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# NAPSNet Daily Report 06 October, 1997

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## Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 06 October, 1997", NAPSNet Daily Report, October 06, 1997,  
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-06-october-1997/>

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## **I. United States**

### **1. Kim Jong-il Meets Russian Official**

The Associated Press ("KIM JONG IL MAY INVITE FOREIGNERS," Moscow, 10/4/97) said that the ITAR-Tass news agency reported Friday that Kim Jong-il met with Oleg Shenin, chairman of Russia's Council of the Union of Communist Parties, on Sept. 2 in Pyongyang. [Ed. note: See related item in the ROK section, below] It was the first time for Kim to meet with a foreigner since 1983, when he visited the PRC. Shenin reportedly said that Kim was ready to invite foreign guests to celebrate his formal ascension to power. "I saw that Pyongyang is ready for contacts with the world and during the celebrations Kim Jong-il will, naturally, meet many foreigners," Shenin said. He said that Kim

was expected to become supreme leader of the DPRK's ruling Workers Party around Oct. 10, the anniversary of the party's founding. Shenin also said that Kim was expected to become state president, the other top post, when the DPRK celebrates the 50th anniversary of its establishment in September next year.

The New York Times reported (Reuters, "KIM SPEAKS TO FOREIGNER OF NORTH KOREAN FAMINE," Moscow, 10/4/97) that Kim Jong-il told visiting Russian Communist Party official Oleg Shenin that the DPRK's economic conditions are "complicated, especially the food situation, after two years of floods and this summer's drought." Kim reportedly said that this year's rice harvest was good but the corn crop was poor.

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Reuters (Andrew Browne, U.N. SAYS N.KOREA HAS ESCAPED FOOD CATASTROPHE, Beijing, 10/5/97) reported that Namanga Ngongi, the deputy executive director of the UN's World Food Program (WFP), said that the food situation in the DPRK was getting visibly better as a result of international food aid. "People looked better, the children in particular looked better," Ngongi said after a tour of western and southern parts of the DPRK by an international team, including officials from the US and Japan. The WFP has distributed 400,000 tons of food, and another 300,000-400,000 tons in foreign government aid has been pledged this year to help cover a shortfall of about 1.3 million tons, Ngongi said. A WFP appeal for US\$136 million for the DPRK raised about 80 percent of the dollar total, but because the money was used to buy cheaper food more than 90 percent of the projected volume of aid had been delivered, he said. Ngongi estimated that North Korea would face a shortfall of 2.0-2.5 million tons of food in the year starting from the end of the latest harvest, which is now underway. However, depending on the volume of aid pledged for next year, DPRK citizens will experience "some pain" but will be able to struggle through the coming winter. He said there was no evidence that food aid had been diverted from those in need, and recipients all knew exactly the amount of aid to which they were entitled. Ngongi made clear he did not believe there had been mass starvation, but he added "It

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Reuters ("N. KOREA SAYS FAMINE DEATH TOLL REPORT IS WRONG, Tokyo, 10/5/97) said that the DPRK's Korean Central News Agency on Saturday denied a report in a Hong Kong's South China Morning Post that more than a million people had died of hunger in the DPRK. [Ed. note: See "DPRK Famine" in the US Section of the October 2 Daily Report] "No one doubts that the press speculation is a product of the [ROK] 'Agency for National Security Planning' to hurl muds [sic] at the northern half of Korea," the news agency said.

## **3. DPRK Military Buildup**

Reuters (Bill Tarrant, "SOUTH KOREA SAYS NORTH KOREA HAS EXPANDED ITS MILITARY, Seoul, 10/6/97) reported that the ROK's Ministry of Defense, in its 1997-1998 "Defense White Paper" released Monday, said the DPRK has increased its troop strength by 92,000 to 1.15 million over the past year. The report also said that the DPRK in the 1990s became capable of reprocessing nuclear fuel, and that "it is possible to conclude that Pyongyang has the capability to produce one or two crude nuclear weapons." However the report concluded that "it is doubtful whether it has actually produced deliverable nuclear weapons due to difficulties in developing detonation devices and delivery vehicles which require high-tech and precision technologies." The DPRK has successfully test-fired a Rodong-1 missile, capable of carrying chemical or nuclear warheads to a range beyond 621 miles. "It is believed that this missile is ready for operational deployment," the report said, adding that the DPRK is also developing mid- and long-range missiles with ranges of 932 miles and 2,385 miles, it added.

