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I. United States

1. US-DPRK Talks

The Associated Press ("TALKS WITH N. KOREA TO RESUME," Washington, 01/06/00) reported that the US State Department said in a statement that a US delegation led by US envoy Charles Kartman would meet with a DPRK delegation headed by Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye-gwan in Berlin this month. The agenda for the talks will include preparations for a visit to the US by a high-level DPRK official. US State Department spokesman, James Foley stated, "We look forward to hosting a high-level visit at the earliest opportunity." He added, "We will continue to work on preparations for such a visit when our bilateral talks resume." US National Security Adviser Sandy Berger stated, "We want to pursue that very actively. North Korea has a choice. It can either pursue more normal relations ... or it can continue with its threatening nuclear and missile programs and continue to be isolated and continue to be contained by the rest of the world. We're prepared to go down either path."

2. PRC-DPRK Missile Cooperation

The Washington Times (Bill Gertz, "CHINA BREAKS VOW, SENDS N. KOREA MISSILE

MATERIALS," Washington, 1/06/00) reported that a US Defense Department intelligence report in late December stated that the US National Security Agency (NSA) uncovered a deal for the transfer of PRC materials to the DPRK for their long-range missile program. An anonymous US Defense Department official said the report identified a shipment arranged by the PRC through a Hong Kong company took place two weeks ago. The official said, "this is a deal for a direct shipment of Chinese missile technology." Officials declined to provide other details about the transfer, citing concerns about sensitive intelligence involved in the report. Yu Shuning, a spokesman for the PRC Embassy, denied the report, saying, "we have always abided by our commitments so far as the MTCR [Missile Technology Control Regime] is concerned."

3. Detained Japanese in DPRK

The Associated Press ("JAPAN DENIES N. KOREA SPY LINK," Tokyo, 1/06/00) reported that Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman Sadaaki Numata denied on Thursday that the government had any ties with a Japanese man who is being detained in the DPRK on spying charges. Numata said Japan is still waiting for the DPRK to respond to a request for details on the December 4 detention of Takashi Sugishima, a former journalist. Numata said the ministry has heard only that he is staying at a hotel for foreigners and is in good condition. The ROK's main government spy agency, the National Intelligence Service, has also denied links to Sugishima.

4. Aid for DPRK

Dow Jones Economic Newswire (Shogo Kawakita, "U.N. AGENCIES, NGOS DEPLORE N. KOREA'S 'AID BLOCKING'," Geneva, 01/04/00) reported that 21 UN agencies and nongovernmental organizations operating in the DPRK released a statement on Tuesday expressing concerns about restrictions to their aid activities. The statement alleged that aid workers face "difficult operating conditions that limit and constrain implementation, accountability, verification and access to the most vulnerable." It added that these conditions present a "hindrance to the promotion of humanitarian principles and verification of humanitarian assistance." David Morton, humanitarian coordinator for the UN's DPRK food aid program, said that the statement was submitted to the DPRK but that he has not received any direct response. James Darcy, Oxfam's official in charge of humanitarian works in Asia, said the group was forced to stop helping the DPRK with its water purification operations after it became unable to work effectively in rural areas as limited access prevented them from monitoring the water quality and making appropriate adjustments to the program.

5. US-PRC Military Relations

The New York Times (Steven Lee Myers, "CHINESE MILITARY TO RESUME CONTACTS WITH THE PENTAGON," Washington, 1/05/00), Agence France Presse ("US, CHINA TO HOLD MILITARY TALKS JANUARY 24," Washington, 1/06/00), and The Los Angeles Times (Tyler Marshall, "U.S., CHINA ARE TO TAKE MAJOR STEP TOWARD RESUMING TIES WITH VISIT DIPLOMACY" Washington, 1/06/99) reported that the US-PRC military visit scheduled for January 24-26 is expected to yield few substantive results, but is seen as a sign of improving ties. An anonymous US Defense official said, "it shows the wheels are beginning to roll again now. We don't have an agenda yet, but it is likely to be very routine." Walter Slocombe, undersecretary of defense for policy and head of the US delegation, said, "they will discuss the framework and content of the military-t--military relationship between China and the United States." A senior US defense official told the New York Times that the goal is "to have a modest increase … that acknowledges the delicacy of the

environment, politically, and to take careful steps given what has transpired. One of the rationales for more discussions and more interactions between the United States and China is that at least the Chinese interlocutors can experience the United States in a slightly different way than they might pick up in some of their own propaganda." Alan Wachman, a US-PRC relations expert at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, said, "the symbolic value of this is that the proponents of reason on both sides, at least at this moment, are able to get their hands on the steering wheel."

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK Political Situation

Joongang Ilbo ("'NK SHOWS NO SIGN OF CHANGE ', FRANKFURT ALGEMEINER ZEITUNG REPORTS," Seoul, 01/05/00) reported that a German daily newspaper, the Frankfurt Algemeiner Zeitung, has said that the DPRK has shown no signs of changing its closed system despite the start of the new millennium. The German newspaper asserted in its edition published on January 4 that the DPRK has maintained a strange form of socialism, in which its late leader Kim Il-sung and his son Kim Jong-il are worshipped as idols, although most socialist states have abandoned orthodox communism and shifted to reformative and open-line policies. The newspaper also said that although the rest of the world greeted the new millennium with hope and excitement, the DPRK calls the year 2000 "Juche 89" because it introduced a new dating system three years ago, under which the date is counted from the birth of Kim Il-sung.

2. Demilitarized Zone Environmental Protection

The Korea Times ("DMZ LIKELY TO BE DEVELOPED INTO ECO-TOURISM SITE," Seoul, 01/05/00) reported that the ROK's Korea National Tourism Organization (KNTO) said on January 3 that the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) dividing the two Koreas can be developed into an eco-tourism site. In its report "Working-level Guidelines for Inter- Korean Tourism Exchange and Cooperation in 2000," the KNTO said, "The DMZ is a treasure house of rare animals and can be developed into an eco-tourist haunt." A KNTO official said, "The DMZ development project is being studied on a long-term basis in preparation for the unification of the Korean Peninsula." The report also stressed the need and importance of preserving the environment in promoting inter-Korean tourism cooperation.

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