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I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

BBC News ("US NUCLEAR TEAM LANDS IN N KOREA", 2007/10/11) reported that a US-led team of experts has arrived in the DPRK to oversee the dismantling of the country's nuclear program. They are due to map out a plan for disabling the reactor at Yongbyon. The experts, led by Sung Kim of the US State Department, landed in Pyongyang on a flight from Beijing on Thursday. "We expect to be there for a week or so to finalize discussions on disablement, the scope of disablement and also to discuss a wide range of administrative issues," he said.

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2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Yonhap (Yoo Cheong-mo, "ROH SAYS N. KOREAN LEADER'S COMMITMENT TO DENUCLEARIZATION UNQUESTIONABLE", Seoul, 2007/10/11) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-hyun said that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il expressed a clear and strong intention to give up nuclear weapons, and positively evaluated US attitudes toward the DPRK during their summit talks in Pyongyang last week. Roh quoted Kim as telling him at the talks, "North Korea does not have any intention to possess nuclear weapons. It's an instruction (from my father). Our determination is strong."

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3. US-DPRK Relations

Korea Times (Yoon Won-sup, "WASHINGTON CONSIDERS REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE IN PYONGYANG", 2007/10/11) reported that the United States is considering setting up a representative office in Pyongyang as a diplomatic mission, according to a report. Radio Free Asia said the US will set up a diplomatic mission in Pyongyang, and its form would most likely be a representative office, not a liaison office or an embassy. The US-based media quoted a source as saying that the US government and Congress are discussing the level of a diplomatic mission in

Pyongyang, which will depend on progress in the DPRK's dismantlement of its nuclear weapons program.

Yonhap ("U.S. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY TO LEAD N.Y. TALKS WITH NORTH KOREANS", Washington, 2007/10/11) reported that a senior US official will go to New York soon for talks with DPRK officials in a follow-up to last week's six-party denuclearization agreement, a State Department official said. Alexander Arvizu, deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asia and the Pacific, will lead a team of officials at the talks, but the exact date has not yet been set, according to the official. Christopher Hill, Arvizu's immediate superior, said that the meeting could open this weekend.

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4. ROK on Peace Treaty

Korea Herald (Lee Joo-hee , "SEOUL CAUTIOUS ON SCHEDULE OF PEACE TALKS", 2007/10/11) reported that Unification Minister Lee Jae-joung declined to set a timeline for the start of peace treaty negotiations, saying that it is "difficult at this stage to say exactly when." "This is thought to be a matter that needs to be looked at in a more comprehensive manner," Lee said. He explained that the nuclear issue had to be dealt with at the same time as the peace talks, as well as US-DPRK relations, the process of gathering and implementing international agreements, and the efforts at cooperation between the two Koreas. "(When to begin the peace talks) should be decided with a comprehensive consideration of all stages, and not just based on a certain point in time," Lee said.

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5. ROK on NLL Issue

Joongang Ilbo (Lee Min-a and Kim Min-seok, "ROH CONCLUDES YELLOW SEA LINE IS NOT A BORDER", 2007/10/11) reported that defining the Northern Limit Line in the Yellow Sea as the maritime inter-Korean border is wrong, according to President Roh Moo-hyun, who said yesterday the contentious line was merely a line in the water between the two Koreas for military reasons. While presidential candidate Lee Myung-bak has called both the Military Demarcation Line and the Northern Limit Line "borders," Roh said the NLL was drawn solely for military operations in 1953. The North never accepted it, he noted, suggesting the line could be reset.

Yonhap ("ROH'S VIEW ON INTER-KOREAN SEA BORDER CAUSES UPROAR", Seoul, 2007/10/12) reported that war veterans and conservative forces are up in arms over ROK President Roh Moo-hyun's controversial remarks on the de facto sea border between ROK and DPRK since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War. The main opposition Grand National Party also attacked Roh's remarks. "The president needs to correct his angle on national security," GNP spokeswoman Na Kyung-won said. ROK's largest veterans group expressed worries over the future of the NLL. "It is shocking and deplorable that the president made such inappropriate remarks," the ROK Veterans Association said in a statement.

