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I. United States

1. UN Security Council on DPRK

The Associated Press (Edith M. Lederer, "UN PANEL MULLS NORTH KOREA PACT WITHDRAWAL," UN, 04/09/03) and the New York Times (James Brooke, "NORTH KOREA'S NEIGHBORS SEEK CRISIS ROLE," Seoul, 04/09/03) reported that the U.N. Security Council met Wednesday to debate the DPRK's withdrawal from the global treaty to curb development of nuclear weapons, with Russia and the PRC opposing any statement condemning the DPRK and the US pushing for one. "We don't believe the condemnation is going to solve the problem," said Russia's U.N. Ambassador Sergey Lavrov as he headed into the closed-door meeting. "The only way the problem is going to be solved is direct bilateral dialogue between Washington and Pyongyang." Secretary-General Kofi Annan echoed this view, saying on his arrival at U.N. headquarters, "I think the next step really is to get the parties talking and to find a format that will be acceptable to both parties and bring them to the

table to talk." The PRC said Tuesday the Security Council has no business discussing the DPR's nuclear program. "It is not appropriate for the U.N. Security Council to get involved in these issues," Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said in Beijing. The International Atomic Energy Agency referred the issue of the DPRK's withdrawal to the council in February, saying the DPRK was not complying with nuclear agreements. The DPRK's withdrawal takes effect Thursday. Maurice Strong, who is Annan's special adviser on the DPR, expressed hope Tuesday the Security Council would seek reconciliation in the nuclear standoff between the DPR and the US rather than risk escalating the crisis by taking a punitive approach. He said he expects the 15 council members to "carefully orchestrate the reconciliation" of their views and not move in the direction of sanctions which the DPRK has said it will consider a hostile act. Russia's Lavrov said, "We would like to see the members of the council strongly reiterating their position in favor of a political solution." But diplomats said no action is

2. PRC UN DPRK Statement Blockage

The Washington Post (Colum Lynch and Doug Struck, "CHINA BLOCKS UN STATEMENT CONDEMNING NORTH KOREA," UN, 04/09/03) reported that the PRC today stalled efforts to obtain a Security Council statement that criticizes the DPRK for refusing to submit to monitoring of its suspected nuclear weapons program by the United Nations, saying such a statement would "complicate" diplomatic attempts to resolve the standoff. The move was a setback for the US, France and Britain, which want the 15-nation council to pressure the DPRK to abandon plans to restart a nuclear enrichment plant capable of producing fuel for nuclear explosives. It also diminished the prospects of the council's playing a central role in managing the nuclear crisis. Although the council will hold a meeting on the DPRK's nuclear ambitions Wednesday, U.N. diplomats said substantive discussions on the issue would be dealt with outside that forum. US officials met with DPRK diplomats in New York last week to discuss a meeting involving representatives of DPRK, ROK, the US, Russia, PRC and Japan.

3. KCNA on UN DPRK Resolution

The Korean Central News Agency of DPRK ("FAIR SETTLEMENT OF NUCLEAR ISSUE CALLED FOR," Pyongyang, 04/09/03) reported that a delegate of the DPRK addressing a meeting of the UN Disarmament Committee on April 1 referred to the fact that the situation on the Korean Peninsula is so tense that a nuclear war may break out any time as the US-ROK madcap joint military exercises targeted against the DPRK were staged in the ROK, timed to coincide with the start of the Iraqi war. He went on to say. The US has increased international pressure upon the DPRK to "scrap its nuclear development program before dialogue" painting its "nuclear issue" as a "threat" to the world. As this did not prove workable, the US is trying to settle this issue by military means. The nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula is an issue to be settled between the DPRK and the US in view of its origin, nature and essence. Any attempt to meddle in this issue would not help solve the issue but, on the contrary, make its settlement difficult and complicated. As the 13th Summit of Non-Aligned Countries clarified the stand of the NAM, the most reasonable way of settling the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula is for the DPRK and the US, both directly responsible for the issue, to sit face to face for negotiations. This is a strong rebuff to the unreasonable behavior of the US which insists on "multilateral talks" to internationalize this issue, turning its face away from the consistent offer of the DPRK to seek a negotiated settlement of the nuclear issue through the DPRK-US direct talks. No threat, blackmail, pressure and sanctions can ever work on the DPRK. The Korean people will never beg for peace afraid of a war, allowing the dignity and sovereignty of the nation to be infringed upon, and the DPRK will never sacrifice its supreme interests, yielding to pressure.

