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I. United States

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1. Compensation for ROK Comfort Women

The Associated Press ("EX-SEX SLAVE REJECTS JAPAN'S OFFER," Seoul, 04/05/98) reported that Lee Yong-soo, an ROK woman who was enslaved in a Japanese military brothel during World War II, on Tuesday refused to accept the ROK government's compensation offer unless the ROK recovers the money from the Japanese government. Lee was the first former "comfort woman" to publicly state that she would not accept the government compensation.

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2. PRC Lifts Travel Restrictions to ROK

The Associated Press ("CHINA TO LET CITIZENS TRAVEL FREELY TO S. KOREA - REPORT," Seoul, 04/05/98) reported that the ROK's state-run KBS-TV said Tuesday that the PRC Foreign Ministry informed the ROK Embassy on Tuesday that it has decided to allow PRC citizens to travel to the ROK without restrictions, and it proposed talks to work out details of implementing the new policy. While ROK government officials were unavailable to confirm the report due to a national holiday on

Tuesday, the move comes after PRC Vice President Hu Jintao said last week that the PRC would positively consider a request by ROK President Kim Dae-jung to designate the ROK as a free-travel country. Kim made the request in the hope that increasing Chinese tourists would help ease the ROK's financial difficulties.

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3. ROK Labor Unrest

The Wall Street Journal (Karen Elliott House and Michael Schuman, "KIM SAYS UNEMPLOYMENT POSES BIGGEST THREAT TO KOREA'S REFORM," Seoul, 04/05/98) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung said Monday that rising unemployment poses the greatest threat to economic reform in the ROK. Unemployment in March reached 6.5 percent, or 1.38 million people, more than double the level at the end of last year. Kim said that he "can't exclude" the possibility of further labor unrest, but pledged to take strong action against labor when workers "interfere with management and go against the law." He warned that labor unrest could scare away foreign investment. He also promised that the government would build a welfare system to help the jobless, and would increase the size of an unemployment- insurance fund to 7.9 trillion won (US\$5.9 billion) from the current five trillion won. He called on corporations to share the pain with labor by decreasing their debt levels and focusing on core industries. He also said that the government will conduct hearings on the causes of the economic crisis after local elections next month, but that the investigation will probably not implicate former President Kim Young- sam. Meanwhile Lee Kyu-sung, the minister of finance and economy, said Monday that "without social stability, we couldn't accomplish our reform program." He added that without strong reform efforts, "the economy will drop into longtime sluggishness."

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4. PRC-US Military Cooperation

The Associated Press ("CHINA OFFERS MILITARY COOPERATION," Beijing, 04/05/98) reported that the PRC's state-run Xinhua News Agency said that General Zhang Wannian, in a meeting with US Assistant Defense Secretary Franklin Kramer, said that the PRC "is ready to make concerted efforts" on military cooperation with the US. He added that the PRC is willing "to actively consult and discuss with its U.S. counterpart the possibilities of cooperation in various fields." Kramer said that he hoped Zhang would visit the US after President Clinton comes to the PRC in June to "keep the momentum going between the two countries and their armed forces." Zhang replied that he expected to go to the US this year.

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5. PRC-Japanese Military Cooperation

Reuters ("JAPAN MAKES OVERTURE TO CHINA DEFENSE AGENCY," Beijing, 04/05/98) reported that the PRC's official Xinhua news agency said on Tuesday that Japanese Defense Agency chief Fumio Kyuma offered to expand defense cooperation with the PRC. Kyuma was quoted as saying in a speech at the PRC's University of National Defense that exchanges between the PRC and Japan would contribute to regional peace and stability. He said that the university would conduct exchanges with Japan's National Institute for Defense Studies, adding that he hoped that PRC and Japanese warships could exchange visits in the coming year. He reiterated that Japan fully recognizes the PRC as the sole legal government of China and understands that Taiwan is an inalienable part of Chinese territory.

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6. PRC-Russian Hot Line

The Associated Press ("CHINA, RUSSIA OPEN COMMUNICATIONS," Beijing, 04/05/98) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao announced Tuesday that the PRC and Russia have opened a direct presidential hot line to improve understanding between the two countries. Zhu said that the secure telecommunications link, the PRC's first with a foreign capital, will allow presidents Jiang Zemin and Boris Yeltsin to "exchange views on bilateral relations and international issues at any time." Zhu also said that he did not know when the PRC-US hot line agreed to last week would open.

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7. Taiwanese War Games

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN TO HOLD ANNUAL WAR GAMES," Taipei, 04/05/98) reported that Taiwan Defense Ministry spokesman Kung Fan-ting said Tuesday that the Taiwanese armed forces will stage annual war games in southeastern Taiwan next week to practice repelling an invasion from the PRC. He stated that the four-day exercise, which begins Monday, will target "the most threatening and most probable moves the Communist army might take to invade Taiwan."

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8. Taiwanese Diplomacy

Reuters (Lawrence Chung, "TAIWAN MOVES TO IMPROVE CENTRAL AMERICAN RELATIONS," Taipei, 04/05/98) reported that Taiwan Vice President Lien Chan on Tuesday vowed to strengthen ties with Central America through his state visit to attend the inauguration of Costa Rican president-elect Miguel Angel Rodriguez. Lien stated, "I believe my visit will be helpful in strengthening our ties and cooperation with Costa Rica and other Caribbean nations." He said he would also visit the east Caribbean nation of Grenada on May 9 to meet the prime minister of that country, as well as those of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Christopher and Nevis, Belize and Dominica. Lien will be accompanied by Foreign Minister Jason Hu. Hu on Sunday accused the PRC of using its economic aid and trade interests to woo away Taiwanese allies in Africa.

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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