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CONTENTS

I. United States

1. DPRK Participation in UN Summit
2. DPRK Economy
3. ROK-DPRK Prisoner Exchange
4. Reunion of Separated Families
5. ROK Food Aid to DPRK
6. Japanese Food Aid to DPRK
7. Japan-Russia Talks
8. Japanese Nationalism
9. Cross-Straits Relations

II. Republic of Korea 1. UN Summit
2. UN Statement on June Summit
3. ROK-DPRK Red Cross Talks
4. Reunion of Separated Families
5. ROK-DPRK Prisoner Exchange
6. ROK Policy toward DPRK
7. Inter-Korean Relations

III. People's Republic of China 1. DPRK-ROK Ministerial Talks
2. ROK-DPRK Economic Cooperation
3. ROK-DPRK Prisoner Exchange
4. PRC-US Relations
5. US Decision on NMD
6. PRC's Response to US's NMD Decision
7. Russia's Response to US NMD Decision
8. Russian-Japanese Relations
9. PRC-Japanese Relations
10. South China Sea "Code of Conduct"

I. United States

1. DPRK Participation in UN Summit

Agence France Presse ("N.KOREA BUCKS UN SUMMIT, CHARGING US SECURITY'S 'RUDE SEARCH'," Frankfurt, 9/5/00) and the Associated Press (Hans Greimel, "NORTH KOREAN CANCELS U.N. TRIP," Frankfurt, 9/5/00) reported that DPRK nominal head of state Kim Yong-nam had been due to meet ROK President Kim Dae-jung in New York on the sidelines of the summit in the latest stage of a rapprochement between the two Koreas, but returned home to Pyongyang Tuesday in protest against the security checks carried out at the Frankfurt airport. DPRK Vice-minister for Foreign Affairs Choe Su-hon, accused the US of an "insidious and cunning double-faced strategy" to prevent the leaders of DPRK and the ROK from meeting in New York. He said, "This incident cannot be construed otherwise than an intentional and premediated plot" by the US administration. Choe complained that US security officials "opened suitcases and handbags of each member of the presidential entourage, forced them to take off clothes and shoes and thoroughly searched even the sensitive parts of the body as if they were criminals." He said the officials attempted to impose the same "rude search" on Kim, but the delegation "resolutely rejected the search" and demanded that the officials report the protest to their superiors in the US. Choe described the behavior of the US officials as "rude and provocative," a "grave encroachment on the sovereignty of a sovereign state," an "insult to human rights," and a "flagrant challenge" to the rights of a member state of the UN. He added, "The US should make an official apology for its act committed against the president and take full responsibility for all consequences resulting therefrom." However, when whether the DPRK would consider proceeding to the UN summit if the US made an official apology, Choe stated, "No, not this time. The chance has been lost." However, he added that the incident would not affect relations between the ROK and the DRPK, which were "improving rapidly."

2. DPRK Economy

The Washington Post (Doug Struck, "NORTH KOREA BACK FROM THE BRINK," Tokyo, 9/5/00) reported that, according to visitors and other outside observers, the DPRK has emerged stronger and more stable from an economic and political crisis with key assistance from the US and other countries. These sources said that the DPRK economy is growing for the first time in nine years and the mass starvation of the past five years is largely over, as is the political stagnation that followed the death of Kim Il- sung in 1994. Koichiro Matsuura, a senior UN official, said last month after a trip to the DPRK, "They have definitely come out of the worst period." Bruce S. Lemkin, a senior policy adviser on the light-water reactor project, who traveled there recently, said, "I saw a dramatic difference this time." On a visit 15 months earlier, he said, "the conditions were pretty grim. [This time,] I saw trains operating. I saw farm machinery. I saw schoolchildren waiting for school buses, and they looked healthy," he said. "The rice paddies appeared green; it all appeared more lively." The economy is estimated to be operating at only 75 percent of the level of a decade ago. Aid workers said that pockets of hunger and signs of malnutrition remain. The Bank of Korea concluded, "it's reasonable to predict that the worst is over for the North Korean economy." Shinobu Sawaike, who makes frequent trips there as head of a Japanese trade group, said, "Every time I go, Pyongyang gets better and better. In 1997, when I first went, the city was far from bustling. The food at the hotel was very shabby. We visited a lot of factories that were not operating. I never saw regular people riding bicycles. I thought they were really struggling. Now, the hotels are renovated, there are more cars on the streets, the town is cleaner; I see a considerable number of bicycles." Analysts said that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's recent public debut at the inter-Korean summit and the recent blitz of DPRK diplomacy is a sign that Kim has firmly and confidently consolidated power following his father's death. Victor Cha, a Korea specialist at Georgetown University, said, "You get the sense

