NAPSNet Daily Report 11 March, 2004

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 11 March, 2004", NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-11-march-2004/

CONTENTS

I. United States

1. DPRK Nuclear Arsenal
2. DPRK on US Presidential Election
3. DPRK-US Relations
4. US Missile Shield
5. DPRK-Japan Relations
6. ROK Presidential Impeachment Session
7. US-PRC WTO Relations

II. Japan 1. Japan Military Emergency Bills
2. Japan Iraq Troops Dispatch
3. Japan PKO in East Timor
4. The 50th Anniversary of the 'Bravo' Test
5. Japan Defense Agency's Media Control
6. Japan Yasukuni Shrine Lawsuit
7. Japan's Refugee Recognition

I. United States

1. DPRK Nuclear Arsenal

The Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA SAYS NUCLEAR ARSENAL IS FOR SELF-DEFENSE ONLY," Prague, 03/11/04) reported that the DPRK's nuclear arsenal is designed for self-defense only, but the country is ready for more talks on the issue with the US and other countries, a DPRK official said Thursday. The DPRK's parliamentary leader, Choe Thae Bok, arrived in Prague for talks with Czech leaders and to reopen diplomatic channels between the two countries. "In a situation when the US deployed nuclear weapons in the ROK, we must have our own nuclear arsenal to block the nuclear threat," Choe told reporters through a translator. "The reason for that is to protect our very existence." Choe also said the DPRK was ready for more multilateral talks about the country's

nuclear program, assuming concessions on the US side. "The US representatives came to Beijing with the same position as in the first round," Choe said, blaming the US side for the breakdown of the talks. "The fundamental problem is for the US to give up its hostile policies toward North Korea," Choe said. "But we have indicated our willingness for further talks." Choe will spend six days in the Czech Republic. Apart from meeting with Prime Minister Vladimir Spidla and other Czech leaders, he will also travel to the spa town of Karlovy Vary and the industrial capital of Plzen. After meeting with Choe Wednesday, Parliament speaker Lubomir Zaoralek indicated the Czech republic could play the role of a diplomatic bridge between the DPRK and the European Union. The Czech Republic is set to join the EU on May 1.

2. DPRK on US Presidential Election

Reuters (Jane Macartney, "NORTH KOREA SAYS IT DOESN'T CARE WHO WINS US ELECTION," Taipei, 03/11/04) reported that the DPRK dismissed any idea it wanted George W. Bush to lose November's US presidential election, saying Thursday the key for the winner -- Democrat or Republican -- would be to change policy toward the DPRK. Analysts say little progress on curbing the DPRK's nuclear programs was now likely before the US presidential elections in November, thus giving the DPRK more time to try to develop a nuclear capability. The DPRK denied it could be stalling in six-way talks over its nuclear ambitions to see whether a more amenable Democratic US president is elected, saying it did not care which party's candidate triumphed in the US presidential election. "Whoever (is) elected US president should be willing to make a switchover in its policy toward the DPRK, drop the hostile policy toward it and express readiness to coexist with it," the official KCNA news agency said. "This is a main point," it said. "If the US makes a switchover in its policy toward the DPRK, though belatedly, progress will be made in the settlement of the nuclear issue," KCNA said.

3. DPRK-US Relations

Xinhua ("FM SPOKESMAN CALLS FOR HALT IN US 'VERBAL ATTACKS,'" Pyongyang, 03/11/04) reported that the DPRK on Wednesday called on the US to halt verbal attacks on the DPRK in order to promote a spirit of understanding to help resolve the problems between the two countries. A spokesman for the DPRK foreign ministry said: "To realize a denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula, the US should observe relevant methods and procedures. If it persists in demanding a 'verifiable, irreversible and complete abandoning' of (the DPRK's) nuclear program it should first promise a verifiable, irreversible and complete abandoning of its hostile policies against it (the DPRK)." The second round of the six-party talks in Beijing yielded no substantial results due to the US persistent demand that the DPRK abandon its nuclear program, said the spokesman. The US also desired to wipe out the DPRK's nuclear programmes for peaceful uses, the spokesman pointed out. Even after the talks, the US side continued asking the DPRK to accept its "abandoning first" policy on this issue and to publish and give up the so-called high enrichment uranium (HEU) programme, he added. The DPRK asked the US to furnish evidence for the alleged HEU programme in the DPRK during the second round of six-party talks, but the US failed to provide it, he said. By so doing, the US is repeating what it has done to Iraq, which could only make the DPRK more determined to enhance its nuclear deterrent forces, he added.

