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I. United States

1. KEDO Project

Reuters ("HITACHI, TOSHIBA COULD PROVIDE N.KOREA GENERATORS-PAPER," New York, 12/06/00) reported that Japan's Nihon Keizai Shimbun said Thursday that the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) could ask Hitachi Limited and Toshiba Corporation to provide generators for light-water reactors to be built in the DPRK. According to the report, KEDO decided at an ambassadorial level meeting in Tokyo that it would order from the two Japanese companies if General Electric Company decides to withdraw from the project.

2. UK-DPRK Relations

Reuters ("BRITAIN, N.KOREA OFFICIALS DISCUSS IMPROVED TIES," London, 12/07/00) reported

that British and DPRK officials met in London on Thursday for talks on plans to open diplomatic relations. A British Foreign Office spokeswoman stated, "It would be wrong to lead you to believe on Friday afternoon there will be an announcement." She added that the talks would concentrate on Britain's concerns over nuclear non-proliferation, the DPRK's missile technology and export plans and human rights, "Then they will touch on the possibility of opening ties."

3. DPRK Loan Repayment

Dow Jones Newswires (Nitsara Srihanam, "THAILAND, NORTH KOREA TO DISCUSS DEBT REPAYMENT 1Q 2000," Bangkok, 12/07/00) reported that Thai Deputy Minister of Commerce Goanpot Asvinvichit said Thursday that Thailand and the DPRK will discuss the repayment of a Thai loan to the DPRK government in the first quarter of next year. Goanpot said that the DPRK ambassador to Thailand informed him that the DPRK minister in charge of trade will visit Thailand to discuss the issue. The DPRK owes Thailand US$96.15 million for rice sold on credit in 1993. In July, Goanpot proposed that the DPRK issue bonds to obtain money to repay the debt, but at Thursday's meeting, the DPRK ambassador said that his government was not legally able to issue bonds.

4. DPRK Food Shortage

The Associated Press (Thomas Wagner, "U.N.: N. KOREA FACING FOOD SHORTAGE," Kyoto, 12/07/00) reported that David Morton, the UN resident coordinator in the DPRK, said on Thursday that the DPRK is suffering its worst food shortages since 1996-97. Morton said that if the ROK, Japan, the US and other nations provide 810,000 tons of food, relief agencies should able to feed the DPRK's people through the winter and into next year's growing season. He warned, "It will be a big step backward for the country if we don't manage to help it enough this year." He also said that a failure by relief agencies could set back the process of political rapprochement. He argued, "The initial suspicion and mistrust on both sides [when international aid organizations first came to the DPRK] has been substantially reduced, and the North's understanding of how the West works increased. It's been a big confidence-building measure for North Korea in dealing with the outside world." Morton said that a drought this spring and two tropical storms in September have set back efforts to help the DPRK. Morton was attending a UN-funded international symposium on the Koreas and ways of establishing peace in Northeast Asia.

5. Remains of US Soldiers from Korean War

The Associated Press (Robert Burns, "US, N. KOREA TO DISCUSS WAR REMAINS," Washington, 12/06/00) reported that an anonymous US Defense Department official said Wednesday that the DPRK has agreed to hold talks with the US in Kuala Lumpur starting December 13 on terms and conditions for resuming the search for remains of US servicemen killed during the Korean War. Among the issues to be settled are the location, duration and number of excavation missions and financial compensation to the DPRK. The US plans to publicly announce the talks early next week. The US hopes that the talks will result in agreement to expand the search to the Chosin Reservoir area, where remains of about 1,000 US servicemen are believed to be recoverable.

6. Nogunri Incident

Reuters (Song Jung-a, "S. KOREA WANTS U.S. APOLOGY FOR KOREAN WAR KILLINGS," Seoul, 12/07/00) and the International Herald Tribune (Don Kirk, "HARD ATTITUDE IN SEOUL BLOCKS U.S. ENDEAVOR TO SETTLE ISSUE," Seoul, 12/07/00) reported that Kim Byoung-ho, chief policy

coordinator at the ROK prime minister's office, said Thursday that the ROK wants the US to apologize and give compensation to relatives and survivors of the killings at Nogunri village during the early days of the Korean War. Kim stated, "The South Korean side delivered the victims' position to the U.S. delegation and asked Washington to come up with sincere measures." He added, "We have failed to reach an agreement on the investigation results, but we came closer on many issues involving the incident." Kim also said that the US Defense Department had notified the ROK that a story in the Washington Post on Wednesday did not represent the US government's official position. Brigadier General Cha Yong-gu of the ROK Defense Ministry stated, "The Korean team depends more on the claims of victims. The Americans depend on the documents and testimony of veterans. The source is different." He added, "Basically, the United States and Korea are trying hard to share each other's view. It's not an easy problem. The more important thing is our alliance." More than 200 civic group members and the massacre survivors held a rally on Wednesday in front of the War Memorial, chanting slogans such as "Yankee go home," and blowing whistles. The protesters marched toward the headquarters of US Forces in Korea and formed a human chain along the fence, demanding that the US government reveal the truth about No Gun Ri. They also demanded that the US revise the Status of Forces Agreement governing US troops stationed in the ROK. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 7.]

