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I. United States

1. ROK-DPRK Summit

Reuters ("KOREAS TO CONTINUE SUMMIT TALKS VIA HOTLINES," Seoul, 5/9/000) reported that ROK Unification Ministry spokesman Kim Hyun-koo said on Tuesday that preparatory talks for the June inter-Korean summit would continue through Red Cross hot lines. Kim said, "Both sides won't

get together physically because of its inefficiency. But they could meet at the truce village Panmunjon if they reach an agreement on the pending issues."

2. ROK-DPRK Economic Cooperation

The Washington Times (David Jones, "SOUTH KOREA LOOKS TO INVEST IN NORTH," 5/9/00) reported that ROK Commerce Minister Kim Young-ho said on May 8 that the ROK hopes a breakthrough at the inter-Korean summit in June will permit a "rush" of foreign direct investment into the DPRK. Ho said during a two-day visit to the US that such investment is expected to contribute to an easing of military tensions between the DPRK and the ROK, while enabling ROK companies to take advantage of low-cost labor in the DPRK. Kim also said that the two leaders would talk about potential areas of exchange and cooperation during the summit, but "the core area will be assistance in the development of North Korea's infrastructure, including the delivery of energy and food." Kim noted that promising areas for investment include high-technology products, such as computer games, that have no military applications. He continued, "the development of software and information technology is an area of potential growth in North Korea." He said that the ROK is poised to help the DPRK improve its energy system and "the South Korean government supports efforts by North Korea to establish diplomatic ties with other countries and to become a member of the Asia Development Bank. I believe North Korea wants investment from South Korea. North Korea knows that only if tension is relieved can there be investment of the right kind from the United States, South Korea and Japan. In this respect, North Korea is watching the American presidential election very closely. The prospect of economic exchange with North Korea opens the possibility of using North Korean low-cost labor, which will help with price competitiveness." [Ed. note: This article was included as a Top Story in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 9, 2000.]

3. ROK Chemical Weapons

Agence France Presse ("SOUTH KOREA STOCKPILES CHEMICAL WEAPONS: MILITARY," Seoul, 5/9/00) reported that a defense ministry spokesman on Tuesday confirmed for the first time that the ROK military possessed chemical weapons to counter the DPRK's military threat. The ROK Foreign Ministry declined to give details, describing the stockpiling of chemical weapons as a grave security issue. It said in a statement, "the government has fulfilled its duty since it joined the chemical weapons convention in April 1997. The issue of chemical weapons is one which has a great impact on national security." The statement followed a Chosun Ilbo report that the military was secretly disposing of chemical weapons to abide by an international pact restricting their proliferation. The newspaper said that the disposal has been underway since October when the military built a chemical treatment factory near an army base in Yongdong county, 134 miles south of Seoul. The daily quoted a military source as saying, "the military had kept a significant amount of chemical weapons. It secretly constructed a plant for disposal and began treating the weapons late last year." The paper said that the military planned to scrap all its chemical weapons, "tantamount to hundreds of tons," by 2006.

4. Japan-DPRK Relations

Reuters ("JAPAN SAYS TO WORK TOWARDS BETTER N.KOREA TIES," Tokyo, 5/9/00) reported that Japan said on Tuesday that it would work towards improving diplomatic relations with the DPRK in a bid to ensure peace and stability in the region. The Japanese Kyodo news agency quoted government officials who said that Japan and the DPRK will hold a second round of full scale normalization talks

on May 23 in Tokyo. The talks will be led by Kojiro Takano of Japan and Jong Thae-hwa of the DPRK. The Japanese Foreign Ministry released an annual report on diplomacy to coincide with the announcement that Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori would visit the ROK later this month to coordinate policies towards the DPRK. In the report, the Japanese Foreign Ministry expressed concerns over the DPRK's suspected missile program, saying "it is highly possible that North Korea has completed the deployment of medium-range Rodong missiles." The ministry said that it believed that the DPRK was developing longer-range ballistic missiles while the state was faced with "various uncertain factors." The ministry report said that it had detected no power struggle in the DPRK and that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il remained firmly in control of the state. It continued, "although the food and economic conditions remain severe in North Korea, no anti-government move that could threaten the present regime has been detected." The report said that while balancing between "dialogue and deterrence," Japan would try to "correct" relations between Japan and the DPRK in a way that could contribute to peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

