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I. United States

1. US-ROK-Japan Meeting on DPRK Issues

Reuters ("U.S., JAPAN, S.KOREA OFFICIALS BEGIN N.KOREA TALKS," Tokyo, 5/7/97) reported that the US, the ROK and Japan began talks in Tokyo on Wednesday to coordinate policies regarding the DPRK. ROK officials said that the one-day discussions at the Japanese Foreign Ministry were to focus on food shortages in the North and ways to encourage the DPRK government to join peace talks. The trilateral discussions are being led by Charles Kartman, US deputy assistant secretary of state, Yu Myung-hwan, director-general for North American affairs at the ROK Foreign Ministry, and Ryozo Kato, Yu's Japanese counterpart. At talks in New York two weeks ago, the US and the ROK failed to get the DPRK to accept their proposed four-party peace talks proposal.

Reuters ("FOOD AID TO NORTH KOREA TIED TO PEACE TALKS," Tokyo, 5/7/97) reported that Japanese officials involved with the Tokyo talks said Wednesday that the US and the ROK do not plan to give large-scale food aid to the DPRK until the Pyongyang government agrees to open peace talks.

The officials said Japan did not plan to give any aid at all until ties with the DPRK were normalized. All three viewpoints were reiterations of previously held positions. "We basically agreed it was important to keep a cautious eye on the food situation in North Korea," a Japanese Foreign Ministry official said.

The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("1997 S. KOREA, JAP

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The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("1997 S. KOREA, JAPAN, U.S. OFFICIALS HUDDLE ON N. KOREA AID," Tokyo, 5/7/97) reported that a ROK Foreign Ministry official said Wednesday on condition of anonymity that in the Tokyo talks the US and ROK strongly favored providing immediate humanitarian aid to the DPRK, but that the Japanese government must refrain because it faces intense domestic pressure to demand first that the DPRK resolve allegations that its spies kidnapped Japanese civilians in the 1970s and 1980s.

2. DPRK Chemical Weapons Threat

United Press International ("S.KOREA SHOWS CONCERN OVER N.KOREA ARMS," Seoul, 5/7/97) reported that Lee Ki-choo, the ROK vice foreign minister, on Wednesday called for international support to urge the DPRK to join the UN-sponsored Chemical Weapons Convention. Lee's plea at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in the Hague, Netherlands, came just one day after ROK Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-ha suggested the DPRK could produce up to 5,000 tons of chemical weapons a year. Yoo told the ROK National Assembly that defectors from the North had given evidence of eight chemical weapons plants in the DPRK's northeast corner.

3. DPRK Famine Situation

The Associated Press ("U.N. SAYS NORTH KOREA DESPARATE," United Nations, 5/6/97) reported that World Food Program (WFP) Executive Director Catherine Bertini said Tuesday that the DPRK's food shortage is becoming so intense that people are scavenging for scrap metal and rocks to sell for money to buy food. People in impoverished northern areas of the country also are grinding rice stalks, corn cobs and empty pea pods. "There is virtually no nutritional value to this," Bertini said. "It's basically something to fill one's stomach ... to stave off some of the pain of hunger." Bertini said Tun Myat, the WFP's director for transport and logistics, reported to her Tuesday morning that the situation has worsened in the impoverished northern areas of the country he is now visiting. "Wherever he and his delegation went, people were pleading for food," Bertini said. "He saw many people foraging in fields, trying to come up with extra stalks of rice or corn that they could add to their diets for the day." Only 15 percent to 20 percent of children enrolled in schools in northern areas actually were attending classes, Bertini cited Tun Myat as saying, adding that the WFP believes children are staying away from schools because the schools don't have food for lunches. Hospitals in northern regions are in a similar situation, with patients who need treatment staying away because the hospitals have no food, she said. The WFP estimates the DPRK's overall food needs at 2.3 million tons this year, of which the DPRK government says it can raise 1 million tons. The WFP is currently trying to raise 200,000 tons, which it says is all it would be able to monitor

during distribution, but so far has received pledges for only US\$38.6 million, or about 40 percent of the US\$95.5 million required.

3. DPRK Famine Situation and DPRK Military

The Washington Times (Betsy Pisik, "NORTH KOREAN SOLDIERS GETTING MORE FOOD THAN THEIR COUNTRYMEN," New York, 5/7/97) reported that World Food Program (WFP) Executive Director Catherine Bertini also said Tuesday that DPRK soldiers are receiving seven times the food rations as civilians. However, Bertini urged governments not to let that stand in the way of humanitarian contributions. "The military is served by a separate system" that the WFP does not supply, Bertini said. UN officials say Pyongyang maintains farms and factories specifically for military needs, and has established separate trading companies to obtain hard currency or food, as needed. Bertini said its staff follows pallets of food from the dock to the distribution points to ensure it is getting to the right people. Bertini also urged governments to contribute directly to the DPRK as well, saying this is the only way thousands of families will make it through the lean times. However, she said, the WFP cannot vouch for how such direct bilateral donations will be distributed.

