



NAPSNet Daily Report 09 January, 2003

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 09 January, 2003", NAPSNet Daily Report, January 09, 2003,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-09-january-2003/>

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I. United States

1. DPRK-ROK Nuclear Talks

The Associated Press (Hans Greimel, "NORTH KOREA AGREES TO TALKS, AS SOUTH CALLS FOR CLOSER US MILITARY ALLIANCE," Seoul, 01/09/03) and BBC News ("NORTH KOREA AGREES TO TALKS WITH SEOUL," 01/09/03) reported that the DPRK has agreed to hold talks with the ROK

Government, at which the ROK says it will put pressure on the DPRK over its nuclear program. The meeting will be the latest in a series of rapprochement talks between the two sides since their historic summit in 2000. The ministerial-level meeting will be the first since the DPRK began reactivating a nuclear plant, which is believed to be capable of producing weapons-grade plutonium. But so far, the DPRK has made no response to a US offer of talks, or to demands by the United Nations nuclear watchdog to allow its inspectors - expelled last week - back into the country. ROK officials said the DPRK had proposed starting the four-day meeting on January 21 - a week later than the ROK had suggested. But our correspondent, Caroline Gluck, says the ROK will be relieved the talks are going ahead at all. ROK President Kim Dae-jung and his government believe dialogue is the best way to tackle the nuclear controversy. The ROK's National Security Adviser, Yim Sung-joon, said on Wednesday that the US had endorsed his plan to utilise the ROK's existing channels of dialogue with the DPRK to resolve the stand-off.

2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Dialogue

Reuters (Paul Eckert and Teruaki Ueno, "NORTH KOREA MAY OFFER WAY OUT OF CRISIS - DIPLOMATS," Seoul/Tokyo, 01/09/03) and the Associated Press (Sang-Huh Choe, "NORTH KOREA AGREES TO TALKS, AMID FLURRY OF DIPLOMACY BY US ALLIES," Seoul, 01/09/03) reported that the DPRK agreed Thursday to Cabinet-level talks with the ROK later this month, while the ROK's president-elect called for the "carrot" in resolving a standoff over the DPRK's nuclear program. "Once we start using the stick, it's difficult to change course," President-elect Roh Moo-hyun told a forum of scholars and retired diplomats in Seoul. "The carrot may cost a lot and may not easily attract popular support, but it will be cheaper than creating dangerous situations." Roh, who is scheduled to take office on February 25, said he will be "pragmatic" in handling the DPRK crisis, and that he has "no intention of being anti-American" or changing the ROK's alliance with the US. Also Thursday, the DPRK told the ROK that it wants to hold Cabinet-level talks in Seoul on January 21-24, a week later than the ROK had proposed. The talks would be the highest level of inter-Korean dialogue since shortly after it was revealed last fall that the DPRK had a secret nuclear weapons program.

3. Powell on DPRK Diplomacy

The Washington Post (Glenn Kessler, "Security Assurances Possible for North Korea," 01/09/03) reported that US Secretary of State Colin L. Powell held out the prospect yesterday of a settlement with the DPRK over its nuclear weapons programs that would include formal assurances the US has no plans to attack the the DPRK. "We have made it clear we have no aggressive intent," Powell said, one day after the Bush administration said it is willing to have face-to-face talks with the government in Pyongyang. "Apparently, they want something more than a passing statement." US allies in the region, especially the ROK, and Russia have pressed the administration to consider offering some form of security guarantee to the DPRK to persuade it to reverse its decision to restart its nuclear weapons programs. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov said yesterday that instead of isolating the DPRK, which he called "an erroneous approach," the US should provide the security guarantee sought by the DPRK. Powell's remarks, in an interview at the State Department, suggested that the administration has begun to heed this concern, marking a further evolution in the US strategy to persuade the DPRK to dismantle its nuclear weapons programs. Asked whether there is a formula that offers more than President Bush's repeated statements that the administration will not invade the DPRK and the DPRK's desire for a nonaggression pact with the US, Powell replied: "You've just bounded a problem. That's what diplomacy is about."