there was a long transition process, and the summit is symptomatic of the end of that process. Politically, things seem as though there has been some sense of completion."

3. ROK-DPRK Prisoner Exchange

The Associated Press ("S. KOREA LEADER WORKS ON POW ISSUE," Seoul, 9/5/00) reported that according to the ROK Yonhap news agency, ROK President Kim Dae-jung promised on September 3 to work for the return of hundreds of ROK citizens believed held in the DPRK against their will, calling for more talks with the DPRK on the issue. Kim said in an interview with the ROK's three major TV channels, "We have found, through various channels, that there are 700 to 800 such people. We will definitely resolve the issue. On the issue, we need more contacts to bear fruits." Kim said that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il would visit the ROK, but the time of the visit has not been fixed.

Agence France Presse ("OPPOSITION CONDEMNS PRESIDENT KIM'S NORTH KOREA POLICY IN RALLY," Seoul, 9/4/00) reported that the ROK's opposition party on September 4 held a massive protest rally against ROK President Kim Dae-jung's management of state affairs, notably his DPRK policy. Grand National Party GNP officials said that some 10,000 people, including GNP members, took to the streets in Inchon, west of Seoul. Kim Dae-jung admitted on September 3 that he estimates the number of ROK citizens held in the DPRK at between 700 and 800. The GNP said in a statement, "It's deplorable that no progress was made during the minister-level peace talks on returning South Korean prisoners of war (POWs) and abductees still held alive in the North."

4. Reunion of Separated Families

The Associated Press ("KOREAS TO ARRANGE MORE REUNIONS," Seoul, 9/5/00) reported that the ROK said on Tuesday that it had contacted the DPRK to set a new date for talks to arrange more reunions of separated families. Kim Sung-kun, an official at the ROK National Red Cross, said that the ROK proposed last week that Red Cross officials from both sides meet at the border on Tuesday to discuss more family reunions. However, the timing was not convenient for the DPRK and the talks were not held, but the two sides would reschedule. Also Tuesday, an ROK government spokesman said that the DPRK asked during last week's talks for a loan of 200,000 tons of grain. Chung Kang-kyu of the ROK's Unification Ministry said that the ROK would consider the request.

5. ROK Food Aid to DPRK

Reuters ("KOREA MUM ON REPORTS OF NORTH FOOD AID REQUEST," Seoul, 9/4/00) reported that ROK newspapers reported on September 4 that the DPRK asked for one million tons of food in ministerial talks last week, but officials in the ROK declined to comment on the news. ROK Unification Ministry, the presidential Blue House, and the Red Cross officials all declined to comment. The Hankook Ilbo daily, quoted unidentified government officials as saying in a report that the DPRK opened last week's ministerial talks with a request for the food aid. It said the DPRK wanted 200,000 tons delivered by the end of October. The Hankyoreh newspaper, also citing government officials, said that the DPRK had asked for food on credit and said that the ROK might offer corn as part of the aid to offset the high local price of rice.

6. Japanese Food Aid to DPRK

Agence France Presse ("JAPAN TO GIVE 400,000 TONNES OF RICE TO NKOREA: REPORT," Tokyo, 9/2/00) reported that the September 2 evening edition of the Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun

said that Japan will soon announce food assistance worth 400,000 tons of rice to the DPRK. Japan will give the aid through the World Food Program after the UN agency calls for international assistance to the DPRK as early as next week. The daily said that the food aid will be called "humanitarian assistance" but is apparently seen as leverage to draw a compromise from the DPRK over stalled rapprochement talks between the two countries. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) director-general Jacques Diouf said on August 30 that the DPRK is recovering from serious food shortages but it still needs international support. Diouf said that discussions were under way between Japan and the DPRK over humanitarian assistance. Diouf said, "I think that the Japanese government is also considering the possibility of providing some support in the framework of discussion. That is going on." However, Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono has so far ruled out any immediate aid to the DPRK despite continued efforts by the two countries to establish diplomatic ties.

