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I. United States

1. Four-Party Peace Talks

The Associated Press (Alexander G. Higgins, "NORTH, SOUTH KOREA OPEN PEACE TALKS," Geneva, 12/09/97) and Reuters (Elif Kaban, "KOREAN PEACE TALKS START IN GENEVA," Geneva, 12/09/97) reported that the first day of the opening two-day session of four-party peace talks for the Korean peninsula adjourned Tuesday with little indication of progress. DPRK delegation leader Kim Kye-gwan, described the talks as "ongoing." The other delegates declined comment. Jakob Kellenberger, a representative for the Swiss government, said that reaching a peace settlement on the Korean peninsula is one of the key factors for securing stability throughout the world. He stated, "We hope this process will result in the progressive introduction of confidence-building measures on the Korean peninsula, with the ultimate aim of ending the 'no war-no peace' situation which has prevailed since the signing of the armistice in 1953." PRC Vice Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan urged the DPRK and the ROK to improve relations gradually and build trust, but said that better US-DPRK relations also were essential. He added, "We know for sure that the future course will still be long and difficult. Nevertheless, we have already struck a good beginning."

White House Press Secretary Mike McCurry ("WHITE HOUSE DAILY BRIEFING," Washington, USIA

Transcript,12/08/97) said that the four-party peace talks which opened in Geneva Tuesday are important. He added, "There's no basis upon which we can speculate what the course of those talks will be, but [ROK] President Kim [Young-sam] and [US] President [Bill] Clinton, when they committed themselves to the proposal to the four-way talks saw that as an opportunity for fundamental issues to be addressed about the future of the Korean Peninsula. And we believe these exchanges will provide that forum. We hope that representatives of all parties can conduct their work in a serious and fruitful manner."

2. ROK-DPRK Relations

Reuters ("TWO KOREAS THROW VERBAL BLOWS ON DAY OF PEACE TALK," Seoul,12/09/97) reported that the DPRK's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) on Tuesday criticized the ROK's plan to allow ROK citizens building two nuclear reactors in the DPRK to vote by absentee ballot in the December 18 presidential election. ROK election laws ban absentee voting from another country. "This is an intolerable violation of our sovereignty and a grave political provocation against our republic," said the KCNA broadcast. It added, "The [ROK] puppets intend to 'legitimate' their 'constitution', which describes the north of Korea as their 'territory' and to create an atmosphere favorable for realizing their sinister ambition." Meanwhile Rodong Sinmun, in a commentary carried by KCNA, said, "U.S. troops present in South Korea...should be pulled out for peace and security on the Korean peninsula. So long as the U.S. troops remain in South Korea, peace can never be ensured on the Korean peninsula." Later on Tuesday, the ROK Agency for National Security Planning said that it confirmed that two high school students who have been missing since 1977 had been abducted by the DPRK and were still alive in Pyongyang, helping to train DPRK spies.

3. Search for Remains of US MIAs

The Associated Press ("U.S. PAYS TO SEARCH N. KOREA," Washington, 12/8/97) reported that the US Defense Department announced Monday that the US has agreed to pay the DPRK US\$672,000 to conduct five searches in 1998 for the remains of US servicemen killed in the Korean War. That would bring to nearly US\$1 million the amount of US government compensation to the DPRK

4. DPRK Famine

The Associated Press (Charles Hutzler, "NKOREA FAMINE HAVING DEADLY EFFECT," Beijing, 12/09/97) reported that representatives from the relief organization Americares said Tuesday that three years of famine in the DPRK have nearly doubled death rates among children under 5 and turned common ailments into deadly epidemics. The representatives, returning from a three-day mission to the DPRK to deliver medical supplies, said they found hospitals without antibiotics, vaccines, and stethoscopes. Operating rooms lacked anesthesia, surgical masks, and often electricity, they said. A DPRK doctor told Americares that malnutrition was the leading cause of death. Karen Gottlieb, a registered nurse who runs Americares' free-clinic programs in the US, said that DPRK health officials admitted that death rates for children under 5 have risen from 31 per thousand in 1994 to 58 per thousand in 1996.

