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CONTENTS

I. United States

1. ROK Anti-Americanism
2. PRC-US Military Talks
3. US-Cross Straits-Relations
4. US DPRK Diplomacy
5. UN DPRK Food Monitoring

II. Republic of Korea 1. ROK President met US Senators
2. DPRK's Trial Developing Nuclear
3. Kumgang Land Route Tourism Delayed
4. US-ROK Talks on SOFA
5. ROK-Russia Railway Linking

I. United States

1. ROK Anti-Americanism

The Agence France-Presse ("TOP BUSH ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL HOLDS TALKS ON IRAQ, NORTH KOREA," 12/10/02) reported that anti-Americanism was on the agenda here as US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage began the second leg of an Asian tour to drum up support for a possible US-led attack on Iraq. The DPRK's suspected nuclear weapons programme was also central to Armitage's round of talks with top South Korean officials. Armitage arrived in Seoul from Japan and was to begin high-level talks with a courtesy call on President Kim Dae-Jung. Later he was to meet with Defense Minister Lee Jun and then hold discussions with Foreign Minister Choi Sung-Hong. Some 40 demonstrators braved freezing temperature outside the US embassy in central Seoul to protest the Armitage visit. "The purpose of Deputy Secretary Armitage's visit is to discuss issues related to North Korea's nuclear weapons program and Iraq," a Foreign Ministry official said. "However, local anti-US sentiment will also be on agenda."

2. PRC-US Military Talks

The Associated Press (Matt Kelley, "TAIWAN QUESTION ELUDES U.S.-CHINA TALKS," Washington, 12/10/02), the New York Times (James Dao, "US AND CHINA RESUME HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY TALKS," Washington, 12/10/02), the Associated Press (Ted Anthony, "CHINA BLAMES TAIWAN 'INDEPENDENCE FORCES'," Beijing, 12/10/02) and the Agence France-Presse ("US, China meet for military talks," 12/10/02) reported that senior military officials from the US and the PRC have held their first talks since the debut of the Bush administration and a damaging 2001 diplomatic crisis over a downed US spy plane. Teams led by senior People's Liberation Army General Xiong Guangkai and US Under Secretary of Defense Douglas Feith met for a strategic dialogue, ranging over Taiwan, terrorism, non-proliferation and the DPRK nuclear crisis. "I don't want to claim progress ... the talks were professional, useful," Feith told reporters at the end of the one-day session at the Pentagon. The US used the talks to broaden its push for the PRC to step up pressure on the DPRK. "We agreed with the Chinese on the importance of non-nuclear Korean Peninsula," said Feith. "We asked China to use its influence and insight into the North Korean regime to help us encourage that regime to eliminate its nuclear weapons program, and to do it in a way that s visible," he said. The two sides also discussed their common approach to terrorism, launched in the wake of the September 11 attacks, which has seen US officials praise PRC for sharing intelligence on suspected terror groups. But the talks appeared to make little headway on frequent areas of contention between the US and PRC. "The areas of disagreement were of course headed by the issue of Taiwan, but also touched on China's military modernisation and its proliferation policy and how this affects the stability of Asia," Feith said.

3. US-Cross Straits-Relations

The Washington Post (John Pomfret, "CHINA SUGGESTS MISSILE BUILDUP LINKED TO ARMS SALES TO TAIWAN," Beijing, 12/10/02) reported that PRC President Jiang Zemin suggested during his meeting with President Bush in October that the PRC could link its deployment of short-range missiles facing Taiwan to US arms sales to the Taiwanese military, a senior PRC official said. The official recently described the offer as "sincere and well thought through." The proposal marked the first time the PRC has offered to link the missiles with arms sales and, the official said, "created new space for cooperation" between the US and the PRC. Bush administration officials, responding to a reporter's inquiries in Washington, seemed to have little interest in the PRC proposal, using words that suggested it was a non-starter as far as they were concerned. "We will fulfill our commitments under the Taiwan Relations Act," an administration official said. "We have made our position clear, that any issue between Taiwan and China should be resolved without resorting to force or coercion and instead through political dialogue." The official added that the PRC idea was "never formally proposed," either during Bush's meeting with Jiang at the president's ranch in Crawford, Tex., or in other meetings. "I don't think anyone would consider it an offer," he said.

4. US DPRK Diplomacy

Washington File ("ARMITAGE SAYS DIPLOMACY HAS TIME TO WORK WITH NORTH KOREA," Washington, 12/09/02) reported that there is time for diplomacy to do its work in the effort to denuclearize the DPRK, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said in Japan. In remarks to reporters December 9 in Tokyo, Armitage said: "I think the US stance toward North Korea is completely in line with our friends and allies in this region. We feel we have time for diplomacy to work. We've got a nation, North, surrounded by the Republic of Korea, Russia, China, Japan, and for that matter the United States; we're all united in our view that the peninsula has to be denuclearized. And that's a pretty good basis on which to move forward for a political solution -- a

diplomatic solution -- and that's where we're about now."

The Associated Press (Jae-Suk Yoo, "US SEEKS 'DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION' WITH NORTH KOREA, BUT PYONGYANG STICKS TO TOUGH STANCE," Seoul, 12/10/02) reported that US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said Tuesday that the US would seek a "diplomatic solution" to the DPRK's nuclear weapons program. But the DPRK the same day reiterated its rejection of a UN watchdog's appeal to abandon its nuclear program and to accept foreign inspections. Armitage, who arrived in Seoul Tuesday, discussed the DPRK with President Kim Dae-jung, Foreign Minister Choi Sung-hong and Defense Minister Lee Jun. "In my meetings today, we reaffirmed our common interest in finding a diplomatic solution to North Korea's destabilizing pursuit of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction," Armitage said in a written statement. The DPRK and its allies are trying to pressure the North to give up its nuclear ambitions. Earlier Tuesday, North Korea's state-run news agency, KCNA, said the communist state rejects as "unilateral and biased" the International Atomic Energy Agency's resolution urging the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons program and open its facilities to outside inspectors.