7. Japan-Russia Talks

The Washington Post (Doug Struck, "RUSSIA, JAPAN OCEANS APART ON ISLANDS," Tokyo, 9/5/00), the Associated Press (Scott Stoddard, "RUSSIA, JAPAN WORK ON TREATY," Tokyo, 9/5/00) and Agence France Presse ("WIDE GULF LIES BETWEEN JAPAN, RUSSIA OVER TERRITORIAL ROW," Tokyo, 9/5/00) reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori ended two days of talks without progress over claims to four islands off northern Japan that Russia seized at the end of World War II. However, they pledged Tuesday to press on toward a peace treaty. The national Japanese Yomiuri newspaper said Tuesday, "It was all they could do to agree to continue peace treaty talks, giving us a glimpse of how far apart they are in their views." Despite hopes for signing a peace treaty during the talks, Putin backed off, saying: "The important thing is not setting up a deadline, but that both countries have good faith." Mori said, "We confirmed that we will continue negotiations for a peace treaty by resolving the issue the sovereignty over the four islands, based on all the negotiations in the past." Putin also emphasized that he wanted Japan and Russia to tighten their strategic relationship and to ensure stability in northeast Asia. He invited Mori to visit Russia, but no date was set.

8. Japanese Nationalism

The New York Times (Howard W. French, "TOKYO POLITICIAN'S EARTHQUAKE DRILL IS MILITARIST MOMENT," Tokyo, 9/3/00) reported that Shintaro Ishihara, governor of Japan's Tokyo prefecture, oversaw an annual earthquake readiness drill on September 3 that critics said highlighted Japan's military and celebrated Japanese nationalism. The drill included more than 7,000 uniformed soldiers. Many of the Japanese who questioned the need for a military drill of that scale said that they saw the exercises as being as much a public relations operation for the military as it was a disaster preparedness drill. Atsuo Nakamura said, "There are two purposes behind this exercise. Ishihara wants to change the Constitution, and turn Japan into a big military country again. The other purpose is that Japan is in very bad economic condition, and politicians like this are trying to blame people of other nationalities for our troubles. That is a very classic way of dealing with problems, just like Hitler did. The Japanese people are very nationalistic, and he wants to awaken this feeling to become more popular." So Chungo On, director of Chosensoren, an association of residents of Korean descent, said, "The right wing in Japan has always been very hostile to Koreans and Chinese. These kinds of people feel that the past history of the military in Japan is glorious. All we can do is hope that this drill is not aimed at us."

9. Cross-Straits Relations

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN PRESIDENT: LEAVE UNIFICATION," Taipei, 9/2/00) reported that Taiwan president Chen Shui-bian urged the PRC on September 2 to start a dialogue with the island, but to leave the issue of reunification for future generations to resolve. Chen said that the governments should not impose their wills on the Chinese people. Addressing a new committee established in Taiwan to advise the president on the PRC, Chen said, "In 30 or 50 years, the situation across the Taiwan Strait may be entirely different, and reunification may no longer be an issue. We should have the next generation in our minds when tackling the issue." Addressing the same meeting, Lee Yuan-tseh, a chemist and Nobel laureate who heads the president's advisory committee, said that the Taiwanese are afraid that reunification with the PRC would bring political suppression. Lee said, "Many of us believe we are Chinese, but this is not to say we will compromise on our yearnings for freedom and democracy. The social base for reunification is in fact very fragile at the moment. In the future, we hope we can jointly establish a peaceful, prosperous and democratic China."