4. US ROK Military Base Re-location

BBC News ("US ARMY TO MOVE SOUTH KOREA BASE," 04/09/03) reported that the US military is to move its main base in the ROK from Seoul to a new location inside the country as part of its global redeployment of forces. The announcement follows two days of talks between Richard Lawless, US deputy assistant secretary of defense for East Asia, and the ROK's assistant defense minister for policy, Cha Young-koo. Both sides have stressed that the redeployment of troops from the Yongsan garrison will not affect their ability to deter North Korea - currently the source of tensions in the region because of its nuclear program. "The two sides agreed that there would be no compromise on the combined deterrence of their forces throughout the process of realignment," said a joint statement issued on Wednesday. ROK new President, Roh Moo-hyun, has also announced he will visit US President George W Bush in Washington next month for their first face-to-face talks on the DPRK crisis. Correspondents say the US troops' redeployment is designed to modernize the US-ROK military alliance, as US troops occupy the same positions they have held since the end of the Korean war 50 years ago. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said last month that some of the 37,000 US troops currently stationed in the ROK could be moved further south - away from the DPRK border - sent to neighboring countries, or even sent home.

5. ROK-US Presidential Visit

The Associated Press (Soo-Jeong Lee, "ROK PRESIDENT TO MAKE US VISIT," Seoul, 04/09/03) reported that the ROK's president will make his first trip to the US next month to seek a peaceful solution to the standoff with the DPRK over Pyongyang's nuclear programs, his office said Wednesday. Roh Moo-hyun will meet President Bush on May 14 and spend five days in Washington, New York and San Francisco, Roh's office said in a statement. Roh and Bush "will hold in-depth discussions to forge a common stance on bringing about a peaceful resolution to the DPRK nuclear issue," the statement from Roh's office said.

6. US Soldiers in ROK on US-Led War on Iraq

The Associated Press (Eric Talmadge, "LONE US CARRIER GROUP WATCHES NORTH KOREA," Aboard The SUS Carl Vinson, 04/09/03) reported that Corp. Douglas Mesnan and dozens of others sat riveted as the mess hall television carried reports that Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein might have been killed. "If it's true, I'm happy," Mesnan, of Highland, Ind., said Tuesday. "But being a Marine, I feel like I should be over there with the other Marines." Mesnan is stationed on an aircraft carrier thousands of miles from home, but television reports are the only way he's keeping up with the war in Iraq. He's one of 5,200 sailors and Marines in a lone aircraft carrier battle group patrolling the western Pacific amid heightening tensions with communist North Korea. Being so far away from the war is frustrating for many soldiers. "I love the Navy. I've been in for 14 years. But every time something happens, I've missed it," said Martin Griffin, a dental assistant from Vidor, Texas. "I know our job here is important, but I would much rather be contributing over there." "It's like being on a football team and you never get to play," said Lt. Aaron Parks, of Raymore, Missouri, an F/A-18 "Hornet" fighter pilot. "I think a lot of people feel that way."

7. DPRK on Japan Striking Distance

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA REMINDS JAPAN IT IS WITHIN STRIKING DISTANCE," Tokyo, 04/09/03) reported that the DPRK warned Japan to remember it was "within striking distance" of the DPRK amid heightened calls in Japan to contain the DPRKK regime. The Korean

Central News Agency accused Japan of being emboldened by the US-led invasion of Iraq, which it condemned as "state-sponsored terrorism," in its ambition to remilitarize. "Japan should behave with discretion, clearly mindful that it is also within the striking range of the DPRK," KCNA said in a dispatch monitored here. "Japan is turning to the right and is getting militarized at such a rapid tempo that the call for destroying the DPRK, a legitimate sovereign state, is heard in the Diet (Japanese parliament). This is a clear indication of the gravity of the situation. "The Japanese reactionaries seem to have lost their reason under the impact of the Iraqi war launched by their master," KCNA said in a reference to the US which Japan has backed over going to war. The DPRK is believed to have deployed some 100 Rodong-1 missiles with a range of 1,300 kilometres (805 miles), capable of striking any target in Japan.

8. Japan on Iraq Aid

CNN News ("JAPAN PLEDGES IRAQ AID," Tokyo, 04/09/03) reported that Japan is prepared to contribute up to US$100 million in emergency humanitarian aid for people affected by the war in Iraq, its foreign minister announced Wednesday. Japan has earmarked US$25 million for 10,000 tons of rice and 7,000 tons of other grains, along with medical supplies and other aid for people in Iraq and neighboring countries affected by the conflict, Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi said. She said Japan is prepared to set aside as much as US$100 million in total, although details have yet to be worked out. The assistance is in response to an appeal from the United Nations for US$2.2 billion in emergency aid and a smaller request from the Red Cross. "It is desirable for the relief to be brought to the Iraqi people as soon as possible," Kawaguchi said. Kawaguchi announced the aid ahead of her departure later in the day for Europe, where she is to discuss the postwar reconstruction of Iraq.

