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- ### I. [United States](#)
1. [DPRK on Nuclear Deal](#)

The Associated Press (Sang-hun Choe, " N. KOREA SETS CONDITION FOR HALTING NUKES," Seoul, 12/09/03) reported that the DPRK said Tuesday it will freeze its nuclear weapons program if Washington takes the communist country off its list of terrorism-sponsoring nations and provides fuel aid. If this demand is met by the US, the DPRK also said it will join a second round of six-nation talks aimed at persuading Pyongyang to dismantle its nuclear weapons programs. The DPRK would "freeze" its nuclear activities in exchange for "measures such as the US delisting the DPRK as a 'terrorism sponsor,' lift of the political, economic and military sanctions and blockade and energy aid including the supply of heavy fuel oil and electricity by the US and neighboring countries," a spokesman for the DPRK's Foreign Ministry was quoted as saying by its official news agency, KCNA. "This would lay a foundation for furthering the six-way talks," the spokesman said. "What is clear is that in no case ! the DPRK would freeze its nuclear activities unless it is rewarded."

2. [US DPRK Nuclear Missile Claims Doubts](#)

Los Angeles Times (Douglas Frantz, " US CLAIMS ON NORTH KOREA DOUBTED," Seoul, 12/09/03) reported that the Bush administration has asserted in recent months that the DPRK possesses one or

two nuclear bombs and is rapidly developing the means to make more. The statements have raised anxiety about a nuclear arms race in Asia and the possibility that terrorists could obtain weapons from the regime. But the administration's assessment rests on meager fresh evidence and limited, sometimes dated, intelligence, according to current and former US and foreign officials. Outside the administration, and in some quiet corners within it, there is nothing close to a consensus that DPRK scientists have succeeded in producing atomic bombs from plutonium, as the CIA concluded in a document made public last month. Independent specialists and some US officials also are skeptical of administration claims that the DPRK is within months of manufacturing material for more weapons at a secret uranium-enrichment plant. Interviews with more than 30 current and former intelligence officials and diplomats in Asia, Europe, and the US provide an in-depth look at the development of North Korea's nuclear program, the regime's elaborate efforts to conceal it, and the behind-the-scenes debate over how much danger it poses. According to these officials: The US has failed to find the DPRK plant that the Bush administration says will soon start producing highly-enriched uranium. The DPRK's attempts to reprocess plutonium recently hit a roadblock, raising new questions about its technical capabilities. The PRC 40,000 troops to its border with the DPRK last summer after the US warned that the regime of Kim Jong Il might try to smuggle "a grapefruit-size" quantity of plutonium out of the country. There have been no signs of smuggling. The doubts about US intelligence are emerging as the administration engages in a high-wire diplomatic battle over its demand that the DPRK dismantle its nuclear program and open the country to inspectors. In what some see as a bid for backing from the other parties -- the PRC, Japan, Russia, and the ROK -- the US has portrayed North Korea as a global threat. Its language is reminiscent of administration rhetoric before the Iraq war, as is the worry in some quarters that the US is exaggerating the danger to galvanize world opinion against another regime in what President Bush termed an "axis of evil." Even officials and specialists who question the administration's latest conclusions acknowledge that there is ample evidence that the DPRK is trying to develop atomic weapons. But they say that walking into another confrontation based on dubious evidence could make the danger seem more rhetorical than real and could further damage trust in US intelligence.

3. ROK on DPRK Multilateral Talks

Agence France-Presse ("TIME RUNNING OUT FOR NUCLEAR TALKS THIS YEAR -- SOUTH KOREA," 12/09/03) reported that the ROK's top envoy to nuclear crisis talks says time is running out for a new round this year in the strongest indication so far that they will be put off until next year. Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo-Hyuck said the ROK, Japan and the US had agreed that if talks were to be held in December, they must be convened next week. "The three countries have a position that it will be proper to have the talks in the week commencing December 15. Because of Christmas, that week is the only possible one for the talks (this year)," Lee said in a radio interview. He was speaking a day after a US-backed proposal for a resolution to the 14-month old nuclear crisis was conveyed to the PRC to be passed on to the DPRK for consideration, according to officials here. "We told our ambassador in Beijing to deliver the proposal to China. We expect China will soon pass it on to North Korea!," Lee told CBS radio. The DPRK has little time to consider and respond to the proposal if talks are to be held in the third week in December. The counter-proposal was drafted last week in Washington when Lee and US and Japanese officials met to consider how to respond to a DPRK plan to resolve the crisis that had been delivered to Washington earlier in December by a top PRC foreign ministry official.