Agence France Presse ("CHINA SAYS TAIWAN PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS 'DANGEROUS'," Beijing, 9/5/00) reported that the PRC said on Tuesday that Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian's recent comment that unification with the PRC was not the only option for Taiwan was "dangerous." PRC foreign ministry spokesman Sun Yuxi said, "The essence of his comments that unification is not the only option for Taiwan and that Taiwan is an independent sovereign state, is to adhere to separatist activities. By so doing, it's very dangerous and this can ring alarm bells among all Chinese people, Taiwanese compatriots included." He also criticized Chen for refusing to accept the PRC's principle that there is only one China and that Taiwan must eventually be reunified with the mainland.

II. Republic of Korea

1. UN Summit

The Korea Herald (Chon Shi-yong, "KIM OFF TO N.Y. FOR U.N. MILLENNIUM SUMMIT: TO HOLD BILATERAL TALKS WITH NORTH KOREAN, U.S., CHINESE AND RUSSIAN LEADERS," Seoul, 09/05/00) reported that ROK President Kim Dae- jung leaves for the US today to attend the UN Millennium Summit, which will be held September 6-8 in New York. Kim will make a keynote speech at the plenary session of the summit on September 6 and attend a roundtable discussion September 7. Presidential aides said that Kim will address the Korean situation and global issues at the UN sessions. During his stay in New York, Kim was also scheduled to hold successive one-on-one talks with leaders from the DPRK, the US, the PRC, Russia and Sweden. The bilateral talks are expected to focus on the recent developments on the Korean Peninsula. Presiding over a weekly cabinet meeting, Kim stressed the importance of talks with US President Bill Clinton. Aides said that Kim would begin his diplomatic activities with a meeting with DPRK's ceremonial head of state, Kim Yong-nam, upon his arrival in New York on Tuesday. Seoul officials said that the DPRK leader was scheduled to hold separate talks with leaders from Japan, Sweden and other countries on the sidelines of the UN gathering. They said that Kim Yong-nam's trip to New York constitutes the latest evidence that the DPRK is breaking out of its decades-long isolationism.

2. UN Statement on June Summit

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "U.N. TO ISSUE STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF S-N TIES: GENERAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT WILL ISSUE DECLARATION ON INTER- KOREAN SUMMIT LATER THIS WEEK," Seoul, 09/05/00) reported that ROK Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister Lee

Joung-binn said on September 4 that the UN will adopt a declaration by the president of its General Assembly supporting the recent inter-Korean summit during the three-day Millennium Summit scheduled to open on September 6 in New York. Lee also said that the UN would issue a resolution for a similar purpose, probably in November or December this year. He said, "The U.N. president's declaration will include evaluation that the inter-Korean summit will help bring about peace on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia." The ROK and the DPRK have agreed to promote a UN statement in an attempt to draw world recognition to the outcome of the inter-Korean summit talks. The ministers from the two Koreas are scheduled to hold a second round of talks on September 18 on the sidelines of the assembly session.

3. ROK-DPRK Red Cross Talks

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "RED CROSS TALKS SEEN TO BE DELAYED," Seoul, 09/05/00) reported that ROK officials said that a new round of Red Cross meetings on arranging more reunions for long-separated families in the two Koreas may have to wait a little longer as the DPRK has delayed replying to the ROK's proposal. Park Ki-ryun, secretary-general of the ROK's Korea National Red Cross (KNRC) said, "North Korea seems to find it quite hard to schedule the talks amid a hectic series of events. It appears inevitable to postpone the talks by a few days." Another topic to be tabled at the Red Cross negotiations will be the issue of ROK citizens, mostly fishermen, abducted by the DPRK, and prisoners of war, observers said. Red Cross negotiators from the two Koreas will also discuss arranging two more exchange visits for the separated family members.

