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I. United States

1. US-PRC Talks on DPRK

The Associated Press ("U.S. ENVOY DISCUSSES N. KOREA WITH CHINESE OFFICIALS," Beijing,

02/11/99) reported that US special envoy Charles Kartman met Chinese diplomats Thursday to discuss the DPRK. An anonymous US Embassy official said that Kartman met mainly with officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and that the discussions centered mainly on the next round of four-party peace talks. Zhang Qiyue, a spokeswoman for the PRC Foreign Ministry, declined at a briefing to release details of the discussions.

The Washington Post (John Pomfret, "CHINESE MISSILES MENACE TAIWAN," Beijing, 02/11/99, 1) reported that several Western analysts believe that the PRC must take a more active approach to helping to solve DPRK issues. Victor Cha, a political scientist at Georgetown University, stated, "China has basically been able to free-ride on the Korea problem since 1992 or so. But today, Beijing's interest in a peaceful resolution of the North Korean issue may even be more critical than those of the United States. Curbing North Korean missile sales and tests may take some of the heat off theater missile defense in the region." However, several unnamed Western sources said that PRC Defense Minister Chi Haotian told former US secretary of defense William J. Perry last month that the PRC has more substantive contacts with the US military than with the DPRK.

2. ROK Policy toward DPRK

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREA SENDS ENVOY TO BEIJING TO DISCUSS NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 02/11/99) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung sent Lim Dong-won, his secretary for foreign affairs and national security, to Beijing on Thursday for a three-day trip to seek PRC support for his "sunshine policy" toward the DPRK. Lim will meet with PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan and other senior Chinese security officials, his office said. Meanwhile, in a published interview with Japan's Tokyo Shimbun newspaper on Thursday, Kim renewed his proposal for the US and Japan to improve ties with the DPRK in exchange for the DPRK's firm commitment to give up its missile and nuclear weapons program. Kim stated, "We must give to the North what we can afford to give. For example, we can give the North diplomatic ties with the United States, economic cooperation and a guarantee for its safety. In return, we must get promises from the North that it will never develop nuclear weapons and missiles and that it will never start an armed provocation."

3. Alleged DPRK Drug Production

US State Department Spokesman Jamie Rubin ("STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING, FEBRUARY 10," USIA Transcript, 02/10/99) said that the US has been aware of past reports of alleged DPRK drug activity and views these reports with concern. Rubin stated, "Because of the continuing reports indicating that North Korea may be producing large quantities of opium for the illicit market, and may be involved in methamphetamine production and trafficking, we need to monitor the situation closely, to determine whether a substantial amount of opium is being cultivated or harvested in North Korea, and whether opium transiting North Korea is significantly affecting the United States." He added, "Because there is not yet sufficient evidence to meet the legal criteria for including North Korea on the majors list -- the so-called major narcotics countries -- we will continue to monitor and evaluate alleged North Korean involvement in narcotics, and will apply the law as circumstances warrant."

4. PRC Missile Threat to Taiwan

White House Press Secretary Joe Lockhart ("WHITE HOUSE REPORT, FEBRUARY 11, 1999," 02/11/99) said that the US is aware of the growing deployment in the PRC of missiles capable of striking Taiwan. Lockhart said that the US has a "strong interest in maintaining peace and stability

in the Taiwan Straits. For that reason, the United States supplies defensive arms to Taiwan consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act." He added that the US plans "to continue to monitor the military balance in the Taiwan straits closely." Regarding the inclusion of Taiwan in a Theater Missile Defense (TMD) system, Lockhart said "theater missile defense technology is in the development stage and is some years away." He added that the US "will make a decision in the future in this area based on the development of the technologies, Taiwan's defense needs and how we perceive the best way to maintain peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits."

State Department Spokesman Jamie Rubin ("STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING, FEBRUARY 10," USIA Transcript, 02/10/99) said that the US Defense Department is preparing a comprehensive assessment of the military balance in the Taiwan Straits, including missile deployments, which should be presented to Congress very soon. Rubin stated, "With respect to suggestions that this justifies providing Taiwan with theater missile defense, let me say the Taiwan authorities are currently addressing their own capabilities and needs. Their interests at this point appears to be primarily informational. We remain firmly committed to fulfilling the Taiwan Relations Act, and we will continue to assist Taiwan in meeting its legitimate defense needs, in accordance with this law and the 1982 Joint Communique with China." He added, "Consistent with our obligations under this law and part of our policy, we regularly consult with Taiwan on its defense requirements. As part of these defense requirements, we have briefed Taiwan, as we have many other friends, on theater missile defense."

