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I. United States

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1. ROK-DPRK Talks

The Los Angeles Times (Sonni Efron, "SOUTH KOREA'S PRESIDENT AGREES TO TALKS WITH NORTH," Tokyo, 04/06/98), Reuters (Jane Lee, "SEOUL AGREES TO TALKS WITH NORTH, SUGGESTS VENUE," Seoul, 04/06/98), and the Associated Press ("S. KOREA, N. KOREA AGREE TO TALKS," Seoul, 04/06/98) reported that the ROK on Monday accepted Saturday's DPRK proposal that a five-member delegation from each side, led by a vice minister-level official, meet in Beijing on April 11 to discuss possible ROK fertilizer aid and "other matters of mutual concern." In accepting this proposal on Monday, the ROK suggested that the meeting be held at Panmunjom or any other place on the Korean peninsula. An ROK unification ministry official said that the ROK had not ruled out talks in Beijing, but preferred to hold them in Korea. The talks, if held, would be the first bilateral government contact between the ROK and the DPRK since 1994, when deputy prime ministers of the two sides met to prepare for the first ever inter-Korea summit, which was canceled after the death of the Kim Il-sung. Park Young-ho, director of policy studies at the Korea Institute for National

Unification, a think-tank for the unification ministry, stated, "The talks could be a link to future relations, but it's still too early to expect anything like an exchange of special envoys to result from the meeting." He added that the DPRK "is testing the waters to see how much it can get from the new administration." However, an anonymous ROK government official stated, "We have been unofficially pushing the North for talks. If they were really serious about talks, they would have responded to the president's inauguration speech." Meanwhile, ROK President Kim Dae-jung on Sunday said that the talks will constitute "a substantial progression and change in our relations." The ROK's Joong Ang Ilbo in an editorial published Monday said, "Regardless of the outcome of the talks, the fact that Southern and Northern government figures will sit down to talk ... is itself meaningful." [Nicholas Eberstadt](#) at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington called the initiative for direct talks "interesting" and a sign of how desperately the DPRK needs the ROK's help. However, he warned that until the DPRK can echo Kim Dae-jung's promise of not attempting to reunify the peninsula by military force, hopes for meaningful talks are limited.

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2. DPRK Food Aid

The Washington Post (Steven Mufson and John Pomfret, "N. KOREA HINDERS EFFORT TO TRACK FOOD SHIPMENTS," 04/06/98, A18) reported that concerns over monitoring continue to plague the distribution of food aid to the DPRK. Doug Coutts, head of the World Food Program (WFP) in Pyongyang, stated, "The situation is getting worse and worse among the general population." Coutts said that the daily food ration in the DPRK was slashed recently from a range of 15.75 to 17.5 ounces a day, the "minimum needed" for an adult, to between 7 and 10.5 ounces a day. As part of an agreement signed with the DPRK on February 23, the WFP almost doubled last year's 385,000-ton appeal on the condition that the DPRK allow the program to increase the number of international monitors from about 20 to 46 and that they visit every area where the program's food was being distributed. Last year, the DPRK allowed only five US workers to monitor a shipment of 55,000 tons of food from the US that was funneled through aid agencies. Only non-Korean speaking officials were allowed, they had to travel together, and their visas were of limited duration. Last Tuesday, the DPRK government pulled out of a meeting with five US-based charities to discuss efforts to monitor 83,000 tons of food pledged by the US for this year, citing a death in the family of one DPRK participant. An unnamed senior Clinton administration official stated, "Unless North Korea opens up and allows people in to see the extent of the damage, there will be more and more skepticism about North Korea's needs. And that skepticism is turning into donor fatigue." Andrew Natsios, vice president of World Vision, stated, "Either [DPRK officials] are disguising a famine of massive proportions or they are manipulating us for their own political purposes and creating a famine that doesn't exist." Natsios, who said he believes in the former scenario, added, "We need access so we can understand the gravity of North Korea's plight."