4. Reunion of Separated Families

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "ALL APPLICANTS FOR REUNION TO EXCHANGE LETTERS WITH CONFIRMED KIN IN N. KOREA," Seoul, 09/04/00) The Korea Times (Seo Soo-min, "CORRESPONDENCE TO BE ALLOWED BETWEEN SEPARATED FAMILIES," Seoul, 09/02/00) reported that the ROK government will allow all 76,000 people who registered for family reunions to exchange letters with their relatives in the DPRK as soon as they confirm their divided family members' whereabouts. Upon his return from Pyongyang on September 2, ROK Unification Minister Park Jae-kyu said, "North Korea agreed to first allow those people who have confirmed their family members are alive on the other side to correspond with one another." Park explained the results of the negotiations at a standing committee meeting of the National Security Council (NSC). At the meeting, Park and other security-related ministers discussed follow-up measures to the seven- point agreement made at the ministerial talks. ROK Unification Ministry officials said that the NSC panel decided to study an appropriate timetable and scale for the ROK food "loans" to the DPRK.

5. ROK-DPRK Prisoner Exchange

Chosun Ilbo ("FORMER SPIES RETURN TO NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 09/02/00) reported that the DPRK spies released by the ROK returned safely to the DPRK through Panmunjom. Approximately 500 people came out to greet the returning agents by the border. In Pyongyang, many citizens came out to the roads to congratulate the returning "unification heroes," and Central Pyongyang Television conducted live interviews with some of them. In the television broadcast, it was announced that foster families had been made for those who had no surviving families in the DPRK.

The Korea Herald ("FIVE MORE S. KOREAN POWS DEFECT TO SOUTH," Seoul, 09/04/00) reported that the National Intelligence Service (NIS) said on September 2 that five former ROK prisoners of war (POWs) and a fisherman who were abducted to the DPRK, as well as his two family members,

recently escaped to the ROK via a third country.

6. ROK Policy toward DPRK

The Korea Herald (Chon Shi-yong, "SOUTH-NORTH MILITARY TALKS TO OPEN WAY FOR PEACE ON PENINSULA," Seoul, 09/04/00) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung said on September 3 that the planned inter-Korean military talks would pave the way for the two Koreas to further improve relations and achieve peace on the Korean Peninsula. Kim said that he pushed the ROK delegation to the second round of ministerial talks to persuade the DPRK to accept the proposal for the military talks. Although the two sides failed to set a date or the level of the planned military talks, they reached an agreement on August 31 in Pyongyang that talks between military authorities would be held in the near future. In a special television interview program, Kim also said that the ROK's repatriation on September 1 of 63 former Communists to the DPRK would help the two Koreas resolve the problems of ROK prisoners of the Korean War and citizens held in the DPRK. Kim did not rule out the possibility of the DPRK leader coming to Seoul this year. He said that the two sides need to negotiate the issue between diplomatic events. Kim said that he expects that ROK firms will be able to manufacture products in the DPRK, including footwear and textiles.

7. Inter-Korean Relations

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "N.K. EMPHASIS ON ECONOMIC TIES CONFIRMED IN TALKS WITH SOUTH," Seoul, 09/04/00) and The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "TWO KOREAS STRUGGLE TO RESOLVE DETAILS OF MILITARY COOPERATION," Seoul, 09/02/00) reported that at the second round of inter-Korean ministerial talks, which ended on September 1 in Pyongyang, the DPRK readily accepted the ROK's proposal to launch working-level talks this month on the legal framework for boosting economic cooperation, including an agreement on investment guarantees. Paik Haksoon, an analyst at the private Sejong Institute, said that the ROK's food loans to the DPRK and the DPRK's economic team's visit to the ROK show that the DPRK is placing top priority on economic cooperation, rather than military and political issues, in inter-Korean relations. The DPRK, which had shunned military issues, changed its stance at the end of the talks and accepted the ROK's call for early discussions to open dialogue between their military authorities. However, it is widely viewed that significant progress on security matters, like the proposed opening of an inter-Korean military hot line, will be made when relations between the DPRK and the US improve.