4. DPRK-US Relations

BBC News ("NORTH KOREAN TO MEET FORMER US OFFICIAL," 01/09/03) reported that a DPRK diplomat is to hold a meeting in the US with the former US ambassador to the United Nations, Bill Richardson. The meeting is not officially sponsored by Washington. But the BBC's Jon Leyne in Washington says it is a "first hint of a way towards a possible peaceful outcome" of the standoff between the US and the DPRK. US Secretary of State Colin Powell has briefed Richardson, who is now the governor of the state of New Mexico. The US gave special permission for Han Song Ryol - the DPRK's deputy permanent representative to the UN - to travel to New Mexico to meet Richardson. He needed special permission because the US does not have diplomatic relations with the DPRK. Richardson served as US Secretary of Energy under Bill Clinton after leaving his post at the UN.

5. ROK Anti-US Sentiments

The Washington Post (Peter S. Goodman and Joohee Cho, "ANTI-US SENTIMENT DEEPENS IN SOUTH KOREA SUPPORT FOR ISOLATING NORTH SEEN LACKING," Seoul, 01/09/03) carried a story that read inside a Starbucks coffee shop tucked in a posh shopping district of the ROK capital, three women in their late twenties sip cappuccino, their Prada purses and Gucci sunglasses testifying to lives of comfort in the southern half of the Korean Peninsula -- the side defended by 37,000 US troops. Yet, as their conversation turns to the nuclear confrontation playing out here, all three express sympathies for the DPRK and anger toward the US. They reject the central tenet that has bound the ROK and the US together for a half-century -- that they need US troops here to protect them from a menacing Communist power to the north. "If the US left, I wouldn't mind," says Kim Young Ran, 29. "If North Korea wants nuclear weapons, I think they should have them. The US and so many other countries have them. There's no way the DPRK will attack us with their nuclear weapons. I don't think so. We're the same country. You don't bomb and kill your family. We share the same blood." In a recent opinion poll conducted by Korea Gallup for the Chosun Ilbo more than 53 percent of ROK citizens surveyed said they disliked the US, up from 15 percent in 1994. Over the same period, the percentage of those who said they liked the US fell from nearly 64 percent to 37 percent. Many analysts say the growing anti-Americanism here has emboldened the DPRK's leader, Kim Jong Il, to ratchet up the confrontation because he is secure that the Bush administration cannot wage war against him, or even contain him, without the support of the ROK, and equally secure that such support is lacking. "It wasn't like that back in 1993 and '94," said Lee Chung Min, a DPRK expert at Yonsei University in Seoul, "We thought North Korea was crazy and had no illusions about who they were building their bombs for. Now, Kim is less likely to bend, because he can count on South Korea. And that's a weird situation."

6. Japan-RF Relations

The Associated Press (Eric Talmadge, "JAPAN'S KOIZUMI TO DISCUSS BORDER DISPUTE, NORTH KOREA IN SUMMIT WITH PUTIN," Moscow, 01/09/03) reported that Japan's Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi arrived Thursday for a summit with President Vladimir Putin, saying he hopes to find common ground on a half-century-old border dispute and perhaps enlist Russia's clout in ending an emotional tug-of-war with the DPRK over several Japanese abducted decades ago. The four-day trip was seen as a welcome change of scenery for Koizumi, whose popular support has been threatened by increasing criticism that he is not doing enough to pull Japan's stagnant economy out of its decade-long slump. Koizumi has also been under growing pressure to end the abductee standoff, which has caused widespread outrage in Japan and heightened tensions with its unpredictable, and possibly nuclear-armed, neighbor. It was by no means clear, however, whether

Koizumi would win from Putin any significant concessions on the territorial dispute or help in dealing with the DPRK. Japan has long demanded the return of several small islands off its northernmost shores that were occupied by Soviet troops in the closing days of World War II and the dispute has kept the two countries from signing a peace treaty. But Koizumi, a strong advocate of closer ties, said Russia's transition to a more democratic society and market-oriented economy has opened the way for change. "It is very important how our relations will evolve," he said on the plane after leaving Tokyo. "I am happily awaiting our exchange of views." There was no immediate comment from Putin, but the ITAR-Tass news agency quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov as saying that before Koizumi's visit, Moscow received "signals from Tokyo that Japan would not want to wrap itself up in the territorial problem."

