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# NAPSNet Daily Report 07 December, 1998

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### **I. United States**

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#### **1. US Policy Coordinator's ROK Visit**

Reuters (Bill Tarrant, "S.KOREA, U.S. KEEP ENGAGEMENT POLICY TOWARD NORTH," Seoul, 12/07/98) and the Associated Press ("PERRY DISCUSSES N. KOREA NUKE ISSUE," Seoul, 12/07/98) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung and William Perry, US policy coordinator on the DPRK, on Monday agreed to act "sternly" against the DPRK if necessary, but to maintain a policy of engagement. Kim told Perry at a meeting, "North Korea is currently at a crossroads. One (way) is to risk war through military provocations, or to open up. But the two are equally difficult for North Korea to take up." He added, "If we approach wisely through means of giving hopes and warnings, and because North Korea knows it would lose if they engage in a war, they will respond cooperatively." Perry, who arrived late Sunday, will also fly to Beijing and Tokyo this week to meet top security and defense officials, as well as academic experts, to collect their views on US policy

toward the DPRK. ROK Foreign Minister Hong Sun-yong told Perry at a lunch meeting that he thought it was a particularly good idea to go to Beijing. He stated, "I think no country has greater influence over the North than China has. China has as much potential to influence North Korea as any country has. They also have...the ability to understand and explain the mind of the North Korean leadership, which is very important." Foreign Ministry officials confirmed that the meeting between Perry and Hong focused on the suspected DPRK underground facility. They said that Hong supported the US demand for unlimited access to the suspected site, but he also stressed the importance of the ROK's policy of engagement with the DPRK.

The Associated Press (Paul Shin, "DEAL ON N.KOREA NUKE ISSUE PROPOSED," Seoul, 12/07/98) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung proposed Monday to US envoy William Perry that the US provide economic and diplomatic benefits to the DPRK in exchange for access to its underground construction site. ROK presidential spokesman Park Ji-won quoted Kim as telling Perry, "I think all problems related to North Korea should be tackled in a package deal." Kim added, "I hope for normalization of relations between the United States and North Korea, and I think it's time to think about lifting economic sanctions against North Korea." He also said that he believes the DPRK is taking a hard-line stand because it is weak. He argued that even if the project at Kumchang-ri was nuclear-related, that should not be a reason for sanctions against the DPRK because the facility would need four to five years to be completed. Perry reportedly promised to consider Kim's proposal.

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## **2. US-DPRK Meetings**

The Associated Press ("N. KOREA: NO PROGRESS IN U.S. TALKS," United Nations, 12/05/98) reported that DPRK Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye-gwan on Friday reiterated his country's demand that the US pay for access to its underground construction site. Kim said that no headway in the issue after talks with the US on Friday. Negotiations were to resume Saturday at the US Mission to the UN and then move to Washington on Monday and Tuesday.

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## **3. Future of Agreed Framework**

The New York Times (Philip Shenon, "NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR PACT REPORTED NEAR BREAKDOWN," Washington, 12/06/98) reported that US administration officials said that the 1994 Agreed Framework could collapse within weeks unless the issue of the DPRK's underground construction is resolved. Unnamed senior Clinton administration officials were quoted as saying that the DPRK will be told in negotiations this month that the agreement will unravel unless the DPRK allows a team of dozens of US inspectors complete access to the underground installation. Robert Gallucci, the former State Department official who negotiated the Agreed Framework and who is now dean of the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, stated, "The North Koreans are playing with fire. The North Koreans are quite consciously engaging in brinksmanship. They are putting the framework at risk." Donald Gregg, former US ambassador to the ROK and now president of the Korea Society, said that US policy toward the DPRK was in "disarray" and that there was little time left to salvage the Agreed Framework. He added that the DPRK may be justified in its frustration with the US. He stated, "The Agreed Framework said we would lift sanctions as soon as feasible, and we haven't. We have not lived up to all that we said we would do. And if we don't get our act together in the next three or four months, Congress is going to take apart the Agreed Framework and that will remove any inhibition the North Koreans have from going full bore to develop a nuclear capability. I think the problem is that there's really no constituency in Washington for a sustained serious policy toward North Korea." Senator Craig Thomas, R-Wyo., chairman of the

Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, said of the DPRK, "I don't think there is any reason to trust them. You have a government that is more like a cult, and that is obviously going downhill economically." He added that without unfettered inspection of the underground site, "I frankly think we ought to discontinue our agreement with them."

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#### **4. DPRK War Warnings**

Reuters (Bill Tarrant, "N.KOREA RATTLES SABRE AS U.S. ENVOY BEGINS TOUR," Seoul, 12/07/98) reported that the DPRK said on Monday that it was prepared for a possible war with the US. In a commentary carried by the official Korean Central News Agency, the ruling Workers' Party Rodong Shinmun newspaper stated, "Since it has become clear that the U.S. imperialists have planned to wage an overall war with the DPRK and the ignition of war is imminent, our revolutionary armed forces cannot but take an appropriate self-defensive counter-measure." It added, "We cannot remain a passive onlooker to the hysteric moves of the enemies, as they are trying to cut off our heart and reduce our territory to ashes with nuclear weapons, alleging they would make 'pre-emptive strike' and 'surgical operation style strike.'" Some analysts in the ROK have speculated that the US may consider a "surgical" air strike against the DPRK's underground complex, if it is conclusively proven to be a nuclear- related facility, but US diplomats declined to say whether that is being considered.