7. Cross-Straits Relations

The Far Eastern Economic Review carried an analytical article (Maureen Pao and Susan V. Lawrence, "CHINA AND TAIWAN SHARE DISTASTE FOR COMMON FOE," Taipei and Beijing, 12/06/00) which said that recent trip to the PRC by an official of Taiwan's Kuomintang (KMT) shows how the two groups are brought together in opposition to Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian and the Democratic Progressive Party. Wu Yu-shan, a professor of political science at National Taiwan University, stated, "It's a realistic and instrumental calculation on the KMT's part, more symbolic than concrete. It shows that only the KMT has the ability to talk to high-ranking officials across the strait." Wu added, "There is tremendous economic pressure for [President Chen Shui-bian] to break this current impasse and reach out to Beijing. But the political situation constrains him." Lu Ya-li, a political scientist at Chinese Culture University, said that the KMT "want to win the goodwill of the people, to build up political capital for next year's legislative elections." He warned, however, "The KMT can't be perceived as being used by Beijing, but using Beijing." Bonnie Glaser, a Washington-based consultant, said that the PRC "government is happy to oblige" the KMT. She stated, "It serves everyone's short-term interest." In recent public-opinion polls, the KMT's rating hovers between 10 and 20 percent, and 540,000 people re-registered for the party, compared to a two million membership in the past. DPP legislator Shen Fu-hsiung warned that the KMT "can only push to a certain extent before they will invite resentment from the public.... They can't walk too close to the CCP [Chinese Communist Party]." Xu Shiquan, head of the PRC's Institute of Taiwan Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, stated, "The contacts between the KMT and the mainland will play a stabilizing role" in cross-strait relations by putting "pressure on the DPP to accept or move closer to the one-China principle." Xu added, "Pressure from the mainland and from the United States are playing a very important role, but if the pressure from the opposition were not there, perhaps the DPP policy would be more extreme."

8. Japanese Foreign Aid

Kyodo News Agency ("JAPAN COALITION TEAM TO URGE CUT IN ODA BUDGET," Tokyo, 12/07/00) reported that Japan's ruling coalition's project team on foreign aid has compiled a draft policy paper urging a "quantitative cut" in official development assistance (ODA). A team source on Thursday quoted the draft paper as stating, "The government should implement a quantitative cut in the

overall size of the ODA budget while ensuring that it will not affect implementation of the projects that are based on the nation's international promises." The source said that the policy paper urges the government to put priority on using the ODA money for humanitarian purposes and calls for aid-recipient nations to inform the local populace that the ODA goods and services have originated from Japan. The paper recommends the government pay greater attention to helping the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

9. Foreign Policy of Next US President

The Los Angeles Times carried an analytical article (Jim Mann, "PENTAGON SHAPES THE BUSH POLICY TEAM," Washington, 12/06/00) which noted that US presidential candidate George W. Bush's foreign policy team is dominated by a defense orientation. The article stated, "Over the last eight years, the leading figures in the Clinton administration have come from the world of trade law and investment banking.... Now we're going to see a return of The Commanders, the team that won the Persian Gulf War nine years ago." He noted that Bush's choice for vice president, Dick Cheney, was most recently Defense secretary, his probable secretary of State, General Colin L. Powell, was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and that former Defense Department officials Richard L. Armitage and Paul Wolfowitz are likely to get senior posts. The leading candidate for assistant secretary of State for East Asia is said to be James A. Kelly, a Navy veteran who served on the National Security Council in the Reagan administration. The Defense Department's Asia policy job may go to Torkel Patterson, another retired Navy official. The article said that while the Defense orientations of many of the Bush foreign policy advisors may prove beneficial in some respects, "It's unclear yet whether the Pentagon alumni who would return to government in Bush II are prepared to deal with a new challenge--a world where international economic issues loom larger than they did a decade ago."

