

# NAPSNet Daily Report 08 September, 2000

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## I. **United States**

### 1. **DPRK Threat to the US**

The International Herald Tribune (Don Kirk, "THREAT FROM NORTH KOREA RISING, U.S. ARMY WARNS," Seoul, 9/8/00) reported that an intelligence report prepared by the US military command in the ROK warned of a rising DPRK threat. According to a document titled "North Korean Threat" that was compiled by the intelligence section of the US command in ROK, the DPRK has "an offensive military capability designed to prosecute a short and violent war." It said that DPRK troops could overwhelm ROK and US troops "and occupy the Korean Peninsula" before reinforcements arrived from the US. Although the document was prepared shortly before the inter-Korean summit, US military officials said that the only update it needs would be reports on the latest DPRK

exercises. US State Department officials denied that the view of the US military command conflicted with statements of complete support for Kim Dae-jung's efforts at rapprochement offered by the US ambassador in Seoul, Stephen Bosworth. However, US military analysts cited what they say is "a high level of activity" by the DPRK military units since the summit meeting. A veteran analyst said that the summit talks had had no impact on DPRK military behavior. He saw nonstop DPRK exercises as fitting in with a pattern that has puzzled and alarmed the command here in "an unusually active year" for DPRK forces. Although some military observers said that the US command has a vested interest in perpetuating their presence, Jee Man-won, a leading ROK defense analyst, warned this week that inter-Korean railway links would pave the way "for a possible North Korean invasion" in which the DPRK's troops could quickly surround Seoul. The report continued that over the past few years, the DPRK has steadily moved military units south toward the Demilitarized Zone so that "today, 70 percent of all combat forces are south of a line between Pyongyang and Wonsan or 100 kilometers from the DMZ." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for September 8, 2000.]

## **2. DPRK Airport Security Incident**

The Washington Times (Ben Barber, "U.S. 'REGRETS' SEARCH OF N. KOREANS," 9/8/00) reported that the US State Department confirmed on September 7 that a letter of "regret" was sent to the DPRK on September 5 regarding a US airline search of a DPRK delegation. A State Department official said, "I can confirm that the Secretary of State [Madeleine K. Albright] sent a letter but I would not characterize it as an apology." The official would not go into any detail or release the contents of the letter. The State Department said the US government did not accept responsibility for the incident, which it blamed on overly diligent security staff at American Airlines in Germany, where the search was conducted. It also said, "It is our feeling that this incident should not have an effect on our bilateral relations. There were no U.S. government personnel involved in this incident." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for September 8, 2000.]

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

Agence France Presse ("US SENATORS TO TACKLE CHINA WEAPONS HURDLE FOR TRADE BILL," Washington, 9/8/00) reported that on September 11 US senators will debate whether to punish the PRC for alleged exports of nuclear weapons technology, in a move seen as a serious threat to the prompt passage of permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) bill. Trent Lott, the Republican leader in the US Senate, said on Friday that the amendment to the PNTR would be raised by its sponsor, Tennessee senator Fred Thompson. Thompson had hoped to raise his issue as a separate bill, but was not given the chance and so will carry out a threat to add it to the PNTR bill. His measure would require the president to impose graded sanctions on the PRC if the US suspects PRC firms of shipping weaponry to US adversaries like Libya, the DPRK and Iran, or "flashpoint" states like Pakistan. It is not yet clear how much support the bill will garner.

The Office of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State ("BACKGROUND BRIEFING ON SEPT. 8 CLINTON-JIANG BILATERAL," New York, 9/8/00) reported that a senior US administration official gave a briefing about the meeting between US President Bill Clinton and PRC president Jiang Zemin. He said that Clinton and Jiang covered such key issues as cross-strait relations between the PRC and Taiwan; missile proliferation; the current debate in the US Congress over granting the PRC Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) status; the PRC's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO); Tibet; religious restrictions in the PRC; the inter-Korean summit; the DPRK's missile proposals; and a review of Sino-US relations. Asked whether Jiang give any

assurances that the PRC would not move on Taiwan, the official said, "The Chinese are in a wait-and-see attitude. On his side, Chen Shui-bian has made a number of moves to take the edge off of the fact that he is from the democratic progressive party, which has traditionally been a pro-independence party. Our feeling is that we would like this relationship, though, not to kind of remain where each side is warily watching the other, but rather we'd like to see a dialogue begin to move the relationship forward. And the discussion focused on that." The official also said that the topic of US missile defense was brought up only briefly. The official said that Clinton "stressed that the issue of a missile threat, and not only from established nuclear powers, a threat like that in the future is real. And he said he'll encourage his successor to engage in serious dialogue with the Chinese and others so as to try to get a clearer, common understanding of the threat and how we can all end up more secure by what we do about it."