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA SAYS U.S. PUSHING PENINSULA TO WAR," Tokyo, 12/05/98) reported that the DPRK's official Korean Central News Agency warned late Friday night that US charges of an underground nuclear facility were "as good as a declaration of war." The report said, "While the U.S. imperialists and their followers are spreading the fiction of 'suspected underground nuclear facilities' in the North, is, in actuality, as good as a declaration of war against the DPRK." It added, "If the U.S. imperialists provoke a war, the Korean people will give a thousand-fold blow to the enemies at home and abroad and totally smash them."

US State Department Deputy Spokesman James Foley ("STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING, DECEMBER 4, 1998," USIA Transcript, 12/07/98) said that the recent escalation of the DPRK's hostile rhetoric was "not helpful at all." Foley stated, "Of course, we are not going to welcome any kind of language that's bellicose and hostile when ... the United States is helping to feed the people of North Korea who are dealing with a humanitarian disaster on their hands. It's unacceptable language. But at the same time, we're in various negotiating fora with the North Koreans to deal with our security concerns and the four-party talks.... We would rather leave the focus on the actual negotiations that we're undertaking and urge the North Korean side to lower the temperature of the rhetoric." He added, however, "I think it's not unusual for this kind of rhetoric to be coming out of there from time to time."

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#### **5. Harassment of Japanese-Koreans**

The Associated Press ("JAPAN GROUP SUSPECTED OF HARASSMENT," Tokyo, 12/06/98) reported that Japan's Kyodo News agency said Sunday that police in central Japan have raided the offices of a political group suspected of harassing the pro-DPRK General Association of Korean Residents in Japan. The search was triggered by suspicions the group had sent intimidating letters and razor blades to a branch of the association located in Gifu prefecture. The news report did not identify the group, and a police spokesman in Gifu was unable to confirm the report.

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## 6. Taiwan Elections

The Washington Post (John Pomfret, "NATIONALISTS VICTORIOUS IN TAIWAN," Taipei, 12/06/98, A31) reported that ruling Nationalist Party candidate Ma Ying-jeou defeated the incumbent Chen Shui-bian of the main opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in the election for mayor of Taipei held Saturday. The Nationalist Party also won 123 of 225 seats for a 55 percent majority in the Taiwan legislature, while the DPP only won 70. Nationwide, the Nationalists received 46.39 percent of the vote to the DPP's 29.55 percent. The minor opposition New Party, which supports unification with the PRC, received less than 7 percent of the vote. In Taiwan's second largest city, Kaohsiung, DPP challenger Frank Hsieh beat Mayor Wu Den-yih. Yu Ting-wan, a Taiwanese electrical engineer, stated, "We voted this way to avoid confrontation with the Communists. I love Taiwan and I think the Nationalists are the ones to protect it." About 80 percent of Taiwan's registered voters cast ballots. Analysts attributed Chen's defeat to his attempt during the campaign to appeal to distinctions between native-born Taiwanese and those with mainland Chinese origins. Chu Yun-han, a professor of political science at National Taiwan University, argued, "This policy of separation backfired, and the DPP should learn a lesson. This election was not about who would be the better mayor. It was about whether Taipei's voters were willing to let the Nationalists continue to slide and give the DPP a chance to come to power." In Tainan, a southern Taiwanese city, 77 percent of voters said in a plebiscite that they opposed Taiwan being governed by the PRC.

## II. Republic of Korea

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### 1. US-DPRK Meetings

Chosun Ilbo ("DPRK-US MEETINGS FAIL TO YIELD RESULTS," Seoul, 12/06/98) reported that the December 4-6 round of meetings between the US and the DPRK held in New York to discuss ways to dispel suspicion of nuclear activities at a facility in Kumchang-ri ended without compromise. According to diplomatic sources, the two parties were set to resume talks for two more days in Washington at the State Department starting Monday. US government officials said that discussion at the New York meetings was sincere and covered a wide-range of issues connected with the suspicion of nuclear facilities. DPRK minister of foreign affairs Kim Gye-gwan, who headed the DPRK delegation, said that meetings have entered a serious stage, indicating a shift in attitude following the DPRK's insistence that the allegations are groundless and suggesting that the next round of meetings could yield some results. US government sources said, however, that the DPRK did not show any change in their previous claim that the Kumchang-ri facility is for civilian purposes only and continued to insist that an inspection of the site would be allowed only with financial compensation.

