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I. **United States**

1. **US DPRK Nuclear Talks Proposal**

Agence France-Presse ("US NEAR TO FINALIZING PROPOSAL FOR NUCLEAR TALKS: ROK OFFICIAL," 08/11/03) reported that the US is close to finalizing a proposal to be tabled at six-party talks aimed at resolving the crisis over North Korea's nuclear weapons drive, a senior ROK official said. Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo-Hyuck said before leaving for Washington that the US initiative would be reviewed at talks on Wednesday and Thursday with US and Japanese officials. "Washington has told us that its proposal has almost been put together," said Lee, who is to meet US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly and Mitoji Yabunaka, chief of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's Asian affairs bureau. Lee said the ROK would field its own proposal, which he said is "slightly different" from the US initiative. He said the six-nation meeting could start anytime from August 25 in Beijing. "From today, there will be additional discussions," on how to proceed with the six-party talks involving the US the ROK and DPRK, the PRC, Japan and Russia, he said. In Tokyo, PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said Beijing planned to host the six-way talks on the nuclear crisis for about three days in late August, according to a Japanese official.

2. US-Japan-ROK DPRK Talks Agence France-Presse ("US, JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA TO MEET WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY ON NORTH KOREA: US," 08/11/03) reported that senior officials from the US, Japan and the ROK will open two days of talks to refine their tactics ahead of six-way talks on the DPRK nuclear crisis, officials said. The talks will take place amid a flurry of diplomatic contacts between parties to the six-nation talks, also including the PRC, Russia and the DPRK itself. "We are planning to hold some informal trilateral consultations here in Washington with Japan and ROK, August 13-14," said State Department deputy spokesman Philip Reeker. The senior officials will discuss a common front for the six-nation talks, but will not meet under the formal umbrella of their so-called "Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group" (TCOG), which holds regular meetings on DPRK policy, he said. Earlier, in Seoul, Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo-Hyuck said the US was close to finalizing a proposal to be tabled at the six-party talks, and said the ROK would present a slightly different plan.

3. ROK Anti-US Activists

Agence France-Presse ("ROK ACTIVISTS DEMAND US TROOP PULL-OUT, POLICE BEEF UP SECURITY," 08/11/03) reported that ROK police beefed up security around US facilities as leftist students stepped up anti-US protests demanding the expulsion of US troops. Police imposed a temporary ban on anti-American protests near key US civilian, diplomatic and military facilities in the capital, deploying 1,920 policemen around the installations. The move came after dozens of protestors broke into a US live-fire training ground last week, burning American flags and climbing on top of an armored vehicle during the incident. The intrusion in Pocheon, some 50 kilometers northeast of Seoul, provoked strong protests from US officials. ROK police have arrested 12 students. On Monday, riot police formed a human barricade as about 600 students gathered for an anti-US rally near the main entrance to the command post of the 37,000 US military personnel in the ROK. The protestors carried banners accusing the US of heightening tension on the Korean peninsula and shouted slogans denouncing US-ROK joint military exercises scheduled to start on August 18. The rally coincided with a meeting between ROK Prime Minister Koh Kun and US military commander General Leon LaPorte on the surge in protests organized by the outlawed leftist campus group, Hanchongryon.

4. US-PRC on DPRK Asylum Seekers

Agence France-Presse ("US OFFICIAL TO PRESS CHINA ON N KOREAN REFUGEES, POPULATION CONTROL," 08/09/03) reported that a senior US official was heading to the PRC to press Beijing on

DPRK refugees and population control policies, on a trip that will also take him onto Vietnam. Assistant Secretary of State Arthur Dewey is heading to the PRC less than a month after US officials confided they were considering offering haven to thousands of DPRK refugees as a means of pressuring the Stalinist regime in Pyongyang. "Assistant Secretary Dewey will depart tonight for China and Vietnam," said Tara Rigler, a State Department spokeswoman. "While in China he will continue ongoing dialogue with PRC officials on China's birth planning policies. He also will discuss with PRC officials the situation of DPRKs in China." With Washington and Pyongyang locked in a nuclear weapons crisis, US officials have been considering the admission of refugees from the DPRK state directly to the US. Relief agencies estimate up to 300,000 DPRK refugees are currently living in the PRC, which refuses to grant them asylum. Beijing often sends them back to the DPRK where they are usually punished harshly, often with torture and forced labor at prison camps.