**4. Taiwan Bid to Enter UN** The Associated Press ("CHINA FOILS TAIWAN'S U.N. BID," Taipei, 9/8/00) reported that for the eighth straight year the PRC has blocked Taiwan's bid to join the UN, prompting Taiwanese officials on Friday to accuse the PRC of "sinister behavior." Taiwan's Foreign Ministry said that a UN steering committee decided on September 7 not to put the issue on the UN General Assembly's agenda. The committee's chairman, former Finish Premier Harri Holkeri, made the ruling after representatives from 47 nations opposed the proposal. Only 19 nations--most of them small, developing African and Latin American allies of Taiwan--supported the measure.

## **II. Republic of Korea**

### **1. UN Millenium Summit**

The Korea Herald (Chon Shi-yong, "KIM, CLINTON AGREE TO WORK WITH N.K., CHINA FOR PEACE," New York, 09/08/00), The Korea Times (Lee Chang-sup "JIANG PLEDGES TO PLAY CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE FOR PEACE, STABILITY ON KOREAN PENINSULA," N.Y., 09/08/00), The Korea Times (Lee Chang-sup, "ANNAN DISAPPOINTED OVER KIM'S CANCELLING TRIP TO UN," N.Y., 09/08/00) and Chosun Ilbo (Kim Min-bai, "PRESIDENT PROPOSES TWO-PLUS-TWO FORMULA," Seoul, 09/07/00) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung and US President Bill Clinton agreed in New York on September 7 to strive to establish a permanent peace mechanism on the Korean Peninsula in conjunction with the DPRK and the PRC. ROK officials said that Kim reiterated his call for replacing the armistice with a new peace regime between the Koreas in order to secure lasting peace on the peninsula. Chong Wa Dae spokesman Park Joon-young said, "The President stressed the need for the two Koreas to work out a peace accord between them, with both the United States and China signing on as guarantors." Park said that Clinton reaffirmed the US position that the Korean problems must be resolved by Koreans and that the US would render whatever support is necessary. ROK Foreign Minister Lee Jung-binn indicated that the ROK government would push for a so-called "two-plus-two" format to work out a new Korean peace system. The proposal is identical with Kim's suggestion that the ROK and the DPRK first reach an agreement on a new peace regime and then the US and the PRC sign the treaty as guarantors. This approach represents a departure from the previous ROK-US proposal to work out a Korean peace mechanism in four-party talks. They said that Kim discussed Korean peace with PRC President Jiang Zemin in a meeting held prior to the ROK-US summit, although Kim and Jiang did not specifically mention either the two-plus-two format or the current four-party talks. Park said, "President Kim asked the Chinese leader if Beijing would assist South Korea's efforts to ease tension and promote economic cooperation and human and cultural exchanges. President Jiang said that he was happily watching the progress in inter-Korean relations and that China was interested in securing stability and peace on the peninsula."

The Korea Herald (Chon Shi-yong, "KIM ASKS LEADERS TO SUPPORT PEACE ON PENINSULA," New York, 09/08/00) and The Korea Times (Lee Chang-sup, "UN ISSUES STATEMENT S\_N SUMMIT," N.Y., 09/07/00) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung called on the United Nations and its member states on September 6 to support the Korean Peninsula in its efforts to achieve peace. In a keynote speech at the opening-day plenary session of the U.N. Millennium Summit, Kim stated, "As long as we have the United Nations leading the global support for our efforts for peace with the active backing of all the leaders here, the miracle of the new millennium unfolding on the Korean Peninsula will become a great achievement for history." ROK officials said that Kim held a series of conversations with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and leaders participating in the summit during the opening ceremony. Annan congratulated Kim on the success of the inter-Korean summit and said that he was interested in the progress of reconciliation and cooperation between the Koreas.

## **2. Inter-Korean Relations**

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "N. KOREA'S SILENCE ON DIALOGUE PROPOSALS TRIGGERS SPECULATION," Seoul, 09/08/00) reported that the DPRK has failed to send responses to two of the latest ROK proposals for working-level contacts, sparking speculation among DPRK watchers about the DPRK's protracted silence. As of September 7, the DPRK had not replied to the ROK's separate proposals for another round of Red Cross talks to discuss more family reunions and working-level meetings to reconnect a cut-off rail line beginning September 7. ROK officials said that the DPRK even failed to explain its lack of answers. Some observers said that the DPRK might need more time to prepare for the talks, which will tackle a host of fresh issues raised at recent negotiations between the two sides. Professor Shin Jung-hyun of Kyung Hee University said, "North Korea appears to need time to establish new strategies to cope with new situations. Moreover, the North's military might have not fully accepted all the latest developments." ROK officials said that the DPRK might find it difficult to secure a consensus among inner power groups, particularly military authorities, in opening itself up to the outside world.