Chosun Ilbo (Kim In-ku, "KIM JONG-IL AGAIN SHOWS COMPLETE AUTHORITY," Seoul, 09/02/00) and The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "MINISTER PARK MEETS WITH KIM JONG-IL," Seoul, 09/02/00) reported that according to a source, DPRK leader Kim Jong-il once again showed his complete authority during the second ministerial talks in Pyongyang. The establishment of military talks, joint flood control of the Imjin river area, the exchange of letters, the site of the third ministerial meeting, and the size of tourist groups to visit each other's countries were all approved at the last minute following ROK Minister of Unification Park Jae-kyu's breakfast meeting with the Kim, which lasted three hours. Prior to that meeting, little headway was being made in talk with relevant ministers. At working level contacts "the two sides" agreed to "discuss the issue of military contacts to ease tension and promote confidence." Following the breakfast meeting, however, the two sides agreed to hold military talks as early as possible. Analysts said that this kind of contact with Kim Jong-il will occur more frequently as DPRK bureaucrats appear to be unable to make decisions.

III. People's Republic of China

1. DPRK-ROK Ministerial Talks

China Daily ("KOREANS AT ODDS OVER MILITARY TIES," Seoul, 09/02/00, P8) reported that DPRK and ROK negotiators concluded two days of reconciliation talks by issuing a joint statement focusing on social and economic exchanges, but failed to agree on proposed military hotline and meetings between their defense leaders. In the joint statement, they said that military issues require further discussion, likely at the next round of ministerial talks that are to be held in the ROK from September 27-30. The joint statement also said that they agreed to hold two more reunions this year for separated families. The reunions and possible letter exchanges will be discussed later this month at a meeting of Red Cross officials from the two countries. According to the statement, the two sides will also allow 100 tourists from each side to visit mountain resorts in the other country this month or next. It also said that working-level talks on economic issues such as treaties on waiver of double taxation and investment guarantees would be held this month.

2. ROK-DPRK Economic Cooperation

Xinhua News Agency (Gao Haorong, "KIM DAE-JUNG: ROK-DPRK ECONOMIC COOPERATION SHOULD REACH WIN-WIN," Seoul, 09/03/00) reported that, when interviewed by correspondents from the Korea Broadcasting Company and three major TV Stations, ROK President Kim Dae-jung said that ROK-DPRK economic cooperation should adopt a win-win strategy, which will benefit both sides. Kim noted that current ROK-DPRK economic cooperation is mainly carried on in the civilian channel, stressing that governmental economic cooperation should also obey economic principles. He urged that the two sides should sign treaties on waiver of double taxation and investment guarantees and other relevant documents.

3. ROK-DPRK Prisoner Exchange

Jiefang Daily ("DPRK GIVE GRAND WELCOME TO POWS," Panmunjom, 09/03/00, P4) reported that the DPRK held a grand ceremony on September 2 in Panmunjom to welcome its 63 Prisoners of War who refused to abandon their Communism ideology while jailed in the ROK. Tens of thousands of citizens in Pyongyang welcomed the 63 POWs with flowers on their return home.

4. PRC-US Relations

China Daily (Hu Qihua, Gao Jin, "NATION 'UNHAPPY' WITH U.S. POLICY," 09/04/00, P1) reported that during an online press conference on September 3, Liu Xiaoming, the Minister of the PRC Embassy in the US, said that the PRC is not satisfied with the US policy towards the PRC. Liu said, "We are very concerned about the Democratic and Republican conventions and their party programs, and we are not satisfied with their policies on China released at the conventions. The US has promised to follow the one-China policy and it should earnestly implement the three communiques between the Chinese and US governments and fulfill the series of promises it has made." Admitting that the PRC and the US still have divergent views on many issues, such as human rights, religion, the Dalai Lama and the arms control and non-proliferation issues, Liu said that no two countries can agree on everything. However, he said, the PRC is optimistic about the future of bilateral relations.

5. US Decision on NMD

Xinhua News Agency ("CLINTON ANNOUNCES NOT TO DECIDE U.S. MISSILE DEFENCE

SYSTEM," Washington, 09/01/00) reported that US President Bill Clinton announced in a speech at Georgetown University not to deploy US national missile defense (NMD) system at this time, saying more time was needed for testing. Clinton said that because of test failures, "I simply cannot conclude with the information we have today that we have enough confidence [in the technology.] Therefore, I have decided not to authorize deployment of NMD at this time."

