcast an audiotape with a voice purported to be that of Osama bin Laden, threatening attacks on six countries -- including Japan -- that have allied with the US. The voice said that countries continuing to cooperate with the US-led occupation of Iraq could become targets of attack. "We reserve the right to respond at the appropriate time and place against all countries participating in this unjust war, particularly Britain, Spain, Australia, Poland, Japan and Italy," the speaker said, according to an excerpt released by the Associated Press. If the tape broadcast by the satellite network is authentic, it would be the first time that bin Laden has mentioned the possibility of attacking Japan. The broadcast prompted the Foreign Ministry to urge Japanese traveling or residing abroad to be cautious of possible terrorist attacks. It was the first tape since one released on the eve of the second anniversary of the Sept. 11 terror attacks -- and the new message came as US President George W. Bush was on a tour of Asian nations rallying allies in the war on terrorism.

III. People's Republic of China

1. PRC on BOAO Forum

China Daily (Sun Shangwu, "PREMIER PUSHES 'WIN-WIN'", BOAO, 11/03/03, P1) reported that leaders of Asian nations on November 2 called for developing a deeply integrated Asia as well as pushing for openness with the rest of the world. "To create a win-win situation through closer cooperation and stronger efforts for development is the only way to make Asia's renewal possible," said Premier Wen Jiabao on November 2 at the Second Annual Conference of Boao Forum for Asia. In his

key-note address, Wen encouraged all countries in the region to maintain peace and stability by cultivating "a new security concept" that features mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and co-operation. Besides highlighting regional integration, Wen emphasized that "Asia cannot rejuvenate in isolation from the world, while the world also needs Asia for prosperity and progress." Turning to PRC's relations with its neighbors in the region, Wen said that PRC's reforms, opening-up and further economic development will surely bring more opportunities for development and tangible benefits to others.

2. ROK's Domestic Politics

China Daily ("ROH REMAINS COMMITTED TO REFERENDUM", Seoul, 11/03/03, P12) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-hyun confirmed on November 2 he will go ahead with a referendum to test his mandate, setting aside doubts that the vote would be held, but said the timing will have to be reviewed. Roh also sought to limit the potential corporate damage of an inquiry into improper political funding, one instance of which led him last month to seek a referendum on his performance and to promise to step down if he lost. Asked whether the referendum plan stood, Roh told reporters: "Yes, it still holds good." The plan for the referendum, announced just eight months into his five-year term, is so unusual that lawyers and politicians doubted its legality under the constitution. More doubts about it arose on October 23 when a government official said Roh would drop the idea if the opposition did not agree to it - and it has not.

3. PRC-DPRK Relations

China Daily (Jiang Zhuqing, "COMMITMENT TO FURTHER NUCLEAR TALKS HAILED", Pyongyang, 11/01-02/03, P2) reported that the DPRK commitment in principle to continuing six-way talks on its nuclear program has delivered an important and positive message to the rest of the world, according to a senior Chinese official. The visit by PRC's top legislator Wu Bangguo to the DPRK was a success and will have a far-reaching impact on bilateral ties, said Vice-Foreign Minister Wang Yi, who accompanied Wu during his three-day trip. Having wrapped up his first visit to the DPRK, Wu, who chairs the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, returned to Beijing on October 31. Wu's tour is the first high-level visit by a Chinese leader since PRC's new leadership was formed, Wang said on October 31. The Chinese delegation included major officials in charge of Party and military affairs, indicating the importance PRC attaches to its links with the DPRK, he said.

China Daily (Jiang Zhuqing, "DPRK SHOWS RESOLVE ON NUCLEAR TALKS", Pyongyang, 10/31/03, P1) reported that pushing for a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula, PRC and the DPRK agreed in principle on October 30 to continue the process of six-party talks on the simmering issue. The consensus was reached during a meeting between Kim Jong-il, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK), and PRC's top legislator Wu Bangguo, who is on an official goodwill visit. PRC and the DPRK support a peaceful solution through dialogue, a news release said yesterday after the meeting. The DPRK stressed the US should accept a package solution to resolve the matter simultaneously. The Chinese side emphasized that it is crucial to resolve the concerns of both the DPRK and the US at the same time.

China Daily (Jiang Zhuqing, "NEIGHBORS WORK TOGETHER FOR PEACE", Pyongyang, 10/30/03, P1) reported that the Korean nuclear issue must be solved peacefully through talks, despite its complexities or whatever trouble or turbulence may be met along the way, said Wu Bangguo, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in his meeting with his DPRK counterpart Kim Yong-nam on October 29. The three-way talks and six-party talks held in Beijing this year have played an important role in preventing further deterioration of the situation, Wu told Kim,

president of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly of the DPRK. Kim made positive comments about PRC's important role in helping solve the issue peacefully and elaborated the DPRK's stance. PRC would like to, together with the DPRK, make unremitting efforts for the peaceful solution to Korean nuclear issue, said Wu while delivering a speech before a banquet in his honor hosted by Kim. PRC supports the DPRK and the ROK's efforts to improve bilateral relations and to realize the peaceful reunification of the peninsula. Sino-DPRK relations are an important component of PRC's foreign policy, and the country's new leadership will continue the traditional friendship and implement further friendly policies towards the DPRK, Wu stressed.