7. US Asymmetric DPRK / Iraq Policy

The Associated Press (Teresa Cerojano, "US OFFICIAL DEFENDS WASHINGTON'S DIFFERING POLICIES TOWARD IRAQ AND NORTH KOREA," Manila, Philippines, 01/09/03) reported that a senior US official on Thursday defended the US' differing policies toward Iraq and the DPRK - saying different circumstances required different approaches. Responding to criticism that the US was taking a softer stance against the DPRK than Iraq, Undersecretary for Arms Control and International Security John Bolton said that the US viewed the DPRK's nuclear aspirations as "very serious." "And the reason that the DPRK matter is being handled differently from the Iraq matter is the factual circumstances of the two cases are different. That is not to say that we don't view the DPRK effort as something very serious," Bolton told reporters at the end of a one-day visit to Manila. The US has threatened to go to war with Iraq if Baghdad refuses to dismantle its suspect banned weapons programs; with the DPRK, the US has said it has no intention of invading and hopes to resolve a crisis over the DPRK's nuclear program through diplomacy. Bolton pointed out that Iraq has failed to comply with multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions over the last 12 years requiring it to disarm. Malaysian Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar told Bolton Wednesday that Malaysia - a predominantly Muslim country - believed the US was treating Iraq unfairly compared to the DPRK.

8. US Assessment DPRK Military

The Associated Press (John J. Lumpkin, "US ASSESSES NORTH KOREA'S MILITARY," Washington, 01/09/03) reported that the DPRK's massive military is probably backed up by one or two nuclear weapons and would present a greater challenge to American forces than Iraq's, US defense officials say. With 1.2 million troops, the DPRK is considered the world's most militarized nation: it has more soldiers, per capita, than any other. Its military is the fourth or fifth largest in the world, and more than 30 percent of its gross domestic product is spent on its military, according to CIA estimates. But for all its size, the DPRK's conventional military can't match US technology, despite an effort to modernize, officials said. It is short on fuel and sometimes food, even though it receives both before the civilian populace does. However, US military planners still fear the DPRK's ability to wreak havoc in a fast-moving conflict on the peninsula. Some of its forces are stationed just 30 miles from Seoul, and could quickly bombard civilian areas using artillery. The DPRK also has an arsenal of long-range ballistic missiles, many of which can reach Japan, where more US forces are stationed. The country is believed to have made one or two nuclear weapons with plutonium in the early 1990s. More than 65 percent of the DPRK's ground forces are kept within 60 miles of the zone. Facing them are more than 600,000 members of the South Korean armed forces, reinforced by 37,000 US troops. "Korea remains a place where US forces could almost instantaneously become engaged in a high-intensity war involving significant ground, air and naval forces," Gen. Thomas A. Schwartz, then commander of US forces in Korea, told a congressional committee last year. "Such a war would cause loss of life numbering in the hundreds of thousands and cause billions of dollars in property

destruction." The DPRK's air force boasts a few dozen modern MiG fighters and hundreds of older jets but also flies some 300 1948-vintage biplanes to parachute commandos behind ROK lines. It also has numerous air defenses and a coastal navy that includes several attack submarines. The DPRK also boasts a 100,000-strong special operations force, commandos trained to attack economic and political targets behind ROK lines. If pressed, the DPRK can also call on up to 7 million reservists, the Defense Intelligence Agency said.

9. RF on US Missile Defense

The Associated Press (Vladimir Isachenkov, "RUSSIA PROPOSES UNITED STATES TO SIGN NEW AGREEMENT ON MISSILE DEFENSE," Moscow, 01/09/03) reported that Russia's Foreign Ministry said Thursday that Moscow has proposed a new agreement with United States on missile defense, while a top Russian general warned that the missile shield the US administration wants to build would pose a potential threat to Russia. Referring to US officials' statements that the two nations could cooperate in developing defenses against ballistic missiles, Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander Yakovenko voiced hope that the US would agree to a draft "political agreement" on missile defense that he said Russia has submitted. Yakovenko's brief statement to the media did not include any details about the Russian proposal, saying only that it would "strengthen, not weaken the strategic stability." US Embassy officials could not immediately confirm that the US had received a proposal.