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "'SEOUL READY TO HELP MODERNIZE N. KOREA," Seoul, 09/08/00) reported that ROK Unification Minister Park Jae-kyu said on September 7 that the ROK government would do everything it could to help modernize the DPRK's economy and accelerate reconciliation between the two Koreas. Park said that he expected that inter-Korean economic cooperation would begin to accelerate when agreements on investment guarantee and double taxation avoidance are concluded through working-level contacts. He said, "This will improve the environment for investments in the North, prompting international businesses to make inroads there."

## **3. US-DPRK Relations**

The Korea Times (Lee Chang-sup, "US SEEKS TO MITIGATE NK'S ANGER OVER FRANKFURT INCIDENT," NY, 09/07/00) reported that the US government on September 7 sent a letter to DPRK Foreign Minister Paek Nam-sun, as part of steps to mitigate DPRK's indignation over the alleged rude and provocative security check by American Airlines officials against the DPRK's ceremonial head of state Kim Yong-nam and his delegation in Frankfurt. ROK Foreign Affairs-Trade Minister Lee Joungh-binn told reporters, "As far as I know, a top State Department official has sent a letter to North Korean Foreign Minister Park, regretting over the unfortunate incident in Frankfurt." However, he refused to identify who had sent the letter. The letter said the US said the unfortunate incident took place since American Airline security officials conducted checks on standing instructions from the Federal Aviation Administration. The letter also noted that it was done without the knowledge and instruction of the US government. It said, "This incident should not have a

negative impact on the development of U.S.-North Korea relations." Lee said that the letter is intended to clarify the US government's innocence with regard to the incident and to clear away any misunderstanding that the DPRK might have.

Chosun Ilbo (Song Eui-dal, "U.S. AMBASSADOR TAKES CAUTIOUS STANCE ON NK INVESTMENT," Seoul, 09/08/00) reported that US Ambassador to Korea Stephen Bosworth said on September 7 that if DPRK political leaders do not make fundamental changes to the way they operate their country's economy, US businesses are not likely to make large-scale investment there any time soon. The ambassador was speaking in Seoul to participants of the Northeast Asia Forum 2000, an event co-sponsored by a local think tank, the Institute for Global Economics (IGE), and the Brookings Institution, a US research institution. Ambassador Bosworth also said that his cautious attitude towards prospects for investment in the DPRK is based on the fledgling stage of infrastructure development there and the low likelihood of any immediate gains. Advancement by US firms into the DPRK would undoubtedly be limited to joint ventures with ROK firms and investment focused on areas that could capitalize on low labor costs, according to the ambassador. He also noted in his presentation that previously strong US public support for the stationing of US troops in the ROK has been going down.

### **III. Japan**

#### **1. Japanese-DPRK Talks**

The Daily Yomiuri ("SECRECY SHROUDED SCRAPPED MORI-N. KOREAN TALKS," 09/08/2000) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori's plans to announce the holding of a meeting with a top DPRK official in New York have been thwarted after the DPRK delegates pulled out of the UN Millennium Summit at the last minute. The cancelled meeting with KimYong-nam, chairman of the standing committee of the DPRK's Supreme People's Assembly, was agreed to by Pyongyang on September 2, but Mori had instructed government officials to keep the planned talks secret. In response to a request from Tokyo for a 20-minute quasi-summit between Mori and Kim, the DPRK replied that it could set aside 30 minutes for the meeting. The planned meeting was organized on Mori's insistence. The report said that Mori seemed to have wanted to make the announcement dramatically by releasing the information just before the meeting and had planned to announce food aid to the DPRK during the brief talks.

#### **2. Japanese Rice Aid to DPRK**

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("GOVERNMENT TO DECIDE NEXT WEEK TO SEND RICE TO DPRK," 09/07/2000) reported that the Japanese government would decide next week whether to send rice aid to the DPRK. The decision would be made in response to an appeal by the World Food Planning, but the DPRK already made a similar appeal at the 10th round of the Japanese-DPRK normalization talks last month. The amount of rice would be 200-300,000 tons. The aid would be the 5th of its kind since 1995. However, the decision might be delayed because of cautious stances to additional rice assistance and divergent views on how rice aid should be sent within the ruling Liberal Democratic Party.

#### **3. Visit to ROK by Pro-DPRK Residents in Japan**

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("CHONGRYUN TO SOUTH KOREA ON SEPTEMBER 22," 09/08/2000) and the Daily Yomiuri ("CHONGRYUN PARTY TO VISIT SOUTH KOREA," 09/08/2000) reported that the

General Association of Korean Residents of Japan (Chongryun) would send 63 of its members to the ROK for a weeklong visit to their hometowns later this month. The visit would be the first time the group has officially sent members to the ROK, not the DPRK. The visit is based on an agreement between the ROK and the DPRK at a ministerial meeting in late July in Seoul. The visit is being organized under the auspices of the ROK Red Cross Society on humanitarian grounds.

