NAPSNet Daily Report 04 September, 2003

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 04 September, 2003", NAPSNet Daily Report, September 04, 2003, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-04-september-2003/

CONTENTS

I. United States

1. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Tactics
2. ROK on DPRK KEDO Project
3. US DPRK Nuclear Test Warning
4. DPRK-US Diplomacy
5. DPRK Nuclear Capabilities
6. DPRK Ferry Japan Port Call
7. Taiwan War Games
8. US President Bush on PRC Currency
9. PRC AIDS Policy
10. Beijing Olympics Preparations

I. United States

1. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Tactics

Agence France-Presse ("NKOREA'S NUCLEAR BUILD-UP THREAT A TACTIC," 09/04/03) reported that the DPRK's threat to build up its nuclear deterrent force is a pressure tactic aimed at giving it an edge in future nuclear crisis talks, the ROK's Unification Minister said. "The conflicting message is a sort of pressure tactic outside the negotiating table ahead of further talks," said Jeong Se-hyun, South Korea's top policymaker on relations with the DPRK, on Thursday. Following inconclusive six-nation talks in Beijing last week, the DPRK said it had no option but to build up its nuclear arsenal faced with Washington's refusal to drop its "hostile" policy to the DPRK. The DPRK described the talks as "useless" and said it had no interest in further negotiations. However, Jeong told ROK reporters that the DPRK would eventually return to the negotiating table, according to a report by Yonhap news agency. In Seoul, Jeong said that he expected no escalation of the 11-month-old nuclear crisis from North Korea, despite its threat to launch a nuclear test. "The North would not do things that can be defined as escalating the situation," he was quoted as saying by Yonhap. In an

effort to promote a new round of talks, the ROK's national security chief Ra Jong-Yil will visit the PRC from Tuesday to Friday.

2. ROK on DPRK KEDO Project

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREA OPPOSED TO SCRAPPING REACTOR PROJECT IN NORTH KOREA," 09/04/03) reported that the ROK is opposed to scrapping a project to build advanced nuclear reactors in the DPRK while talks on the DPRK's nuclear crisis continue, a top policymaker said. The ROK would stand to lose 1.4 billion dollars including compensation payments to contractors should the project be abandoned, Unification Minister Jeong Se-Hyun said Thursday. "We have spent no less than 930 million dollars so far. If the project is terminated, we would be left with 1.4 billion dollars of losses," Jeong told journalists. "It would be better for the project to move on. And in this context, Japan is cautious (about killing off the project) as well," Jeong said. An international consortium led by the ROK, Japan and the US has been building two light-water reactors in the DPRK's northeastern port of Sinpo which will cost some 4.6 billion dollars. "The US, in private, raised questions about the rationale for continuing with the project, but it does not say in public that the project should be terminated," Jeong said. However, Jeong, the top ROK policymaker in charge of inter-Korean affairs, said the fate of the light-water reactor project would eventually depend on progress in negotiations with the DPRK to dismantle its nuclear program.

3. US DPRK Nuclear Test Warning

Agence France-Presse ("US WARNS NORTH KOREA ON NUCLEAR TEST THREAT," Washington, 09/04/03) reported that the US delivered a veiled warning to North Korea (news - web sites), saying it would face "consequences" if it made good on an alleged threat to conduct a nuclear test. The official, briefing reporters on condition of anonymity, stopped short of saying the US would pull out of a six-nation bid to end the nuclear crisis should such a test take place. But he hinted that such a move would deal a serious blow to hopes of finding a negotiated way out of the crisis which erupted last October. "I don't want to downplay the threats that were made by the DPRK (North Korea) to have some kind of nuclear test, or to demonstrate the means that they would have to deliver nuclear weapons," the official said. "These words are very disturbing, and I hope that Pyongyang realizes that provocative actions can and will have consequences, whether it be to the atmosphere of the talks or something more than that." The US says the DPRK made the threat at six-nation crisis talks last week in Beijing, though Russia has denied that any such warning was given. The talks ended without any obvious signs of agreement but an undertaking to meet again at a date yet to be fixed. The senior US official said he was disappointed at the DPRK approach to the talks, describing it as "scripted" and corresponding to Pyongyang's perceptions of US positions, and not the US stance itself.

4. DPRK-US Diplomacy

Reuters (Arshad Mohammed, "US OPEN TO 'SEQUENCE' OF STEPS WITH NORTH KOREA," Washington, 09/04/03) reported that the US last week told the DPRK it was willing to discuss a sequence of unspecified steps it could take if the DPRK abandons its nuclear ambitions, a senior US official said on Thursday. The official said the US could take some steps before the DPRK fully dismantled its suspected nuclear program, suggesting Washington may be considering offering the DPRK incentives despite repeated US statements that it will not "reward" the DPRK for its pursuit of atomic weapons. Providing the first detailed US briefing on last week's six-nation talks in Beijing on ending the DPRK's suspected nuclear weapons program, the official said Pyongyang "clearly stated"