4. US Missile Shield Reuters (Jim Wolf, "PENTAGON'S TESTER UNSURE MISSILE SHIELD WILL WORK," Washington, 03/11/04) reported that the top US weapons tester told Congress on Thursday it was too early to say if a multibillion-dollar missile shield -- due to start deployment this year -- would thwart a DPRK attack. "So at this time we cannot be sure that the actual system would work

against a real DPRK missile threat?" Sen. Jack Reed, Democrat of Rhode Island, asked at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing into the ambitious defense system sought by President Bush. "I would say that's true," replied Thomas Christie, director of the Pentagon's independent office of testing and evaluation. He said the system "must be built before we can properly test it." Air Force Lt. Gen. Ronald Kadish, in charge of fielding the complex system, brushed off a similar question about its potential effectiveness, saying its performance capabilities were classified. The first missiles in this system are supposed to go into operation by late this year. Sen. Carl Levin of Michigan, the panel's ranking Democrat, said the bulk of Bush's huge funding request was for "an uncertain defense against an unlikely long-range missile attack." He accused the Pentagon of racing to launch the complex system of ground-based interceptors, satellites, and radar posts in violation of "fly-before-you-buy" laws requiring realistic, operational testing to avoid costly fiascos. Bush has requested $10.2 billion for program in fiscal 2005, which begins Oct. 1, up 13 percent from this year. That is more than for any other weapons program.

The Associated Press ("CRITICS TACKLE $10B REQUEST FOR MISSILES," Washington, 03/11/04) reported that Democratic senators Thursday criticized the administration's budget request for the missile defense program, questioning anew whether the system will ever work. Supporters urged continued funding for the program still in development. Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., called the request for $10.2 billion "truly staggering" - the largest single-year funding request for any weapon system in history - and questioned the program as "rudimentary and uncertain." It's double the amount being requested for custom and border protection for the US, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee said, asking: "How will this help keep this country safe from terrorist threats we know exist?" "How many more billions of dollars should we spend" before knowing whether it will work?" Levin asked Thursday. Committee Chairman Sen. John Warner, R-Va. countered that this is not the first time officials have been prompted by an "urgent need" to press a weapons system into service while it was still in development. Warner said the committee should give the program "the strongest of oversight" but also the "strongest of support."

5. DPRK-Japan Relations

Kyodo News ("JAPAN HOPES TALKS WITH N KOREA BEFORE SIX-PARTY WORKING GROUP," Tokyo, 03/11/04) reported that Japan hopes to resume bilateral talks with North Korea on its abduction of Japanese nationals before the launch of a working group of six-nation talks on the North's nuclear ambitions, Senior Vice Foreign Minister Ichiro Aisawa said Thursday. "The government is waiting for a response from Pyongyang (on the resumption), but Japan's stance is to resume them prior to the launch of the working group," Aisawa told reporters. On Wednesday, a government panel on normalization of Japan-DPRK ties told the Foreign Ministry to urge North Korea to promptly resume bilateral negotiations. Aisawa said the ministry may make a fresh proposal to the DPRK on the timing of the bilateral talks.

6. ROK Presidential Impeachment Session

Reuters (Martin Nesirky, "S.KOREAN IMPEACHMENT SESSION PUT OFF TO FRIDAY," Seoul, 03/11/04) reported that the ROK's parliamentary speaker adjourned an unprecedented session called to try to impeach President Roh Moo-hyun Thursday because Roh supporters blocked him from presiding over the opposition-inspired debate. The two parties seeking to impeach Roh said earlier they had secured enough support among their own members of parliament to pass the bill if it was put to the vote. Roh put himself on collision course with the opposition at a news conference earlier in the day when he refused to apologize for illegal electioneering. An impeachment vote, even if it is not upheld by the Constitutional Court, could plunge the country into months of political uncertainty.

"I am aware of public opinion that I should apologize," Roh said. "It is something difficult for me to accept." Adding to the high-stakes atmosphere, a Roh supporter set himself on fire outside parliament and was rushed to hospital, and a businessman Roh had named at his briefing went missing after telling his lawyer he was going to kill himself. "I don't think the session can continue in this situation today," speaker Park Kwan-yong told the chamber. "I will do what it takes if the speaker's seat is occupied again tomorrow." A parliamentary announcer said Friday's session would start at 10 a.m.