#### **4. Light-Water Reactor Construction Project**

The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("N.KOREA: NUCLEAR REACTOR WORK RESUMES AFTER 5-DAY SUSPENSION" Seoul, 10/6/97) and Reuters ("WORK RESUMES ON N. KOREAN REACTORS AFTER DISPUTE," Seoul, 10/6/97) reported that construction of two nuclear reactors in the DPRK resumed Monday, five days after about thirty DPRK workers stopped work after finding a torn newspaper image of Kim Jong-il at the living quarters of ROK workers on the project. Work was halted last Wednesday after the DPRK demanded an apology and a promise to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents. ROK officials rejected the demand, arguing that the alleged ripping of the newspaper, found in a trash bin, was not intentional and pointing out that it is common in the ROK for old newspapers to be thrown away. "Work resumed, while the dispute has not been resolved," said Chang Sun-sup, a senior ROK government official in charge of the project. "North Korean workers have returned to the construction site, and the guards who were sent in have been withdrawn," he added.

#### **5. Rajin-Sonbong Free Trade Zone**

The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("N.KOREA: FREE TRADE POLICY WON'T HAVE EFFECT OUTSIDE ZONE," Tokyo, 10/6/97) reported that Ho Maeng-chol, a section chief of the DPRK Committee for the Promotion of External Economic Cooperation, told an audience of about fifty Japanese businessmen that "The Rajin-Sonbong zone will be treated differently, and we will guarantee free economic activities there." But the DPRK will still adhere to socialist planning, and there will not be any spillover effects on other regions of the country from development of the zone, he said. The Tokyo seminar was the last of a month-long series of investor seminars held by Ho and other DPRK officials at eight Japanese cities. The trade zone has so far lured 65 investment contracts totaling US\$370 million this year, Ho said, with the companies being mainly from the PRC, Hong Kong, the US and Japan. Poor infrastructure has been a major concern for the zone, but investment flows from Hong Kong and Southeast Asian nations should resolve the problem, the DPRK officials said. "But we can't deny that most of the foreign investment has been put only in the service sector," not in industrial projects, Ho said. While he acknowledged that the DPRK's economy "has certainly been facing hardship the past five years," Ho argued that "it is a temporary phenomenon amid the development phase, and we can overcome the hardship."

#### **6. US-PRC Summit Meeting**

The Associated Press (Laura Myers, "WHITE HOUSE TO SLAM CHINA ON NUKES, Washington, 10/3/97) reported that a senior Clinton administration official said that the administration expects to make a declaration at the October 29 Washington summit meeting of President Clinton and Chinese President Jiang Zemin that the PRC isn't helping other nations make nuclear weapons. However he added that administration officials are telling opponents in Congress in private that they are "pushing China hard to terminate or phase out its cooperation with Iran." Kurt Campbell, deputy assistant secretary of defense for East Asia, added that "There's no rush to do this in a way that can't be verified and that can't be explained to the Congress." Senator Craig Thomas, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on East Asia, after meeting with national security adviser Sandy Berger, said he came away satisfied "that the United States wasn't going to shortchange our interests to be able to announce something at a summit." Instead, Thomas said, US officials were impressing upon the PRC that halting the spread of nuclear weapons is in its own security interests. But Representative Edward Markey, a Democrat from Massachusetts, warned President Clinton in a letter signed by 62 members of Congress that "No president has thus far been able to certify" that the PRC isn't spreading military nuclear technology "and we do not believe that it is possible to certify that it is the case today."