Reuters (Alice Hung, "TAIWAN SEEN VULNERABLE TO CHINESE MISSILES," Taipei, 02/11/99), the Los Angeles Times (Henry Chu, "CHINA REPORTEDLY INCREASES MISSILES TARGETING TAIWAN," Beijing, 02/11/99) and the Washington Times (Bill Gertz, "CHINA MOVES MISSILES IN DIRECTION OF TAIWAN," 02/11/99, 12) reported that military experts said on Thursday that Taiwan remains vulnerable to PRC missiles. Defense analyst Andrew Yang stated, "Taiwan's missile defense is still very fragile at the moment." He added, "Patriot and Sky Bow missiles can provide some air defense, but whether they can 100 percent knock down incoming missiles remains a question." Taiwan's military has said it would deploy three batteries of Patriot missile system -- including 200 Patriot missiles, launchers and other equipment -- in northern Taiwan to protect the Taipei metropolitan area. However, an unidentified military analyst warned, "It normally takes two Patriots to intercept one missile, so we barely have enough to counter mainland China's missile threat." He added, "Our current missile defense system is only able to provide limited protection -- namely in the Taipei area." He also said, "There is definitely a need for Taiwan to join the TMD (Theater Missile Defense)." Richard Fisher of the Heritage Foundation warned, "We've seen this coming. Both [People's Liberation Army] doctrine and practical facts have led us to conclude that China was and will be in the future relying heavily on missile forces." However, James Mulvenon, a Chinese military specialist at the Rand Corp. in Washington, argued, "The Pentagon is making the argument that the Chinese are building up their missiles, and that's why we need TMD. The other way of looking at it is that this shows the Chinese government can [keep on] ramping up missile production, and therefore TMD is a bad idea." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for February 11.]

5. PRC Views of Theater Missile Defense

Reuters ("CHINA WARNS U.S. OVER MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM," Beijing, 02/11/99) reported that the PRC Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said Thursday that including Taiwan under a US Theater Missile Defense system would threaten Asian stability. Zhang stated, "Including Taiwan in any form in the TMD system would constitute violation of international law, the three joint communiques and would lay obstacles to the development and improvement of bilateral relations." She added, "It would also be counterproductive to peace and stability in Taiwan and the Asia-Pacific

region." She urged the US to "refrain from the sale of TMD and other related technology and equipment to Taiwan so as to avoid damaging bilateral relations."

The Washington Post (John Pomfret, "CHINESE MISSILES MENACE TAIWAN," Beijing, 02/11/99, 1) reported that Western diplomats said that the PRC's recent increase in its deployment of missiles near the Taiwan Straits is the PRC's response to US plans for Theater Missile Defense (TMD). US officials said that TMD is one of several issues US Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright plans to discuss with Chinese leaders when she visits Beijing during the first week of March. US officials also said they have conferred with Japan and the ROK over the past six months about creating a network of anti-missile defenses in the region, and that the DPRK's missile test last August galvanized the discussions. US officials have declined to provide details about whether an East Asian defense system would be land-based or sea-based, saying its components are still in the experimental stage. Analysts said there are several reasons why talk of a TMD system has angered the PRC. One is that the PRC feels that any moves by the US to strengthen its defense ties with Taiwan would be an attack on PRC interests. Chinese security analysts also view a missile-defense system that would incorporate Taiwan as a "force multiplier" that would deny them their main tactical advantage over Taiwan's armed forces. Randall Schriver, former senior policy director for the PRC in the office of the US secretary of defense, said that the PRC is also concerned that including Taiwan under a missile-defense umbrella would embolden Taiwan's independence movement. Chinese analysts have also written in recent weeks that the US may be using the DPRK's missile test as an excuse to expand its security agreements with the ROK and Japan into an anti-Communist bloc. Some Western analysts and officials said that they worry that the PRC might react to this perceived alliance by adopting a more aggressive stance in Asia, particularly toward Taiwan. James Mulvenon, a specialist in Chinese security issues at the Rand Corp., predicted, "As Sino-U.S. relations slide into the abyss in 1999, the No. 1 burr under the saddle will be theater missile defense. This is what they're hyperventilating about." [Ed. note: This article was one of the top stories in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for February 11.]

