

# NAPSNet Daily Report 07 November, 1997

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## IN TODAY'S REPORT:

### [I. United States](#)

- [1. DPRK Food Aid](#)
- [2. ROK Presidential Election](#)
- [3. PRC-Taiwan Relations](#)
- [4. PRC-Russian Relations](#)
- [5. Congressional Action on PRC](#)
- [6. US Defense Secretary to Visit Asia](#)
- [7. US Anti-Satellite Weapon Development](#)

### [II. Republic of Korea](#)

- [1. Inter-Korean Relations](#)
- [2. ROK-DPRK Red Cross Talks](#)
- [3. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute](#)
- [4. Russian Ratification of Chemical Weapons Convention](#)
- [5. Taiwan Nuclear Power](#)

## **I. United States**

### **1. DPRK Food Aid**

US State Department Spokesman James P. Rubin ("STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING," USIA Transcript, 11/06/97) said Thursday that a US team sent to assess the famine situation in the DPRK successfully completed its mission. Rubin stated, "This trip improved our understanding of the food crisis in North Korea. The team visited several sites that were not previously open to international relief workers." Rubin said that the DPRK authorities were cooperative and that the team "had useful discussions" with DPRK government officials. However, Rubin expressed regret "that there are still some areas of the DPRK that are not currently accessible." He added that there are no current plans for a second team to visit.

### **2. ROK Presidential Election**

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Reuters (Jane Lee, "S.KOREA PRESIDENT QUILTS PARTY BEFORE VOTE," Seoul, 11/07/97), the Washington Post (Kevin Sullivan, "SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT QUILTS AS PARTY LEADER," Tokyo, 11/07/97, A31) and the Associated Press ("PRESIDENT QUILTS SKOREA RULING PARTY," Seoul, 11/07/97) reported that ROK presidential spokesman Shin Woo-jai said Friday that President Kim Young-sam quit his governing New Korea Party (NKP). "In order to ensure a fair and just 15th presidential election and concentrate on government issues, President Kim Young-sam has decided to leave the New Korea Party today," Shin said. Kim's action followed a demand by party presidential candidate Lee Hoi-chang that he leave. The demand led to a splintering in the NKP, with a mainstream faction rallying behind Lee and Kim's supporters deserting to join the New Party by the People (NPP), led by former Kyonggi-do governor Rhee In-je. Both governing and opposition parties accused President Kim of secretly supporting and financing Rhee's group. The presidential Blue House issued a statement strongly denying any link between Rhee and the President. The NPP also denied any links to President Kim and said the governing and opposition parties were trying to tarnish Rhee's image to dampen his rising public support. The NPP also filed a defamation suit Thursday against the opposition party National Congress for New Politics (NCNP) for alleging that Rhee's party received 20 billion won (US\$20.5 million) left over from Kim Young-sam's 1992 election fund. The NCNP said that it withdrew the charge Wednesday. Analyzing these developments, Professor Lee Ki-tak at Yonsei University said, "Kim's supporters who are still in the New Korea Party are likely to defect to Rhee's camp as well." Another Yonsei University professor, Moon Chung-in, added, "Given all the circumstantial evidence, it is quite likely that Kim Young-sam left the party to support Rhee In-je's party." The latest opinion polls by the Hankook Ilbo newspaper showed the unified opposition candidate Kim Dae-jung leading with 39.9 percent support, followed by Rhee with 32.3 percent, and Lee in third with 15.7 percent.

### **3. PRC-Taiwan Relations**

Reuters (Alice Hung, "TAIWAN RAISES STAKES FOR THAW WITH CHINA," Taipei, 11/07/97) reported that Taiwan on Friday turned down the PRC's invitation for Chiao Jen-ho, vice chairman of Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation, to visit the mainland. Instead, Taiwan urged the PRC to accept a mission by the Foundation's chairman, Koo Chen-fu. If the PRC were to accept the counter-initiative, it would be the highest-level contact between the two since 1993. Taiwan Premier Vincent Siew said that the offer to send Koo indicated Taiwan's sincere desire to end the impasse in cross-strait relations. Taiwan said it would await Beijing's reply and was prepared to accept visits by senior mainland negotiators.

### **4. PRC-Russian Relations**

The Associated Press (Sergei Shargorodsky, "YELTSIN TO STRENGTHEN CHINA TIES," Moscow, 11/07/97) reported that Russian President Boris Yeltsin said Friday that his visit to the PRC on November 9-11 would strengthen Russia's strategic partnership with the PRC. Yeltsin stated, "Our joint achievement over the past years is a high degree of trust and an intensive high-level dialogue. We are firmly determined to develop it further." Yeltsin added, "Good neighborly ties and cooperation with China constitute a priority direction of our foreign policy... that is not subject to political state of affairs." Yeltsin stated, "We must resolve the problem of border demarcation and put an end to it."

### **5. Congressional Action on PRC**

The Associated Press ("ANTI-CHINA LEGISLATION PASSES," Washington, 11/07/97) and the Wall Street Journal (Eduardo Lachica, "U.S. HOUSE TO STEP UP VIGILANCE AGAINST CHINA RIGHTS VIOLATIONS," Washington, 11/07/97) reported that on Thursday the US House of Representatives voted 366 to 54 to bar PRC officials accused of human rights abuses from the US. The House also

urged the Clinton administration in a 414 to 8 vote to enforce a 1992 law that restricts sale of advanced cruise missiles to Iran by the PRC and Russia. It also voted 301 to 116 to require a US study of providing a missile defense system for Taiwan and 354 to 59 to obstruct low-interest international loans to the PRC.

