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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks

Korea Herald ("U.S. WELCOMES N. KOREA'S COMMITMENT TO SIX-PARTY TALKS: WHITE HOUSE", 2008/09/11) reported that the US welcomed remarks by the DPRK's ceremonial head of state to continue multilateral nuclear talks amid reports of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's failing health. "We are looking at the comments today from the second in command as a positive one," White House spokesperson Dana Perino told a daily press briefing. She said the United States will "continue to work to bring them into compliance with what they agreed to do."

Yonhap News (Lee Chi-dong, "FUTURE OF NUCLEAR TALKS' MURKY AMID KIM'S ILLNESS ", Seoul, 2008/09/11) reported that following reports of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's latest health setback, the future of international efforts to rid the secretive nation of its nuclear arsenal has become uncertain, with the DPRK's military emerging as a key variable. Many expect the six-way talks to go adrift for the time being, citing the current U.S. presidential race and Kim's worsened health as factors. A senior ROK nuclear negotiator when asked about future prospects for the talks said, "We need to check first on the North's internal situation as it relates to Kim Jong-il's illness."

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2. DPRK Leadership

The Associated Press (Jae-Soon Chang, "NORTH KOREAN LEADER MAY HAVE PARTIAL PARALYSIS ", Seoul, 2008/09/11) reported that the DPRK's Kim Jong Il had brain surgery after a stroke last month and could have partial paralysis on one side, media reports said Thursday, after

the ROK government said the leader remained in control of his country. Kim's condition has improved and he is not suffering from slurred speech, a disability often associated with a stroke, the reports said. Lee Cheol-woo, a ROK ruling party lawmaker, said that Kim is "recovering fast," has "no problem speaking and communicating," and is "able to stand if assisted."

Yonhap News (Lee Joon-seung, "NO POWER VACUUM DETECTED IN N. KOREA: GOV'T SOURCE", Seoul, 2008/09/11) reported that no power vacuum has been detected in the DPRK amid speculations that Kim Jong-il may have had a stroke last month, a diplomatic source said. The diplomatic source, who declined to be identified, said there seem to have been no disruptions to key decision-making processes in the DPRK, pointing to the nuclear situation as evidence. "North Korea threatened to reassemble its nuclear facilities in Yongbyon in late August at about the time Kim may have fell ill, and actually took steps early this month that may be construed as following up on their word," he said. Such actions can be interpreted as a sign that decisions are being made and that the system of government has not been affected by Kim's possible incapacity, said the source.

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3. US on DPRK Leadership

Agence France-Presse ("US HOPEFUL OF NKOREA PROGRESS DESPITE KIM HEALTH REPORTS", Washington, 2008/09/11) reported that the White House expressed guarded optimism about the future of DPRK nuclear disablement efforts amid reports that DPRK leader Kim Jong-Il may be seriously ill. "We are going to continue to work with the six parties. North Korea knows exactly what they need to do, which is to establish a verification protocol so that we could then take the next step that we promised to do, which is to take them off the terrorism list," said Spokeswoman Dana Perino. Perino rebuffed questions about that situation, saying: "If and until North Korea's ready to talk about the health of their leader, I'll just decline to comment for now."

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4. ROK on DPRK Leadership

Yonhap News (Shin Hae-in, "SEOUL HAS NO PLANS TO RAISE DEFENSE ALERT AGAINST N.K.: MINISTER ", Seoul, 2008/09/11) reported that the ROK does not plan to raise the level of defense readiness since no unusual activity in the DPRK military has been detected following reports of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's illness, a top defense official was quoted as saying. "We have not found anything unusual suggesting signs of leadership change in the North Korean military," Defense Minister Lee Sang-hee was quoted as saying. "We are prepared for any new developments," he said. "But it appears unnecessary to raise the Defcon 5 (Defense Readiness Condition) status to Defcon 3, which could trigger public concerns and irritate the North."

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5. PRC on DPRK Leadership

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA DENIES KNOWLEDGE OF NORTH KOREAN LEADER'S HEALTH", Beijing, 2008/09/11) reported that the PRC said Thursday it hadn't received information from secretive DPRK on the health of its leader Kim Jong Il following reports he had suffered a stroke.

"The DPRK (North Korea) and China have kept up normal exchanges. We have not heard from the DPRK on whether Mr Kim Jong Il had any health problems," foreign ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu told reporters. "I understand you want more information on this question but questions about the DPRK should be addressed to the DPRK," Jiang said at a regular news briefing.

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6. ROK, Russia on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Xinhua ("RUSSIA, SOUTH KOREA CALL FOR FULFILLMENT OF OBLIGATIONS ON KOREAN NUCLEAR ISSUE", 2008/09/11) reported that Russia and the ROK called on all participants in the six-party talks to fulfill their obligations on the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said. "We looked into the situation surrounding the Korean Peninsula nuclear problem in detail. In general, our approaches are coinciding," Lavrov said after talks with his ROK counterpart Yu Myung-hwan. "There is an understanding that all parties to the six-party talks need to fulfill their obligations and agreements in line with the 'action in response to an action' principle," Lavrov was quoted by the Interfax news agency as saying.