5. Japan on 'Going Nuclear'

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN'S PM VOWS NOT TO GO NUCLEAR AT A-BOMB ANNIVERSARY," 08/09/03) reported that Japan Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi denied Japan would go nuclear itself as the city of Nagasaki marked the 58th anniversary of its atomic-bomb devastation with worries over the Korean nuclear crisis. "Our country will never change the position," he told the main memorial service in Nagasaki, pointing to Japan's 35-year-old policy banning the production, possession and presence of nuclear weapons on its territory. "At the forefront of the international community, we will use all our might to work for the eradication of nuclear weapons," he said. But, at the same gathering, Koizumi was urged by Nagasaki mayor Itcho Ito to write the non-nuclear pledge into a law. In a so-called peace declaration, Ito cited concerns at home and abroad "over the possibility of Japan's remilitarization and nuclear armament." He added, "The government must uphold the principle of an exclusively defensive posture, and the three non-nuclear principles must be passed into law, thus demonstrating the sincerity of Japan's intentions."

6. Japan Hiroshima Anniversary

The Associated Press (Duncan Mansfield, "PROTESTERS MARK HIROSHIMA ANNIVERSARY," Oak Ridge, 08/10/03) reported that about 300 protesters marched on the Oak Ridge nuclear weapons plant Sunday, waving banners and carrying ashes to symbolize the victims of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. "It is fire and damnation. You are protecting a death camp," protester Erik Johnson, 59, shouted at two dozen security guards watching from the other side of a barricade at the entrance to the Y-12 facility. Johnson and four other protesters, ages 69 to 86, were arrested for blocking the roadway. About 50 veterans and plant supporters gathered for a counter-demonstration, with one shouting over a bullhorn: "You lose, we win, the plant is still open." The Y-12 plant made uranium for the "Little Boy" bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, on Aug. 6, 1945, near the end of World War II. The protest marked that anniversary and Y-12's continuing role in making parts for every nuclear warhead in the U.S. arsenal. "That bomb got me back to the US," said Ken Allred, 80, a counter-demonstrator who said he was serving in the Navy in the South Pacific when the bomb was dropped. "It saved a lot of lives." Also Sunday, about 1,000 people rallied outside the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, 35 miles east of San Francisco, to protest the Bush administration's move to develop new nuclear weapons. Three women were arrested after blocking an entrance to the nuclear weapons lab, but were later cited and released. Some protesters held signs that read "Hiroshima Never Again," and "Abolish Nuclear Weapons Now."

7. Russia on Inter-Korean Talks

Reuters ("RUSSIA TO HOST TALKS BETWEEN KOREAS," Moscow, 08/10/03) reported that Russia will host talks between the DPRK and the ROK this week in preparation for larger negotiations about the North's suspected nuclear weapons program, a Russian diplomat was quoted as saying Sunday. Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov said from Beijing that the talks in Moscow would begin Tuesday, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported. The report did not say which Korean officials would take part. A spokesman for the PRC Foreign Ministry said he was unaware of the plan. Losyukov was in the PRC to discuss the particulars of six-nation talks expected later this month in Beijing.

8. PRC on Yasukuni Shrine Visit

Reuters ("CHINA'S LI WARNS JAPAN LEADERS ON WAR SHRINE VISIT," 08/11/03) reported that the PRC's Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing gave Japan's leaders a strong warning Monday against visiting a controversial war shrine, saying they must learn from history in order to improve relations with other countries. Li, visiting Japan to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the signing of a peace treaty between the two former enemies, made the remark ahead of planned visits by several cabinet ministers to Tokyo's Yasukuni Shrine on August 15, the anniversary of Japan's surrender in World War II. At least three ministers in Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's cabinet, including the high-profile trade minister, have said they will visit the shrine, which is dedicated to Japan's war dead, including several convicted war criminals. "Japanese leaders should definitely not visit the shrine where A-class war criminals are also enshrined. It is a universally held view of the international community," Li told a news conference. "We must correctly recognize history, use it as a mirror for the development of our nations' relationship," he added. While Koizumi has avoided going to the Yasukuni on August 15, he has visited it every year since taking office in April 2001.