that it did not want nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula despite also threatening to test a nuclear weapon. The US official's comments appeared to be a slightly more upbeat assessment of the talks among the two Koreas, the US, the PRC, Russia and Japan than suggested by initial media coverage, which focused on Pyongyang's threat to test. The official reiterated that the US was willing to discuss security guarantees for the DPRK -- something Pyongyang has long demanded -- if it gives up nuclear weapons. "We made clear that we are not seeking to strangle North Korea. We stated that North Korea unquestionably has a much better future if it turns away from nuclear weapons," the official told reporters, saying the US team had sought to present a positive case to Pyongyang to abandon such weapons. "We made clear that we can sincerely discuss security concerns in the context of nuclear dismantlement and that we are willing to discuss a sequence of denuclearization measures with corresponding measures on the part of both sides," he added, declining to say what steps Washington might take.

5. DPRK Nuclear Capabilities

The Associated Press (Sang-Hun Choe, "NORTH KOREA TO RAISE NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES," Seoul, 09/03/03) reported that Kim Jong Il endorsed Pyongyang's decision to "increase its nuclear deterrent," spurring orchestrated celebrations by dancing housewives and loyal soldiers. The bespectacled Kim, 61, nodded nonchalantly from a platform as 670 legislators stood in unison, wildly clapped their hands and shouted hurrays to voice unanimous support for his new five-year term as chairman of the DPRK's highest governing body, the National Defense Commission. Tens of thousands of olive-clad soldiers stood in neat lines at a Pyongyang rally as a speaker called for increased "battle readiness against American imperialists." Women in colorful dress and children wearing red scarves sang songs and danced on streets decorated with flags and flowers. The festivities, carefully choreographed by the Stalinist regime, came as Kim upped the stakes in negotiations with the US and other countries over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program. The DPRK says it will give up its program only if Washington guarantees the Pyongyang regime's security by signing a nonaggression treaty and providing badly needed economic aid.

6. DPRK Ferry Japan Port Call

Agence France-Presse ("NKOREAN FERRY MAKES SECOND PORT CALL TO JAPAN IN NINE DAYS," 09/04/03) reported that a controversial DPRK ferry made its second port call here in nine days as the Stalinist state rushed shipments of goods in time to celebrate next week's 55th anniversary of its founding. Amid cheers and jeers, the Man Gyong Bong-92 docked at 12:34 pm (0334 GMT) on Thursday at Niigata port on the Sea of Japan (East Sea) coast, 250 kilometres (155 miles) north of Tokyo. The ferry, previously suspected of smuggling money and drugs, last called at the port last week on its first visit to Japan in seven months. Japanese authorities began an inspection of the ship -- the only direct link between Japan and the DPRK -- as Japanese officials warned the vessel's operator to fix safety defects identified last week. Anti-DPRK protesters on the wayside included relatives of Japanese citizens kidnapped by DPRK agents during the Cold War era. Separated from the protesters by police vans, some 100 ethnic Koreans living in Japan -- some of them wearing pink and light blue traditional Korean clothes -- cheered the arrival, waving small DPRK flags. Korean songs blared from the ferry's loudspeakers, drowning out the voices of the protesters who yelled: "Go home. Give our children back to us." Analysts said the ship's hurried return to Japan is mainly due to the DPRK's preparations for ceremonies to mark the 55th anniversary of the DPRK's foundation on September 9. "North Korea is now in a hurry to collect food and presents for its senior officials to mark the nation's foundation day next week," said Hideshi Takesada, a professor at National Institute for Defence Studies.

7. Taiwan War Games

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN HOLDS MASSIVE WARGAMES AMID WARNINGS OF FUTURE CHINESE THREAT," 09/04/02) reported that Taiwan staged its biggest ever live-fire military wargames here, firing sophisticated missiles and mobilizing high-tech weaponry in a mock 'invasion' by the PRC. The military exercise, staged in the northeastern Ilan county and codenamed "Han Kuang 19" (Han Glory), was aimed at fully illustrating the defense capability of Taiwan's armed forces, the defense ministry said Thursday. "The all-out defense forces in Ilan area are deployed to simulate the People's Liberation Army's tactics and operational schemes of cross-Strait operations," the ministry said. Military officials said nearly all the modern weaponry Taiwan owns was mobilized in the 110-minute drill which was presided over by President Chen Shui-bian and televised live nationwide. The army kicked off the drill by firing two Hawk surface-to-air missiles in response to a simulated attack by enemy aircraft. One Standard surface-to-air missile was launched from a naval warship, while a fleet of jet fighters, including French-made Mirage 2000-5s, US-made F-16s, and locally made Indigenous Defensive Fighters, scrambled to intercept the imaginary invaders, firing air-to-air missiles. Taiwan's military authorities also unveiled a locally-designed "stealth" missile boat when a Hsiungfeng II ship-to-ship missile, designed with a range of 150 kilometers (90 miles), was launched from the 170-tonne vessel. Analysts said the boat, designed to reduce the reflection of radar waves, may be able to "passively" receive intelligence collected by other Taiwan warships, enabling the fleet to launch missile blitzes against enemy warships without exposing their location. Each missile boat, designed to cruise at a maximum speed of 33 knots per hour, will be armed with four Hsiungfeng II missiles. The navy plans to build 30 such missile boats under the "Kuanghwa Six Project." The fleet is to replace dozens of aging 50-tonne Seagull missile boats, each of which is fitted with two 40-kilometer range Hsiungfeng I missiles. Taiwan's defense ministry warned last week that China would be capable of mounting a successful attack on Taiwan after 2008 if the island did not strengthen its defensive capabilities.

