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CONTENTS

I. United States

1. Light-Water Reactor Project
2. Japan-DPRK Normalization Talks
3. ROK Defoliant Use
4. ROK-PRC Relations
5. Cross-Strait Relations
6. Taiwan Missile Development
7. PRC Military Development
8. US-Taiwan Weapons Software Transfer
9. US Nuclear Weapons in Japan

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-Japan Normalization Talks
2. Japanese Sanctions on DPRK
3. Light-Water Reactor Project
4. US Special Envoy Visits ROK
5. US-DPRK Talks
6. Remains of US Soldiers from Korean War
7. DPRK-PRC Relations
8. ROK-PRC Relations
9. ROK Military Readiness
10. ROK Assemblyman to Visit DPRK
11. DPRK-ROK Environmental Cooperation
12. DPRK Foreign Missions

II. Japan

1. Japanese-DPRK Normalization Talks

2. Japanese Sanctions on DPRK
3. Light-Water Reactor Project
4. Japanese Peacekeeping Operations

I. United States

1. Light-Water Reactor Project

Agence France Presse ("MAJOR POWERS AGREE TO BUILD NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IN NKOREA," Tokyo, 12/13/99) reported that a Japanese foreign ministry official said that the executive board of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) agreed on Monday to sign an agreement with the project's main contractor in the ROK on December 15. The Japanese official said, "The contract will be signed by KEDO executive director Desaix Anderson and the contractor, Korea Electric Power Co. (KEPCO)."

2. Japan-DPRK Normalization Talks

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN TO HALT CURBS ON NORTH KOREANS," Tokyo, 12/10/99) reported that news reports said on December 10 that Japan plans to lift all sanctions it has imposed on DPRK early next week, but an announcement of renewed food aid is likely to be delayed. Quoting government sources, the report said the chief Japanese cabinet secretary, Mikio Aoki, will announce the end of sanctions on December 14. Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi approved the measure on December 9 after meeting with the deputy foreign minister, Yutaka Kawashima, in light of an agreement between the two countries to reopen normalization talks. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 10.]

Agence France Presse ("US BACKS JAPAN ENGAGEMENT WITH NORTH KOREA," Tokyo, 12/13/99) reported that US Ambassador to Japan Thomas Foley on Monday praised Japan's decision to re-start talks with the DPRK. Foley told a news conference at the Japan Press Club, "I believe the United States, Japan and South Korea can bring about a peaceful, substantive dialogue with North Korea. We welcome the recent hopeful signs of an improvement in Japan-North Korea relations." Japan's Jiji Press said on December 11 that Japan and the DPRK are likely to hold a preparatory meeting in the PRC on December 21. Foley said, "together with South Korea, American and Japanese support for the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization remains the key to preventing North Korea from pursuing a nuclear weapons program."

3. ROK Defoliant Use

Associated Press (Paul Shin, "S.KOREAN: AGENT ORANGE USE OUR FAULT," Seoul, 12/12/99) and USA Today ("S. KOREA RESPONSIBLE FOR SPRAYING AGENT ORANGE," 12/13/99, 18) reported that ROK Defense Minister Cho Sung-tae said on December 12 that the ROK is solely responsible for spraying toxic defoliant Agent Orange along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) in the late 1960s, but ROK residents who fell ill after exposure to the chemical may be able to sue US manufacturers for compensation. Cho said, "in view of the past settlement of similar cases involving the Vietnam War, it may be necessary that victims exposed along the Korean border sue U.S. manufacturers." Cho said on a policy debate show on KBS-TV that the US military recommended the use of Agent Orange and other defoliants to clear undergrowth along the DMZ without knowing their negative health effects, and the ROK decided to use them because of the DPRK's reliance on dense foliage along the border as cover to infiltrate armed agents. Cho also said, "I think it's inappropriate to hold the U.S.

responsible for it, because the South Korean government ultimately decided to use the chemical."

4. ROK-PRC Relations

Agence France Presse ("FOREIGN MINISTERS AGREE ON CHINESE PREMIER ZHU'S VISIT TO S. KOREA," Seoul, 12/10/99) reported that Cho Jung-pyo, director general of the Asia Pacific Affairs Bureau of the ROK Foreign Ministry, said that Foreign Ministers Tang Jiaxuan of the PRC and Foreign Minster Hong Soon-young of the ROK agreed on December 10 to push for a visit by PRC Premier Zhu Rongji to the ROK next year to strengthen PRC-ROK ties. Cho said the ministers also agreed to push for a visit by the PRC defense minister during the first half of next year. Hong also agreed to hold regular foreign ministers' talks twice a year. Hong sought continued PRC support for the ROK policy of engaging the DPRK. Hong also requested that the PRC treat in a humanitarian manner the DPRK nationals who illegally cross into the PRC to search for food. Tang was quoted as saying that the number of DPRK nationals crossing the border has decreased in recent times and that the PRC had treated them in a "generous" manner.