9. Japan on DPRK Kidnappings

Reuters ("JAPAN TO RAISE N. KOREA KIDNAPS AT SIX-WAY TALKS," Beijing, 08/11/03) reported that Japan plans to raise the abduction of its citizens by the DPRK at six-way talks to be held late this month in Beijing on the crisis over Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions, a Japanese official said Monday. But the official said the issue of the abductions, which took place decades ago but have dogged relations between Japan and the reclusive communist state, would be resolved bilaterally. "This is an important issue so this will be raised," the official quoted Japanese chief cabinet secretary Yasuo Fukuda as saying at the end of a three-day visit to Beijing. The DPRK has admitted kidnapping 13 Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 1980s to help train spies, saying eight of them subsequently died. It has apologized for the kidnappings and the survivors have returned to Japan, but the fate of the abductees' offspring has frayed bilateral ties.

10. PRC Domestic Politics

Agence France-Presse ("LEADING PRC COMMUNIST PARTY OFFICIAL EXPELLED FOR GRAFT," 08/10/03) reported that Cheng Weigao, 70, has been stripped of his party membership and is awaiting criminal charges, the leading People's Daily reported. Cheng served two terms on the party's elite Central Committee from 1987 to 1997, was the governor and top party official of northern Hebei province from 1991-1998, and was the head of the province's legislature from 1998 until early this year. "As an important leader of Hebei province, Cheng Weigao interfered in government affairs to seek benefit for his son Cheng Muyang and brought large economic losses to the state," the paper said. "He allowed his spouse and children to use his position of influence to engage in unregulated and illegal criminal activities." Cheng also took revenge on officials who tried to report his corrupt behavior and accepted "valuable gifts and bribes", the paper said. Li Zhen, once

the head of the provincial government office and vice provincial tax head, was sentenced to death for accepting illegal gifts and bribes to the tune of some 56 million yuan (6.76 million dollars). Wu Qingwu, former vice head of the provincial office, was sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve for accepting illegal gifts and bribes amounting to some 19 million yuan.

11. PRC Society

Agence France-Presse ("CRIME RATE DROPS IN CHINA'S CAPITAL," Beijing, 08/09/03) reported that the crime rate in the PRC capital, which boasts a population of some 12 million residents, fell in 2002 as a result of the "Strike Hard" anti-crime campaign, state press said. The number of premeditated murders in Beijing fell by 5.6 per cent compared to the previous year and thefts by 9.7 percent, according to figures released by city officials and cited in local media including the China News Agency. During the past year the capital dealt with more than 10,000 criminal cases and 14,412 people had been sentenced for various illegal activities. Officials did not say how many of these people had been given the death penalty. A city poll found that almost two-thirds of Beijingers felt that security in the capital was good. The 'Strike Hard' campaign was launched in 2001.

12. PRC on US Religious Rights Monitor Pullout

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA REGRETS US RELIGIOUS RIGHTS MONITOR'S TRIP PULLOUT," 08/11/03) reported that the PRC has expressed regret over the cancellation of a visit by the US government's religious rights monitor, which said it was protesting what it called "unacceptable" restrictions imposed by Beijing. The PRC's foreign ministry put the cancellation down to "technical reasons" and said it hoped the trip could be rescheduled. "China expresses regret and is willing to maintain contact with the committee on religious issues and other issues on the basis of equality and mutual respect," a foreign ministry spokesman told AFP. "In order to promote Sino-American religious exchanges China welcomes the visit by the committee at the proper time." The US Commission on International Religious Freedom pulled out of the trip at the last minute complaining of restrictions on its movements. The US Commission on International Religious Freedom ... is disappointed that a scheduled visit to China in early August 2003 could not proceed as planned due to unacceptable last-minute conditions imposed upon (its) visit by the PRC government," it said. The commission complained that two weeks ago PRC authorities had demanded that Hong Kong be dropped from the itinerary and that only days before the trip they had still not confirmed meetings with senior officials. "Nor did the commission receive assurances it would be able to visit prominent religious houses of worship and meet privately with religious leaders," it said in a statement from Washington. Negotiations for the trip had been underway since February and the commission said it had made clear that a visit to Hong Kong, which reverted to PRC rule in 1997, was "integral" to its tour.