9. PRC SARS Cover-Up

BBC News ("CHINA ACCUSED OF SARS 'COVER-UP,'" 04/09/03) reported that the PRC been urged to reveal the full extent of its SARS outbreak amid claims that true case numbers are being concealed. The appeal came after a team of epidemiologists from the World Health Organization ended a six-day tour of Guangdong province, where the illness is believed to have first appeared. South Africa has now reported a "probable" SARS case - which, if confirmed by the WHO, would be the first on the continent. A spokesman asked the PRC authorities to be transparent about the numbers of people affected by the bug. "We are always insisting that to address this outbreak you need full and open reporting," said Chris Powell, a spokesman for the organization. The PRC authorities have been accused of a slow and secretive handling of the SARS outbreak in order to avoid spreading panic. The government says 19 people have been infected in the capital Beijing, with four deaths. But health workers in the capital have told the BBC that at least 100 people have been infected. PRC health authorities announced on Tuesday that the rate of new cases in Guangdong had more than halved in the past month. However, a PRC military doctor, Jiang Yanyong, has taken the highly unusual step of publicly contradicting the authorities, claiming that at least nine people had died in Beijing's four military hospitals alone. According to official figures, 103 people have now died in 32 countries, half of them in the PRC.

10. SARS Status

The New York Times (Keith Bradsher with Lawrence W. Altman, "ASIAN OFFICIALS SAY SARS MAY BE HERE TO STAY," Hong Kong, 04/09/03) reported that health officials in Hong Kong and Singapore warned their citizens today that the agent that causes a mysterious respiratory disease has spread so far in their communities and abroad that it will be hard to bring under control any

time soon, if ever. "Singaporeans must be psychologically prepared for the problem to stay with us for some time," said Lee Hsien Loong, Singapore's deputy prime minister. Hong Kong and Singapore officials began emphasizing new measures to slow the spread of the disease, but refrained from suggestions that they might be able to get rid of the disease completely. The World Health Organization, however, remained cautiously optimistic that the disease, severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, could be kept in check.

11. SARS PRC-Hong Kong Relations

LA Times (Ching-Ching Ni, "HONG KONG'S UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MAINLAND," Hong Kong, 04/09/03) carried an analytical story that read as a deadly strain of pneumonia continues its rampage through this special administrative region of the PRC, it is not only creating a public health crisis but casting new light on the island's uneasy relationship with the motherland. When this former British colony reverted to PRC rule in 1997, its people worried about keeping a safe distance from the mainland. They counted on the "one country, two systems" principle to insulate their freedom and wealth from the PRC's lack of those things. Then the Asian financial crisis hit, and suddenly Hong Kong was clamoring for an increasingly prosperous PRC to rescue its economy. Millions of mainland tourists -- and their money -- poured into the territory. In return, savvy Hong Kong businessmen crossed into China to invest in its burgeoning economy. This year the island threw open its borders with neighboring Guangdong province so it could welcome visitors 24 hours a day. But since a Guangdong doctor brought severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, to a Hong Kong hotel -- where he infected tourists who then sickened other people around the world -- the island's open-door policy has seemed to fall apart. And according to some critics, the reason is not too much interaction with the PRC, but too little. "The problem is, you can't just open the borders, send in more tourists and have integration. You've got to have communication and cooperation in policy and decision-making," said Michael DeGolyer, director of the Hong Kong Transition Project, a nonpartisan group of professors and other public policy experts. Within the "one country, two systems" framework, however, that level of contact has been deliberately kept to a minimum, mostly to protect Hong Kong's political independence. The territory deals directly with Beijing, not with its provincial neighbors. The problem is, local leaders throughout the PRC have little incentive

12. Japan Domestic Economics

The New York Times (Ken Belson, "JAPAN'S NEW ECONOMIC TACK: BUYING DEBT," Tokyo, 04/09/03) reported that its arsenal of traditional tools rendered largely ineffective, the Bank of Japan said today that it would consider taking the unconventional step of buying corporate debt to make it easier for small companies to borrow, and in the process battle deflation. The announcement is the latest in a series of moves by the central bank's new governor, Toshihiko Fukui, responding to pressure from the government to do more to shore up Japan's frail economy. In the month since he took up the bank's top post, Fukui has demonstrated that he is much more willing than his predecessor, Masaru Hayami, to work with lawmakers and to tinker with the central bank's policies. The bank concluded a two-day policy board meeting today, the first of Fukui's tenure, without taking other steps on monetary policy. The bank already sets short-term interest rates effectively at zero and has been pumping extra liquidity into Japan's money markets in various ways for many months, so there is little left in the standard central-bank playbook for it to try.

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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Ilmin Internationl Relations Institute
BK21 The Education and Research Corps for East Asian Studies
Department of Political Science, Korea University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

International Peace Research Institute (PRIME),
Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan

Monash Asia Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Brandon Yu: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Kim Young-soo: yskim328@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hibiki Yamaguchi: hibikiy84@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Saiko Iwata: saiko@akira.ne.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Hiroya Takagi: hiroya_takagi@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@online.ru
Moscow, Russian Federation

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

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

John McKay: John.McKay@adm.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