US Defense Department Spokesman Ken Bacon ("PENTAGON SPOKESMAN'S REGULAR BRIEFING," USIA Transcript, 5/7/97), responding to questions concerning how the DPRK military is being affected by the country's food shortage, said Tuesday, "In the past, the military has been better insulated from starvation -- in the recent past -- than the rest of the population as a whole." Bacon did not respond directly to a question concerning observations by US Congressman Tony Hall, who recently visited the DPRK, who reported seeing thousands of DPRK soldiers who had become too thin to fit their uniforms.

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK Aid to DPRK

The ROK, responding to a UN humanitarian appeal, will soon announce its plan to offer grain to the DPRK, ROK Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-ha said yesterday. In a report to the National Assembly Unification-Foreign Affairs Committee, the foreign minister pledged to keep providing humanitarian support to the DPRK, even after the inter-Korean Red Cross meeting in Beijing broke down without any agreement being reached. However, the foreign minister said that the Seoul government will "wait and see" until the DPRK realizes that its participation in the proposed four-party talks is the only way to solve its current food problems. If the four-way talks begin, Seoul is willing to discuss government-level grain aid to the DPRK in the framework of "tension-reducing and confidence-building measures," he said. The National Unification Ministry also made a report to the Assembly committee yesterday with regards to the Red Cross talks. Seoul sought to "increase aid delivery channels, expand areas of aid distribution, ensure transparency in distribution and form a hot line between Red Cross societies to discuss procedural matters of aid delivery," it said. However, a deadlock resulted when the DPRK called on the ROK to reveal the size of aid in advance, it added. The two sides agreed to hold further contacts through a Red Cross hot line to set future meetings, the ministry said. (Korea Times, "SOUTH KOREA TO ANNOUNCE GRAIN AID TO NK SHORTLY," 05/07/97)

2. ROK-DPRK Red Cross Talks

Red Cross delegates from the rival DPRK and the ROK on Monday broke off their talks on the land delivery of private food aid to the starving North, but without final agreement on direct delivery of food aid. "There was some agreement, but the two sides will have to meet again to get final agreement on delivery," a source involved with the talks said. The ROK's Yonhap News Agency

quoted Seoul's chief delegate Lee Byong-Woong as saying the two sides had agreed to meet again, without specifying a date. It also quoted DPRK chief delegate Paek Yong-Ho as blaming the breakdown on a ROK failure to specify the size of shipments to the DPRK. The ROK's Red Cross currently has 3.5 billion won (US\$3.8 million) in donations ready to buy food for the North. The first face-to-face talks between the two ROK Red Cross Societies in five years were held Saturday in Beijing and then postponed to Monday, with both sides agreeing not to disclose any details of their proposals before the end of the negotiations. Sources close to the talks had expressed optimism that there would be a successful resolution of the negotiations until half-way through Monday morning's talks at the Shangri-La Hotel in western Beijing. Yonhap earlier reported that the two Red Cross societies had prepared a joint statement for release at the end of the talks, detailing an agreement to allow food deliveries through the demilitarized zone at the truce village of Panmunjom. The main thrust of the talks was to persuade Pyongyang to allow private food donations from the ROK to be transported through the demilitarized zone dividing the two Koreas, which would save both time and money. ROK sources also said they hoped to raise the issue of reunions among divided family members on the sidelines of the meeting. Although food aid from the ROK government was not on the agenda, officials in Seoul expressed hope that the meeting would help thaw North-South relations. Seoul's pledges of large-scale food aid are dependent on Pyongyang agreeing to four-way peace talks, while Pyongyang is insisting that food aid should come before the talks. The Red Cross reported earlier this week that grain supplies had run out around mid-March in the DPRK countryside, where many farmers are now surviving entirely on grass and bark. (Korea Times, "S-N RED CROSS TALKS ON DIRECT AID DELIVERY TO NORTH BREAK OFF," 05/06/97)

3. DPRK-Taiwan Nuclear Waste Deal

The ROK will continue all diplomatic efforts in bilateral and multilateral arenas to stop Taiwan's plan to ship nuclear waste to the DPRK, ROK Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-ha said yesterday in a report to the National Assembly Unification-Foreign Affairs Committee. Yoo said that Seoul will raise the issue at the ministerial meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum on environmental matters next month and at the UN special assembly on environment. He assessed that Taiwan has recently taken "prudent steps" by not going ahead with its plan to send up to 200,000 tons of radioactive waste to the DPRK under a deal in January. Originally, Taiwan sought to start the shipment from this month but failed to do so, upon facing strong criticism from the international community, including the US. However, Yoo said that Taiwan has not expressed any intention of shelving the "immoral" plan under which Taiwan, an advanced country, intends to dump nuclear waste in the DPRK, a poor country. (Korea Times, "SOUTH KOREA TO ANNOUNCE GRAIN AID TO NK SHORTLY," 05/07/97)