4. US on Taiwan Independence Referendum

Agence France-Presse ("BUSH RAPS TAIWAN OVER REFERENDUM, AS HE MEETS CHINA'S PREMIER," 12/10/03) reported that President George W. Bush delivered a stunning personal rebuke to Taiwan's President Chen Shui-bian over his plans for a referendum, in the politically charged

setting of talks with PRC Premier Wen Jiabao. Wen had traveled to Washington seeking to extract a firm US condemnation of Chen's plan for a March 20 vote critical of Beijing's military posture. "We oppose any unilateral decision by either China or Taiwan to change the status quo," Bush said, seated with Wen in front of a crackling log fire in the Oval Office. "And the comments and actions made by the leader of Taiwan indicate that he may be willing to make decisions unilaterally to change the status quo, which we oppose." Washington is a strong supporter of democratic Taiwan, and is bound by law to offer it the means of self-defense, but insists it has a right to criticize actions which impinge on stability and its own security. Last week, Bush sent a senior member of his national security council on a secret mission to Taiwan to urge it not to hold a referendum, sources said.

5. Japan Space Program

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN ABANDONS MARTIAN PROBE MISSION," 12/10/03) reported that Japan's trouble-plagued first mission to Mars was abandoned in the latest of a series of costly failures to hit the country's space development program. The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency made a final attempt Tuesday to remotely repair electronic circuitry on the Nozomi probe damaged by a solar flare last year, which caused the main engine to shut down, officials said. "But we failed to fix the short-circuit in the electric system and, as the result, we gave up the plan to place Nozomi into orbit around Mars," said Yasunori Matogawa, an agency researcher in charge of the mission. "From now on, we will continue trying to fix the circuit so that we may be able to use the probe for other space observatorial purposes," Matogawa said. Nozomi, Japan's first Martian probe, was launched in 1998 with an initial plan to go into orbit around the Red Planet by the summer of 1999 at a cost of 20 billion yen (186 million dollars). But the probe experienced a problem with fuel consumption in its first year and its attempt to swing by the Earth's orbit to gain momentum before travelling to Mars failed.

6. Japan Iraq Troop Dispatch

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN FORMALLY DECIDES ON CONTROVERSIAL TROOP DISPATCH TO IRAQ," 12/09/03) reported that Japan's cabinet approved a controversial plan to send up to 600 troops to Iraq on a humanitarian mission, the nation's most dangerous deployment of military personnel since World War II. It is the first time since 1945 that Japan has sent its troops to a country where fighting is still going on, although no timetable for the deployment was released. The move comes more than seven months after US President George W. Bush said major combat in Iraq was over. With many Japanese opposed to sending troops -- at least until the security situation improves -- Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi argued Japan had a duty to support the US in its efforts to rebuild Iraq. "Japan must be a trustworthy ally for the US," Koizumi said in a televised press conference, after the plan was nodded through at an extraordinary cabinet meeting. "What is at stake now is the ideals and resolve of Japan. The spirit of Japanese people is now being challenged. We are not in the situation where we can get away with paying money and without making a personnel contribution because it is dangerous," to go to Iraq, he said. Under the plan troops will be sent to the southeastern Iraq province of Muthanna to provide medical services, water supply, restore war damaged buildings, and transport material but not weapons.