5. Japan-PRC Relations

The Associated Press (Elaine Kurtenbach, "CHINA WARNS JAPAN ABOUT MILITARY," Beijing, 5/9/00) reported that the PRC cautioned Japan on Tuesday against conducting military exercises overseas, warning that the drills might harm the region's peace and stability. The warning came on the eve of a four-day visit to Japan by PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan and amid renewed accusations by Chinese officials and media that Japan is plotting to resurrect its military power. At the center of the criticisms is Japan's participation in a multinational submarine rescue exercise to be held later this year near Singapore. PRC Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said Tuesday, "we hope that countries concerned in carrying out this kind of activities or military exercises should not do anything that may be detrimental to stability and peace in this part of the world." A front-page commentary published on May 8 in the PRC's People's Liberation Army newspaper under the title "A Dangerous Signal" said, "the ghost of militarism is stirring on the Japanese archipelago."

6. Cross-Straits Relations

Agence France Presse ("CHINA URGES TAIWANESE PRESIDENT-ELECT TO EMBRACE 'ONE CHINA' POLICY," Beijing, 5/9/00) and the Associated Press (Charles Hutzler, "TAIWAN WARNED TO ACCEPT CHINA TERMS," Beijing, 5/9/00) reported that Tang Shubei, vice president of China's Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS), on Tuesday repeated calls for Taiwanese president-elect Chen Shui-bian to accept the 'One- China' principle. Tang said at a PRC-sponsored conference on Taiwan in the southern city of Xiamen, "adherence to the 'One China' principle concerns China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and the Chinese government and people will make no concession on this matter of principle." PRC foreign ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue on Tuesday indicated that the PRC was not satisfied with Chen's reaction to the PRC's demands thus far. Zhang said, "there are reports that Taiwan will give up the two states theory, but I haven't seen any statements regarding 'One China.' I think they have to first respect the principle of 'One China.'"

7. Taiwan Military Exercises

Agence France Presse ("TAIWAN QUIETLY HOLDS MILITARY DRILLS AMID TENSIONS WITH CHINA: REPORT," Taipei, 5/9/00) reported that the Taiwanese United Daily News said on Tuesday that Taiwan has quietly held military exercises near the southern port of Kaohsiung to simulate an

invasion by the PRC. The report said that mock PRC troops landed on a beach, and marine and artillery units, as well as coast guard vessels, were mobilized. The defense ministry and port authorities refused comment on the report, but Yu Fang-lai, the head of the Kaohsiung port authority, told the newspaper that the harbor's operations were not interrupted.

8. US Response to Cross-Straits Conflict

The San Francisco Examiner (Stewart M. Powell and Eric Rosenberg, "IF TAIWAN IS ATTACKED, WHAT DOES U.S. DO?" Washington, 5/8/00) reported that Harvey Sicherman, a foreign policy analyst with the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia, said that US war planners are re-focusing on the PRC because it would be very difficult for the US to protect Taiwan if the PRC decided to attack. Sicherman added, "this is a big problem, bigger than it has been before." Some independent experts and US war planners said that the US would face immense difficulties defeating a determined effort by the PRC's 2.9 million-member armed forces to move against Taiwan. Richard Fisher, a senior fellow and PRC expert with the Jamestown Foundation, a conservative think tank, said that the PRC would "move too quickly for the US to respond," crushing Taiwan's air force and navy within a day and seizing air superiority and control of the sea lanes within two to three days. Robert Kagan of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace said that a PRC missile onslaught could effectively "force Taiwan's capitulation without an invasion." Beyond the challenges posed by the different scenarios for PRC attack, the US faces the wider frustration of not being able to rely on Taiwan as an equal partner in a joint defense because, according to a secret 40-page US Department of Defense report, the island's 376,000-member armed forces lack high-tech weaponry and extensive military-to-military integration with US forces. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 9, 2000.]