The Washington Post carried an opinion article (Jim Hoagland, "A DARK TINT FOR JIANG," 10/5/97, Page C07) that argued that the Clinton administration seems prepared to declare the occurrence of the upcoming summit between President Clinton and PRC President Jiang Zemin "as just short of miraculous, and highly worthy in and of itself." The article said that the administration is portraying the summit as "a false choice between lavishing ceremony on Jiang on this trip or isolating China altogether." But since the US "is already intimately engaged with" the PRC, "the question is not warm contact or no contact" but rather whether the summit will "be candid and reflect American ethical and moral values as well as support business opportunities and short-term diplomatic imperatives. . . . Will American interests in the survival of democracy in Taiwan and Hong Kong be made paramount in Clinton's conversations with Jiang?" The article pointed out that "While the Clinton administration is emphasizing China's desire to work with America if handled respectfully, Beijing is emphasizing to Europe its desire to diversify its economic and diplomatic relations." The article also argued that "two of the most important things about this summit will be things that do not happen: There will apparently not be an address by Jiang to a joint session of Congress, . . . And as things stand now there will probably be no joint statement at the summit's end."

## **II. Republic of Korea**

### **1. US Lawmaker to Visit DPRK**

An ROK Foreign Ministry official said Saturday that US Congressman Tony Hall, a Democrat from Ohio, is likely to visit the DPRK in the middle of this month. While there Hall is expected to meet DPRK foreign affairs and relief officials to discuss food aid and to tour famine-hit areas. Hall, an expert on global famine issues, will also hold discussions with DPRK officials regarding a visit to the DPRK by a team of US experts to assess the food situation. (Korea Herald, "US LAWMAKER HALL TO VISIT DPRK," 10/06/97)

### **2. ROK Defense Posture**

ROK Defense Minister Kim Dong-jin reported to the National Assembly Defense Committee Saturday that the ROK would consider a possible preemptive strike against the DPRK in case of an apparent threat of chemical attack by the DPRK using Scud missiles. Minister Kim's report was made during the annual parliamentary inspection of state affairs. Kim also admitted that military investigators found that defects in the fuel-injection system could have caused the recent crashes of two KF-16 fighter jets, but he dismissed allegations by legislators that the original designs were not followed in installing the fuel system as "unfounded." The ROK Defense Ministry also submitted to the parliamentary committee a report which said that the ROK had accumulated a deficit of more than US\$2.4 billion in arms trade with the US since President Kim Young-sam's inauguration in 1993. Representative Chun Yong-taek of the opposition National Congress for New Politics also noted Thursday that the US government is reluctant to consent to the ROK's export of weapons made with US technology to a third country, adding to the arms trade deficit. (Korea Herald, "PREEMPTIVE STRIKE AGAINST SCUD MISSILES POSSIBLE," 10/06/97)

### **3. Kim Jong-il Meets Russian Official**

DPRK leader Kim Jong-il held talks with Oleg Shenin, chairman of a grouping of communist parties of the former Soviet Union, at the DPRK leader's Pyongyang residence on September 2, ITAR-Tass reported Friday. It was the first time in 10 years the reclusive leader has met a foreign official, the news agency said. Shenin said his host appeared well-informed on events in Russia, adding that the two men discussed international events and Pyongyang's relations with Tokyo and Washington, ITAR-Tass reported. Shenin said he expected Kim would be elected general secretary of the Workers' Party of the DPRK by October 10. In late September, provincial party chapters in as well as

the armed forces endorsed the elevation of Kim Jong-il to the general secretary's post, according to the DPRK's official media. Shenin said he believed Kim would be elected president "during the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the DPRK in September 1998." (Korea Times, "DPRK'S KIM HOLDS TALKS WITH FIRST FOREIGN OFFICIAL IN 10 YEARS," 10/06/97)

### **III. Japan**

#### **1. Japan's Policy Toward Theater Missile Defense**

The Asahi Shimbun ("JAPAN CONTINUES STUDY ON TMD," New York, 2, 9/24/97) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Keizo Obuchi and Defense Agency head Fumio Kyuma met with their counterparts US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Secretary of Defense William Cohen in New York on September 23 and exchanged their views on the US Theater Missile Defense (TMD) initiative. They confirmed that Japan and the US are continuing their study on the TMD system and that the study will focus for some time on the feasibility of the system.