7. Missing 'Dirty' Bombs Report

The Associated Press (Vasile Botnaru, "'DIRTY BOMB' MISSILES REPORTED MISSING," Chisinau, 12/08/03) reported that dozens of rockets outfitted with so-called dirty bombs - warheads designed to scatter deadly radioactive material - appear to be missing in a breakaway region of Moldova, an expert said Monday. Oazu Nantoi, a political analyst who works at the non-governmental Institute for Policy Studies in Chisinau, said he had seen photocopies of Russian military documents showing

that the dirty bomb warheads - 24 ready to use, 14 dismantled - were missing from a storage depot near the Trans-Dniester Tiraspol military airport. Nantoi said the documents came from a disgruntled Russian military official who claimed he had not received compensation for being exposed to radioactive material. The possibility of terrorists acquiring dirty bombs is a main concern of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, Austria. IAEA Director-General Mohamed ElBaradei said last week that his agency, which tries to cap the spread of nuclear weapons, is now "spending a great deal of time working on this threat." Nantoi said reports first reached him in 1998 that Alazan rockets - normally used in the former Soviet Union for weather experiments - had been fitted with warheads modified to carry radioactive material. Since then, the rockets and warheads appear to have disappeared from their storage area, and "I could not discover what had happened to them," he told the AP. "We tried to work with Moldovan officials, but there wasn't a clear investigation, because the territory is not controlled by Moldova," he said by telephone. Trans-Dniester does not see itself as part of Moldova. It is not recognized internationally. Moldova's government declined comment Monday, while an official of the Trans-Dniester Defense Ministry in Tiraspol called the claims "propaganda from Chisinau."

8. Lockheed Martin US Missile Defense Contract

Agence France-Presse ("LOCKHEED MARTIN GETS 4.6-BILLION-DOLLAR MISSILE DEFENSE CONTRACT," Washington 12/09/03) reported that aerospace giant Lockheed Martin was awarded a contract potentially worth 4.6 billion dollars to develop targets and countermeasures for the Pentagon's missile defense program, the Defense Department announced. The targets and countermeasures will be used to test the gamut of missile defense systems under development, the Pentagon said. Some experts have criticized the Pentagon for moving to develop and field a missile defense system against long-range missiles without testing it against realistic targets with more than one decoy. Lockheed Martin said it will develop targets that represent the evolving missile threat faced by the US. The contract was for 210 million dollars for engineering, design and management of the program over the next four years. But it has a potential value of 4.6 billion dollars over the next 10 years if all options are exercised, the Pentagon said.

9. DPRK Consumer Goods Production

Minju Choson ("DPRK LEADER CALLS FOR INCREASED PRODUCTION OF CONSUMER GOODS," Pyongyang, 12/09/03) reported that Kim Jong-il has pointed out the following: "Consumer products must be made available in increased numbers and with better quality to provide people with affluent and civilized material and cultural livelihood uninterruptedly." To increase the quality of consumer goods is important work in realizing the great general's noble intent towards loving his people. The great general is putting his heart and soul into making sure that our people are given the best things in the world. Today's era is an era of information industry. Modern science and technology are bringing new advances and qualitative changes in the consumer goods production sector as well. The modernization of light industries in accordance with the trend of modern science and technology development is an important way of putting the production of consumer products on a higher level without incurring high costs. In order to achieve the production of inexpensive products and give cultural and clean aspects to production, technological improvement work on facilities and production processes at weaving factories, footwear factories, food factories, and other existing light-industry factories must be accelerated, and imprecise and inefficient facilities must be boldly removed and replaced with modern facilities. In the work of modernizing light-industry factories, we must replace outdated facilities and production processes with newer ones according to the level of urgency and the ease of getting results and build new modern light-industry factories equipped with the latest science and technology, instead of trying to do everything all at once, in order to meet production demands and improve quality at the same time.