9. PRC Naval Strength

Agence France Presse ("CHINA NAVAL STRENGTH MAJOR CONCERN FOR EAST ASIA: DEFENSE ANALYST," Singapore, 5/9/00) reported that US Captain Richard Sharpe in his foreword to Jane's Defense's forthcoming publication of Jane's Fighting Ships said that the PRC's focus on Taiwan is leading to an increase in its naval capabilities and overshadows all other regional security concerns. Sharpe wrote, "China's increasing obsession over Taiwan is casting a growing shadow over the whole of East Asia." He noted the "harder edge" of the PRC's threats against Taiwan in the run-up to its presidential elections in March, "effectively threatening America with extreme long-range strikes' should it seek to intervene to defend Taiwan from an attack by the mainland." Sharpe also said that there was little reason to doubt the PRC's ability to carry out an amphibious invasion of Taiwan or assert its naval superiority by blocking Taiwan's ports. He continued, "neither action would be possible in the event of the US becoming militarily involved, but those who still question China's naval capability should take a hard look," at its four different submarine building programs and massive inventory of surface-to-surface and air-to-surface missiles of all types. Sharpe added that the PRC's growing amphibious lift capability, its large stocks of intelligent mines, and it's capacity to transport by sea "is increasing each year and in the narrow Straits of Taiwan the turnaround time for amphibious ships and craft would be very short." He added, "anti-submarine warfare would quickly become a major priority for Taiwan." Sharpe also pointed out that the PRC would continue to exert its maritime military influence in a dispute with the five other nations claiming the Spratly islands in the South China Sea. He wrote, "further enforcement of Chinese claims seems inevitable in the future," noting that the PRC has developed seven permanent military outposts on the islands.

10. US-PRC Technological Cooperation

The Washington Times (Bill Gertz, "BEIJING STALLS ON NUCLEAR PROMISES," 5/9/00) reported that US national security officials said that the PRC has blocked the implementation of a 1985 cooperation agreement by refusing to provide assurances that it will not sell US technology to other nations. Several US Energy Department export licenses have been delayed because of the denial. Critics of the PRC's weapons-proliferation activities said that the lack of assurances is troubling. Gary Milhollin, director of the Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control, said, "an importer who refuses to give assurances against re-export is too risky a buyer to deal with. If the United States exports reactors with no assurances of re-export, it might as well be sending them to Iran." Zhang Yuanyuan, press spokesman for the PRC Embassy, said that the PRC government is opposing US demands because they were not included in the original 1985 nuclear cooperation accord. Zhang said, "the request we got was that maybe China could make a blanket statement saying it was not going to use American technology for military purposes, or [that it was] not going to transfer the American technology to any third parties." He continued that the PRC opposed the US request because it has "developed indigenous technology" for nuclear reactors and "if we develop nuclear-power facilities and want to export to third countries, it will be hard to determine if the technology is indigenously developed or from the US. That's the reason we don't want to give the assurances." According to an April 4 memorandum from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), which reviews the Energy Department export-license applications known as Part 810s, 16 requests from US companies to sell civilian nuclear-power reactor technology to the PRC have been stalled since 1998 over the issue. Janice Dunn Lee, director of NRC's office of international programs, stated in the NRC memorandum, "to date, China has not provided any assurances for any of the Part 810 cases. China would prefer to provide any assurances on a case-by-case basis, but the U.S., with strong industry support, is requiring generic assurances. The matter is still under review by China." [Ed. note: This article was included as a Top Story in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 9, 2000.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. Inter-Korean Summit

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "2 KOREAS HOLD LAST-DITCH TALKS TO HAMMER OUT SUMMIT DETAILS," Panmunjom, 05/09/00) and The Korea Times (Lee Soo-jeong, "US TROOPS, SECURITY LAW DELAY INTER-KOREAN DEAL," Seoul, 05/09/00) reported that the ROK and the DPRK agreed on May 8 on almost all procedural matters for the June inter-Korean summit, but a few remaining differences prevented them from reaching a full consensus. Officials said that the two sides neared an accord on 14 of the total 16 procedural matters, including the itinerary and the dispatch of an advance contingent for the summit, as well as a broad-based agenda. The remaining points of dispute include the number of journalists that will cover the event, the officials said. The ROK has proposed that an 80-member media team be dispatched to the summit, but the DPRK reportedly wants this number reduced to 40. Both sides also failed to agree on the live telecast of the summit via satellite and the introduction of auxiliary facilities for the broadcast, they added. It was not clear whether they would be able to narrow their differences over these issues and reach a full accord. According to government sources, the ROK hoped to kick off experts' meetings to discuss such specific issues as security, protocols, and communications after formulating the overall accord. The ROK also expressed hopes of continuing the vice-ministerial negotiations to discuss specific items on the summit agenda after the two sides agree on the procedural issues.

