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## I. United States

### 1. US on DPRK Six-way Talks Delay

Agence France-Presse ("US DENIES BLOCKING SIX-NATION NORTH KOREA CRISIS TALKS," Washington, 12/04/03) reported that the US denied it was to blame for a diplomatic hitch that could delay six-nation North Korea nuclear talks until next year, saying Pyongyang had demanded major concessions before the dialogue started. The State Department's point man on the crisis, James Kelly, meanwhile admitted that exhaustive diplomacy aimed at convening a second round of the forum was as testing as "herding cats" as he met his ROK and Japanese counterparts. The three allies met after the ROK urged the US and the DPRK to moderate their positions to allow the talks to go ahead as hoped in Beijing this month. But the US said for the second time in as many days that it was prepared to show up for a meeting, blaming the DPRK for stalling. "We are ready to go. North Korea has not yet agreed to a date," said State Department deputy spokesman Adam Ereli. "It's not that we're standing in the way. We're ready to talk." A senior US official said that the DPRK was attempting to induce US concessions in writing on certain steps to defuse the crisis before the talks begin. "I'm not saying that there won't be something before the talks, but you can't negotiate the round before the round," the official said on condition of anonymity. "You have to leave some things for the talks."

### 2. Response to Australia and US Missile Defense

Agence France-Presse ("AUSTRALIAN MISSILE DEFENCE PLAN MAY CAUSE REGIONAL UNCERTAINTY: INDONESIA," 12/05/03) reported that Australia's decision to take part in the controversial US program to develop a missile defence shield could create uncertainty in the region, Indonesia's foreign ministry said on Friday. Spokesman Marty Natalegawa said Jakarta's view at present was that "these things offer more uncertainties and potential complications rather than solutions". Australian Defence Minister Robert Hill has said that co-operation will mainly involve scientific research, most likely in the area of radar sensors and the Australian-designed over-th--horizon system known as the Jindalee Operational Radar Network. Hill said there were no current plans to host part of a ground-based missile defence system on Australian territory. "A decision by a government for a process of this magnitude will no doubt be responded to and scrutinised by other governments in the regions, not because of any ill-intentions, but simply because this is such an important decision and we want to look at what it means for our security as well," Natalegawa said. Natalegawa said Jakarta had been briefed by Canberra on the plan and respected Australia's right to develop its own defense program, but "sometimes issues can be avoided if there are (more) consultations."

### 3. Japan on Russia Kyoto Protocol Ratification

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN 'BELIEVES IN RUSSIA' ON KYOTO PROTOCOL RATIFICATION: OFFICIAL," 12/05/03) reported that Japan is confident Russia will ratify the Kyoto Protocol on cutting greenhouse gases and believes a remark by a Kremlin official suggesting otherwise was a negotiation tactic, an official said. "We believe in Russia," said Yasushi Ogasawara, assistant deputy chief at the environment ministry's global warming division. "Our recognition is that Russia is working towards its ratification," he said. The pact, signed in 1997 in the ancient Japanese city of Kyoto, cannot enter into force without Russia's agreement after the US rejected it. The Kremlin said Thursday that Russia demanded changes to the pact and would not ratify it if other signatories refused, throwing the treaty's future in doubt. The warning came as representatives of 180 countries met in Milan, Italy, to discuss the pact. Ogasawara said the Russian mission to the meeting had not said it would not want to ratify the treaty or that it wanted changes to it.

### 4. DPRK Telecommunications Network Development

Choson Sinbo (Kang I-ruk, "MODERNIZATION OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK BEING RAPIDLY ACCELERATED IN THE DPRK -- FOUNDATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION INDUSTRY," Pyongyang, 12/03/03) reported that it is frequently noticed that, lately, in Pyongyang citizens are talking over mobile phones. Presently, approximately 20,000 mobile phones have been introduced in the country. To use a mobile phone, approximately 300 euros should be paid in addition to 750 euros paid as a start-up fee, and, as phone fees, 15 won is paid per minute to make calls, and a certain fee is also paid when calls are received. A great deal more money is paid when compared to ordinary telephones in the urban areas that cost 35 chon per three minutes. Telecommunications Sector's Incomes Will Be Used for Facilities Investment "In other countries, too, entrance fees and phone call fees were incomparably expensive in the beginning when compared to ordinary phones. A great deal of money has been invested, and we need to expand the mobile phone networks in the future. Accordingly, mobile phones are presently used only by those who urgently need to use them" said Hwang Ch'ol-p'ung, director of the Korea Posts and Telecommunications Corporation. The state is reportedly taking a measure to allow the telecommunications sector to divert a certain portion of its income into modernizing its facilities without remitting it to the state. The goal is to lay mobile phone service networks in all counties by 2007. Meanwhile, traditional

phones are also being introduced at a high level. A goal has been set to install traditional phones in almost all households within four to five years in the future. To this end, the number of automatic switchboards, which operate without switchboard operators, should be increased, and, accordingly, the Pyongyang Telecommunications Equipment Plant was equipped with automatic switchboard production facilities in October of this year, thus laying the groundwork for self-reliant mass production of automatic switchboards. At the same time, a fiber-optic cable plant, which will produce cables needed for the expansion of networks, is also under construction.