5. UN DPRK Food Monitoring

The Associated Press (Hans Greimel, "ACTIVIST CALLS FOR UN FOOD AID MONITORING OF NORTH KOREA," Tokyo, 12/10/02) reported that the United Nations must push for humanitarian and food aid monitoring in the DPRK just as it has for weapons inspections in Iraq because the DPRK deliberately misuses the international donations, an activist urged Tuesday. German doctor Norbert Vollertsen said the DPRK diverts the food aid to military elite in the capital of Pyongyang or sells it in diplomatic stores for hard currency instead of delivering it to the impoverished people in the countryside. Vollertsen, speaking before Japanese Parliament's lower house Security Committee, volunteered his medical services to DPRK in 1999 and won a friendship medal from the government along with the privilege to visit areas off-limits to most outsiders. He was later expelled after criticizing the DPRK's government policies. He urged Japan, as one of the DPRK's biggest food aid donors, to pressure the United Nations to adopt a food monitoring program in the DPRK, and compared it to the body's resolution for weapons inspectors in Iraq. "Japan as a main contributor of food aid can emphasize at UN that there is a right for food inspectors like weapon inspectors in Iraq and go into this country accompanied by diplomats, human aid workers and journalists," Vollertsen said.

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK President met US Senators

Joonang Ilbo (Kim Young-sae, "US-KOREA RELATIONS SHOULD SURVIVE PROTEST, KIM ASSURES 2 SENATORS," Seoul, 12/10/02) reported that president Kim Dae-jung met with visiting US senators Monday and said the national uproar following the deaths of two schoolgirls during a US military training exercise should not compromise the spirit of the two countries' relationship. Kim asked Senator Daniel Inouye, Democrat of Hawaii, and Senator Ted Stevens, Republican of Alaska, for the cooperation of the US Congress in ensuring that the problem is resolved to the benefit of the two countries. The Blue House spokeswoman, Park Sun-sook, said the president mentioned better workings of the Status of Forces Agreement and prevention of accidents during US military practices. She said ROK officials, including the president, had noted that the outpouring of public anger is fueled largely by the apparent lack of anyone being held responsible for the deaths. Expressing the regret of the US Congress, Inouye recalled the long history and depth of the alliance

between the two countries. He also said conflicts between the two Koreas must be prevented and expressed support for continued cooperation and reconciliation between them. US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage arrives in Seoul Tuesday for talks with the president and Foreign Minister Choi Sung-hong.

2. DPRK's Trial Developing Nuclear

Joongang Ilbo ("NORTH SAID TO SOLICIT NUCLEAR-FUEL CHEMICAL," Washington, 12/10/02) reported that DPRK is seeking to buy from PRC companies a chemical that can be used in the process of producing nuclear weapons fuel, the Washington Times reported Monday, quoting unnamed intelligence sources. DPRK reportedly tried to buy tributyl phosphate, or TBP, from several PRC firms. The chemical has commercial uses, but the US intelligence community believes that DPRK wanted it to advance its uranium-based nuclear weapons program. A CIA spokesman declined to comment. Leonard Spector, deputy director of the Center for Nonproliferation Studies in California, told the newspaper, "North Korea is getting ready to exploit the demise of the Agreed Framework." The 1994 agreement was to have halted DPRK's nuclear programs, but it has admitted to continuing them.

3. Kumgang Land Route Tourism Delayed

Chosun Ilbo (Kim In-ku, "NK WANTS US$10 MILLION FOR KUMGANG LAND ROUTE," Seoul, 12/10/02) reported that the opening of the Mount Kumkang land route tourism program via a temporary east coast highway, which was expected to take place from December 17, was postponed until after the 16th presidential election on December 19. ROK government official said Monday although the Hyundai Asan survey team will be going to DPRK this week, the date of the land route tour had not been agreed on. The tour was originally set to start December 11 and the official said the reasons for this delay were DPRK's request for tour fees of US$10 million, which have not been paid for at the present and complications with military approval on tourist passage through the DMZ.

4. US-ROK Talks on SOFA

Chosun Ilbo (Kim Min-bai, "2+2 MEETING TO ADDRESS SOFA," Seoul, 12/10/02) reported that ROK government decided to press ahead with the issue of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) improvements at a "2+2 meeting" on December 11, which is to be attended by the Korean vice ministers of foreign affairs and trade, and national defense, and the US consul and the 8th Army commander. The government also plans to bring up the issue to the SOFA Korea-US Joint Committee criminal affairs sub-committee meeting on December 12. A comprehensive conference is also to be held during the December 10 visit of US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage on the subject of the clandestine North Korean nuclear project and the subject of the two states' cooperation in case of an Iraqi attack. ROK Government officials also plan to talk to Deputy Secretary Armitage on easing Korean anti-Americanism. In relation to this the central government held a working level "SOFA improvement measures" meeting with related bureau directors.

5. ROK-Russia Railway Linking

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA AND RUSSIA DISCUSS RAILWAY LINKS," Seoul, 12/10/02) reported that officials from ROK and Russia opened a two-day meeting in Seoul, Monday, to discuss the idea of connecting an inter-Korean rail link with the Trans-Siberian Railway. The Ministry of Construction

and Transportation said key topics of concern include establishing a Russian railway representative office in ROK as well as activating the use of Russia's Trans-Siberian Railway. The Ministry adds the second ROK-Russia Transportation Cooperation Committee meeting will also serve to discuss the possibility of sharing information on DPRK's railway conditions.

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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