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I. **United States**

1. **Alleged DPRK Kidnappings of Japanese**

Agence France Presse ("NORTH KOREA RE-STARTS INQUIRY INTO 'KIDNAPPED' JAPANESE," Tokyo, 3/10/00) reported that the DPRK announced on Friday that it had re-launched investigations into missing Japanese citizens, believed to have been kidnapped by DPRK agents. However, the DPRK suggested that Japan also check whether the missing citizens had been kidnapped by criminals in Japan. Japan suspects that DPRK agents kidnapped about 10 of its citizens in the 1960s,

1970s and early 1980s to help train its spies in Japanese customs, language and geography. DPRK officials agreed to re-launch the search at a Red Cross meeting with Japan in Beijing in December 1999. A report by the DPRK's Korean Central News Agency said, "under the agreement, the central committee of the DPRK Red Cross Society sent to its affiliated provincial, city and county branches a notice on the re-start of the investigation into the 'missing persons' proposed by the Japanese side. The competent relevant organs kicked off the investigation as a matter of routine. The investigation will be made in our own way."

2. DPRK Military

The Los Angeles Times (Jim Mann, "N. KOREA'S ABILITY TO SUSTAIN MILITARY SURPRISES THE U.S.," Washington, 03/10/00, 1) reported that US officials said that the DPRK has in recent months carried out extensive military exercises. Admiral Dennis Cutler Blair, the commander in chief of US forces in the Pacific, told the US Senate this week, "the North Korea armed forces have just finished the heaviest winter training cycle that we have seen in recent years." Blair added that the DPRK "seem to have stabilized economically at what we would consider an impossibly low level of production and consumption. They continue to divert a disproportionate part of their small national wealth to military programs and are able to wring a formidable military capability out of a busted economy because that's in the interest of the ruling family there, and they maintain it by authoritarian means." However, when asked whether the DPRK could continue amid its economic difficulties, Blair replied, "Not forever." Peter Brookes, a Republican staff member for the House International Relations Committee, stated, "We've been resuscitating a dying patient. All of the aid we provide to North Korea is completely fungible. They must have gotten the fuel from somewhere, or the money for fuel from somewhere, to conduct these exercises." He argued that even if the DPRK uses the food it gets from other countries to feed ordinary citizens, that food frees up money and resources for the military that might otherwise be used to combat famine. The article quoted former US State Department official Joel Wit as saying in a recent Nautilus Policy Forum Online that the US President Bill Clinton administration's DPRK policy has been "a good deal for the United States" because it stopped the DPRK's nuclear program. [Ed. note: See "[Clinton and North Korea: Past, Present and Future](#)."] Richard L. Armitage, a former US Defense Department official and now an advisor to US presidential candidate Governor George W. Bush, argued, "I think the governor [Bush] would feel much better about the current situation if the administration would turn immediately to the conventional threat and devote as much energy to bringing down the conventional threat to the Republic of Korea as they did to the missile question." [Ed. note: This article was one of the Top Stories in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 10, 2000.]

3. DPRK Defectors

Associated Press ("15 N. KOREANS DEFECT TO THE SOUTH," Seoul, 3/10/00) reported that the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said that fifteen DPRK Nationals arrived in the ROK on Friday. A ministry statement said that among them were four members of one family and five members of another, as well as individuals who left the DPRK separately between 1996 and last year. They arrived in ROK from a "third country."

4. ROK Fighter Purchases

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Philip Dine, "S. KOREA WILL LOOK AT F-15 AS IT CONSIDERS NEW PLANES," Washington, 03/09/00) reported that ROK military officials said Wednesday that the ROK plans a major purchase of jet fighters by next year. The ROK will evaluate four planes, including the

F-15 Eagle made by Boeing, over the next few months. Lockheed Martin Corporation is also competing for the ROK fighter contract. Richard Aboulafia, aerospace analyst for the Teal Group Inc. in Virginia, stated, "Korea is the battle cry. The stakes are huge, a potential US\$6 billion to US\$8 billion fighter buy from the Koreans, with 40 to 80 planes." He added, "We're getting into the realm of F-15 line survivability. Every day (a decision) is pushed back is worse for Boeing. Lockheed Martin, not surprisingly, wants to push it back." Lockheed spokeswoman Kathryn Hayden stated, "I think anywhere in the world now competitions are very intense, as orders have decreased. We have a long history in South Korea and feel very strongly that we would like to continue that relationship." ROK Air Force Colonel Choon Kang stated, "The Korean Air Force is going to purchase planes next year. We will evaluate sometime this year which aircraft will be good for the future." He added that the ROK is also considering the Eurofighter and French and Russian planes. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 10, 1999.]

