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I. United States

1. DPRK Rejects Nuclear Inspections

The Associated Press (Sang-Hun Choe, "NORTH KOREA REJECTS U.N. NUCLEAR AGENCY'S CALL FOR WEAPONS INSPECTIONS," Seoul, 12/04/02) reported that the DPRK rejected a call by the UN nuclear monitoring agency for the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons program and allow foreign inspections. DPRK Foreign Minister Paek Nam Sun said the November 29 resolution was "extremely unilateral," the DPRK official news agency KCNA reported Wednesday. The International Atomic Energy Agency's resolution urged the DPRK to "give up any nuclear weapons programs expeditiously" and open "all relevant facilities to IAEA inspection and safeguards." "Paek clarified that the government cannot accept the ... resolution," KCNA said, citing a letter sent Monday from Paek to director-general IAEA Mohamed El Baradei.

2. US on DPRK Inspections Rejection

The New York Times (David E. Sanger, "US CRITICIZES NORTH KOREA FOR REJECTING INSPECTIONS," Washington, 12/05/02) reported that the US White House issued a muted criticism of DPRK today, saying it was "disappointing" that the DPRK had rejected a demand for inspections of its newly revealed program to develop nuclear weapons from highly enriched uranium. The White

House denounced the decision and said it would work with other countries in the region to find a peaceful solution. "The rejection of the IAEA resolution to open its facilities to inspections is another disappointing example of North Korea's isolation that will only hurt the people of North Korea," White House press secretary Ari Fleischer said Wednesday. "We will continue to apply this pressure to DPRK by working in partnership with Russia and China ... as well as Japan and the ROK. The White House statement today was in sharp contrast to its responses about the inspection of Iraq's suspected weapons sites. At a briefing with reporters, Ari Fleischer, the president's press secretary, insisted that the US did not employ a double standard in dealing with countries developing weapons of mass destruction. "Not every policy needs to be put into a photocopier," Fleischer said today. He argued that Iraq had repeatedly defied United Nations Security Council resolutions, and said "that is not the case in North Korea."

3. Cross-Straits Direct Links

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN WELCOMES A RARE INVITATION FROM CHINA TO DISCUSS STEEL TARIFFS IN THE WTO," Taipei, 12/05/02) and Reuters ("TAIWAN SAYS CHINA AGREES TO WTO TALKS OVER Steel," Taipei, 12/05/02) reported that the PRC has agreed to bilateral talks with Taiwan over a steel dispute under the auspices of the WTO, a government official said on Thursday, a move that would end a three-year freeze on dialogue and could lead to expanded commercial ties. While analysts were reluctant to call the PRC's agreement to talks a breakthrough, Taiwan has long called for direct talks with PRC officials, saying anything can be discussed, even the one-China policy. "From our understanding, China's WTO (World Trade Organisation) representative has agreed to bilateral consultations after a request by the Taiwan side," said economics ministry spokesman Berton Chiu. "However, the details of the talks are being worked out in Geneva," said Chiu. "It is a very welcome development. Taiwan has always sought dialogue with China under WTO," said foreign ministry spokeswoman Chang Siao-yue.

4. DPRK Slabe Labor Camps?

The Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA'S SLAVE CAMPS STILL OPERATING: MAGAZINE REPORT," 12/05/02) reported that slave labor camps are still operating despite the DPRK's denials, according to a report in the Far Eastern Economic Review. The magazine said in its latest edition, which hit the streets Thursday, that it had obtained satellite images of one camp along the northeastern frontier with the PRC that imprisoned about 50,000 people. It said the satellite images, bought from a US-based commercial provider of satellite imagery called DigitalGlobe, were the first photos of a slave labor camp in the DPRK to ever be made public. According to the magazine, the No. 22 Camp in Haengyong, which was captured in the images, is one of the biggest in the DPRK. "Inmates are crammed into clusters of huts, each houses around 30 people who provide slave labor for the (nearby) farms and factories," the magazine quoted a former prison guard at the camp, Ahn Myong Chol, as saying. "Some inmates are sent to the Chungbong coal mine, several kilometers away. Miners sqeeze into narrow shafts to fill their daily coal quota. "Many die of exhaustion, their energy sapped by pitifully small rations, or by vicious beatings from guards." The Far Eastern Economic Review said the DPRK government had gone to extraordinary lengths to prevent the detection of the slave labor camps in a bid to avoid further international condemnation. It said the No. 22 Camp was made to look like an ordinary village for the satellite images. The magazine quoted ROK intelligence agency sources as saying about 210,000 people were imprisoned in 10 camps around the DPRK in 1999. It said five had been closed after news of their locations leaked out, but did not give number about the number of people now detained. According to the magazine, most people were imprisoned for offending DPRK dictator Kim Jong-Il, or his father and the nation's founder, Kim Il-Sung. "The elder Kim decreed that three generations of a class enemy's family be

wiped out to cleanse his socialist paradise. That directive still holds," the magazine said. "An offence can be as trifling as tearing up a newspaper photo of Kim Jong-Il. But it's nonetheless a life sentence in the truest sense of the word. Inmates transferred to, or born in, these camps will never leave."

5. US on ROK Domestic Politics

The Agence France-Presse ("WHITE HOUSE WATCHES BLUE HOUSE BATTLE IN SOUTH KOREA," 12/05/02) reported that with the ROK's knife-edge election speeding to a tense climax, the Bush White House is silently rooting for its favored candidate, seeing its own conservative distaste for the DPRK mirrored by former judge Lee Hoi-chang. The December 19 polls, which match Lee against self-proclaimed people's champion Roh Moo-hyun, come as a relief for the administration. President Kim Dae-Jung will shuffle off the stage early next year, ending his uneasy relationship with President George W. Bush, following several spats with the White House which clouded his "Sunshine Policy" of reconciliation with DPRK. The polls to replace him could decide whether the current delicacy of ROK-US cooperation on DPRK policy is replaced by a unity of approach, analysts say. A Lee victory could see the ROK fall closer into line behind Bush's bid to further isolate "axis of evil" member DPRK. Lee has said he would stop financial aid to the DPRK unless its leader Kim Jong-Il renounces his recently revealed bid to produce nuclear weapons from enriched uranium. Roh said however in a debate Tuesday that US-led pressure on the DPRK on the nuclear issue poses "considerable risks" to peace, and that imposing sanctions would cost Seoul leverage with the DPRK. So sharp is the debate that some observers here believe a Roh presidency could be amount to a policy migrane for the White House. "They would not be on the same page strategically as to what they want to see towards the North or even tactically," said Marcus Noland of the Institute for International Economics. "I think the Bush administration would face, from its own standpoint, a very unpleasant situation in which it has its main ally undercutting its policy."

6. Japan-US Soldier Rape Case

Reuters (Teruaki Ueno, "US REFUSES TO HAND OVER MARINE IN JAPAN RAPE CASE," Tokyo, 12/05/02) reported that the US said on Thursday it would not agree to Japan's request to hand over to Japanese authorities a US Marine suspected of trying to rape a woman on Okinawa, home to most of the US military bases in Japan. The US refusal comes at a time when public resentment toward US forces is growing in Japan and the ROK, with calls to revise treaties governing the conduct of the US troops in the two key US allies. Japan had demanded the US military hand over Major Michael J. Brown, 39, who police allege tried to rape the woman in her car on November 2. Japanese police have declined to give details about the woman, but Kyodo news agency said she was from the Philippines. "We have informed the government of Japan in a December 5 meeting of the US-Japan joint committee that the government of the US is unable to agree to transfer custody in this case prior to indictment," the US embassy in Tokyo said.

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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