6. South China Sea Islands Disputes

The Washington Times (Bill Gertz, "CHINA MAKES UPGRADES TO ISLAND BASE, COASTLINE," 02/11/99) reported that US Defense Department intelligence officials said that the PRC has stepped up construction of a military base on Woody Island in the South China Sea, part of the Paracel Islands chain that is administered by China but claimed by Vietnam. The construction was photographed on January 29 by a National Reconnaissance Office spy satellite. US officials believe that the People's Liberation Army may be preparing for future deployments of Su-27s purchased from Russia or other military aircraft. Richard Fisher of the Heritage Foundation stated, "All Chinese aircraft can use the Woody Island airstrip. As we look into the next decade, [airborne warning and control jets] could operate out of Woody Island, directing both offensive and defensive operations aimed at controlling access to the South China Sea." One official stated, "This is part of ongoing Chinese efforts at power projection throughout the region." PRC Embassy Press Counselor Cui Jianjun said he was unaware of the construction, but restated the PRC's claim to sovereignty over the Paracels. [Ed. note: This article was one of the top stories in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for February 11.]

7. PRC Arms Sales

The Associated Press ("CHINA DEFENDS ITS ARMS SALES," Beijing, 02/11/99) reported that Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said Thursday that the PRC only exports weapons that meet legitimate defense needs. Zhang said that the PRC always took a "prudent attitude" to weapons

sales and allowed them only if they enhanced the legitimate defense capability of the recipient countries, did not harm security and stability in the region, and did not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries.

8. South Asian Sanctions

The Associated Press ("G-8 OFFICIALS SUPPORT ECON SANCTIONS VS INDIA, PAKISTAN," Tokyo, 02/11/99) reported that officials from a Group of Eight industrialized nations task force said Thursday said that India and Pakistan must at least show a willingness to sign a nuclear non-proliferation treaty before economic sanctions can be lifted. Task force chairman Nobuyasu Abe stated, "We must ask India and Pakistan to comply with all demands of the U.N. security council." Abe added that the requirement includes "constructive participation" as non-nuclear nations in talks to sign a global treaty aimed at limiting the spread of atomic weapons. The group also asked India and Pakistan to hold no further nuclear tests, refrain from building nuclear weapons, and resume a dialogue to reduce tensions. In addition to the G-8 members--Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia and the US--the task force included officials from Australia, the ROK, the PRC, the Ukraine, Argentina, and Brazil.

9. India-Pakistan Talks

The Associated Press ("INDIA'S PRIME MINISTER TO VISIT PAKISTAN," Islamabad, 02/11/99) reported that an Indian foreign ministry spokesman said Thursday that Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee is scheduled to visit Pakistan on February 20, which would make him the first Indian prime minister to visit Pakistan in 10 years. Reports in the Indian press said that Vajpayee was likely to offer Pakistan a no-war pact, something Pakistan has requested in the past.

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK Policies toward DPRK

Chosun Ilbo ("NK-US-JAPAN NORMALIZATION SUGGESTED AS PACKAGE DEAL," 02/11/99) reported that a high-ranking ROK government official said that the ROK government has notified the governments of the US and Japan that it can move ahead with the comprehensive settlement of Cold War issues on the Korean peninsula when the suspicion over the underground construction site in Kumchangri is cleared. This would in turn, make way for the US and Japan to lift sanctions against the DPRK so that full diplomatic ties could be established among all concerned nations. The official further commented that, as far as normalization of diplomatic ties between the DPRK, Japan, and the US is concerned, the position of the ROK government is, "the sooner the better." Once this happens, the ROK government has recommended that the lifting of sanctions against the DPRK take place not in phases, but across the board. The official said that President Kim Dae-jung had explained the ROK's comprehensive policy toward the DPRK to Masahiko Komura, the Japanese foreign minister, on the occasion of his visit to Chongwadae that day.