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7. DPRK-Japan Relations

Kyodo News ("N. KOREA SAYS WAITING FOR NEW JAPAN PREMIER, BUT DEAL STANDS", Pyongyang, 2008/09/11) reported that the DPRK has postponed the launching of a fresh investigation into Japanese abductees because it wants to see if a new Japanese prime minister will honor a bilateral agreement on the probe, a senior diplomat said. Song Il Ho, the DPRK's ambassador to normalization talks with Japan, told Kyodo News in an interview Wednesday that the DPRK is still committed to implementing the deal reached with Japan in August. ''There is no guarantee as to how agreements reached between the two countries will be treated'' by Fukuda's successor, he said.

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8. DPRK Missile Systems

Joongang Ilbo ("NORTH MAY USE SECRET BASE TO FIRE NEW ICBMS", Washington, 2008/09/11) reported that the DPRK has quietly built a long-range missile base that is larger and more capable than an older and well-known launch pad for intercontinental ballistic missiles. “It would suggest they have the intention to develop the capability to perfect a missile to deliver atomic bombs to the United States,” said John Pike, an imagery analyst at GlobalSecurity.org. “The primary purpose of the facility is to test,’’ Joseph S. Bermudez Jr., senior analyst for Jane’s Information Group, told The Associated Press in an interview last week.

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9. DPRK Economy

IFES NK Brief ("TROUBLE AGAIN IN THE DPRK'S CHUNGJIN MARKET", 2008/09/11) reported that police recently clashed with women who had worked as traders in the market in the DPRK's Chungjin, in North Hamyong Province, who were demanding that crackdowns in the market be less severe until city officials are able to supply food rations. According to the report, on August 24, patrolmen carried out a drastic crackdown in the market, leading women claiming that they need to continue working there to occupy one area. Ultimately, fighting broke out between the two groups.

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10. Japan SDF Iraq Role

The Asahi Shimbun ("YEAR-END PULLOUT FOR ASDF IN IRAQ", 2008/09/11) reported that the government intends to terminate its military airlift mission in Iraq by the end of this year. Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura said at a news conference: "We have strengthened our belief that the objectives of the Iraqi special measures law are being achieved with the improved domestic situation in Iraq. We have entered into discussions to conclude the ASDF mission by the end of the year." Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura said that Japan would continue to provide official development assistance to Iraq even after the SDF mission is completed.

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11. Japan Politics

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("ASO SHORING UP LDP SUPPORT / MAJORITY OF LDP DIET MEMBERS SEEN BACKING PARTY SECRETARY GENERAL", 2008/09/11) reported that Liberal Democratic Party Secretary General Taro Aso, one of the five candidates competing in the LDP presidency race, has secured more than 50 percent of votes from the party's Diet members, according to a survey by The Yomiuri Shimbun. The survey of LDP Diet members showed Aso had secured at least 197 votes out of a possible 386. In the survey, 34 LDP Diet members said they were likely to vote for Yosano, while 29 planned to vote for Koike and 24 each planned to vote for Ishihara and Ishiba. About 20 percent of members had not made it clear who their pick would be.

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12. Cross Strait Relations

The Wall Street Journal (Ting-I Tsai and Alex Pevzner, "CHINA, TAIWAN PLAN TALKS", 2008/09/11) reported that Taiwan and the PRC plan to hold a new round of talks within the next two months aimed at establishing the first daily flights between the two sides, Taiwan's top negotiator with Beijing said. The negotiations, which Taiwan expects to take place in late October or early November, also will cover the possible establishment of direct ocean-shipping links between Taiwan and the PRC and the launch of charter flights for cargo, Mr. Chiang said.

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13. PRC Human Rights

Reuters ("RIGHTS GROUP CALLS ON CHINA TO END TORTURE", Beijing, 2008/09/11) reported that the PRC is not doing enough to end torture by police and in jails where the practice is still widespread, a human rights group said a in new report. Human Rights in China said there was "ample evidence" of torture being used to extract confessions and as a tool of political repression. "Many criminal suspects in China, as well as those who seek to defend the rights of others and speak out against injustice -- lawyers, environmental activists, petitioners -- have become victims of torture," said Sharon Hom, executive director of Human Rights in China.