4. US-DPRK Relations on DPRK Nuke Issue

People's Daily (Tan Weibing and Yan Feng, "US CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION DELAYS TRIP TO DPRK", 10/28/03, P3) reported that a US Congressional delegation which is due to leave here on October 26 for a four-day visit to the DPRK has delayed the trip due to opposition of the White House. Republican representative Curt Weldon, who is set to head the bipartisan delegation, confirmed the reports on October 25, saying that the trip was postponed after the White House withdrew its support at the last minute. Weldon, who visited the DPRK in May, said that talks were still continuing about the trip originally scheduled for Oct. 28-31. "Discussions continue between our delegation and North Korean (DPRK's) officials," agencies reports quoted the Pennsylvania Republican as saying. "The members of the delegation still believe that a Congressional visit will positively impact relations between our two nations," he added according to the report.

China Daily ("REPORT: DPRK, US AIM FOR TALKS IN DEC", Tokyo, 10/28/03, P12) reported that the US and the DPRK have begun discussions aimed at holding a second round of six-way talks over Pyongyang's nuclear program in Beijing in early December, a Japanese newspaper reported on October 27. The Asahi Shimbun, quoting "a source close to US-DPRK relations," said officials from the two countries met in New York on October 24 and agreed to meet again. The DPRK said on October 25 that it was prepared to consider a US offer of security guarantees in return for stopping its nuclear program. But Pyongyang also said it was too early to assume that more multilateral talks would be held until it had assessed US's intentions through diplomatic channels. The DPRK had questions about what kind of wording was being considered, at what point such security assurances may be put in writing if it agreed to abandon its nuclear program, and how the document may be exchanged within the six-way talks, the newspaper said.

5. ROK on DPRK Nuke Talks

China Daily ("NEW TALKS ON DPRK NUKE ISSUE EXPECTED", Seoul, 10/29/03, P12) reported that the ROK's unification minister said on October 28 he expected a second round of multilateral talks on the DPRK nuclear program to take place in late November or early December. At an earlier lunch with reporters, Jeong Se-hyun said he had told the DPRK at separate North-South talks this month that Pyongyang should seek dialogue soon with the US because "doves" in the Bush administration had the upper hand. At a separate news conference, ROK Foreign Minister Yoon Young-kwan said Seoul would like to see talks by early December or mid-December but could not rule out November.

6. PRC on DPRK Issue

People's Daily ("CHINA APPRECIATES DPRK'S STANCE ON US SECURITY SUGGESTION", Beijing, 10/27/03, P4) reported that PRC appreciates that the DPRK will consider a written security assurance from the US, calling it a "positive gesture". Zhang Qiyue, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman

made the remark here on October 26 when asked for comments on the DPRK willingness, with some preconditions, to consider the US suggestion to offer a written security assurance to the DPRK. PRC hopes that all parties concerned will further show their sincerity, narrow their differences and create the necessary conditions to continue the dialogue progress and seek a political solution for their concerns, Zhang noted. PRC will continue to contribute its own effort to that, Zhang said in the report.

7. Japan Relations with ROK and DPRK

China Daily ("TOKYO GOVERNOR OFFENDS KOREANS", Tokyo, 10/30/03, P12) reported that Tokyo's governor, known for his xenophobic remarks and nationalistic bent, sparked new controversy on October 29 when he called Japan's invasion and brutal 35-year colonization of the Korean Peninsula a "merger" that Koreans chose. Governor Shintaro Ishihara, speaking at a rally, denied Japan had used military might to take the peninsula. "We never invaded the Korean Peninsula by force. I'm not going to justify Japan's annexation of Korea 100 per cent, but it was mainly their ancestors' responsibility," Ishihara said on Tuesday. Korean groups in Japan on October 29 demanded an immediate apology. The ROK's Foreign Ministry expressed "deep regret" over Ishihara's comments. Tokyo officials said the governor's speech was "not official," and refused to confirm his remarks.

8. Russia-Ukrainian Relations

China Daily ("TALKS ON TUZLA DISPUTE A TOUGH JOB", Moscow, 11/03/03, P12) reported that Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov will not be bringing joyous news back to the Kremlin after meeting with the Ukrainian side on the simmering dispute over a strategically significant island, which had raised a vague prospect for a final settlement of the territorial stand-off. Resolving the Russian-Ukrainian territorial dispute is destined to be a formidable task for both sides, taking into account the strategic and economic significance of the Kerch Strait. Apart from the divergence over delimitation, Kiev and Moscow have also differed over the legal ownership of the Tuzla Island, which was once the end of a spit stretching from Russia's mainland but was blown away by a storm in 1925. It is hard to predict how and when diplomats from the two countries will resolve the Tuzla dispute, but it is beyond doubt that the upcoming negotiations will be a tough challenge and a test of patience on both sides.

IV. CanKor E-Clipping Service

1. Issue #140

The Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) held a consultation in Toronto 20-21 October, on "DPRK: Axis of Evil or Nexus of Need?" Numerous experts from Canadian churches, NGOs and Government reflected on seven years of Canadian food assistance to the DPRK, the current humanitarian situation, and prospects for continued assistance programs. This week's issue of CanKor is a full-edition FOCUS dedicated to reports from the CFGB meeting. Included are excerpts from the address by Canadian Secretary of State for Asia Pacific David Kilgour; the executive summary of an independent evaluation of CFGB's DPRK program; and excerpts from the report of a Caritas Internationalis monitoring trip that highlights some of the changes within the country as observed by relief workers. Rick Corsino, country director of the World Food Program in Pyongyang, presents a preview of the results of a joint UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food

Program (WFP) crop assessment report warning that despite better harvests, millions of North Koreans will require assistance in the coming year.

For more information: <http://www.cankor.ca>

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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