5. Cross-Straits Relations

Agence France Presse ("COHEN URGES CHINA, TAIWAN COOL THE WAR OF WORDS," Hong Kong, 3/10/00) reported that US Defense Secretary William Cohen said Friday that there is little chance that the escalating rhetoric between the PRC and Taiwan would lead to a military confrontation. Cohen told reporters in Hong Kong, the first stop of a four-country Asian tour, "all the evidence is that the prospect that this escalates into a military confrontation is not likely." He urged the PRC and Taiwan to lower the rhetoric and work peacefully to settle their differences on the status of the Taiwan. Cohen stated, "we expect China to pursue its relationship and these negotiations with Taiwan in a peaceful fashion. As far as firing words as opposed to taking action, that's certainly a change from what they've done in the past. But we want to make sure they continue to work the peaceful way."

6. US Military Role in Pacific

The International Herald Tribune (Michael Richardson, "U.S. TO TRIM PACIFIC ROLE," Singapore, 03/10/00) reported that the US is encouraging local armed forces to work more closely together and take the lead in any regional crisis that does not require large-scale US intervention. US officials and analysts said that the goal is to strengthen security cooperation in the region while reducing US commitments to send troops into conflicts. Admiral Dennis Blair, commander in chief of US forces in the region, pointed to the Australian-led peacekeeping coalition in East Timor, saying, "Previously, the U.S. has followed two modes of involvement in international peacekeeping operations - either being large and in charge or standing aside. East Timor demonstrated the value of having the U.S. in a supporting role to a competent ally, providing unique and significant capabilities needed to ensure success without stretching the capability of U.S. forces and resources to conduct other operations worldwide." He added, "We are working closely with our security partners to merge bilateral exercises into regional exercises using updated scenarios that develop the skills we expect our combined forces will need." Philippines Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado stated, "What we are foreseeing would be a situation where we would have not only bilateral but possibly multilateral exercises with other countries with which the United States has military cooperation ties." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 10, 2000.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK Policy towards DPRK

The Korea Herald (Chon Shi-yong, "SEOUL TO ELEVATE ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH PYONGYANG TO GOVERNMENT LEVEL," Berlin, 03/10/00), Joongang Ilbo ("PRESIDENT KIM SUGGESTS EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ENVOYS WITH NORTH," Seoul, 03/09/00), Joongang Ilbo ("PRESIDENT KIM TO MAKE ANNOUNCEMENT ON N-S ECONOMIC RELATIONS IN BERLIN SPEECH," Seoul, 03/09/00), Chosun Ilbo ("KIM OFFERS ECONOMIC HELP TO PYONGYANG," Seoul, 03/09/00), and The Korea Times (Lee Chang-sup, "KIM CALLS FOR EXCHANGE OF S-N SPECIAL ENVOYS," Seoul, 03/09/00), and The Korea Times (Lee Soo-jeong, "KIM SEEKS INT'L SUPPORT FOR BERLIN DECLARATION," Seoul, 03/09/00) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung announced on March 8 that the ROK is willing to engage in economic cooperation with the DPRK on a government level. Kim said in a speech at the Free University of Berlin, "the government of the Republic of Korea is ready to help North Korea overcome its economic difficulties." Kim also urged the DPRK to accept the ROK's proposal to resume government-level talks and agree to the exchange of special envoys to discuss the 1991 inter-Korean basic agreement. Kim's aides said that the president's address, which they dubbed the "Berlin Declaration," represents a shift in the ROK's policy. The government had previously confined economic cooperation to the private sector under the "principle of separating politics and the economy." [Ed. note: The Korean Herald article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 10, 2000.]

2. DPRK-US Talks

Joongang Ilbo (Lee Chul-hee, "N.K.-U.S. TALKS AIMED AT REMOVING NORTH KOREA FROM LIST OF 'TERRORIST STATES'," Seoul, 03/09/00) reported that the US and the DPRK are currently carrying out talks with the aim of removing the DPRK from the list of state sponsors of terrorism in addition to the preliminary talks for the DPRK-US ranking government official meeting to be held from March 7 in New York. In order to escape from the list of terrorism states, the DPRK would be required to declare never to support terrorist activity. The US congress must also confirm that the DPRK did not support terrorist activities over the last 6 months, while the DPRK must join the anti-terrorism agreement and admit and apologize for its past terrorist activities.

3. DPRK-Canada Talks

Joongang Ilbo (Shin Joong-don, "NORTH KOREA DELEGATES SECRETLY VISIT CANADA," Seoul, 03/09/00) and Chosun Ilbo (Park Doo-shik, "CANADA STARTS OFFICIAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH NK," Washington DC," 03/09/00) reported that a delegation from the DPRK secretly visited Canada this week. A spokesperson for the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced on March 8 that five delegates from the bureau of DPRK Foreign Affairs (responsible for Central and Latin America plus Canada) headed by Ryang Tae-shik, paid a visit to Ottawa and returned to the DPRK on March 7. The spokesman said that the visit was planned after University of British Columbia professor and university representative Brian Job and Korea Section diplomat Linda Watson and four others visited the DPRK last December. Since the two countries have no official diplomatic ties, the meetings were considered unofficial. The delegates from the DPRK toured various industrial sites and the Canadian House of Parliament during their visit.