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II. PRC Report

14. PRC Civil Society and Public Health

Xinhua Net (Hua Yedi, "UN CHILDREN FOUNDATION LAUNCHES CHILDREN VACCINE POPULARIZATION WORK IN SHANGHAI", Shanghai, 2008/09/09) reported that the big public benefit activity “Love China-Children Vaccine Popularization Work” was jointly launched by the United Nations Children Foundation and GlaxoSmithKline company on Sep.7 in Shanghai. The activity aims to draw attention to the state of children’s vaccination and advocate for helping children in the remote areas to be vaccinated. According to related data, the vaccine coverage rate of poliomyelitis, measles, diphtheria, and whooping cough have all reached over 90%.

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15. Sino-Russian Relations

China Securities News (Zhang Chaohui, "SINO-RUSSIAN BANKING REGULAR EXCHANGE MECHANISM", 2008/09/08) reported that Secretary General Guo Jing of the China Banking Association recently said that the PRC and Russian banking industries face many common challenges and opportunities in the development process, so the establishment of a regular exchange mechanism is conducive to promoting the common development of both sides. On September 3, Guo Jing and his party were invited to the Russian Federation Banking Association in Moscow; later they went to Sochi to participate in the 21st century Banking Sector Development and Cooperation Summit Forum. Guo introduced the status and development issues of the PRC's local banking financial institutions at the forum. He hoped that through cooperation and exchanges, the experience and practices of local banking in the process of growth can be shared.

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16. PRC Investment

Xinhau Net (Hu Su, Ji Shaoting, "CHAIRMAN OF THE WORLD ASSOCIATION OF INVESTMENT PROMOTION AGENCIES: CHINA TO BE A PREFERRED INVESTMENT DESTINATION", Xiamen, 2008/09/08) reported that Chairman of the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies or WAIPA said at a forum that the PRC was the world's largest foreign direct investment recipient country, and was also the preferred investment destination for many multinational companies.

According to Ministry of Business's data, as of the first half of this year, the PRC has approved the establishment of 650,000 foreign-invested enterprises, using foreign funds of more than 800 billion U.S. dollars.

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III. ROK Report

17. DPRK Nuclear Issue

Seoul Shinmun ("DPRK'S SIXTIETH BIRTHDAY, NOW TO OPEN THE DOOR", 2008/09/10) reported that Pyongyang was busy the whole day Tuesday holding fancy parties to celebrate their 60 th anniversary of their regime foundation. The reason these events look somewhat 'empty' is because of the difficulties the people are going through. It is a pity for the DPRK to put all their political effort on the military and the nuclear weapons, saying that they are the only keys to maintain the current regime. The DPRK should find ways to survive by communicating and collaborating wit the ROK or other nations of the global community, rather than trying to maintain the current status by relying on Weapons of Mass Destruction. The first step is to abandon the nuclear weapons.

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18. ROK Policy Toward DPRK

Hankook Ilbo ("DPRK POLICY, UNPREDICTABLE", 2008/09/10) reported that two of the most important principles of government's policy implementation are consistency and predictability, because policies that are inconsistent will lead to unexpected situations, which will eventually ruin the successful implementation of the policy. From this point of view, the ROK Unification Ministry's DPRK policies have failed to build up credibility. Since right after the Lee Administration's inauguration, the Ministry has been withholding their position about humanitarian food aid toward the DPRK. Last month, they decided not to give the Democratic Labor Party and the Korea Teachers and Education Workers' Union permission to visit the DPRK, saying that the number of visitors is unacceptable. However, they suddenly and quietly changed their mind and announced that they will permit other private organizations which support the DPRK to visit the DPRK. The Ministry must remember that consistency and patience should take priority over expediency when it comes to the inter-Korean relationship.

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19. Inter-Korea Relations

Ohmynews ("UNIFICATION MINISTRY, ACTIVATES BUSINESS WITH THE DPRK?", 2008/09/10) reported that Kim Ha-joong, the ROK Unification Minister, revealed that the ROK will resume DPRK food aid. It is known that the ministry will also allow large-scale private organizations to visit the DPRK. Experts analyze that since the break off of inter-Korean dialog lasts longer than they expected, the government is now trying to control the situation. Others also insist that it might only be the Ministry trying to find their way, but not the government trying to change their initial

position.

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IV. Call for Papers

20. KINU Manuscript Submission

Korea Institute for National Unification ("INVITATION TO MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION : INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF KOREAN UNIFICATION STUDIES", 2008/09/11) KINU is inviting the submission of manuscripts for the *International Journal of Korean Unification Studies* , a biannually published journal. The length required for articles should be around 20 pages (equivalent to 6,500-7,000 words) in 12-font size. The feature subject for the forthcoming issue of Vol. 17, No. 2 is "The Next US Administration and Its Policies toward the East Asia-Pacific Region and the Korean Peninsula: Views of the US(Republican and Democratic), Japan, China, Russia, and South Korea." The deadline for manuscript submission is by October 15, 2008. KINU will provide the author with a modest honorarium depending upon publication. Articles can be submitted via email at: kimmik@kinu.or.kr

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