II. People's Republic of China

1. Relations Across Taiwan Straits

China Daily ("'TAIWAN REPRESENTATION' CONDEMNED", UN, 08/09-10/03, P1) reported that the Chinese Government on August 7 strongly condemned an 11th attempt by a small number of countries to have the so-called issue of "Taiwan's representation in the UN" debated at the annual session of the UN General Assembly. PRC's new Ambassador to the UN Wang Guangya said in a letter he handed personally to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan that the purpose of raising the

issue is "to create 'two Chinas' or 'one China, one Taiwan' in this organization." Wang was responding to a request by Gambia and a few other countries to include the "question of the representation of the Republic of China (Taiwan) in the UN" on the agenda of this year's General Assembly session. The request was contained in a letter to Annan on August 5. To date, he said, more than 160 countries in the world have diplomatic relations with China and they all recognize the one-China principle, said the report.

2. DPRK Nuke Talks

China Daily (Meng Yan, "PREPARING GROUND FOR 6-PARTY NUKE TALKS", 08/09-10/03, P1) reported that PRC and the DPRK have held comprehensive and in-depth discussions on nuclear issues involving the DPRK and the forthcoming six-party nuclear talks in Beijing. Vice-Foreign Minister Wang Yi, who will wrap up his three-day visit to the DPRK on August 9, met DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister Kim Yong-il and DPRK First Vice-Foreign Minister Kang Sok-ju on Thursday and Friday respectively. PRC and the DPRK hope that the forthcoming six-party nuclear talks will strengthen prospects for a peaceful settlement of the nuclear issue through dialogue. The DPRK announced on August 4 that the six-party nuclear talks would be held in Beijing. The participants will include the DPRK, the US, PRC, the ROK, Japan and Russia. But the specific time and venue for the talks are still unknown. It is reported that diplomats from the US, Japan and ROK will meet in Washington on August 13 and 14 to co-ordinate policy on DPRK ahead of the talks.

China Daily ("DPRK STICKS TO TALKS BUT NO DIALOGUE WITH BOLTON", Seoul, 08/04/03, P1) reported that the DPRK said on August 3 it still was ready for six-way talks to resolve the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula, but it would have no dialogue with US envoy John Bolton after his sharp criticism of the country and its leader. The DPRK signaled its continued desire for talks in a report by the official KCNA news agency. "There is no change in our stand on holding the six-party talks including the bilateral talks between the DPRK and the United States for the peaceful settlement of the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula," KCNA quoted a foreign ministry spokesman as saying. The DPRK said on Saturday that any move by the US to bring the crisis to the UN Security Council would derail the planned talks and could lead to war. In a related development, a Japanese newspaper reported on August 3 that the US and Japan were considering forming a multinational nuclear inspection team to ensure the DPRK abandons its nuclear weapons programs completely. The multinational group of experts would inspect not only the Yongbyon nuclear complex but also undeclared plutonium and uranium-enrichment facilities as well as facilities built to make and test detonators for nuclear weapons, the paper said.

China Daily (Hu Xiao, "DPRK: BEIJING TALKS TO BE HELD SOON", 08/05/03, P1) reported that the DPRK announced on August 4 that six-party talks on the settlement of the nuclear issue would soon be held in Beijing. PRC, Japan, Russia and the ROK will also attend the talks. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said on August 4 PRC welcomes the DPRK's decision and supports the expansion of the "Beijing talks." Piao Jianyi, executive director of the Center for Korean Peninsula Issues Studies with the Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, said the coming talks would be just a beginning and the process of resolving differences over the nuclear issue could last for "two or three years."