The International Herald Tribune carried an opinion article by Douglas H. Paal, head of the Asia Pacific Policy Center ("YOU'LL BE DEALING WITH A DIFFERENT ASIA, MR. PRESIDENT-ELECT," Washington, 12/07/00) which said that whoever becomes the next president will find dealing with Asia complicated by the forces of globalization and the rise of nationalism. The author argued, "The recent odd mix of American triumphalism and inattention to the region is increasingly at odds with trends there." He pointed out that the region has been severely shaken by the financial crisis and that democracy is being challenged in many countries. He also said, "Handling [the DPRK's] transition and transformation will demand great diplomatic skill and regional coordination. Alternatively, guarding against a North Korean failure will require continued vigilance and deterrence." He added, "Either way, the U.S. disposition of forces in Northeast Asia will come in for reassessment, as Japan and South Korea, weary of Cold War vestiges in their presence, contemplate new capabilities of their own." He argued, "American officials can offer to begin consultations with allies on how the existing structures and facilities associated with the U.S. military presence can be altered to make them more durable, dependable and strong. Potential adversaries should see a transparent consultative process that can be interpreted only as reaffirming the strength of a coalition of the willing. The aim of such alliances should not be Cold War style deterrence but to maintain the region's stability." He added, "Globally as well as regionally, U.S. nuclear strategy requires clarification. Arms control goals and the role of theater and national missile defense need to be woven into a coherent policy." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 7.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. Nogunri Incident

The Korea Times (Son Key-young, "KOREA, US SHOW WIDE GAP IN ASSESSMENT OF NOGUN-RI CASE," 12/07/00) reported that ROK and US investigators met at the War Memorial in Seoul on Wednesday to discuss a final announcement on the year-long investigation into the alleged massacre of Korean civilians at Nogun-ri during the Korean War. ROK negotiators called for appropriate US actions, including an apology, the restoration of the victims' honor, and compensation. However, the US side contended that it was an accident, saying that the investigators failed to find any hard evidence that US soldiers were ordered to shoot refugees and that many testimonies by the witnesses lacked credibility because of their confusion over the site of the massacre and other details. The two countries are expected to hold another round of negotiations in the US late this month to try to narrow their differences. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 7.]

2. US-ROK SOFA Talks

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "SOFA TALKS LIKELY TO END AMID LITTLE PROGRESS," 12/07/00) reported that ROK officials and analysts said Wednesday that talks between the ROK and the US to revise the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) governing US troops in the ROK will likely end with little substantial progress. An unnamed ROK Foreign Ministry official stated, "Both sides have worked out draft agreements on six pending issues related to the SOFA revision, but their differences over some important and sensitive issues are still wide." The article said that the US is refusing the ROK's proposal on the establishment of an environmental clause in SOFA as it would be legally binding. The US prefers to adopt a declaration on the environment as it did with Japan in September. The US is also not dropping its demand that ROK authorities guarantee the rights of accused US soldiers to question witnesses or their accusers face-to-face, but the ROK argues that that would change its legal system. Lee Hyun-choul, a director at Green Korea United, stated, "The United States seems to have no intention to revise SOFA." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 7.]

3. Anti-US Protest

The Korea Herald (Kang Seok-jae, "CIVIC GROUPS HOLD RALLY TO PROTEST U.S. FORCES AGREEMENT, MASSACRE PROBE," 12/07/00) reported that hundreds of ROK citizens on Wednesday held a protest rally in front of the War Memorial in Seoul, calling for an overhaul of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) governing the legal rights of US troops in the ROK. Participants also demanded a thorough investigation into the Nogun-ri incident. The protest rally was organized by the People's Action for Reform of the Unjust ROK-U.S. SOFA Agreement, a coalition of some 110 civic groups. Cha Seung-yul, secretary-general of the coalition, stated, "In addition to the inclusion of new environmental clauses in the revised SOFA, the Seoul government should be allowed access to U.S. military facilities for the constant supervision and monitoring of environmental problems. If the U.S. side attempts to include the environmental provisions not in the main SOFA text but in a separate appendix, they will mean nothing." Since last Wednesday, scores of civic group members have been staging a sit-in protest at Myongdong Cathedral in Seoul to call for a complete revision of the SOFA. Cha stated, "The sit-in will continue until today and some 150 civic group members started Tuesday sending e-mails calling for overhaul of the SOFA to President Kim Dae-jung and U.S. President Bill Clinton." Green Korea United (GKU) on Tuesday released a report on environmental pollution cases involving US Forces Korea (USFK). The report said that there was only one USFK environmental pollution case per year in the early 1990s, but the figure rose to three to four per year in the late 1990s. Kim Ta-kyun, director of GKU, stated, "This year alone, there were nine cases

related to U.S. troops, accounting for about 35 percent of the total number of environmental contamination cases registered since 1990." He said that 15 of the 35 cases involved oil spills, eight cases of excessive noise and tremors, five cases of water pollution resulting from waste disposal, four cases of illegal reclamation and three cases of excessive use of pesticides. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 7.]

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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