2. US on Inter-Korean Talks

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "WASHINGTON REAFFIRMS ITS FULL SUPPORT FOR SEOUL ON INTER- KOREAN SUMMIT TALKS," Seoul, 05/09/00) reported that the US pledged on May 8 to throw its "full" support behind the ROK's efforts to ensure the success of the inter-Korean summit in June. ROK Deputy Foreign Minister Jang Jai-ryong made the remarks after holding talks with visiting US State Department Counselor Wendy Sherman and her delegation on DPRK issues. Jang said that he explained the ROK government's preparations for the summit talks, and briefed the US side on the outcome of the ROK-DPRK preliminary meetings. The US pledge of support contradicted rampant speculation that the ROK and the US were at odds over the agenda for the summit meeting.

3. DPRK-US Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. AND N.K. TO DISCUSS SECOND KUMCHANGRI VISIT," Seoul, 05/04/00) reported that the US State Department announced on May 3 that the US and the DPRK will be discussing issues in Rome on May 24 from the US investigation team's second visit to the underground facilities in Kumchangri. US State Department spokesman Richard Bauer said, "in this conference, the implementation of the 1994 Basic Agreement which was on freezing the nuclear program and other related nuclear issues will be discussed." He added that the investigation of Kumchangri is an example of such issues to be dealt with; however, the actual date for the visit has yet to be discussed.

4. DPRK-Australia

Chosun Ilbo (Kim Seong-yong, "AUSTRALIA FORMALLY ANNOUNCES NK RELATIONS," Seoul, 05/09/00) reported that Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Alexander Downer announced on May 8 that the DPRK and Australia were resuming diplomatic relations. Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) officially announced that both countries would be naming non-resident ambassadors, with the DPRK's ambassador to Indonesia being accredited as its ambassador to Australia, and Australia's ambassador to the PRC also serving as that country's ambassador to the DPRK.

5. DPRK Participation in International Organizations

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Kwang-gi, "NORTH KOREA MAY JOIN THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK," Seoul, 05/07/00) reported that efforts are currently under way by the ROK to help the DPRK join the Asian Development Bank (ADB). If the DPRK decides to join the ADB, the DPRK might be accepted by the bank as early as next year. ROK Minister of Finance and Economy Lee Hun-jai formally asked the members of the ADB to support DPRK's efforts to join at the bank's meeting held in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Lee made the request in his keynote address on May 7 at the ADB's 33rd Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors. Lee said that the ROK will help the ADB in its efforts to increase the Asian Development Fund's (ADF) financial resources.

Joongang Ilbo (Hong Seung-il, "NORTH KOREA JOINS ICC," Seoul, 05/07/00) reported that the DPRK joined the 133 nation International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). According to the Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the DPRK sent a delegation to the 33rd convening of the ICC in Budapest, Hungary represented by the DPRK's Chamber of Commerce and Industry's vice-chair Lee Hak-kwon. It applied for their membership to the ICC last March and was eventually approved. Little is presently known about the DPRK's Chamber of Commerce and Industry, but the ROK intends to look into the organization and see how it can aid in future inter-Korean economic cooperation.

6. ROK Aid for DPRK

The Korea Herald (Shin Hye-son, "PYONGYANG ASKS SEOUL'S HELP TO BUILD HOSPITALS IN N. KOREA," Seoul, 05/07/00) reported on May 6 that the DPRK requested the ROK's assistance in setting up dental and pediatric hospitals near the Taedong River in Pyongyang. Its request was made through the Korea Pharmaceutical Traders Association (KPTA) when association authorities met with officials of the DPRK's Asia-Pacific Peace Committee on April 17 in Beijing. A member of the ROK association said, "at the meeting, North Korean officials expressed to our representatives their wish that the South would help establish dental and pediatric hospitals near the Taedong River in Pyongyang. As a pharmaceutical group, clearly the KPTA would not play a role in such a project, but we did promise to deliver the North's wish to South Korean authorities, who are expected to take the necessary steps through local hospital associations." The group plans to send about 270 million won (US$220,000) worth of medical goods to the DPRK, mostly basic-treatment medical supplies such as antibiotics and cold medicines. The group's representative said, "the North is soon expected to send our representatives an invitation to visit Pyongyang. Then we will make the second shipment of medical supplies from Inchon to North Korea's Nampo Port, possibly early next month." Analysts expect that if the project is realized, the establishment of hospitals in Pyongyang will expedite inter-Korean exchanges in the medical field.