7. US-PRC WTO Relations

Agence France-Presse ("US MAY RESORT TO WTO ACTION AGAINST CHINA FOR RENEGING ON TRADE RULES: USTR," Washington, 03/11/04) reported that the US warned that it may use the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to take action against China for allegedly not complying with global trade rules and adopting discriminatory tax policies. Robert Zoellick, the US Trade Representative, said that while some of the PRC's compliance problems were initially viewed as "growing pains" as it brought its laws into line with new WTO obligations, the PRC must do more to ensure it lives up to obligations. "Without more progress on matters we have been pressing with China, we will certainly need to avail ourselves of our rights under the WTO," he warned in a testimony before the House of Representatives. Zoellick said that the US would concentrate its enforcement resources this year on ensuring that the PRC played by the rules it had pledged to adhere to under the WTO. He cited what he called the PRC's lax enforcement of intellectual property rights and discriminatory tax policies -- "most blatantly" on semiconductors -- and new wireless encryption standards, intended to block US market access. The US also faced market access problems in agriculture and financial services, he said, charging that the PRC used so called "standards" to unfairly impede US exports. "We are pressing China to resolve these disputes promptly," he said. "The Administration will consult closely with Congress and interested US stakeholders in continuing to press China for full WTO compliance, and will not hesitate to take action to enforce trade rules," Zoellick said.

II. Japan

1. Japan Military Emergency Bills

The Japan Times (Nao Shimoyachi, "AMMO PROVISION ADDED TO U.S. LOGISTIC SUPPORT PACT," 02/28/04) reported that Japan and the US government signed an amendment to a bilateral agreement governing reciprocal provision of logistics support, supplies and services between the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) and the US forces stationed in Japan. The amendment to the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) allows the SDF and the US forces to share ammunition for the first time, though the provision is limited to cases in which they jointly defend Japan from a foreign attack. The government had excluded ammunition and weapons from the list of goods that can be shared between the SDF and the US for fear that it could violate Japan's self-imposed ban on arms exports, a rule the Japanese government introduced under its Constitution. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said the amendment does not violate the rule, which "was intended to avoid escalation of international conflicts." He said ammunition would "only be supplied to the US forces, and the US is obliged not to use it against the spirit of the UN Charter and not to hand it over to a third nation without the consent of our government." The amendment also allows the SDF and US forces to cooperate on logistics when conducting activities that would "contribute to international peace and security." These activities do not exclude actions by multilateral forces unauthorized by the UN, an agency official said. This means the SDF could offer logistic support in cases such as the

US-led war on Iraq and reconstruction efforts. Although providing ammunition to such forces is not stipulated in this case, the government believes it would be possible if a new law was enacted for each case.

2. Japan Iraq Troops Dispatch

Kyodo ("MORE GSDF TROOPS ARRIVE IN SAMAWAH AFTER TARGET PRACTICE," Kuwait City, 02/28/04) reported that a contingent of Ground Self-Defense Force (SDF) troops arrived in the southern Iraq city of Samawah, where they are to carry out reconstruction work, traveling overland from a US military base in Kuwait. The convoy of about 30 vehicles, including light armored vehicles mounted with automatic rifles, carried most of the 140-member core unit that arrived in Kuwait. The unit engaged in shooting practice at the US Army's Camp Virginia in western Kuwait. About 100 GSDF troops are already in Samawah, including an advance team that arrived in mid-January and others who arrived in early February. Japan plans to send two more batches of ground troops to Iraq in March, bringing to about 550 the number deployed to Samawah to repair local infrastructure and provide water and medical services.

3. Japan PKO in East Timor

The Asahi Shimbun ("GUSMAO SEEKS HELP, HOPES SDF WILL STAY," 02/26/04) reported that East Timor President Xanana Gusmao called for continued Japanese help in building the newly independent nation. In an exclusive interview with The Asahi Shimbun, Gusmao said he welcomed the presence of Self-Defense Forces (SDF) as part of UN-led peacekeeping operations and said he hoped they would extend their stay. He stressed that the country remains fragile, with political instability, including a shaky relationship with Indonesia, which ruled the territory for 24 years. Gusmao met Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on Feb. 23 and expressed his gratitude for the presence of the 400 SDF members. SDF members now account for the second-largest group among PKOs in East Timor. Gusmao also asked the government to extend the SDF stay. In January, the UN announced plans to scale back the number of troops. He added, "The unemployment rate is high. Many new university-graduates don't have jobs. The government offers public services, but cannot offer jobs to everybody." "We want Japan and Japanese companies to invest more in oil and resources to create jobs for frustrated young people," he said. Gusmao also added, "Offshore petroleum and gas reserves around our country are exported to Japan. Now Japanese companies have constructed pipe lines in oil fields and other resources facility in neighboring Australia. We do not envy, but Australia is lucky to get Japanese benefits."