### 5. DPRK-PRC Border Crackdown

Radio Free Asia ("NORTH KOREA CRACKS DOWN ON BORDER AREA WITH CHINA," 12/05/03) reported that North Koreans considering escaping across the border to China are being warned by a human rights group not to make any moves for the time being, as DPRK security forces stage a major crackdown in the area, RFA's Korean service reports. "Now high-voltage cables have been installed around the border area near Duman River," recent defector Soon-hang Park told RFA. "When I was crossing Duman River and saw the cables, I thought I could be electrocuted to death, but the current was not on. Electricity was only on in the areas near the front of the train station where there are many passersby," he said. Park said DPRK security forces had stepped up their inspections of border crossings to China. "It is very strict. First of all, when you get off the train, National Defense Committee officers in civilian clothes inspect identification cards of all suspicious people at the front of the train station," he said. "Also safety officers who are now called security guards inspect everyone and when you step into the banks of Duman River you can see soldiers shouldering rifles for about three miles along. So it is very difficult to escape," Park said. A ROK-based rights group confirmed Park's report. "Under the current situation is now very difficult for people to escape from North Korea," Chol-hwan Kang, director of the ROK Democracy Network Against the DPRK Gulag told RFA reporter Won-hee Lee. "In the past, defectors could bribe soldiers to open escape routes, but nowadays the atmosphere of the border areas is quite tense because of the intensive inspection by the National Defense Committee that includes even soldiers," Kang said. He said that the growing use of cell phones smuggled from the PRC, often using PRC service packages, had caused grave concern in Pyongyang, especially as some North Koreans were able to make calls to South Korea and even the US, as well as China.

### 6. Inter-Korean Railway Development

The Associated Press ("TWO KOREAS TO BUILD SIGNAL SYS FOR CROSS-BORDER RAILWAY," Seoul, 12/05/03) reported that the ROK and DPRK agreed Friday to start building the signal, communication and electricity systems for their cross-border railway in the second quarter of next year. The agreement, reached at a ROK hotel between government negotiators of the two sides, brightened the prospects for opening a rail line across the heavily fortified border for the first time in over half a century. The Koreas began work on relinking their rail lines at their border following their historic summit in 2000, and finally reconnected them at a border point north of Seoul in June. But it remains unclear when trains will start running on the cross-border railway amid lingering mistrust and political tensions over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program. Besides a lack of a signal system, the DPRK has yet to lay more rails on its side. Friday's agreement came at the end of three days of talks at a resort hotel on the South's east coast, the eighth round of such talks. Opening the sealed border to regular traffic would be a powerful symbol of reconciliation despite decades of animosity between the two former battlefield foes. The ROK hopes to eventually link its rail line with the PRC and Russia.

### 7. DPRK Religious Suppression

Radio Free Asia ("RELIGION SPREADS IN N KOREA DESPITE SUPPRESSION," 12/05/03) reported that a defector that formerly monitored cultural activities for the DPRK has revealed that there is a small but growing amount of religious activity in the DPRK, which decries any form of religious belief as superstition, and still monitors all forms of cultural activity by its citizens, RFA's Korean service reports. "[Religion] is being spread little by little," former DPRK party cadre Soon-hang Park told RFA. "But the authorities are very strict about this and they say that fortune telling, and any such superstitious beliefs should also be uprooted from the very beginning." "When caught, people are sent to prison without exception." Park said he met various forms of religious and cultural activity during his time as an official with the ruling party in North Korea, and that Christianity had made an impact in some areas of the country influenced by ROK 'religious philosophies.' "Some women would praise God by singing songs, and teach Christian doctrines in front of people even when I was giving lectures," he recalls. Park said his job also involved monitoring his fellow party members to see if they were tuning in to foreign broadcasts. "I went around the houses and inspected their TV and radio frequencies to check if they have tuned their equipment to proper frequencies," he said. "But if they still did not cooperate and listened to the programs clandestinely, then their equipment was confiscated and legal punishment followed... So you have to listen only in private and not in public-if it is discovered, you are sent to a prison," Park said. He said he listened to some of the ROK broadcaster KBS' programming in Korean. "People usually listen to two programs: Radio Free Asia's Korean broadcasts and VOA (Voice of America)," Park 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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