7. DPRK Refugees in PRC

Chosun Ilbo (Kim Song-yong, "AMNESTY INT'L URGES CHINA TO HELP NK REFUGEES," Seoul, 05/06/00) reported that Amnesty International (AI) expressed concern on May 4 for the infringement of human rights by the PRC when it sends DPRK refugees back to the DPRK and urged for a campaign to save the refugees. AI appealed for the international community to send cables, faxes, telegrams and letters to PRC Premiere Zhu Rongji, DPRK Foreign Minister Paik Nam-soon, PRC's Jinlin Province Governor Fung Fu, DPRK Minister of Home Affairs Paik Hak-lim, and DPRK representative to the UN Kim Song-chul during a six week campaign commencing June 15. AI demanded that during this period the PRC government should not deport any DPRK refugees, and called on the DPRK to observe human rights. It asked the PRC to allow United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) members and third party observers access to detainment camps along the PRC border with the DPRK. AI also demanded that the DPRK release the whereabouts of refugees deported by the PRC on April 19 and their legal status. The organization was also concerned over reports that the PRC deported 5,000 refugees in March alone and that as many as 100,000 may have been killed by DPRK authorities over the past five years.

Joongang Ilbo (Lee Chul-hee, "REPATRIATED NORTH KOREAN DEFECTORS ARE SAFE," Seoul, 05/09/00) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao, currently visiting the ROK, said, "the seven North Korean defectors sent by China to North Korea in January have no fears for their safety. I have been personally assured of this and take full responsibility for this statement. It is not just speculation." Lee Nam-soo, spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, said that Zhu visited the DPRK from May 1 to 5 before coming to the ROK on May 7.

III. Australia

1. DPRK-Australian Normalization

The Australian (Robert Garran, "BRIDGE TO N KOREA IS REBUILT AFTER 25 YEARS", 5/11/00) reported that Australia on Monday resumed diplomatic ties with the DPRK, in a joint announcement

in Canberra and Pyongyang. The DPRK had suddenly suspended relations with Australia in 1975, probably in response to Australia's vote against the DPRK in the UN. The diplomatic relations remain cautious, with both countries opting for non-residential ambassadors--Australia will be represented by its ambassador to the PRC, David Irvine, and Pyongyang by its ambassador to Indonesia. Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said that the decision to resume ties "gives Australia a direct channel of communications with North Korea; it gives us greater opportunity to encourage North Korea to engage in regional dialogue and to address security concerns."

The Australian Financial Review (Geoffrey Barker, "DOWNER WARY ON N KOREA TIES" 5/09/00) reported that Alexander Downer said that Australia had held extensive discussions with the ROK, United States, Japan and the PRC on the resumption of relations with the DPRK, and all had been positive about the move. Conceding that Australia had no expectation of substantial change in the DPRK's domestic regime, Downer said that resumption of relations "would add impetus to the spirit of dialogue and compromise on the Korean peninsula", and that he hoped the DPRK would soon join the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum.

2. Commentaries on Normalization

The Australian ("RESOLUTION KEY TO START OF REVOLUTION", 5/09/00) reported that Australian Member of Parliament Kevin Rudd argued that Australia is right to normalize diplomatic relations and take part in the conditional engagement of the DPRK, as it bolsters the arguments of DPRK reformers for increased cooperation with the outside world. Rudd stated that these actions are in Australia's broad security and economic interests--preventing a meltdown on the Korean peninsula, and easing the ongoing humanitarian crisis within the DPRK.

The Australian carried a commentary by Greg Sheridan ("NORTH BASKS IN THE SUNSHINE", 5/09/00) which said that the DPRK has been trying to resume diplomatic relations with Australia since the Paul Keating prime ministership. Despite Australian willingness to resume relations and directly engage with the DPRK, the ROK had previously put a de facto veto on any such move. Sheridan argues that as one of Australia's most important regional partners, "no Australian government was ever going to take a positive step towards Pyongyang without the green light from Seoul. This green light has come about entirely because of Kim Dae-jung's sunshine policy."

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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