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### 2. US DPRK Policy Coordinator's ROK Visit

JoongAng Ilbo ("WILLIAM PERRY ARRIVES IN DPRK TO DISCUSS DPRK ISSUE," Seoul, 12/06/98) reported that William Perry, US special envoy for DPRK affairs, arrived in ROK on December 6. He will meet with Hong Soon- young, the Foreign Affairs minister, on December 7 to discuss the suspected nuclear facilities in the DPRK. Minister Hong intends to advise Perry that the two governments must prevent the DPRK from developing nuclear facilities. Perry is expected to deliver a message from the US government strongly stating that any nuclear development by the DPRK will not be tolerated. Perry, who is known as a "hawk," reportedly drew up bombing scenarios against

the DPRK, unlike Jimmy Carter's "dovish" overtures when the DPRK's nuclear weapon development program was at a crisis level in 1994. He will meet President Kim and also visit the PRC and Japan after leaving the ROK.

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### **3. ROK Missile Misfire**

Chosun Ilbo ("MOND CHECKS AA MISSILE UNITS," Seoul, 12/06/98) reported that the ROK Ministry of National Defense (MOND) announced Sunday that the Air Force has instituted a full-scale check on all of its Nike Hercules anti-aircraft missiles, after determining that the misfire at Incheon on Friday was caused by a fault in the electronic fire control system. An Air Force official said that among four electrical circuits in the system, two were found to have faulty connections and so all 200 of the missiles deployed in the air defense screen will be fully checked by Wednesday. He continued that the self-destruct mechanism in the missile involved in Friday's incident, activated after it had flown 1 kilometer northwest of the battery at an altitude of between 1 to 1.5 kilometers. Some debris was blown towards residential areas by wind and the MOND will compensate the six civilians injured and the 134 incidences of vehicle and building damage.

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### **4. ROK Military Mishaps**

JoongAng Ilbo ("MILITARY FORCES COMING UNDER FIRE," Seoul, 12/06/98) reported that the ROK military is coming under fire after successive mishaps. The Minister of National Defense Chun Yong-taek, in a December 4 meeting in which leaders from all sectors of the military were in attendance, had warned that all units should be prepared for possible DPRK provocations. He also called for increased improvement of security and discipline. The very next day, however, an armed surface-to-air missile was accidentally launched in the morning. It exploded in the air, sending debris down injuring several civilians. On the afternoon of the same day a 90mm shell used in recoilless anti-tank guns was mishandled and exploded killing 3 soldiers in a unit on the eastern frontier. The soldiers reportedly tried to make a souvenir from the shell. On December 6, fragments from a flare bomb flew into a residential house in Ilsan during a night exercise at a nearby Marine Corps firing range, injuring one person. In the past 12 days nine separate military accidents occurred, leaving ten soldiers dead. Finally, after a public outcry, President Kim Dae-jung ordered a special investigation to find out the reasons the deadly accidents are occurring one after another. The government has hinted that a severe censure is in order while the opposition Grand National Party (GNP) is demanding that those responsible, including Defense Minister Chun, resign.

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### **5. Joint ROK-US Military Exercise**

Korea Times ("JOINT ROK, US MILITARY EXERCISE DUE IN TEXAS," Seoul, 12/06/98) reported that a large ROK Army contingent headed by a four-star general will conduct a joint exercise with a US corps in Fort Hood, Texas on December 10-21 in order to enhance their combined war readiness for any major inter-Korean conflict. According to officials at the ROK-US Combined Forces Command (CFC) on Saturday, deputy CFC commander General Chung Yong-moo left for Fort Hood on Saturday along with 14 CFC senior staff members and personnel from the 3rd ROK Army to participate in the joint Warfighter Exercise. Fort Hood, Texas is the headquarters of 3rd US Corps, which would be among the first US ground units to be dispatched to the ROK in case of conflict. Because it would be put under the 3rd ROK Army command under these circumstances, smooth

coordination between the two units is seen as pivotal to deterring and, if necessary, overcoming DPRK aggression, according to CFC officials. Reports have it that in February of last year, a CFC/3rd ROK Army contingent of 285 personnel visited Texas and conducted a joint command post exercise (CPX) with 3rd US Corps, the first-ever large-scale joint drill between the two countries on the US mainland. It is said that the Warfighter Exercise is conducted in accordance with a scenario outlined in the two countries' war plan, codenamed 5027, so as to simulate a wartime situation as close to reality as possible.

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## **6. Hyundai's Business with DPRK**

Korea Herald ("HYUNDAI TO SET UP FIRM FOR DPRK PROJECTS," Seoul, 12/07/98) reported that the Hyundai Group will launch a company next month which will take charge of its DPRK projects, including the tour of Mt. Kumkang. When the tour to Mt. Kumkang catches on beginning next year, Hyundai's business with the DPRK will grow too big for the current single task force to handle, the Hyundai official said. The new company, to be named "Mt. Kumkang Development Co.," will be a consortium of all subsidiaries involved in the group's inter-Korea business, including the task force. The company will become Hyundai's dialogue channel with DPRK, and will be equipped with all the resources needed to develop a resort complex in Mt. Kumkang and an industrial estate on the western coast. Hyundai chairman Chung Mong-hun, who is in charge of the group's business with the DPRK, is likely to become the chief executive officer of the company, a group official said. The company will initially push three of the nine projects agreed upon between Hyundai and the DPRK last June. Those are mobilizing DPRK workers for an oil refinery construction project in Turkmenistan, construction of a car radio assembly plant on the western coast, and development of mineral water springs.

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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