5. US Nuclear Policy

Reuters ("CHINA TELLS U.S. TO CUT NUCLEAR ARSENAL," Beijing, 12/09/97) reported that PRC foreign ministry spokesman Tang Guoqiang on Tuesday criticized the US for "stubbornly" sticking to its policy of nuclear deterrence and urged it to cut its nuclear arsenal. "We urge the United States in the strongest terms to abandon the policy of nuclear deterrence and continue to cut its nuclear weapons significantly." He added, "China always stands for the complete prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons."

The New York Times carried an editorial ("THE BOMB AND THE BUTTON," 12/09/97) which said that the Clinton Administration has "sensibly" revised US nuclear warfare guidelines to reflect changes since the end of the cold war. The article stated that "The new doctrine ... marks an important step toward a world in which the United States relies on fewer nuclear weapons for its defense." The article said that the plans drawn up by the White House "are important because America continues to rely on its formidable nuclear arsenal to deter potential nuclear, biological and chemical attack." The article concluded, "President Clinton now has an improved nuclear planning document that takes account of arms cuts already agreed to and leaves room for further reductions."

6. US Citizen Passes Laser Secrets to PRC

The Los Angeles Times (Eric Lichtblau, "PHYSICIST ADMITS PASSING LASER SECRETS TO CHINESE SCIENTISTS," Los Angeles, 12/09/97) reported that Peter H. Lee, a Taiwan-born US physicist, pleaded guilty in federal court Monday to charges that he passed classified secrets to PRC scientists during a 1985 visit. Authorities believe that he acted out of national loyalty and not desire for money. Lee faces up to 15 years in federal prison and a fine of US\$250,000. In the mid-1980s, Lee worked on US government projects aimed at using lasers to simulate nuclear detonations. Much of the material which Lee provided has since been declassified, according to prosecutors. Assistant US Attorney Jonathan S. Shapiro said Monday that "clearly law enforcement and the intelligence community are extremely interested in conducting a thorough damage assessment" to determine how the material may have been used by the PRC.

7. PRC-Taiwan Relations

The Associated Press (Annie Huang, "TAIWAN PARTY EYES POLICY CHANGE," Taipei, 12/08/97) reported that Taipei mayor Chen Shui-bian said Monday that his main opposition Democratic Progressive Party's recent victory in local elections will force it to modify its call for formal independence from the PRC. Chen stated, "Taiwan's welfare, safety and development all depend on how we maintain our relations with China, so we must not ignore the existence of the Chinese communist regime." He added, "We are no longer what many people called a forever opposition party. As a ruling party in waiting, we must come up with a mainland policy that is feasible and can be accepted by the public." However, he emphasized that his party will never concede the Taiwanese "right to maintain their freedom and determine their future." [Ed. note: See "Taiwan Elections" in the US Section of the December 1 Daily Report.]

8. Russia-Japan Relations

Reuters ("YELTSIN PRAISES JAPAN'S PRIME MINISTER," Moscow, 12/09/97) reported that Russian President Boris Yeltsin on Tuesday praised Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto for taking a pragmatic approach to improving ties between their countries. Russia's Itar-Tass news agency quoted Yeltsin as saying, "Finally they have moved to the economy whereas before it was politics and then the economy. Finally clever Hashimoto understood: You will never get anywhere with Russia like that. First the economy. We must develop our relations across the board."

9. Nuclear Power and Global Warming

The Washington Times (Willis Witter, "NUCLEAR POWER INDUSTRY FACES RESISTANCE IN KYOTO," Kyoto, 12/09/97) reported that atomic energy advocates view the proposed global treaty on climate change as an opportunity for the expansion of the nuclear industry. Scott Peterson, a director of the Nuclear Energy Institute, said, "You're looking at a doubling of global electricity demand by the year 2020 to 2030 and there's no way to meet that without nuclear power." He added

that safety at nuclear plants has vastly improved since the Three Mile Island accident in Pennsylvania nearly two decades ago.

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

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

Shin Dong-bom: dongbom.shin@anu.edu.au
Seoul, Republic of Korea

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

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

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

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

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

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Nautilus Institute
2342 Shattuck Ave. #300, Berkeley, CA 94704 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:
nautilus@nautilus.org