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CONTENTS

I. United States

- 1. Reunion of Separated Families
  2. US-DPRK Relations
  3. DPRK Future
  4. ROK Official Visit to US
  5. Announcement

II. Republic of Korea

- 1. ROK on US Policy towards DPRK
  2. Inter-Korean Talks
  3. Inter-Korean Red Cross Talks
  4. Second Inter-Korean Working Level Talks Delayed
  5. DPRK-US Missile Talks
  6. DPRK Doctors Visits US

I. United States

1. Reunion of Separated Families

The Associated Press (Jae-Suk Yoo, "KOREAS AGREE TO MORE FAMILY REUNIONS," Seoul, 1/29/01) reported that local ROK pool reports said the DPRK on Monday accepted an ROK proposal to hold another round of reunions for 100 separated family members from each side in late February. The reports also said the two sides also agreed to allow first-ever correspondence among 300 selected, separated families on each side beginning on March 15.

2. US-DPRK Relations

Los Angeles Times (Robin Wright, "US SIGNALS WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE NORTH KOREA," Washington, 1/29/01) reported that during talks between US Secretary of State Colin L. Powell and Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono, the US Bush administration indicated on January 26 that it is willing to pursue rapprochement with the DPRK if it moves toward a formal agreement on limiting sales and export of its long-range missiles. A senior US administration official said Powell indicated that the US "proceed step by step as North Korea meets the concerns that we have about missiles, about military forces and tension on the peninsula." The Bush administration is widely expected to take a tougher line than its predecessor had toward the DPRK. Powell's statement during his US Senate confirmation hearings earlier this month triggered an angry response from the DPRK. A DPRK Foreign Ministry spokesman told the official Korean Central News Agency that the DPRK "cannot but interpret what he [Powell] said as a statement reflecting the sinister intention of big war industrial monopolies and other conservative hard-liners in the United States to keep U.S.-North Korean relations in the hostile and belligerent relationship forever." The spokesman warned that the DPRK would respond in kind. He said, "If the U.S. brandishes a sword at us, we will counter it with a sword, and if it shows good faith, we will reciprocate." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for January 29, 2001.]

3. DPRK Future

Deutche Presse-Agentur ("NORTH KOREA PREPARING TO OPEN UP, U.N. OFFICIAL SAYS," New York, 1/24/01) reported that Carolyn McAskie, head of the emergency unit of the UN office for humanitarian affairs, said on January 24 that the situation in the DPRK is "slightly in flux" because the country is preparing to open up following its leader's visit to the PRC. However, McAskie warned, "The definition of 'opening up' in North Korea is different from anywhere else. They have a very long way to go. It's an extremely closed society." She said public utilities are "virtually non-existent", electricity is available only under "extreme conditions" and most of the houses are not heated in winter. McAskie said the DPRK is also suffering from the extreme cold and have to depend on aid, particularly on drugs supplied by international organizations.

4. ROK Official Visit to US

The Associated Press Monday ("SOUTH KOREAN OFFICIAL TO VISIT US," Washington, 1/29/01) reported that US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said ROK foreign minister Lee Joung-Binn plans to meet with US Secretary of State Colin Powell form February 6-8 while visiting Washington to discuss the two allies' joint DPRK policy. Boucher said, "They will discuss a range of important issues, including the unprecedented opportunity for reconciliation on the Korean peninsula." He said Powell and US State Department officials "look forward to building a close and productive working relationship with Foreign Minister Lee, and further deepening our vital security and economic partnership."

5. Announcement

The Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS) at the Monterey Institute for International Studies announced on January 27 that Leonard S. Spector, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Arms Control and Nonproliferation at the US Department of Energy, will join CNS as a Deputy Director of the Center and the Editor-in-Chief of all CNS publications. He will be based at the CNS Washington D.C. office. Prior to his tenure at the Department of Energy, Spector served as Senior Associate at the Carnegie

Endowment for International Peace and Director of its Nuclear Non-Proliferation Project.