6. PRC's Response to US's NMD Decision

People's Daily ("ZHU BANGZAO TALKS ON NMD," Beijing, 09/03/00, P2) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhu Bangzao, when commenting on US President Clinton's announcement that he would not decide whether to deploy a national missile defense (NMD) system at the moment, said that the PRC has taken note of this issue and thinks the US attitude is reasonable. Zhu said that it is in every country's interests to maintain global strategic stability and security, which is beneficial to world peace and stability, and also to the international effort on arms control and disarmament. He noted, "We wish the US government would listen to and discuss more with other countries concerning this issue, in order to make a decision that is consistent with the pivotal interests of each country and its people."

7. Russia's Response to US NMD Decision

People's Daily ("PUTIN SPEAKS HIGHLY OF U.S.'S DECISION ON NMD," Moscow, 09/03/00, P2) reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin said late on September 1 that US President Bill Clinton's decision not to deploy the NMD system now is an act of careful consideration and responsibility, which will help strengthen international strategic stability and promote US's international prestige. According to the Russian President's News Bureau, Putin stressed that Clinton's decision does not necessarily mean that the US and Russia have reached consensus on ABM Treaty. However, Putin added that Russia will keep working with the US and other countries to cut nuclear arsenals, improve the non-proliferation regime, and strengthen strategic stability. He said that he had transmitted relevant instructions to Russian Foreign Ministry and Security Committee.

8. Russian-Japanese Relations

People's Liberation Army Daily (Wang Dajun, "RUSSIA WILL NOT GIVE UP THE FOUR NORTHERN ISLANDS," Tokyo, 09/04/00, P) and China Daily ("PUTIN IN JAPAN TO IMPROVE RELATIONS," Tokyo, 09/04/00, P1) reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in Japan on September 3 for a three-day official visit. Putin said that he was optimistic about improving the long-troubled relations between the two former Cold War enemies. Putin told reporters after his arrival at Tokyo's Haneda airport, "In our assessment, Russian-Japanese relations are at their highest level of development since the end of World War II. We value this fact very highly and plan to develop our relations further." Regarding the issue of the four disputed islands, Putin said that Russia and Japan would move forward on the basis of previous agreements, which have committed them to seek a solution to the dispute. However, some reports said that before his departure to Japan, Putin expressed that although Russia and Japan can hold negotiations on the islands, that does not necessarily mean that Russia will return them to Japan.

9. PRC-Japanese Relations

Jiefang Daily ("HARD-WON FRIENDSHIP SHOULD NOT BE DISTURBED BY UNFRIENDLY

VOICES," Beijing 08/31/00, P6) reported that, in talks with the visiting Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono, PRC Premier Zhu Rongji called on young people in the PRC and Japan to learn the history of Sino-Japanese relations and appreciate the hard-won friendship. Zhu said that friendly relations between China and Japan are not only of interest to their citizens but also benefit peace and development in the region and the world. Reviewing PRC President Jiang Zemin's visit to Japan in 1998 in which the two national leaders established a framework of developing friendly relations, Zhu commented that they had built the foundation of bilateral relations in the 21st century. Kono stressed that friendly cooperation is the main ingredient of bilateral relations, adding that the PRC's development was very important to peace and prosperity in Asia. Kono said that Japan highly values relations with the PRC, and believes Zhu's visit in October will further promote bilateral relations.

10. South China Sea "Code of Conduct"

People's Liberation Army Daily ("PRC ATTITUDE ON 'CODE OF CONDUCT' CONCERNING SOUTH CHINA SEA," Beijing, 08/31/00, P4) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhu Bangzao said that the PRC and ASEAN countries continued to exchanged ideas and reduced divergence during the re-negotiation of the "Code of Conduct" concerning South China Sea. Zhu noted that the "Code" is a set of political documents aiming to facilitate good neighborly relations and regional stability, rather than legal documents for solving specific controversies. He added that the PRC has raised many positive and constructive proposals and the major difficulties that currently exist are not due to the PRC. Zhu stressed that the PRC wishes that some relevant countries should show necessary political sincerity and flexibility based on the spirit of "sinking divergence and seeking convergence."

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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