10. PRC Domestic Economy

Reuters (Benjamin Kang Lim, "CHINA STATE STREAMLINING SEEN FACING RESISTANCE," 01/09/03) reported that the PRC is pushing ahead with plans to smash one of its last "iron rice bowls" by ending cradle-to-grave jobs for its 30 million employees at hospitals, universities and other state-funded institutions. But analysts said Thursday the planned reform is likely to run into stiff opposition from the cultural elite and a class Beijing can ill afford to upset: intellectuals. The scheme calls for state-funded institutions, including think tanks and publishing houses, to sign contracts with their employees over the next three years, ending lifelong job tenures, a Ministry of Personnel official said. As a result, "many employees" at the country's 1.3 million state-funded institutions would be laid off, the official Xinhua news agency said. It did not give a figure. Analysts were skeptical. "I don't believe it," Yang Fan, an economist at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the top government think tank, said in an interview. "It's not conducive to social stability," Yang said, hinting at the possibility of discontent among intellectuals. "It'll be very difficult to implement."

11. PRC Public Demonstration

The New York Times (Joseph Kahn, "HUGE DEMONSTRATION IN CHINA, BUT SUBJECT IS TRAFFIC SAFETY," Shanghai, 01/09/03)

Some 10,000 people took the streets in the eastern city of Hefei this week in what appears to have been the largest student demonstration since the Tiananmen Square human rights protests of 1989. But the students had a much narrower agenda: traffic safety. They were protesting the government's failure to provide a safe way to cross a busy thoroughfare near Hefei Industrial University. The protests developed after three students were knocked down by a truck that ran a red light, killing two and putting one in a coma, students involved in the protest said. "There is no background to this other than telling the government that traffic safety must be a priority," Li Pan, a student at the college, said in a telephone interview. "Some of our friends have died and this should be taken

seriously." "This is not only the driver's fault, but also mistakes by people in power," one student wrote on the university's open Internet bulletin board. "Every year students die under wheels at the school gate, but Hefei hasn't taken the necessary initiatives." Students said that the university had proposed constructing a pedestrian bridge over the intersection, but that city authorities had rejected the request for lack of money.

II. Republic of Korea

1. Trilateral Cooperation on DPRK

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Young-sae, "U.S. AGREES TO TALK WITH PYEONGYANG: STEP IS HAILED HERE," Seoul, 01/09/03) reported that DPRK found itself Wednesday holding a copy of an offer from US to talk about nuclear weapons. That marked a departure from US's earlier vow that it would not engage in dialogue with DPRK unless DPRK first took steps to dismantle its nuclear program. DPRK must still do that, the delegates to the year's first trilateral consultations on DPRK said in a joint statement, but US has at least agreed to respond to expressions of willingness by DPRK to again put its nuclear facilities in mothballs. The two-day trilateral talks continued a series of consultations among ROK, Japan and US on Korean Peninsula issues. The offer of talks is unconditional, according to US State Department spokesman, Richard Boucher, but he added that US will not provide any more carrots to DPRK to induce DPRK to "live up to its existing obligations," in the spokesman's words. He said a copy of the statement issued by the three delegations had been handed to DPRK's representative at UN in New York.

2. Food Aid Needed to DPRK

Joongang Ilbo ("UN GROUP AGAIN CALLS FOR FOOD AID TO NORTH," Seoul, 01/09/03) reported that the World Food Program repeated its calls Tuesday for food aid for DPRK. The UN agency said it needs 80,000 tons of grain immediately to avoid a new crisis. At a press briefing in Geneva, Christiane Berthiaume, the World Food Program spokeswoman, said the agency has received pledges of only 35,000 tons of food for the first quarter of this year, less than one-third of the food it needs to keep starvation at bay. Unless new aid is provided, the agency said, it would have to cut back its programs for the second time since September. The World Food Program said it had failed to attract its food aid quota for DPRK last year for the first time since it began working in DPRK in 1995.