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3. DPRK Defector

The Associated Press ("REPORT: N. KOREAN SEEKS ASYLUM," Hong Kong, 04/04/98) and Reuters ("NORTH KOREAN OFFICIAL REPORTEDLY SEEKS POLITICAL ASYLUM IN HONG KONG," Hong Kong, 04/04/98) reported that Hong Kong's Chinese-language Apple Daily reported on Saturday that a high-level DPRK official on Friday night approached Hong Kong police at a train station and requested political asylum in Hong Kong. The official arrived in Hong Kong on a train from the PRC, separated from his delegation, and asked a security guard for asylum, the paper said. It added that the official has been provided with a police escort and senior Hong Kong security officials are looking into the matter.

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4. Kim Dae-jung to Visit Japan

The Dow Jones Newswires ("S. KOREA KIM TO VISIT JAPAN IN OCTOBER - KYODO," Tokyo, 04/06/98) reported that Japan's Kyodo News quoted a senior Japanese Foreign Ministry official as saying Monday that ROK President Kim Dae-jung is likely to make a state visit to Japan in October. Kim agreed to the visit when he met with Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto in London on Thursday ahead of the Asia-Europe Meeting.

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5. ROK Financial Crisis

The Chicago Tribune ("SOUTH KOREA MAKING FINANCIAL COMEBACK," Seoul 04/05/98) reported that the ROK is attempting to replace its old method of economic growth with "American-style free-market capitalism." ROK Finance Minister Lee Kyu-sung stated last week, "From now on, Korean financial institutions will be allowed to operate on a commercial basis, not as tools of the government's industrial policies." US Ambassador to the ROK Stephen Bosworth said in a recent speech in Seoul, "The old economic model under which Korea rose to become a modern industrialized economy no longer meets the country's needs." Kim Young-jin, president of the Jindo Group, stated, "The chances of Korea making it are half and half. If all Koreans save and live frugally while exporting as much as possible, we might make it. But if not, I'm pessimistic."

US Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin ("RUBIN 4/3 REMARKS ON MEETING WITH KOREAN FINANCE MINISTER," USIA Text, 04/03//98) made the following statement on April 3 regarding his meeting with ROK Finance Minister Lee Kyu-sung: "Finance Minister Lee and I had a good meeting today. We discussed the substantial progress South Korea has made over the past three months in stabilizing its financial situation. I praised the efforts that President Kim Dae Jung and his government are making to bring about decisive change in Korea's economy. We spoke about the recent success of the government's effort to restructure a vast majority of the banking sector's short-term international debt, the growth of external reserves, and the nation's upcoming bond issue. All of these are important steps in the process of normalizing Korea's access to the international capital markets. Minister Lee and I agreed that while many challenges have been successfully met, difficult structural reforms lie ahead. We also agreed on the importance of ensuring that Korea sustains strong macroeconomic policies. This will provide the fastest and surest route to recovery and improvements in living standards for the Korean people."

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6. US Missile Technology Transfer to PRC

The Associated Press ("REPORT: COS. EYED ON CHINA MISSILES," New York, 04/04/98) and Reuters, ("TWO COMPANIES PROBED FOR CHINA MISSILES - REPORT," New York, 04/04/98) reported that the New York Times said on Saturday that two US companies, Loral Space and Communications of New York and Hughes Electronics, a Los Angeles-based division of General Motors, are under investigation by a federal grand jury on suspicion of giving the PRC space technology for use in its ballistic missile program. However, unidentified US officials said that in February President Bill Clinton quietly approved similar technology transfers, which dealt a serious blow to the grand jury investigation. Officials also said that the Justice Department opposed the decision to investigate, citing the difficulty in prosecuting the companies in light of the government blessing of the deal. Administration officials said the investigation stems from the February 15,

1996, explosion of a PRC rocket carrying a US\$200 million Loral satellite. After the explosion, the PRC asked the two US companies to help conduct an independent study of what went wrong. According to the unnamed US officials, the US experts provided crucial data and information to the PRC and may have gone beyond the sharing of information by improving the guidance systems of their rockets. White House spokesman Mike McCurry said that the February go-ahead "will not contribute to Chinese military capabilities" because Loral agreed to "stringent safeguards" to prevent the unauthorized transfer of technology.