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6. Inter-Korean Relations

Korea Herald (Kim Ji-hyun , "GNP PLEDGES COOPERATION ON N.K.", 2007/10/11) reported that Grand National Party Chairman Kang Jae-sup yesterday said the party would cooperate "fully" on further advancing ties with the DPRK. Reflecting an about-face from the GNP's earlier criticism of the outcome of President Roh Moo-hyun's summit with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il, the GNP chairman commended the president for "producing a much developed agreement with North Korea" compared to seven years earlier during the first summit between the leaders of the two Koreas. However, shortly before the meeting, Kang told Yonhap News that the president should seek parliamentary endorsement before pushing ahead with allotting government funds for investing in the DPRK's infrastructure, such as building and improving ports and roads.

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7. DPRK-Japan Relations

Kyodo ("N. KOREAN ENVOY SAYS FUKUDA'S DIALOGUE POLICY 'WORTHY OF NOTE'", Pyongyang, 2007/10/11) reported that the DPRK's envoy to normalization talks with Japan sounded a positive note on new Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda's dialogue-oriented policy on the DPRK, saying it marks a change from his hard-line predecessor and is "worthy of note." In an interview with Kyodo News, Song Il Ho expressed a willingness to improve relations with Japan through talks, saying Pyongyang will not shun discussions with a country seeking dialogue.

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8. PRC on DPRK Defectors in Beijing

Reuters ("CHINA CRITICIZES SOUTH KOREA OVER NORTH DEFECTORS ", Beijing, 2007/10/11) reported that the PRC criticized the ROK over an attempt by four apparent DPRK defectors to seek refuge at an international school in Beijing, saying its diplomats obstructed police called to the scene. The four defectors entered a ROK-run school, hid on the premises and then were chased onto the roof by about 30 PRC security personnel, the South's Yonhap news agency reported. "At that time, South Korean consular officials disregarded international law and their own status and obstructed the Chinese police from doing their job," Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao told a news conference. "China expresses its dissatisfaction at this."

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9. US-ROK Security Alliance

Chosun Ilbo ("INDEPENDENT TROOP CONTROL WILL COST W230 BILLION", 2007/10/11) reported that last year, the government insisted the ROK's takeover of wartime operational control of its troops by 2012 would create no additional burden for the country, but that is far from truth. The Defense Ministry on Wednesday said it will need an additional budget of some W230 billion (US\$1=W916) for an increase of 1,420 company and field officers to prepare for the takeover of wartime operational control from the US between 2008 and 2012.

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10. US-ROK Trade Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("RICE, CLINTON CLASH OVER KOREA-U.S. FTA", 2007/10/11) reported that US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice clashed with Senator Hillary Clinton, a Democratic Party presidential contender, on the congressional ratification of the ROK-US Free Trade Agreement. Speaking before the Organization of American States on Tuesday, Rice warned that failure to pass the deal would send the wrong signal to Asian allies. "We fully support our free trade agreement with Korea, and we look to Congress to approve it." But Clinton continues to slam the trade pact. Clinton denounced not only the ROK-US trade deal but also NAFTA.

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11. US-Japan Missile Defense Cooperation

The Associated Press ("REPORT: US TO DEPLOY SYSTEM FOR ANALYZING MISSILE LAUNCH DATA AT BASE IN JAPAN", Tokyo, 2007/10/11) reported that the US military is set to deploy a mobile ground station for analyzing satellite data on ballistic missile launches at a US base in northern Japan, a news report quoted a Japanese defense official as saying. The Joint Tactical Ground Station will be deployed at Misawa Air Force Base, Kyodo News agency quoted Defense Ministry official Fumitaka Ochi as telling local officials in a meeting open to media in northern Aomori prefecture (state) where the base is located.