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK on US Policy towards DPRK

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "PARTIES DIVIDED OVER U.S. POLICY ON N.K.," Seoul, 01/29/01) reported that lawmakers of ROK's ruling and opposition parties who returned from trips to the US are showing conflicting views over the Bush administration's attitude toward the DPRK. Members of the ruling Millennium Democratic Party (MDP) said that they got the impression that the new Republican government will follow the Clinton administration's engagement policy on the DPRK. But lawmakers of the opposition Grand National Party (GNP) said they had a different impression. Representative Lee Bu-young, vice president of the GNP, said, "Deputy U.S. Secretary-designate of State Richard Armitage told me that the Bush administration will never give a 'penny' of economic aid to North Korea if Pyongyang does not secure transparency in its production and export of missiles." Lee said Armitage made these and other remarks while stressing the principle of "conditional reciprocity" in dealing with the DPRK during a meeting with a group of ROK lawmakers. Political watchers criticized that the ruling and opposition parties are trying to interpret the Republicans' remarks on the Bush administration's DPRK policy to their advantage.

2. Inter-Korean Talks

The Korea Herald ("INTER-KOREAN PARLIAMENTARY SPEAKERS' MEETING LIKELY IN APRIL," Seoul, 01/29/01) reported that ROK National Assembly Speaker Le Man-sup said on January 27 that he expects to hold a meeting with his DPRK counterpart during the annual meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) scheduled for Havana, Cuba, in April. Lee, who returned on January 26 from a meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) in Chile, said that Choe Thae-bok, chairman of DPRK's Supreme People's Assembly, will attend the IPU meeting. "It is natural for us to meet there," Lee said. The Havana gathering would be the first of its kind between the leaders' of the Koreas' parliaments.

3. Inter-Korean Red Cross Talks

The Korea Herald ("INTER-KOREAN RED CROSS TALKS TODAY IN MT. KUMGANG," Seoul, 01/29/01) reported that an ROK delegation to the third round of inter-Korean Red Cross talks left for Mount Kumgang on the DPRK's east coast on January 28. The two sides will discuss the proposed exchanges of letters and visits between separated families and the establishment of permanent meeting places for the displaced people. The talks are scheduled to last for three days.

4. Second Inter-Korean Working Level Talks Delayed

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "NORTH KOREA DELAYS TALKS ON ELECTRICITY AID," Seoul, 01/29/01) reported that the DPRK delayed inter-Korean talks on ROK electricity aid, which were originally scheduled to open today in Kaesong, south of Pyongyang. A Unification Ministry official said, "North Korean liaison officers at Panmunjom requested the delay, saying they will later inform us of a rescheduled timetable." The Pyongyang talks were aimed at reviewing the energy-starved DPRK's previous request that the ROK transmits 500,000 kilowatts of electricity.

5. DPRK-US Missile Talks

Joongang Ilbo ("U.S., NORTH DISCUSS MISSILE QUESTION," Seoul, 01/28/01) reported that Ri Hyong-chol, the DPRK ambassador to the United Nations, and Charles Kartman, special US envoy for the Korean peace process, met on January 18 in New York to discuss the DPRK missile question An ROK official said, "During the meeting, North Korea is said to have laid out a proposal with regard to the missile question." This was called the first time that the DPRK and the new Bush administration have had diplomatic contact. Kartman is expected to visit Seoul in early February to explain the results of the meeting to the ROK government.

6. DPRK Doctors Visits US

Joongang Ilbo (Lee Young-jong, "U.S. TO HOST NORTH'S DOCTORS," Seoul, 01/28/01) reported that three DPRK heart doctors will receive training at hospitals in the northeastern US for six weeks beginning March 7, Radio Free Asia has reported. The DPRK doctors, Ri Jae- mun, Ri Sang-jun and Kim Chol-man, inare expected to be given lectures on and have the opportunity to practice diagnosis, heart transplant and other surgical techniques at university hospitals specializing in heart diseases, said the US funded radio this week. The training program was recommended by Korean-Americans and organized by a civic relief agency in Philadelphia, according to the radio report. The ROK government said January 26, "North Korea is expected to adopt a full range of advanced medical technology beginning with the introduction of heart treatment techniques made possible by the North's improved relations with the United States."

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.
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