4. The 50th Anniversary of the 'Bravo' Test

The Japan Times (Nao Shimoyachi, "BIKINI TEST SURVIVORS STILL LIVING WITH BLAST," 02/27/04) reported the 50th anniversary of the test of a US hydrogen bomb, code-named Bravo, at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands. The Fukuryu Maru No. 5 tuna trawler, known in English as the Lucky Dragon, was at a location believed to be 160 km east of Bikini Atoll when the US denoted the bomb. Of the 23 crew members, only 11 are still living. All 23 suffered or are suffering from health problems believed to have been caused by radiation and the contaminated blood they received during treatment. While the Bikini incident had a huge impact on the global stage, the Fukuryu Maru's crew remained silent for decades. They were puzzled by the intense media attention that followed their return to Yaizu, Shizuoka Prefecture, a leading deep-sea fishing port. Fear of social discrimination against people exposed to radiation discouraged them from coming out as survivors of the Bikini incident, according to Matashichi Oishi, one of the survivors. Many of the crew had to

quit as fishermen due to health problems and later tried to hide their nuclear experience so they could hold on to jobs, Oishi says. He left Yaizu for Tokyo in 1955 to start a new, quiet life. He began making public appearances in the 1980s after being asked to give a lecture by a junior high school student. Another survivor, Yoshio Misaki, said he was shocked by some of the media reports, such as one that said the Fukuryu Maru crew members, while "tainted with death ash," were carousing in the city. "What makes me angry is we have suffered so much, but nuclear weapons are still there with improved quality," Oishi said. "Because people did not think about the incident, because politicians never took it seriously," people are still living in a world with nuclear arms.

The Japan Times (Nao Shimoyachi, "FOR MARSHALL ISLANDS, NUCLEAR LEGACY LIVES ON," 02/27/04) reported that the stories of people in the Marshall Islands, the site of 67 US nuclear tests between 1946 and 1958. Fifty years later, the legacy of the nuclear testing program still runs deep, says Seiichiro Takemine, a doctoral candidate at Waseda University studying the effects of nuclear testing on the islanders. During the testing period, the people living on and near Bikini and Eniwetok atolls, which were used for nuclear testing, were evacuated to other islets. But the US later admitted that at least 239 people were left behind, where they were exposed to strong radiation at the time of the March 1, 1954, Bravo blast. Half a century later, Bikini and Rongelap, which received strong radioactive fallout, are still uninhabitable. The nuclear fallout is believed to have also caused high rates of certain health disorders across the Marshall Islands, including thyroid cancer and miscarriages. The US acknowledged responsibility for radiation-induced health problems when it signed the compact in 1986 and set up a $150 million compensation trust fund. Most of the islets to which the islanders were evacuated were isolated and barren, which caused the evacuees to abandon their traditional "canoe" culture, Takemine says. The government of the Marshall Islands wants the US to beef up the compensation program, whose funding is running out, and help clean up the contaminated land and resettle the displaced people, according to Mary Leon Silk of the College of the Marshall Islands. As of last May, $9.5 million was left in the fund.

Kyodo ("U.S. FUMED OVER LACK OF ACCESS TO VICTIMS," Nagoya, 02/27/04) reported that senior US officials accused Japan of denying it valuable security data by refusing to let them examine 23 Japanese fishermen irradiated by a US hydrogen bomb test near Bikini Atoll in 1954, according to a declassified report found recently by Kyodo News. The 19-page report reveals not only a serious bilateral spat over the irradiation of the Fukuryu Maru No. 5, known as the Lucky Dragon in English, but also sheds light on the attitude of US scientists, who appeared to see the victims as experiment subjects and were in no doubt about the superiority of US medical practices. "The field of atomic medicine is in its infancy. . . . Accidentally an experiment was performed on 23 unfortunate men," the report said. "It was apparent that American medical practices were far superior in every respect. In just the diagnoses and therapeutics as related to the fishermen, their chances of survival and of speedier recuperation would be greatly enhanced under the supervision of the US team," the report said. The document was compiled by John Morton, director of the US Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission (ABCC), and Jack Lewis, the commission's head of medicine, two months after the test. "The Japanese team by its obstinacy and desire for aggrandizement has irrevocably lost what may be very valuable data for the national defense to the US, the islands of Japan, and the free world," it said. The report also blamed the Japanese media for the deterioration in Japan-US relations over the issue, saying, "This in no small part was due to the rantings of the hysterical sensation-seeking, irresponsible, sometimes mendacious Japanese press." The report was found in the archives of the US Department of Energy in Nevada.