3. Comment of ROK President on Anti US Movement

Joongang Ilbo ("VIGILS NOT ANTI-US, KIM TELLS HIS CABINET," Seoul, 01/09/03) reported that "Candlelight vigils are not an anti-U.S. protest, and it is wrong simply to address it as such," said President Kim Dae-jung Tuesday at the first cabinet meeting of the year. President Kim said that recent polls clearly show that the majority of South Koreans oppose a pullout of the 37,000 U.S. troops stationed in ROK. "It is only logical that demands for the revision of the SOFA are based on the fact that U.S. military is stationed in Korea," Kim stressed. The president also asked cabinet members to work with the utmost diligence and prudence during their remaining term of office to solve pending issues such as the North Korean nuclear program, the economy and living standards.

4. No Ill Will toward USFK

Chosun Ilbo (Kang In-sun, "RUMSFELD SEES NO ILL WILL TO USFK," Seoul, 01/09/03) reported that US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated Tuesday he disagreed that ill will toward US troops stationed in ROK was escalating. Secretary Rumsfeld told a press conference that the recent aggravation of anti-Americanism has not made the diplomatic approach to the DPRK nuclear problem difficult. He added that ROK has recently had an election and people are free to express their opinions in a free country. Rumsfeld also noted that demonstrations by a minority do not represent the standpoint of the whole nation. The secretary also said US will be working closely with ROK's new administration, adding President-elect Roh Moo-hyun has expressed his willingness to meet with US officials in order to discuss ROK-US relations. Rumsfeld emphasized that the ROK-US relationship is satisfactory and there is no need to be alarmed by a minority of protestors on the streets.

5. PRO USFK Rally in ROK

Chosun Ilbo (Baek Seung-jae, "PRO USFK RALLY HELD," Seoul, 01/09/03) reported that Some 900 members of veterans, civic, and Christian groups held an "Anti-North Korean Nuclear Weapons, Opposition to USFK Withdrawal March" in Pyeongtek, Gyeonggi Province, in front of Osan US Air Force Base, Wednesday. The leaders of the march said that serious consequences would be brought about by a USFK withdrawal, and that DPRK should abandon its nuclear weapons program immediately to ensure peace on the Korean peninsula. Min Se-gi, who organized the march said that he was worried that the recent candlelight demonstrations had been seen as anti-American protests.

6. Moody's Worries on ROK situation

Chosun Ilbo (Park Yong-keun, "MOODY'S WORRIES OVER ANTI-US RALLIES," Seoul, 01/09/03) reported that the Deputy Finance and Economy Minister for International Affairs Kim Yong-deok said Wednesday that Moody's Investors Service showed concern over the anti-Americanism of candle light demonstrations and the DPRK nuclear crisis. Deputy Minister Kim also said that a state credit evaluation team from Moody's would visit Seoul to meet the Presidential Transition Committee on Jan. 20 and 21. He added, however, that other credit evaluation services had not asked about the current anti-Americanism and the DPRK crisis.

7. ROK's Efforts to Implement Free Trade Pact

The Korea Herald (Kwak Young-sup, "KOREA MULLS MORE FREE TRADE PACTS," Seoul, 01/09/03) reported that following the signing of a free trade agreement (FTA) with Chile last October, ROK is preparing to initiate FTAs with other countries in Asia and Latin America, government officials said Wednesday. The move is expected to hasten further opening of the world's 12th largest economy, which the incoming Roh Moo-hyun government strongly advocates. The Ministry of Finance and Economy said that upon the National Assembly's ratification of the Chilean FTA, full implementation of the agreement will begin in March. A ministry official said that the long-term goal of the bilateral treaty is to completely eliminate tariff barriers from all sectors of foreign trade such as investment, services and government procurement. Following the implementation of the Chilean FTA, ROK will assess the feasibility of an FTA with Singapore within the first half of this year, the ministry said. The ministry official said that ROK and Japan will start in July a joint study on the feasibility of a bilateral free trade pact between those two nations at the request of Japan. In addition, ROK government will propose to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) a joint feasibility study on FTAs being struck between ROK and the seven-member regional organization, the official said.