#### **2. Japan-ROK Relations**

The Asahi Shimbun ("ROK HAILS NEW GUIDELINES FOR JAPAN-US DEFENSE COOPERATION," New York, 2, 9/25/97) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Keizo Obuchi told ROK Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-ha in New York on September 24, with regard to the new Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation, that if rescue work by Japanese Self-Defense forces impacts on the ROK's sovereignty, Japan will consult with the ROK for coordination. In response, Yoo said, "Japan-US defense cooperation is important to ROK-US cooperation and security in Asia. I give credit to the new guidelines."

#### **3. Japan-US-PRC Defense Relations**

The Nikkei Shimbun ("JAPAN-US-PRC SECURITY DIALOGUE," Washington, 1, 9/27/97) reported that the Japanese and US governments are now proposing an unofficial Japan-US-PRC security dialogue to respond to the PRC's concerns about the new Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation. The report pointed out that although the US and the PRC began defense exchanges at the defense academy level after the Taiwan Strait Crisis last year, there has been a need for some framework for security dialogue among Japan, the US and the PRC. The proposed trilateral dialogue would likely be arranged by governmental institutes such as the Japan Institute of International Affairs. The report also said that US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Kurt Campbell will call for such a trilateral security dialogue during his own visit to the PRC prior to US Secretary of Defense William Cohen's visit in late November.

#### **4. DPRK's View of Japan-US Defense Cooperation Guidelines**

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("DPRK CRITICIZES NEW GUIDELINES FOR JAPAN-US DEFENSE COOPERATION," Seoul, Evening Edition 2, 9/29/97) reported that according to the DPRK's central broadcasting agency, the DPRK's Foreign Ministry spokesman criticized the new Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation on September 27, saying, "The whole process of the discussion on the New Guidelines for Japan-US Defense cooperation demonstrate that the Guidelines [are] definitely aim[ed] at our republic."

The DPRK's Korean Central News Agency ("NEW GUIDELINES FOR JAPAN-US DEFENSE COOPERATION UNDER FIRE," 10/1/97) reported on October 1 that the DPRK's Rodong Sinmun described the new Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation as a war scenario worked out by Japan and the US, arguing, "It is the strategic plan and target of the U.S. and Japanese reactionaries

to invade and dominate Asia. The first target of their attack is the DPRK. . . . We cannot remain a passive onlooker to the fact that with the new 'guidelines' worked out the U.S. and Japan are working in real earnest to realize their design of aggression on our country and other Asian countries. We will respond to the situation with sharpened revolutionary vigilance. The Asian countries should never allow the new 'guidelines.'" [Ed note: The text of this report can be found at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/contents/01.htm#3>]

## **5. Japanese Wives' Visit**

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPANESE GOVERNMENT IS CONDUCTING SURVEY ON ATTITUDE OF RELATIVES OF FIRST GROUP OF JAPANESE WIVES VISITING JAPAN," 3, 10/3/97) reported that a high-ranking Japanese Foreign Ministry official suggested on October 2 that the Ministry is conducting a survey of the relatives of Japanese wives of DPRK citizens who will visit Japan from the DPRK to ascertain their attitudes toward the visits. The official also revealed that the first group will consist of about ten women. With regard to Japan-DPRK negotiations on normalization, the official said, "I cannot say anything certain at this moment, but I will not deny the possibility of the negotiations restarting within this year."

## **6. Japan-Russia Relations**

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("RUSSIAN PRESIDENT SAYS HE IS READY FOR TALKS WITH JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER ON 'TERRITORIES'," Moscow, 3, 10/3/97) reported that according to the Inter-Fax News Agency, Russian President Boris Yeltsin said, regarding his meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto slated for November 1-2, that he is ready for talks on all issues including territorial ones, but that it is regrettable that there has been no peace treaty between Japan and Russia. The report pointed out that his statement indicates that the peace treaty will be part of the agenda at the summit.

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We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

Produced by [the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development](#).

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