8. US President Bush on PRC Currency

Reuters ("BUSH TO 'DEAL WITH' CHINA CURRENCY ISSUE," Washington, 09/04/03) reported that US President Bush said on Thursday that the PRC's currency policy was unfair and Washington would "deal with it accordingly" following inconclusive talks in Beijing. Bush, in an interview with CNBC, said Treasury Secretary John Snow used meetings in Beijing to "deliver a strong message from the administration that we expect our trading partners to treat our people fairly -- our producers and workers and farmers and manufacturers -- and we don't think we're being treated fairly when a currency is controlled by the government." "We believe the currency ought to be controlled by (the) market and ought to reflect the true values of the respective economies," Bush said, adding: "I'm waiting for him (Snow) to return and I look forward to hearing their response to him and then we'll deal with it accordingly." In talks with Snow, the PRC agreed that its currency, the yuan, should eventually float freely, but resisted US calls to speed up the process.

9. PRC AIDS Policy

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA DEFENDS AIDS POLICY, SAYS IT IS DETERMINED TO ADDRESS EPIDEMIC," 09/04/03) reported that the PRC slammed an international rights group for "falsely" blaming government policy for a massive AIDS outbreak, and said it was determined to care for victims of the epidemic. "If some international organizations, based on some inaccurate information make irresponsible accusations against China, I think this will not go with the facts," foreign ministry spokesman Kong Quan said Thursday. "It is true that in some parts of Henan province there were some problems with blood collecting stations and it led to the spread of AIDS in that area. "The

central government attaches great importance to this issue." Kong was referring to a damning report by New York-based Human Rights Watch which Wednesday said that the government was covering up the epidemic, playing down the numbers of people infected and implementing discriminatory policies against sufferers. Independent medical workers and rights group estimate that at least a million people, sometimes including entire villages, contracted HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, from the mid-1980s because of unsanitary state-run blood collections. The PRC only recently acknowledged it has a problem. "The number of persons with HIV is much higher than the one million cases that Beijing officially acknowledges," the 94-page report, 'Locked Doors: The human rights of people living with HIV/AIDS in China,' said. "It is time for China to confront the blood collection scandal," said Brad Adams, executive director of Human Rights Watch's Asia division. "Beijing should authorize a full and impartial investigation into the involvement of local authorities in the blood scandal, and hold those responsible accountable." The health ministry repeatedly refused comment but Kong claimed the epidemic in Henan was contained and unsanitary blood collecting stations shut down.

10. Beijing Olympics Preparations

The Associated Press (Ted Anthony, "CHINA REDUCING POLLUTION AHEAD OF OLYMPICS," 09/04/03) reported that the PRC's Olympic organizers are ordering "polluting enterprises" in central Beijing to either renovate or move out of the area in preparation for the 2008 Summer Games, a senior organizing official said Thursday. Jiang Xiaoyu, deputy president of the Beijing Olympic organizing committee, said the measures were part of what he called a diligent attempt to cut pollution and improve the environment in Beijing before the games. "Polluting enterprises within Beijing's Fourth Ring Road will have to be renovated or resettled to outside areas," Jiang said at a news conference, after Beijing Olympic officials met for three days with the International Olympic Committee's Coordination Commission. Beijing is encircled by a series of ring roads, each representing new industrial and commercial development. The area inside the Fourth Ring Road encompasses all of what visitors would consider the capital city, including major hotels, homes for millions of people, and Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City. Jiang didn't say how the government will decide which businesses have to move or where they would go. Jiang said the Beijing committee's goals include quintupling the use of natural gas within the city by 2008 and a sharp reduction in the use of dirtier coal in a bid to reduce air pollution. "The improvement of the air quality in Beijing has been supported by its industries and people," Jiang said. "Our committee wants the Olympics to be a green Olympics and improve the environment of Beijing. We attach great importance to this goal."

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:

Ilmin Internationl Relations Institute
BK21 The Education and Research Corps for East Asian Studies
Department of Political Science, Korea University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

International Peace Research Institute (PRIME),
Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan

Monash Asia Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Brandon Yu: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

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

Kim Young-soo: yskim328@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hibiki Yamaguchi: hibikiy84@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Saiko Iwata: saiko@akira.ne.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Hiroya Takagi: hiroya_takagi@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@online.ru
Moscow, Russian Federation

Wu Chunsi: 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

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-04-september-2003/

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