3. PRC-Japan Relations

People's Daily ("CHINESE PRESIDENT MEETS JAPANESE GUESTS", Beijing, 08/10/03, P3) reported that Chinese president Hu Jintao on August 8 called on people with far-sightedness in PRC and Japan to work together to help push forward cooperation and exchange between the two

countries. Hu, also general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, met former Japanese Prime Ministers Ryutaro Hashimoto, Murayama Tomiichi, the incumbent Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda and representatives of a number of Japan-PRC friendship organizations, who are here to mark the 25th anniversary of the treaty of peace and friendship signed between PRC and Japan in 1978. Hu said that both PRC and Japan should, more than ever, value their hard-won friendship, and be more aware of the historical responsibilities and the noble mission to promote Sino-Japanese relations when they review the history and lessons. Hashimoto and other Japanese visitors said they were pleased to attend the activities to mark the anniversary, which were important for furthering the relations between Japan and PRC in the new century. The visitors said they were confident of a bright future for Japan-PRC relations with the efforts of both sides.

China Daily (Meng Yan, "POISONOUS CHEMICALS", 08/09-10/03, P1) reported that PRC on August 8 urged Japan to accept responsibility for the suffering inflicted on Chinese citizens because of poisonous chemicals left behind by the Japanese invaders during World War II. An accident in which people were injured by poisonous chemicals occurred on a construction site in Qiqihaer, in Northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, on August 4. According to Foreign Ministry sources, Chinese experts thought the poison was left behind by the Japanese invaders during their invasion of PRC. Fu Ying, director of the Department of Asian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on August 8 urgently requested the Japanese minister in Beijing to make serious representations to his government on this matter. Japan should accept its political, moral and legal obligations on this issue in accordance with political documents, including the PRC-Japan Joint Declaration and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, Fu said. The accident happened before the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Peace and Friendship, which is on August 12. Both PRC and Japan will hold a series of activities to celebrate the event, said the report.

4. PRC's Commentary on Japan's Defense White Paper

China Daily (Wu Yixue, "JAPAN HAS AN AXE TO GRIND", 08/07/03, P4) carried a commentary on the annual white paper released by Japan's Defense Agency on August 5, in which the Japanese Government stressed the importance of a missile defense system against alleged nuclear threats from the DPRK. The paper said that the DPRK's nuclear program remains one of Japan's biggest security concerns, therefore meaning there needs to be collaboration with the US on the research and deployment of a missile defense shield. Such an exaggerated statement flies in the face of the positive moves which have emerged regarding the regional security situation, said the report. Last week, the DPRK expressed a willingness to accept six-nation talks on its nuclear program, and at such a critical and sensitive moment, any provocative action or even rhetoric from any party may possibly reverse the initially promising process. In fact, the so-called "DPRK threat" is only an excuse for Japan to advance towards its long-pursued status of being a "normal country" and a military power, said the article. Japan's defense developments, no matter under what excuses, are sending a dangerous message about the country's military goals in the future, the article commented.

5. PRC's Commentary on DPRK Nuke Talks

China Daily (Wu Yixue, "CONCESSIONS NEEDED FROM DPRK TALKS", 08/05/03, P4) carried a commentary on the DPRK nuke issue, saying that the willing attitude of the DPRK for six-way talks on its nuclear program is undoubtedly encouraging. It is a huge concession made by Pyongyang from its previous firmly-held stance for direct bilateral talks with the US, said the article. It may be too early to declare that the cloud of war over the Korea Peninsula brought about by the nuclear

stand-off between Pyongyang and Washington can possibly be dispersed. What is certain, however, is that it is an important part of the international community's efforts to find a peaceful resolution to the situation. To mirror Pyongyang's moves, US President George W. Bush said on August 8 that the US would agree to hold a one-on-one dialogue with the DPRK during the multilateral talks. But there is not much to be too optimistic about regarding the talks themselves. Besides agreeing to return to the negotiating table, the DPRK and the US have not made many concessions on the key issues. A final peaceful settlement of the nuclear crisis needs more sincerity, concessions if necessary, and a problem-solving spirit from all parties concerned, the article commented.