III. Japan

1. Movement of Korean Residents in Japan against US

The Asahi Shinbun (Booyeon Lee, "TWO KOREAS JOIN HANDS TO PROTEST US MILITARY PRESENCE," 01/07/03) reported the two organizations, Mindan (pro-ROK) and Chongryun (pro-DPRK) remain locked in Cold War discord on the political level. However, Mindan and Chongryun in Japan temporarily set aside their diametric political alignments at two candlelight rallies in Tokyo's Shinjuku Ward to voice anger at the presence of the U.S. military in ROK. The rallies, held Dec. 22 and 31, brought together about 200 Korean residents, in response to the acquittal of two American soldiers by a U.S. military court in November over the deaths of two 14-year-old girls in ROK. Pro-DPRK and pro-ROK university students, political activists, homemakers and children marched single file, holding candles and displaying photos of the girls, who were crushed by a U.S. armored vehicle on their way to a birthday party in June. These rallies reflect the anti-American sentiment in Seoul and Pyongyang that rallied more than 60,000 citizens in ROK and 10,000 on the other side of the Demilitarized Zone. The rare gesture of political unity among Korean residents in Japan came about spontaneously and started at a grass-roots level.

2. Abduction Issues related to DPRK

The Asahi Shinbun ("WARRANT OUT FOR AGENT OVER KUME'S ABDUCTION," 01/09/03) reported that the Metropolitan Police Department in Japan on Wednesday obtained an arrest warrant for a suspected DPRK agent in connection with the disappearance of Yutaka Kume, one of 15 Japanese listed by the government as having been abducted to DPRK. The warrant is for Kim Se Ho, 74, for ordering the abduction of Kume from a beach in Ishikawa Prefecture and stealing him away by ship on Sept. 19, 1977. Police also plan to ask Interpol to place Kim on its international wanted list, police officials said. It is the first time a warrant has been obtained for an alleged DPRK agent for the abduction of a Japanese. Kim is believed to have been a senior member of the intelligence arm of the DPRK Workers' Party.

3. Japan's ODA Strategy

The Asahi Shinbun ("EARLY AID:THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HOPES TO ESTABLISH PEACE IN SRI LANKA AND PROTECT ITS ODA PROGRAM," Colombo, 01/09/03) reported that Japan's Foreign minister, Yoriko Kawaguchi views ODA (Official Development Aid) as the critical tools to strengthen a fragile peace accord in Sri Lanka. "Official development assistance is indispensable to consolidating the peace process here," Kawaguchi told reporters on Monday when she inspected land-mine removal activities by a British nongovernmental organization in Jaffna, on the northern tip of the nation. In addition, the Foreign Ministry hopes to quell criticism against ODA by using Japanese funds to maintain peace in war-ravaged regions such as Jaffna. If successful, such efforts using ODA could serve as a model for Tokyo's future diplomacy.

4. Japan-US-ROK Cooperation toward DPRK Issues

The Asahi Shinbun ("TOKYO, SEOUL NUDGE US INTO TALKS," Washington, 01/09/03) reported that Japanese and ROK diplomats are quietly celebrating after securing an agreement from the US on Tuesday to reopen a dialogue with DPRK. The agreement comes in the form of a joint statement saying Washington is "willing to talk to DPRK about how it will meet its obligations to the international community." The statement was released at the closing of this year's first Trilateral

Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) meeting held Monday through Tuesday. However, the statement added that the US "will not provide quid pro quos to DPRK to live up to its existing obligations," meaning the US will not revisit the nuclear inspection agreement nor reward bad behavior with additional aid. The three delegations, represented by Mitoji Yabunaka, Japan's director-general of the Foreign Ministry's Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau; James Kelly, U.S. assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs; and Lee Tae Sik, ROK's deputy minister of foreign affairs and trade, demanded DPRK take "prompt and verifiable action to completely dismantle its nuclear weapons program and come into full compliance with its international nuclear commitments." The statement said they strongly support the resolution adopted Monday by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors, which called upon Pyongyang to cooperate urgently and fully with the IAEA.

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](#) in partnership with:

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