4. DPRK-Japan Talks

Joongang Ilbo ("CHUNG TAE-WHA HEADS NORTH'S DELEGATION AT TALKS WITH JAPAN," Seoul, 03/09/00) reported that the Tokyo Shimbun reported on March 9 that Chung Tae-wa, a former ROK

deputy minister of Foreign Affairs, will lead the DPRK's negotiating team at the upcoming rapprochement talks with Japan. Chung, aged between 69 and 70, was ambassador to Madagascar before taking up the ministry post.

5. Inter-Korean Soccer Game

Joongang Ilbo (Chang se-jung, "SOUTH AND NORTH KOREA TO HOLD FRIENDLY SOCCER GAME IN THE WORLD CUP MAIN STADIUM," Seoul, 03/09/00) reported that the 2002 World Cup Main Stadium (WCMS) in Sangam-dong, Seoul will be completed by the beginning of September 2001, three months earlier than scheduled. Upon completion, a friendly game between the ROK and the DPRK is scheduled.

III. Japan

1. DPRK's Suspected Abduction of Japanese

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("RODONG SHINMUN CRITICIZES JAPAN FOR ABDUCTION ISSUE," 03/10/2000) reported that Rodong Shinmun, the DPRK Workers' Party's official paper, criticized the Japanese government on March 9 for its handling of the DPRK's investigation into an abduction of a Japanese female in Niigata Prefecture. The report said, "the Japanese government cannot solve many abduction incidents in Japan. The Japanese government is making up 'abduction' (by the DPRK) as a scapegoat. The Japanese government should not take up the abduction issue any more."

2. Japanese Aid to DPRK

The Daily Yomiuri ("GOVET ANNOUNCES RICE AID SHIPMENT TO N. KOREA," 03/08/2000) reported that the Japanese government announced on March 7 its plan to send a 100,000 tons of rice as aid to the DPRK. According to the Japanese government, both Japan and the DPRK have agreed to resume normalization talks in the DPRK in early April. The government also briefed the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) on the aid shipment at the LDP's joint meeting on party diplomatic relations at the party's headquarters. The LDP participants and the LDP's General Council approved the shipment. According to government officials, the shipment will mainly come from government stockpiles. The officials also said that the World Food Program (WFP) would use funds allocated by the government to buy the rice, which would cost 16-17 billion yen. The rice is expected to be shipped from a port in Tomakomai, Hokkaido. The rice will arrive in the DPRK in April. Japan provided 500,000 tons of rice to the DPRK in 1995, food and medicine worth US\$6 million in 1996, and 6.7 tons of rice worth US\$27 million in 1997 through the WFP. Ichita Yamamoto, the state secretary for foreign affairs, said that the 100,000 tons of rice would be transported to the DPRK through the WFP as a humanitarian gesture. The report quoted Yamamoto as saying, "The first round of normalization of diplomatic relations talks will be held in Pyongyang in April, the second round will be held in Tokyo, and the third will be either in Beijing or a third country."

The Daily Yomiuri ("PUBLIC UNCONVINCED ON N. KOREA RICE AID," 03/09/2000) reported that the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and Jiyuto have voiced discontent over the lack of concrete measures that could be used to uncover the truth about the alleged abductions of Japanese citizens by the DPRK. Ichita Yamamoto, the state secretary for foreign affairs, said at an LDP meeting that the 100,000 tons of rice aid was strategically necessary to make progress on the alleged kidnappings. After the meeting, Yasuhisa Shiozaki, a House of Councilors member, said he wanted to know whether the government had other plans if the aid did not bring the DPRK to talks. Yoshizaki

also expressed concern over the nation's legal system that allowed the DPRK spy ships to escape after being sighted in Japanese waters. The vote on the rice aid was 15 against and two for, with six leaving the matter in the hands of the chairperson of the meeting. The government plans to increase rice aid if progress is made over the kidnapping issue. Former Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, who visited Pyongyang in December to pave the way for the resumption of talks, said that DPRK government officials openly told him the DPRK was suffering from an acute shortage of food. Murayama added that humanitarian action was needed to send rice to the DPRK, and that he was hopeful that the aid would help bring about bilateral talks. At an LDP meeting on March 7, Kunihiro Makita, chief of the Foreign Ministry's Asian Affairs Bureau, said that during unofficial Japanese-DPRK talks, the DPRK had shown sincerity in wanting to solve the abduction issue and had reported the results of its own investigations to Japan.

