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I. United States

1. US-ROK SOFA Talks

The Associated Press (Robert Burns, "US, S. KOREA REACH 'UNDERSTANDING' ," Washington, 12/11/00) reported that a US administration official said on December 8 that US and ROK negotiators ended talks on December 7 with no announced result. However, they have reached a "mutual understanding" that US soldiers killed ROK civilian refugees in the early weeks of the Korean War, but they left unresolved how many died. The agreement did not address whether the US will compensate the survivors and families of the dead, issue an official apology, or build a memorial to the victims. The official said the US Army opposes compensating the families, but the decision is expected to rest with the president. US Defense Department officials said the inspector general of the US Army, Lieutenant General Michael Ackerman, is conducting a yearlong study, which is highly unlikely to be released before January. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 11, 2000.]

2. Inter-Korean Red Cross Talks

The Associated Press ("N.KOREA WANTS TO DELAY MEETING," Seoul, 12/11/00) reported that the ROK Unification Ministry said in a brief statement that the DPRK's Red Cross wants to postpone a scheduled meeting with its ROK counterparts until next year because of a busy slate of inter-Korean activities this month. The statement did not elaborate. Separately from the Red Cross meeting, the ROK and the DPRK plan to hold Cabinet-level talks this week to discuss ways to further improve ties. Officials are expected to discuss a visit to the ROK by the DPRK's ceremonial head of state, Kim Yong Nam, to lay the groundwork for a possible visit to Seoul in the spring by DPRK leader Kim Jong-il.

3. Security in the Asia-Pacific

The International Herald Tribune published a commentary by Admiral Dennis Blair, commander in chief of the US Pacific Command, ("ASIA-PACIFIC MILITARY COOPERATION IS A GOOD WORK IN PROGRESS," Honolulu, 12/8/00) which said that armed forces of countries in Asia and the Pacific are under increasing pressure to contribute to a broader set of security concerns, beyond the traditional military arena. Blair wrote that senior officers from eighteen Asia Pacific nations, meeting recently in Honolulu for the third annual Chiefs of Defense Conference, "found that collaboration offers some promise for satisfying the rising demands with available force structures." He continued, "Each nation organizes its defense in a similar way. The core concern is territorial defense and national integrity. Next is security and peaceful development nearby. Finally, each nation has a broader interest in regional security. These requirements are linked. One nation's internal security problems spill over into nearby areas." Blair also said that the senior officers presented "efforts by their nations to improve dialogue and build confidence, to develop standard procedures and to increase the ability of their forces to operate with other nations." He added that none of the initiatives to increase multilateral capabilities weakens bilateral military relations. Blair also said he discussed US initiatives to enhance dialogue, develop standard procedures and train teams of officers to staff multinational forces under UN mandates. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 11, 2000.]

4. Cross-Strait Relations

Agence France Presse ("FORMER U.S. OFFICIAL CALLS FOR TAIWAN- CHINA ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENT," Taipei, 12/7/00) reported that Taiwan's Parliamentarian Lee Shang-ren, a member of the opposition Kuomintang (KMT) said on December 7 that former US-PRC policy decision-maker Kenneth Lieberthal, who is visiting Taiwan with five other US-PRC watchers, called on Taiwan and the PRC to sign an "arms control agreement" amid new appeals to resume rapprochement talks. Lieberthal was cited as saying, "Taiwan has spent myriad of money buying sophisticated weapons, and simultaneously China also boosted its military spending. If the arms race continues, both Taipei and Beijing would be losers." Lee said Taiwan president Chen Shui-bian did not immediately respond to the arms control proposal, but said it was not clear if Lieberthal had raised the idea to PRC leaders before he wrapped up his Beijing trip and flew into Taipei on December 5. The five-member delegation included former ambassador to the PRC Winston Lord, Douglas Pall, George Schwab, Professor Donald Zagoria, and Professor Robert Scalapino. After the December 6 meeting, Chen issued a statement urging the next US president to review the US interpretation of the "one China" policy.

Central News Agency ("1992 CONSENSUS SAID BEST OPTION TO BREAK CROSS-STRAIT STALEMATE," Taipei, 12/11/00) reported that Taiwan's former Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) head

Su Chi said on December 10 that a consensus between Taiwan and the PRC reached in 1992 would serve as the best option to break the cross-strait stalemate. Su, who currently serves in the Kuomintang (KMT) think tank the National Policy Foundation, made the remarks in a seminar sponsored by the Tamkang University. Su said that the 1992 consensus is the only political compromise reached between the two sides and paved the way for a historic high-level meeting across the Taiwan Strait the following year. Su noted that as far back as 1991, the KMT held to the concept that "Taiwan is part of China and the mainland is part of China, while Beijing said only that Taiwan is part of China." Su said he regretted that it is only now that the PRC has come around to the KMT stance, referring to a recent statement by PRC Vice Premier Qian Qichen that Taiwan and the mainland are both part of China. Su also said that he believes cross-strait relations are complicated and require careful consideration of political and economic factors.