2. DPRK-Japan

Korea Times ("NEW NK MISSILE LAUNCH RISKS LOSS OF JAPAN'S KEDO FUNDING, 02/11/99) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura warned Wednesday that the DPRK's launching of another missile would lead to the Diet's rejection of the government's plan to offer US$1 billion for the light-water reactor project in the DPRK. Komura, who arrived in the ROK on Wednesday for a two-day visit, made the remarks in a meeting with ROK Foreign Affairs-Trade Minister Hong Soon-young. Komura stressed in particular the importance of close policy coordination between the ROK, the US, and Japan to prevent the DPRK from launching a second missile, the ministry official said. Meanwhile, Hong emphasized that the three countries need to make efforts to persuade the DPRK not to pursue a confrontational path. Hong also said that the principles of the Agreed Framework should be maintained at all costs. Although Hong called for Komura's attention to the delay in the establishment of a loan agreement between Japan and the Korean Peninsula Development Organization (KEDO), a basic condition for the start of full-fledged reactor construction in the DPRK, Komura offered no comment on the issue. Komura also stressed the difficulty of kicking off negotiations for diplomatic normalization because Japanese public opinion toward the DPRK is still negative due to the missile launch and the alleged abduction of Japanese nationals by DPRK agents. However, Komura said that Japan is willing to start dialogue with the DPRK if it gives a positive reaction to Japan's requests. Hong said that the ROK government would not oppose Japan's move to improve ties with the DPRK, as long as it is fully informed of all progress. Komura pledged to provide the ROK with all information on Japan-DPRK negotiations, the official said.

3. DPRK Economy

Korea Herald ("IMF/IBRD EYES FREE MARKET CLASSES FOR N.K.; EDUCATION PROGRAM WOULD BE HELD IN CHINA," 02/11/99) reported that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) are seeking to set up a market-economy education program to train the DPRK in the PRC, an ROK Foreign Affairs and Trade Ministry official said Wednesday. The official said that delegates from the IMF and the IBRD recently consulted on the issue with the DPRK. He said, "Both sides have yet to reach a final agreement before implementing the proposed education program." If the DPRK approves of the offer, experts on free-market economy from international financial institutions will be able to educate the DPRK policymakers. The official said that the PRC's gradual transition to a market economy can be a reference for the education of the DPRK. "The PRC can be a model state for the DPRK to follow in reforming its closed economy and opening wider its door to the outside world," he said. He added that the DPRK has recently been more active in learning about the free-market economy. He said that only a few DPRK economic officials were taught by the UNDP about the market economy each year during the period from the early 1970s to the mid-1990s, but in 1997 and last year the number reached about 60. They were educated in basic rules of a free-market economy, currency flows in international financial markets, and economic statistics in countries like Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia and Switzerland. The change has been pronounced since last September when the DPRK revised its constitution, which introduced some elements of capitalism in its economic operations.

4. ROK

Korea Herald ("PRESIDENT KIM SEES NO POSSIBILITY OF UNIFICATION DURING HIS TERM 02/11/99) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung said Wednesday that he does not expect to see unification with the DPRK before his term of office ends in 2003. "But I will try to keep the DPRK from launching a war and pursue inter-Korean reconciliation and cooperation," Kim said during a luncheon with about 100 Protestant leaders at Chongwadae. The President said that he will ensure that ROK businessmen can freely travel to the DPRK, as they now do to China.

5. ROK-DPRK Fishery Pact

Chosun Ilbo ("DECOMMISSIONED FISHING BOATS TO NK PROPOSED," reported that Kim Sun-kil, ROK Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, said that he is considering the possibility of providing to the DPRK some of the fishing vessels that will be forced into inactivity by the new fisheries accord between ROK and Japan. Speaking at a luncheon meeting with the press, Kim said that the ROK needs to reduce the number of fishing boats by approximately 3,000 by the year 2004. Already, about 600 vessels have been decommissioned and he suggested that some of the vessels be contributed to the DPRK. An official from the ministry elaborated that the ROK Fisheries Cooperative Federation has been moving ahead with the proposal, which suggests that fishing vessels and equipment be provided by the ROK while the DPRK provide territories and manpower. Proceeds from the joint fishing venture may be shared between the two nations.

III. Announcements

1. ICAS Awards Dinner

The Institute for Corean-American Studies (ICAS) announced that Benjamin A. Gilman, Chairman of the Committee on International Relations of the US House of Representatives, will be the recipient of the ICAS Liberty Award, and he will deliver his acceptance speech on "U. S. Vision for East Asia" at the ICAS Liberty Award Dinner from 6:30-9:15 p.m. on Friday, February 26, 1999, at the Faculty Club of the University of Pennsylvania. Previous recipients of the Award are Ambassador Charles Kartman, Dr. Jeong H. Kim, Professor Lawrence R. Klein, and Ambassador Richard L. Walker. For more information, contact ICAS at 965 Clover Court, Blue Bell, PA 19422; tel: (610) 277-9989 of (610) 277-0149; Fax: (610) 277-3992; Email: icas@dvol.com

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We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

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