## **6. US Defense Secretary to Visit Asia**

The Associated Press ("ALBRIGHT, COHEN TO VISIT ASIA," Washington, 11/06/97) reported that US Defense Secretary William Cohen plans to travel to Asia November 12-23. Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon said Thursday that Cohen plans to visit the ROK, the PRC, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Japan. He added that, while in the PRC, Cohen will sign a formal agreement on maritime issues, and will continue discussions on further military-to-military exchanges and issues involving humanitarian relief matters.

## **7. US Anti-Satellite Weapon Development**

The Washington Times (Bill Gertz, "YELTSIN LETTER REVEALS ANTI-SATELLITE WEAPONS," Washington, 11/07/97) reported that it had obtained a copy of a letter that Russian President Boris Yeltsin wrote to US President Clinton in September condemning US efforts to build anti-satellite weapons. The letter reportedly said, "At one time we possessed an anti-satellite capability. We renounced it as soon as we realized the futility [of] a first-strike notion." Yeltsin reportedly proposed a new round of US-Russia talks to curb anti-satellite weapons, but added, "we should not allow the development of new military technologies that can undermine strategic stability," by putting warning systems at risk, thus preventing one side from knowing when it is under attack. However, Yeltsin added, "We do not rule out joint projects, say, to ensure ecological safety in the case of [the] fall of large space objects." White House spokesman Michael McCurry declined to comment on the letter, saying it was classified. A US defense official said the Yeltsin letter was typical of Russia's past approach to arms control. "They want new talks to limit our anti-satellite capabilities, while they already have the world's only system," the official said. Another senior military official involved in space defense issues said, "There are indications that foreign countries continue to demonstrate interest in developing ASAT capabilities ranging from theoretical studies to developmental programs." Defense Department spokesman Ken Bacon denied that the US is building anti-satellite arms. Regarding a recent laser space test, Bacon said: "We have said publicly and privately to the Russians that the ... program was designed solely to test the vulnerabilities of our satellites." [Ed. note: See "US Plans Laser Test on Satellite" in US Section of October 3 Daily Report.]

## **II. Republic of Korea**

### **1. Inter-Korean Relations**

Kenneth Quinones, a visiting former DPRK analyst of the US State Department, said Thursday that inter-Korean summit talks will probably take place early next year as the DPRK's Kim Jong-il is seeking to open up the nation's economy and showing an interest in dialogue with the ROK. "Kim Jong-il wants change, and he is working to implement it. South Korea should take the initiative by proposing summit talks with the North," he said during a press conference. Quinones, who has visited the DPRK 13 times since 1990, added that, despite the DPRK government's tendency to put up a defiant front, the nation is moving toward opening up. "If you look at North Korean policy, there is a strategy there," he said. "It has opened to the US, receiving a massive amount of international food aid. It has talked with Taiwan, obtaining Beijing's attention and promises of aid once again." (Korea Herald, "ROK-DPRK SUMMIT LIKELY NEXT YEAR: QUINONES," 11/07/97)

### **2. ROK-DPRK Red Cross Talks**

President Chung Won-shik of the ROK Korean National Red Cross (KNRC) and Choi Kyong-lin of the DPRK Red Cross Society are to attend the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) congress in Spain between November 20-27 where the two may meet to discuss pending issues. The KNRC yesterday said that no official schedule for the meeting has been set for the two Korean Red Cross representatives but that it is highly likely that they will meet. If they meet, they are expected to discuss the setting up of reunion centers for separated families, a source said. Currently, the KNRC is preparing for a third round of inter-Korean Red Cross talks, with the issue of divided families at the top of the agenda. The KNRC has delivered two rounds of food aid to the DPRK this year. (Korea Herald, "ROK, DPRK RED CROSS CHIEFS MAY MEET IN SPAIN," 11/07/97)

### **3. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute**

A pier for large ships carrying residents and guards to dock at the small disputed island of Tokdo was completed Thursday. A grand ceremony for the dedication was to be held on Tokdo, but the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs, concerned about the Japanese response, proposed the ROK island of Ulung-do for the ceremonial site instead. Jo Jung-jae, ROK Minister of Marine and Fisheries, was to attend the ceremony but was suddenly stopped at the last minute by the Presidential Office. An official of the office said Japan might have been provoked if the minister had participated in the ceremony, and that therefore he sent deputy Minister Jang Sung-woo in his place. Japanese Foreign Minister Obuchi said Japan has repeatedly protested the ROK's construction of the facilities, and will continue to claim the island to be under Japanese sovereignty. (Chosun Ilbo, "TOKDO PIER FACILITY COMPLETED," 11/07/97)

### **4. Russian Ratification of Chemical Weapons Convention**

Russia ratified the international ban on chemical weapons Wednesday, paving the way for the destruction of huge Soviet-era stockpiles of lethal gases. The ratification, signed by Russian President Boris Yeltsin, was delivered to UN headquarters in New York late Wednesday after the Russian upper house of parliament had approved it earlier in the day. Russia will be the 104th country to become a member of the 1993 International Chemical Weapons Convention when the ratification comes into effect after 30 days. The lower house of the Russian parliament, the Duma, gave its backing last week before the upper house, the Federal Council, approved it unanimously on Wednesday. (Korea Herald, "RUSSIA RATIFIES CHEMICAL WEAPONS BAN," 11/07/97)

### **5. Taiwan Nuclear Power**

Taiwan's opposition parliamentarians voted Wednesday to throw out a controversial US\$1 billion project to build a nuclear power plant on the Northern part of the island. The move, which came as dozens of environmental activists rallied outside parliament, caught the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) totally unprepared, witnesses said. The parliament voted 59-42 to kill the budget for construction, which was approved in October 1996 amid a storm of protests. (Korea Herald, "TAIWAN'S OPPOSITION LAWMAKERS ACT TO DISRUPT N-POWER PLANT PROJECT," 11/07/97)

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](#).

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