II. Republic of Korea

1. Inter-Korean Military Talks

The Korea Herald ("INTER-KOREAN MILITARY TALKS ON CROSS-BORDER RAIL LINKS SET FOR DEC. 21," Seoul, 12/12/00) reported that the ROK Defense Ministry said the ROK and the DPRK will hold the third round of working-level military talks on the cross-border rail links on December 21 at the truce village of Panmunjom. ROK Army Brigadier General Yoon Il-young, spokesman for the ministry, said, "In a telephone message Friday, the North proposed the talks be held at 10 AM on December 21 at the North's Tongilgak Pavilion, and our side accepted it Saturday after consultations among relevant government agencies." The DPRK's proposal came one day after the ROK made a counterproposal on December 8 that the two Koreas hold the third round of working-level military talks this Thursday. Yoon said, "At the next talks, both sides are likely to produce common regulations to help avert accidental clashes within the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) during construction for cross-border railway and road."

2. Inter-Korean Red Cross Talks

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "KOREAS FORMALLY DELAY THIRD RED CROSS TALKS UNTIL NEXT YEAR," Seoul, 12/12/00) reported that the ROK and the DPRK formally decided on December 10 to put off another round of Red Cross talks aimed at arranging additional reunions of separated families to next year, citing the lack of time for preparations. The three-day Red Cross meeting was originally scheduled to open on December 13. On December 9, when the ROK sent a letter to remind the DPRK of the timetable, the latter sent a counterproposal that it be postponed. A telegram signed by Choe Sung-chol, the DPRK's chief delegate, said, "Considering other inter-Korean schedules and our situations at year's end, we think the third Red Cross talks should inevitably be put off until next year." Officials said the ROK also decided to accept the counterproposal. Lee Kwan-se, spokesman for the ROK Unification Ministry said, "The government also thinks the delay was inevitable. We have no reason to be in a hurry." The upcoming Red Cross talks are aimed at arranging another round of temporary family reunions as well as setting up a permanent reunion station.

3. Inter-Korean Ministerial Talks

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "MINISTERIAL TALKS TO REVIEW POST- SUMMIT RAPPROCHEMENT," Seoul, 12/12/00) reported that ROK officials said that the DPRK and the ROK will open four days of high-level talks in Pyongyang on December 12 to review a year of dramatic

inter-Korean thaw and make an overall readjustment of schedules for unimplemented projects. A 38-member ROK delegation, led by Unification Minister Park Jae-kyu, will fly to the DPRK capital for the talks. An ROK ministry official said, "During the talks, the two sides will review a series of inter-Korean dialogues and projects held this year and plan next year's programs based on their priorities." In what will be a key step to boost inter-Korean economic exchanges and trade, the two sides will officially sign four agreements, including ones to guarantee investment and to avoid double taxation. ROK ministry spokesman Lee Kwan-se said, "Another major issue will be the additional reunions of separated family members." Park's DPRK counterpart is Jon Kum-jin, a senior cabinet councilor. Park will be accompanied by four other negotiators, 21 aides, 10 reporters, and two advisors.

4. US-ROK SOFA Talks

Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "DELEGATIONS DISCUSS SCHEDULE FOR SOFA TALKS," 12/11/00) reported that sources in the ROK said delegations from the ROK and the US discussed the schedule for future negotiations over the revision of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) at their informal meeting in Seoul on December 10. Parts of the US delegation members returned to the US after the two sides virtually wrapped up their talks on December 8. However, US chief delegate Frederick Smith, deputy assistant secretary of defense for Asia-Pacific affairs along with some members stayed in Seoul without giving specific reasons. Smith's stay touched off speculation in the ROK that the US may be willing to accept key demands from the ROK, including the establishment of an environmental regulation in SOFA. An ROK government source said, "But this unofficial meeting was not for settling unresolved issues but for arranging future talks and boosting their chances to reach a final agreement at a new round of talks." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 11, 2000.]

5. DPRK Ambassador to PRC

The Korea Herald ("NORTH KOREA NAMES NEW AMBASSADOR TO BEIJING," Beijing, 12/12/00) reported that diplomatic sources in the ROK said on December 10 that DPRK Ambassador to the PRC, Ju Chang-jun, will be replaced by Choe Jin-su, vice director of the DPRK Workers' Party's International Bureau. Ju will return to the DPRK at the end of the month, wrapping up 12 years of his service in the PRC. Choe will take his position before next February. The ambassador-designate served as a secretary at the DPRK Embassy in Brunei and held ambassadorships to the Ivory Coast and Switzerland from the late 1960s to early 1970s. He has worked within the Workers' Party throughout the 90s, dealing with affairs with the PRC.

6. Inter-Korean Laborers' Meeting

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "INTER-KOREAN LABORERS' MEETING IN JEOPARDY OVER SEOUL BAN," Seoul, 12/12/00) reported that the ROK government and major labor umbrella groups are at odds with each other over Seoul's ban on a labor leader's visit to the DPRK, threatening to scuttle an unprecedented symposium between workers from the two Koreas. Each of the nations' two umbrella labor organizations - the Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU) and the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) - had planned to send 20 representatives to the conference on national unification at the DPRK's Mount Kumgang scheduled for December 11-14. On December 7, however, the government said it would not allow one of them, KCTU vice president Lee Kyu-jae, to cross the border, citing its unfinished probes into Lee's alleged violation of the National Security Law. The decision immediately triggered strong protest from the labor groups, which said they would boycott

the symposium unless Seoul reverses its move.

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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