3. ROK Policy toward DPRK

The Yomiuri Shimbun (Norihide Miyoshi "ROK EXPRESSES SUPPORT FOR DPRK'S AGRICULTURAL REFORM," Berlin, 03/10/2000) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung gave a speech at Freedom University in Berlin on March 9 called the "Lessons from German Unification and the Urgent Problems on the Korean Peninsula." Kim proposed a "Berlin Declaration" in which he expressed his support for the DPRK's agricultural reform. Kim said, "the ROK government is ready to help the DPRK overcome its economic difficulties." The report said that Kim expressed his support for the DPRK's agricultural reform because the ROK was aiming to find a way to resume ROK- DPRK intergovernmental talks after the Japanese and the US government had some form of normalization plans with the DPRK already in place.

4. Japanese View of TMD

The Sankei Shimbun ("NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DEFENSE STUDIES ARGUES FOR TMD AGAINST PRC," 03/09/2000) reported that the National Institute of Defense Studies, the Japanese Defense Agency's research institute, published its "East Asia Strategic Overview 2000" on March 8. In the report, the institute argued that although the PRC has been opposed to the theater missile defense initiative, the system is purely defensive and it is hard to believe that the system would destabilize Japan's relationship with neighboring countries. The report also said, "the PRC is strengthening its ballistic missiles and there still remain suspicions about the PRC's export of missiles. It is hard for Japan, which has no ballistic missile, to accept opposition to research on TMD from such a country (as the PRC, which has ballistic missiles)." Regarding the DPRK's missile development, the report said, "although the DPRK temporarily froze its missile launch, there is no sign that the DPRK would restrain from its missile development and deployment. It is hard to believe that the DPRK would abandon its missile card or nuclear card until the Kim Jong-il regime becomes confident about its survival."

5. Japanese-US Arms Control Talks

The Daily Yomiuri ("JAPAN, US MEET TO DISCUSS ARMS," 03/09/2000) reported that according to the Japanese Foreign Ministry, Japan and the US on March 8 set up a joint committee on arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation, which held its first meeting the same day. Norio Hattori, director general for arms control and scientific affairs at the ministry, led the Japanese delegation, and John Holum, senior adviser for Arms Control and International Security at the US State Department, headed the US side. The committee will hold a meeting twice a year to discuss a wide range of issues regarding disarmament. At the first meeting, the two sides agreed on technical

cooperation to establish a system to inspect nuclear experiments and on early implementation of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). They also agreed to cooperate on strengthening the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty at the UN meeting in April when the treaty is to be reviewed.

6. Japanese-US Host-Nation Support

The Daily Yomiuri ("US MAKES DEMANDS FOR 'SYMPATHY BUDGET'," 03/07/2000) reported that the US government has been intensifying its demands in negotiations with the Japanese government for maintaining the current level of budgetary support for US forces stationed in Japan, called host-nation support (HNS). The Japanese call HNS "the sympathy budget." The report said that the US government's insistence on maintaining HNS at current levels was seen when James Foley, US Ambassador to Japan, met directly with each political party to put forward the US position. Foley and other officials began their meetings with Japanese political parties by talking with New Komeito. During the meeting, Foley insisted that HNS was not a sympathy budget but a strategic contribution essential to maintaining the Japan-US alliance and the stability of the Asia-Pacific region. Foley also pointed out that Japan bears 59 percent of the costs of US forces stationed in Japan, but more than 40 percent of that is used for renting the land and implementing countermeasures for the safety of US bases. Foley said that although the operating costs for personnel and other expenses to maintain the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk reach hundreds of million of yen per day, these costs are not included in HNS. However, Masao Akamatsu, chairman of the New Komeito's diplomacy and security committee, emphasized the need to reduce HNS. Akamatsu said, "currently, we do not have guidelines. Expenditures (from the sympathy budget) are used even for leisure facilities on the bases. Now is a chance to review how we should share the costs." The report said that one factor behind the US intensifying its demand for HNS is anxiety that the US public will oppose Japan's reduction, adversely affecting the Japan-US security alliance. Another factor seemed to be that the US government was calculating that it will be easier to get Japan to compromise if negotiations are held in connection with the summit of the Group of Eight major in July.

The Asahi Shimbun ("AMBASSADOR YANAI SAYS HE RECOGNIZES IMPORTANCE OF SYMPATHY BUDGET," 03/10/2000) reported that Shunji Yanai, Japanese Ambassador to the US, expressed annoyance on March 9 over the intensifying US demand for Japan's maintenance of the current level of the "sympathy budget." Yanai said, "as far as the Japanese government is concerned, it is needless to remind the government of how important (the sympathy budget) is. There are many people who recognize the strategic importance of the budget, but as long as the budget is made by Japanese taxpayers' money, we should be able to explain to them sufficiently. (In addition,) no one is saying that the budget should be completely terminated. Some reduction of the budget (should not be taken to mean) such an extreme view."

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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