10. DPRK Humanitarian Crisis

Donga Ilbo (Kwan-Hae Hong, "U.N. HALTS FOOD AID TO NORTH KOREA," United Nations, 12/09/03) reported that food aid provided to North Koreans by international humanitarian organizations has been cut off due to a shortage in donations from the international community, the U.N. Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OHCA) announced on December 8. In a statement issued that day, OCHA indicated, "Of the funds requested by U.N. Organizations to support North Korea, only about half were raised, leaving the World Food Program (WFP) to halt the handouts to 700,000 people in November and approximately three million people starting this month." OHCA warned saying, "Unless new pledges are confirmed by May next year, food aid to 3.8 million people countrywide may be affected. Eighteen food production facilities supported by WFP for children and pregnant women will also face grain shortages by next April." The U.N. recently made a request to the international community to donate \$20.21 billion of aid to the DPRK next year.

II. Japan

1. Report Says Japanese Funds Would Go To DPRK Army

Chosun Ilbo (Jung Kwon-hyun, "REPORT SAYS JAPANESE FUNDS WOULD GO TO NK ARMY," 12/07/03) reported that a report by U.S. Congressional investigators said that Japanese funding to DPRK, ready to be used after the reestablishment of diplomatic relations, would in all likelihood be prop-up Kim Jong Il's regime and his army, Kyodo News reported on Saturday. The Congressional Research Service (CRS) report by Mark Manning, an expert in the conflict on the Korean Peninsula, presumed that the scale of economic support funding from Japan would be about US\$5 billion to US\$10 billion, Kyodo reported. The report titled, "Japan and DPRK relations," analyzed that Japan could potentially play a role in solving the DPRK nuclear development crisis, but that Japan could also play a key role by economically cooperating with DPRK. Yet the report pointed out that as soon as the issues of the nuclear development and the kidnapping of Japanese citizens are resolved, the next big concern would be how to keep the massive Japanese funding from being diverted to the DPRK military, Kyodo said. Current Japan and DPRK relations, the report said, is in a deadlock due to the issue of kidnapping by DPRK. Kyodo reported that the American public is amazed at the fact that a country could actually link some citizens' problem with its diplomatic goals, yet the report expressed understanding for Japan's situation. 2. U.S Considers Referring DPRK Nuclear Issue To UN

Chosun Ilbo (Arirang TV, "U.S. CONSIDERS REFERRING N.K. NUKE ISSUE TO UN," 12/07/03) reported that amid delays in launching the second round of six-nation talks to resolve the current standoff over Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program, the U.S. is reportedly considering referring DPRK to the U.N. Security Council if DPRK does not give up its nuclear ambition. In a news dispatch from Washington, the Japanese daily Yomiuri Shimbun reported Saturday the U.S. is considering U.N. sanctions against DPRK. The paper cited a high-level U.S. official as saying that there is a wide gap among the 6 nations involved in the nuclear dialogue and that even if the dialogue were to be postponed to January or February next year, prospects for a resolution are not that bright. The official said that DPRK will be offering a breakthrough if it says it is giving up its nuclear ambition, something Washington is waiting for. If the dialogue is not constructive, the official said the U.N. Security Council would be the next step. The paper explained that the delay in the talks is benefiting DPRK's nuclear development to the concern of the U.S. Yomiuri reported that DPRK is using its nuclear card to obtain a security guarantee, and receive energy and economic assistance. It said the U.S. is stepping up pressure against Pyongyang by implying the possibility of U.N.

sanctions.

3. James Kelly Said Preparing For Six-Way Talks Is Like Herding Cats

Donga Ilbo (Kwon Sun Taek, "PREPARING FOR SIX-PARTY TALKS IS LIKE HERDING CATS," 12/05/03) reported that Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly, a U.S. delegate, bared his heart on Tuesday, saying diplomatic negotiations in the second round of six-party talks to solve the DPRK nuclear crisis is quite complicated. He added that it was like herding cats, meaning hard to organize and move forward. Kelly mentioned this in a press conference after consulting with ROK Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo-Hyuck and Japanese Director General of Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau Mitoji Yabunaka on the new round of six-way talks in Washington. He said, "Six nations are taking part in these negotiations on a very critical agenda, and it is a very tough process. As one of my colleagues illustrated today, to discuss every detail is like herding cats." He added that, "We've met 10 times so far and have made progress each time, but we still have a long way to go, so we were not able to schedule a date for the next round of talks yet."

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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