#### **4. Japanese-PRC Talks on DPRK**

The Japan Times (Kyodo, "TOKYO, PYONGYANG NEED TO NORMALIZE TIES," New York, 09/08/2000) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori and PRC President Jiang Zemin on September 7 discussed the need for Japan and the DPRK to establish diplomatic ties. Mori asked Jiang for support in negotiations between Japan and the DPRK. Jiang signaled that he would oblige.

#### **5. Japanese-Russian Territorial Issue**

The Daily Yomiuri ("MORI SEEKS RETURN OF ALL 4 N. ISLES," New York, 09/07/2000) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori said on September 5 that there was no change "at this stage" in the Japanese position of demanding the simultaneous return of four Russian-held islands off Hokkaido. Mori referred to what is called the "return-of- two-islands theory," or the reversion of Shikotan Island and the Habomai islets, while talking with reporters aboard a government jet on his way to the UN Millennium Summit in New York. Mori stated, "There can be no room at all for accepting (the two islands' reversion formula), at least at this stage." Mori also said that if there should be any official Russian proposal for the return of the two islands as part of the territorial negotiations, Japan would not agree to it. Mori added, "We could not agree as long as there was no clear-cut accord about how the remaining two islands (Kunashiri and Etorofu) would be returned to Japan."

#### **6. Russian Subcritical Nuclear Tests**

The Asahi Shimbun ("RUSSIA CONDUCTS THREE NUCLEAR SUBCRITICAL TESTS," 09/05/2000) reported that the Russian Atomic Energy Ministry conducted three sub-critical nuclear tests from August 28 to September 3 in the North Sea. The tests were the second of their kind conducted this year. Russia conducted its last nuclear blast test in Kazakstan in October, 1990, but has resumed sub-critical tests since 1995, even after signing of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1996.

#### **7. PRC Naval Activities**

The Japan Times ("LDP APPROVES 17 BILLION YEN LOAN TO CHINA," 09/08/2000) reported that the ruling Liberal Democratic Party on September 7 approved a special 17.2 billion yen loan package for the PRC despite Japanese protests over recent PRC naval activities near Japanese waters. The LDP's approval came during a joint meeting of the party's panels charged with foreign affairs. The low-interest yen loans are earmarked for a Beijing railway project and an airport terminal expansion plan in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, under a program designed to help countries hit by the 1997 Asian financial crisis. The government outlined the loan plan to the LDP on August 2 in the hopes of having it formally endorsed at a Cabinet meeting and of signing an agreement with the PRC. However, the LDP protested the loan package. One LDP lawmaker said, "If we extend the loans now, it will send the wrong message." Foreign Minister Yohei Kono conveyed the LDP position to the PRC during his visit there from August 28 to 31.

The Asahi Shimbun ("PRC SHIPS ACTIVATE AGAIN: PRC FOREIGN MINISTRY ANNOUNCES REGRET," 09/08/2000) reported that the Japanese government spotted PRC maritime activities in Japanese exclusive economic zone on September 7. The Japanese Foreign Ministry soon asked the PRC Foreign Ministry to stop the activities. The PRC Foreign Ministry announced, "It is a great regret (that such activities took place). We expect to cooperate in immediately setting up a framework to mutually communicate." Both the Japanese and PRC governments already agreed on August 31 to set up such a framework.

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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International Policy Studies Institute Seoul, Republic of Korea  
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Center for American Studies,  
[Fudan University](#), Shanghai, People's Republic of China  
[Monash Asia Institute](#),  
[Monash University](#), Clayton, Australia

Timothy L. Savage: [napsnet@nautilus.org](mailto:napsnet@nautilus.org)  
Berkeley, California, United States

Gee Gee Wong: [napsnet@nautilus.org](mailto:napsnet@nautilus.org)  
Berkeley, California, United States

Robert Brown: [napsnet@nautilus.org](mailto:napsnet@nautilus.org)  
Berkeley, California, United States

Kim Hee-sun: [khs688@hotmail.com](mailto:khs688@hotmail.com)  
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hiroyasu Akutsu: [akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp](mailto:akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp)  
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: [icipu@glas.apc.org](mailto:icipu@glas.apc.org)  
Moscow, Russian Federation

Yunxia Cao: [yule111@sina.com](mailto:yule111@sina.com)  
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: [dlshen@fudan.ac.cn](mailto:dlshen@fudan.ac.cn)  
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

John McKay: [John.McKay@adm.monash.edu.au](mailto:John.McKay@adm.monash.edu.au)  
Clayton, Australia

Leanne Payton: [lbpat1@smtp.monash.edu.au](mailto:lbpat1@smtp.monash.edu.au)

Clayton, Australia

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Nautilus Institute

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

[nautilus@nautilus.org](mailto:nautilus@nautilus.org)