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12. Sino-Japanese East Sea Territorial Dispute

Xinhua ("CHINA, JAPAN START FRESH TALKS ON E.CHINA SEA ISSUE", Beijing, 2007/10/11) reported that the PRC and Japan started the 10th round of talks on the East China Sea issues in Beijing. Director of PRC Foreign Ministry's Department of Asian Affairs Hu Zhengyue attended the talks as top PRC negotiator. The PRC will continue to push forward the consultation with a positive and pragmatic attitude, in accordance with the agreement reached by the leaders of the two countries, PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said. The PRC hoped Japan would make the same efforts so as to find a joint exploration plan accepted by both sides, Liu said.

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13. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN'S CHEN UNDAUNTED BY 'CHINESE SUPPRESSION'", Taipei, 2007/10/11) reported that Taiwan's president pledged to bolster the island's diplomatic defences around the world despite facing "Chinese suppression" in its bid to rejoin the United Nations in its own right. The comments sparked a steely reaction from the PRC which reiterated its vow to stop the island from becoming an independent.

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14. US-PRC Trade Relations

Reuters ("U.S. TO SEEK NEW WTO PROBE OF CHINA TRADE RULES ", Geneva, 2007/10/11) reported that the US will ask the World Trade Organization (WTO) to examine restrictions on the sale of US films, music, books, magazines and newspapers in the PRC, an agenda for an upcoming WTO meeting showed. In its complaint, Washington says the PRC unfairly limits who can import and distribute entertainment products, including movies for theatrical release. "It also appears that foreign individuals and enterprises ... are accorded treatment less favorable than that accorded to enterprises in China with respect to the right to trade," the U.S. complaint reads.

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15. PRC Environment

The Financial Times (Mure Dickie, "POLLUTERS FACE OLYMPIC SHUTDOWN", Beijing, 2007/10/11) reported that the PRC is considering limiting the operations of steelmakers, petrochemical plants and other factories near Beijing for nearly two months next year in order to reduce air pollution during the Olympic Games, according to local media. The reports highlight continuing speculation about what action the government will take to try to ensure air quality does not hit dangerous levels when its often smoggy capital hosts the Games next August.

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16. PRC Party Congress

The Associated Press ("CHINA ACTIVIST DETAINED BEFORE CONGRESS", Beijing, 2007/10/11) reported that authorities in central PRC have detained a longtime democracy campaigner in a security clampdown ahead of the Communist Party congress this month, his son and another activist said. Yao Yao said his father Yao Lifa and other relatives had been taken from their home in the central city of Qianjiang by plainclothes officers on Oct. 1 and would likely not be freed until after the congress. Hu Jia, a Beijing-based activist for people with AIDS and other causes, said he had been unable to reach Yao Lifa for days.

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17. PRC Corruption

BBC News ("CHINESE CORRUPTION 'ASTONISHING'", 2007/10/11) reported that a report by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace says that corruption costs the PRC economy \$86bn a year. The report says bribery and theft by officials are rising and cost PRC more than its annual education budget. And it says the problems will continue because the ruling Communist Party, due to begin its five-yearly congress next week, is unlikely to reform the system.

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18. US Force Deployments

Hankyoreh ("DEPLOYMENT OF B-2 SPIRIT BOMBERS RAISES STAKES IN NORTHEAST ASIA", Washington, 2007/10/12) reported that US Air Force deployed four B-2 Spirit bombers to the Andersen Air Force Base in Guam, which has emerged as a military hub in the Western Pacific region as part of its continuous bomber presence. Since August, some analysts say that the US military has increased its military presence against PRC and DPRK by deploying 40 F-22 Raptors to its air force base in Alaska. It is easy to conduct military operations against the DPRK, PRC, the Straits of Taiwan and the South China Sea from the Guam base, because there are no restrictions in carrying out the operations. Accordingly, Guam is poised as the best alternative after the relocation of US troops to Japan. Guam is located 3,800 kilometers from Pyongyang and 4,500 kilometers from Beijing.

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