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7. Alleged PRC Missile Sales to Pakistan

The Associated Press (Kathy Gannon, "PAKISTAN TESTS MEDIUM RANGE MISSILE," Islamabad, 04/06/98) reported that Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes said that Pakistan received help from the PRC to build medium-range missiles that are capable of reaching deep within the borders of India. He also called on the US to investigate the PRC's role in Pakistan's missile program. He stated, "China has been supplying missile technology to Pakistan despite having given an undertaking to the United States to do no such thing." Pakistan successfully tested a missile with a range of 900 miles on Monday.

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8. Dismantling of Russian Nuclear Weapons

The Associated Press ("RUSSIA ASKS U.S. TO RETURN TO ORIGINAL NUCLEAR POWER DEAL," Moscow, 04/06/98) reported that the Interfax news agency said that Yevgeny Adamov, Russian acting nuclear energy minister, on Monday sent a message to US Energy Secretary Federico Pena asking the US government to return to the original bilateral deal under which Russia would sell uranium from dismantled nuclear warheads to the US. Adamov said that, at first, the US paid for both the uranium and for its dilution into low-enriched uranium, but that since the end of 1996, the US has refused to pay for the uranium itself. Adamov also said the Nuclear Energy Ministry was considering the export of electricity generated at Russian nuclear power plants to Turkey, the PRC, and the ROK.

II. Announcements

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1. DPRK Hunger Relief Benefit Concert

WorldJam, a benefit concert for DPRK famine relief, will be held on April 11, 7pm at Stanford University's Kresge Auditorium. WorldJam is the first-ever collaboration of multicultural musical groups at Stanford to focus on a humanitarian cause. The concert will present a diverse array of music from several cultures, as well as images and information about the North Korean famine. Participants include: Talisman (a-cappella); Mariachi Cardenal de Stanford, Stanford Taiko; Stanford American Indian Organization Drums; and Stanford Hwimori. Tickets will be available in White Plaza beginning Wednesday, April 8, and at the door. Admission is free, but a minimum \$5 donation is requested. All proceeds will be used to send humanitarian aid to North Korea, through the American Friends Service Committee. For more information, please contact [Jeanhee Hong](#): phone: (650) 497-6706; fax:(650) 723- 4639.

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2. World Day of Fasting for DPRK Hunger

On April 24-25, people in over 50 cities throughout the world will come together for a world day of fasting, prayer, reflection, and action on behalf of the people of North Korea. This event will begin simultaneously worldwide -- on Friday, April 24 at 7 p.m. in Washington, DC, and at 9 a.m. on Saturday, April 25 in South Korea and Japan. The U.S. Coalition for a World Day of Fasting for the People of North Korea includes: Adventist Development and Relief Agency International, American Friends Service Committee, Boston Campaign for North Korean Famine Relief, Bread for the World, Christian Reformed Church, Congressional Hunger Center, Food for the Hungry, Holt International, Hunger Relief Fund for North Korea, Korean American Sharing Movement, Mennonite Central Committee U.S., Mercy Corps International, National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, Presbyterian Church (USA), Synod of the Northeast, Tufts University, Feinstein International Famine Center, U.S. Committee for UNICEF, United Way, and World Vision. Donations are urgently needed and can be sent to: Stanford Committee for North Korean Famine Relief, Rains 16C, Stanford, 94305; or: Hunger Relief Fund for North Korea, c/o AFSC, 65 Ninth St., San Francisco, CA 94103-1402. Checks should be made payable to "American Friends Service Committee" with "Korea Relief Fund" written on the memo line. Donations can also be mailed directly to Korea Relief Fund, AFSC, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102. All donations will be used to purchase food for distribution in North Korea by the United Nations World Food Program.

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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