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I. United States

1. US Policy toward DPRK

The New York Times (Don Kirk, "U.S. INFORMS SOUTH KOREA OF PLANS TO RESUME TALKS WITH NORTH," Seoul, 5/10/01), the Associated Press (Christopher Torchia, "U.S. OFFICIALS ARRIVE IN S. KOREA," Seoul, 5/10/01), and Reuters (Bill Tarrant, "WOOS S.KOREA ON MISSILE SHIELD WITH 'SUNSHINE'," Seoul, 5/10/01) reported that US Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage said that he expected that the US and DPRK could have talks "in the near future," after the US had completed a review of policy on DPRK "in a few weeks." Armitage met with ROK President Kim Dae-jung on May 9 and ROK Unification Minister Lim Dong-won on Thursday. Armitage told Lim before their meeting that the DPRK's willingness to sell missile technology to any nation that wants it shows how desperate the country is for funds. ROK officials were relieved that the US review of its policy toward the DPRK was drawing to an end, and thanked Armitage for explaining US plans for a missile defense system. ROK Unification Ministry director of policy, Lee Bong-jo, said, "These talks were important because we received confirmation that U.S. talks with North Korea would resume and Washington has shown strong support for South Korea's Sunshine Policy. This confirmation itself is a message to North Korea. We'll have to wait for North Korea's response." Wrapping up his two-day stay in Seoul, Armitage left for India later Thursday. [Ed. note: The New York Times article

was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 10, 2001.]

2. Kim Jong-il's PRC Trip

Agence France Presse ("NORTH KOREAN LEADER CANCELS CHINA VISIT AFTER SON'S FIASCO," Seoul, 5/10/01) reported that the ROK's JoongAng Ilbo published an unconfirmed report Thursday that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has canceled a secret visit to the PRC because of the incident allegedly involving his son who was deported from Japan to the PRC last week. The article quoted an unnamed government source as saying that Kim had been scheduled to visit the southern town of Shenzhen, along with his eldest son Kim Jong-nam, for one week from May 7, but cancelled it at the last minute. Reports in January said that Kim had also planned to visit Shenzhen during his secret visit to Shanghai, but the trip was dropped from the program as there was so much to see in Shanghai.

3. PRC View of US Missile Defense

Reuters (Paul Eckert, "CHINA SAYS READY FOR MISSILE TALKS WITH U.S. ENVOY," Beijing, 5/10/01) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Sun Yuxi said on Thursday that the PRC remains "firmly opposed" to President Bush's plans to develop a missile defense system but is ready to discuss the issue with a US mission led by Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly on May 14 and 15. Sun said, "If the U.S. side is willing to send an envoy here, we are willing to have consultations." Kelly, making his first visit to the PRC since he took on his new job, is also expected to talk about other aspects of the relationship between the US and the PRC.

4. US Spy Plane

The New York Times (Mark Landler, "CHINA SAID TO FEAR REACTION IF PLANE IS RELEASED," Hong Kong, 5/10/01) reported that PRC Deputy Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing sought on Thursday to explain the PRC decision not to allow the US to fly home its damaged surveillance plane stranded on Hainan island. Li said that such a move would arouse "strong indignation and opposition in the Chinese population." He added, "If we allow such a military plane, which had a mission of spying on China, to be flown back out of China, that will further hurt the dignity and sentiments of the Chinese people." Li said that the PRC government was open to alternatives for removing the plane such as putting it on a ship. He said that he hoped that the US would take a "diplomatic and reasonable" attitude in the negotiations, which are continuing. Li added that the PRC was surprised that the US had resumed surveillance flights off the PRC coast, but he did not say that the resumption would hamper the talks on returning the plane. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 10, 2001.]

5. Cross-Straits Military Balance

Reuters (Alice Hung, "TAIWAN URGES CHINA TO DROP INVASION THREAT," Hsinchu, 5/10/01) reported that Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian commissioned a batch of French-made Mirage fighter jets on Thursday but ruled out an arms race with the PRC and urged it to renounce its threat of invasion. Chen said at a ceremony at an air force base in northern Hsinchu, home to the island's advanced Mirage 2000-5s, "Without a strong combat capability, there can be no national security. Without a strong combat capability, there can be no dignity of existence and bargaining chips. We have no intention of engaging Communist China in an arms race. I sincerely urge Communist China to abandon threats to use force and replace confrontation with dialogue." He also warned that PRC military modernization would pose a serious threat to the island by 2005. He said, "Facing

Communist China's arms build-up, we need to pay attention and raise our alertness. We should be prepared to fight in case misjudgment of the cross-strait situation leads to an attack by Communist China." Taiwan's Mirage pilots said they were under orders not to provoke their PRC counterparts. Mirage fighter wing leader Lee Hai-peng said, "It's our policy not to provoke the other side. As a soldier, it's our duty to protect the country, but nobody wants a war. We will not be the first to attack."

6. US Troops on Okinawa

Reuters ("OKINAWAN SEEKS TO CUT U.S. TROOPS," Tokyo, 5/10/01) reported that a local Japanese official said Thursday that Keiichi Inamine, governor of Japan's Okinawa prefecture, will visit the US next week to ask for a reduction of its forces on the southern island. A spokesman at the Okinawa prefectural government said that Inamine will leave for the US on May 13 for a 14-day visit and is expected to meet with US Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage and military officials. The spokesman said, "He will of course talk about the reduction issue and crime prevention measures." Inamine's stance, however, does not reflect that of the central Japanese government, which appears willing and eager to assist the US in focusing its global security strategy on Asia, with Japan in the center. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 10, 2001.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK-US Talks

The Korea Herald (Hwang Jang-jin, "KIM URGES U.S. TO REOPEN TALKS WITH N. KOREA," Seoul, 05/10/01) and Chosun Ilbo (Kim Min-bai, "BUSH SUPPORTS KIM'S NK POLICY," Seoul, 05/09/01) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung on Wednesday called for an early resumption of talks between the US and the DPRK during a meeting with visiting senior US foreign policy officials, ROK officials said. Kim met with Richard Armitage, deputy US secretary of state, who arrived in Seoul earlier in the day to discuss DPRK policy and US President George W. Bush's new missile defense plan. ROK officials said that President Kim told Armitage that he wants the US to promptly wrap up its review of its DPRK policy and reopen dialogue with the DPRK as soon as possible. Kim welcomed US efforts to have consultations with its allies on the missile shield issue. In a letter to Kim delivered by Armitage, President George W. Bush said that he supported Kim's engagement policy toward the DPRK and would reflect his views to the maximum in establishing US policy to the DPRK following a review slated to be completed at the end of the month. The US officials briefed the ROK on progress in the US government's review of DPRK policy in a separate meeting with Foreign Minister Han Seung-soo. They were to meet Thursday with Unification Minister Lim Dong-won and Defense Minister Kim Dong-shin before holding a roundtable discussion with working-level ROK officials on the missile defense system, officials said.

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