5. Japan Defense Agency's Media Control

The Japan Times (Nao Shimoyachi, "DEFENSE AGENCY EYES MEDIA OFFICERS TO HANDLE DELUGE," 02/27/04) reported that the Japanese Defense Agency will create media officer posts in

fiscal 2005 to handle increasing public interest in the agency and the Self-Defense Forces (SDF). "Since the end of the Cold War, the operations of both the agency and the Self-Defense Forces have been receiving increased public attention," the vice defense chief, Takemasa Moriya, told a news conference. "We felt the need to respond more appropriately and in a timely manner to this rising public interest." Under the plan, the Ground, Maritime, Air and Joint staff offices and Defense Agency, which represents defense policymakers, would each have a media officer. But while agency officials say the move is to improve information dissemination, it is also seen as an attempt to ease criticism that the agency has begun regulating media exposure to defense matters. Since the beginning of the year, the agency has requested various media restraints regarding coverage of the deployment of the GSDF to Iraq, citing security concerns. Its announcement in January that it would halt weekly news conferences by the chiefs of the three branches of the SDF was met with especially strong opposition from the media. The idea was put on hold and will probably be discussed by representatives of the media and the agency in coming weeks.

6. Japan Yasukuni Shrine Lawsuit

Kyodo ("COURT DENIES REDRESS FOR 631 SUING OVER YASUKUNI VISIT," Osaka, 02/28/04) reported that the Osaka District Court in Japan rejected compensation demands filed by a group of 631 people who claimed Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi violated the Constitution when he visited Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo on Aug. 13, 2001. The court did not rule on whether the Yasukuni visit infringed on the Constitution, but it considered the visit official because Koizumi "went in the capacity of prime minister." Presiding Judge Hiroshi Muraoka said, however, "While we realize that the plaintiffs were exasperated because of their religious beliefs, it cannot be said their specific rights accorded under the law were in any way violated." The plaintiffs -- primarily kin of the war dead and clerics -- had demanded that Koizumi, the state and the shrine pay each plaintiff a total of 10,000 yen in compensation for psychological suffering they experienced. They claimed his visit violated the constitutional separation of state and religion. They later said they would appeal. The ruling was the first to be handed down on a series of similar lawsuits also filed in Matsuyama, Ehime Prefecture, Fukuoka, Chiba, Tokyo and Okinawa.

7. Japan's Refugee Recognition

Mainichi Daily News ("JAPAN RECOGNIZED 10 ASYLUM SEEKERS AS REFUGEES IN '03," 02/28/04) reported that the Japanese immigration authorities recognized 10 asylum seekers as refugees in 2003, the smallest number since 1998, officials said. Eight of the 10 are from Myanmar, the Justice Ministry's Immigration Bureau said. The bureau refused to grant refugee status to 298 applicants while 23 asylum seekers rescinded their application for refugee recognition. Of the 298 who were denied refugee status, 16 have been allowed to stay in Japan considering the situation in their home countries and from a humanitarian viewpoint, bureau officials said. Of 336 applicants, 111 were from Myanmar, 77 were Turkish nationals, 25 were Iranians and 22 were Chinese.

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.

Produced by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development in partnership with:

Ilmin Internationl Relations Institute
BK21 The Education and Research Corps for East Asian Studies
Department of Political Science, Korea University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

International Peace Research Institute (PRIME),
Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan

Monash Asia Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Brandon Yu: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Kim Young-soo: yskim328@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hibiki Yamaguchi: hibikiy84@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Saiko Iwata: saiko@akira.ne.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Hiroya Takagi: hiroya_takagi@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@online.ru
Moscow, Russian Federation

Wu Chunsi: cswu@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

John McKay: John.McKay@adm.monash.edu.au
Clayton, Australia

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-11-march-2004/

Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org