4. US MIAs In DPRK

US and DPRK negotiators met Monday for a second day of talks on missing US war dead and reports that American prisoners of war may still be alive in the DPRK, US officials said. The North Koreans also agreed for the first time to meet with a small group of relatives of some of the 8,100 US troops listed as missing in action in the 1950-53 Korean War, the officials said. Besides its search for MIA remains, Pentagon is seeking access to areas of the DPRK where defectors and visitors have reported seeing Americans. The Pentagon has not been able to corroborate any of the sightings reported over the years, and in many cases learned that Caucasians mistaken for Americans actually were East Europeans, said Greer. "Our discussion with the North Koreans is to gain access to areas or to talk with Caucasians, or alleged Americans, who may help us with some answers," he said. "We know about at least four American soldiers who defected into North Korea in the '60s and we have even been able to corroborate some of the live sightings with these fellows," he said. "These guys have appeared in North Korean magazines, newspapers and television, but we need to continue to

try to get answers about sightings that may not be related to these cases," he said. The sightings have been raised before in lower level meetings, and the North Koreans have denied holding any Americans against their will. But they agreed to continue discussing the problem, Greer said. The US side also hopes to persuade the North Koreans to give them access to DPRK military archives to obtain information on prisoner of war camps during the war. "Some of our people on very short visits in Pyongyang have spotted US military memorabilia in some of their military museums. That tells us they do have some information about Americans held captive during the war," Greer said. "We just want to continue exploring records they do have to determine the fates of those still missing," he said. The last set of MIA negotiations a year ago led to a joint excavation in the DPRK in July of the remains of a US serviceman, which were shipped back by his family for burial in New Orleans. US and DPRK negotiators will be discussing a schedule for future excavations of remains during the talks here, Greer said. (Korea Times, "NK AGREES TO MEET RELATIVES OF US MIAs IN KOREAN WAR," 05/07/97)

5. EEZ Demarcation

ROK Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-ha said yesterday in a report to the National Assembly Unification-Foreign Affairs Committee that, in consultations to set the maritime boundaries of the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) between Seoul, Tokyo and Beijing, the ROK government will endeavor to include its easternmost islets of Tok-do in its EEZ. As some of the water zones between the three countries are less than 400 miles, tough bargaining is required to set the 200-mile EEZs in narrow strips of waters. As Tokyo has claimed its sovereignty over Tok-do, Seoul has made all-out efforts to win international recognition of its jurisdiction over the small islets in the East Sea (Sea of Japan). Meanwhile, the foreign minister said that Seoul objects the plan by Tokyo and Beijing to set "provisional joint fishing zones" in the East and West Seas because it runs counter to Seoul's policies. In the East Sea, the provisional zones might affect Seoul's jurisdiction over Tok-do, while in the West Sea, it might erode the Korean government's principle of maintaining "a median line," Yoo said. (Korea Times, "SOUTH KOREA TO ANNOUNCE GRAIN AID TO NK SHORTLY," 05/07/97)

6. IAEA Post

Despite the strong opposition of the ROK government, former Science Minister Chung Kun-mo has not withdrawn his candidacy for the director general post of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). As the agency has finished receiving applications, Chung is now one of the two candidates registered with the agency. But the ROK Foreign Ministry in Seoul, which has opposed his candidacy, yesterday reacted angrily to Chung's refusal to accept its advice. A Foreign Ministry official suggested the government would strip him of the nuclear ambassador title as a reprimand for his refusal to withdraw his candidacy. Earlier he had reportedly said he would consider giving up his bid, if the government refused to recommend him as a candidate by Monday, the deadline for registering candidacy. Chung's hint at the possibility of withdrawing his candidacy, which came after President Kim Young-sam gave his weight to the stance of the Foreign Ministry, seemed to have defused an escalating wrangle between Chung and the ministry. (Korea Herald, "DESPITE OPPOSITION OF GOVERNMENT, CHUNG STICKS TO CANDIDACY OF IAEA POST," Kim Kyung-ho, 05/07/97)

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.

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

Wade Huntley: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Choi Chung-moon: cily@star.elim.net
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Peter Razvin: icipu@glas.apc.org
Moscow, Russian Federation

Chunsi Wu: dlshen@fudan.ihep.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ihep.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Hiroyasu Akutsu: akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp
Tokyo, Japan

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Wade Huntley: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Choi Chung-moon: cily@star.elim.net
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Peter Razvin: icipu@glas.apc.org
Moscow, Russian Federation

Chunsi Wu: dlshen@fudan.ihep.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ihep.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Hiroyasu Akutsu: akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp
Tokyo, Japan

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Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org