6. DPRK-ROK Relations

People's Daily (Zhang Li, "DPRK HALTS TOUR FOR MOURNING", Seoul, 08/06/03, P3) reported that the DPRK called a temporary halt to tours from the ROK after the suicide of a leading figure in inter-Korean ties, as the ROK Government faced pressure to review business dealings with its northern neighbor. DPRK organizations said they would temporarily halt ferry tours from the ROK to its Mount Kumgang resort to honor the memory of Hyundai Asan Chairman Chung Mong-hun, who jumped to his death from his high-rise office building in Seoul on August 4. The ROK side has accepted the suggestion, said the report.

7. DPRK Criticizes US-ROK Drills

China Daily ("DPRK CRITICIZES US-ROK DRILLS", Seoul, 08/08/03, P1) reported that the DPRK said on August 7 annual joint war exercises between the US and ROK raised doubts as to whether Washington would soften its hostility toward DPRK ahead of key diplomatic talks. DPRK's Foreign Ministry spokesman made the comment just days after Washington and Pyongyang said they had agreed to hold crucial six-party talks to resolve a festering standoff over DPRK's nuclear ambitions. "The United States along with its warlike allies in South Korea (ROK) plan to conduct the Ulji Focus Lens joint military exercises from August 18 to 29," the spokesman said in a Korean-language statement issued by Pyongyang's official KCNA news agency.

8. SCO Joint Exercise

People's Daily (Du Xianzhou and Xu Zhuangzhi, "SCO LAUNCHES JOINT EXERCISE", Alma-Ata, 08/07/03, P3) reported that Chinese senior officers said on August 6 that the large-scale joint anti-terrorism exercise conducted by the member countries of the Shanghai Co-operation Organization (SCO) will improve their ability to co-ordinate their fight against terrorism and help guarantee regional security and stability. They made these remarks in Kazakhstan's border city of Ucharal where the joint manoeuvre started yesterday. Lieutenant General Li Qianyuan, head of the Chinese military delegation and Commander of the Lanzhou Military Command, said in an interview that the Chinese army will exchange anti-terror experience with troops of Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan, and that they will discuss ways to work together to fight international terrorism. The report said it is important for the SCO states to step up military co-operation, to further foster mutual trust among their armed forces, and to strengthen regional co-operation against terrorism. It is the first time for the People's Liberation Army of PRC to take part in such a large-scale joint anti-terror exercise, which represents one of the effective ways for member countries to carry out military exchanges and co-operation. The SCO was formed in June 2001 by PRC, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Following the success of a Sino-Kyrgyzstan joint anti-terror exercise held last year, the defense ministers from the five member countries of SCO signed, at the summit held in Moscow last May, a memorandum on conducting this joint anti-terror military

exercise, said the report.

9. Sino-Russian Ties

China Daily (Meng Yan, "LEGISLATURES LEAD SINO-RUSSIAN RELATIONSHIP", 08/06/03, P1) reported that Chinese President Hu Jintao on August 5 pledged that PRC will work with Russia to consolidate bilateral relations. PRC and Russia, as well as regional and world stability, will benefit if the two countries enhance political trust and expand co-operation, Hu said. The president made the remarks when meeting Sergei Mironov, chairman of the Federation Council of the Russian Federal Assembly. Hu said the two countries have established a mechanism for high-level exchanges and made major achievements in economic co-operation. Premier Wen Jiabao on August 5 also vowed in a separate meeting with Mironov to work closely with Russia to implement all co-operative agreements signed by the heads of the two countries. Hu said the legislative bodies of the two countries should strengthen exchanges and co-operation to develop bilateral ties. Mironov pledged to enhance links between the two parliaments within the framework of the SCO.

10. Russia Terrorism Attack

China Daily ("RESCUE WORK CALLED OFF", Vladikavkaz, 08/04/03, P1) reported that work teams abandoned rescue efforts at a military hospital near separatist Chechnya wrecked by a truck bomb that killed 50 people. The Emergency Ministry put at 50 the death toll from Friday's blast in the town of Mozdok, site of a big Russian military base. Authorities blame Chechen rebels but also accused local commanders of failing to protect a high-profile target, where many servicemen hurt in the conflict were sent for treatment. President Vladimir Putin vowed that the blast, one of several deadly attacks in recent months, would not derail his plan to end 10 years of Chechen insurgency, said the report.

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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