5. Cross-Strait Relations

Agence France Presse ("CHINA CAN HOLD PEACEFUL TALKS WITH TAIWAN," Tokyo, 12/13/99) reported that the PRC's official Xinhua news agency quoted visiting chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Li Ruihuan as saying in an interview with Japan Broadcasting Corporation that the PRC can hold peaceful talks with Taiwan if the island changes its attitude. Li said, "as long as the Taiwan authorities show sincerity in conformity to the people's will, we can sit together and have peaceful consultations." Asked why the PRC would not renounce force, Li said, "No Chinese leader nor any generation of the Chinese leadership has the right to discard Taiwan from its motherland. If anybody persists in going his own way to segment Taiwan from the map of China in disregard of the desire of the Chinese people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait for peaceful reunification, prosperity and development, we will have no other choice."

Agence France Presse ("CHINA SEES MACAU HANDOVER AS FUEL FOR ITS TAIWAN REUNIFICATION DRIVE," Beijing, 12/13/99) reported that analysts said that the PRC is using Macau's return to PRC rule on December 20 as an opportunity to rally support for the reunification of Taiwan. Jean-Pierre Cabestan, director of the Hong Kong- based French Centre for Research on Contemporary China, said, "Macau is insignificant in itself. That's why the Chinese government is turning the handover into a very symbolic thing." Cabestan said that the PRC is hoping to sway not only domestic opinion, but international opinion in favor of Taiwan's reunification by showing that Hong Kong and Macau can prosper under the "one country, two systems" formula. Cabestan continued, "the pressure on Taiwan to accept the 'one country, two systems' formula will be stronger after Macau's handover. This will be a big segment of Chinese diplomacy in the coming year."

6. Taiwan Missile Development

Agence France Presse ("TAIPEI-BEIJING TIES SHADOWED BY ARMS RACE," Taipei, 12/12/99) reported that analysts warned on December 12 that an arms race is developing between Taiwan and PRC after Taiwan said it wants to develop long-range ground-to-ground missiles to counter its rival. Lin Yu-fang, professor of Tamkang University's Graduate Institute of International Affairs and Strategic Studies said, "the ongoing political stand-off and an arms race across the Taiwan Strait could be further exacerbated. As a matter of fact, an arms race is going on. Not long after Taiwan said it wanted to be armed with an anti-missile shield, the mainland also unveiled its plans of

building anti- missile capability." Professor Jia Qingguo of Beijing University told the Taiwan-based China Times earlier this week that "if Taiwan decides to develop missiles that could strike most of the mainland, an arms race would be inevitable."

The Washington Times carried an opinion article (Edward Timperlake and William Triplett II, "IS TAIWAN GOING NUCLEAR?" 12/10/99) which said that Taiwan vice president Lien Chan's call for Taiwan to develop its own "long- range ground-to-ground" missiles "would be provocative without being effective as a deterrent if it is not nuclear- armed." The article argued, "The Clinton/ Gore administration's complete tilt to the PRC leaves the democratic Republic of China with an imperative for home-grown self-defense." It added, "The simple problem is the unprecedented build-up of first-strike precision-guided munitions on the PRC coast would ensure a successful overwhelming attack to destroy Taiwan's military. This would be the first phase of the conquest of Taiwan." It concluded that if the PRC carried out a full-fledged assault on Taiwan, without US aid, "It would be all over in 72 hours." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 10.]

7. PRC Military Development

The Washington Times (Gus Constantine, "CHINESE OFFICIAL DEFENDS EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN MILITARY," 12/10/99) reported that Liu Xiaoming, deputy chief of mission at the PRC Embassy in Washington, said on December 9 that the PRC was justified in its efforts to strengthen its military. He refused, however, to confirm or deny reports that the PRC is upgrading its missiles and building new bases close to Taiwan. Liu also said that any inclusion of Taiwan in a theater missile defense system (TMD) would trigger an arms race in the region rather than deter one. Liu also said, "it is clear that [Taiwan President] Lee [Tenghui] wants to lay the groundwork for the declaration of an independent Republic of Taiwan. That is the only meaning of his May 9 statement that relations between China and Taiwan should be conducted as special state-to-state relations. If Mr. Lee seeks to amend the constitution to make his government the Republic of Taiwan, it would pose serious risks for the region." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 10.]

8. US-Taiwan Weapons Software Transfer

Defense Daily (Neil Baumgardner, "U.S. GOV'T TO INTEGRATE AMRAAM SOFTWARE ON TAIWAN F-16S," 12/10/99, 1) reported that the Taiwanese air force's deputy weapons acquisition chief Shen Yuantai said at a press conference on December 7 that the US government has tentatively agreed to integrate software into the fire control systems of Taiwan's Lockheed Martin F-16 fighters that would allow the planes to use Raytheon's AIM-120 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM). Shen said, "the move indicates we have obtained 'admission tickets' to enter the realm of the sophisticated missile system." A US Defense Department spokesman declined to comment. The integration of the AMRAAM software could be a precursor to the eventual sale of AMRAAMs to Taiwan, which the US Defense Department has previously opposed. A Congressional source stated, "the Pentagon might feel that under the Taiwan Relations Act, this could be adequate to meet the Chinese threat." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 10.]

9. US Nuclear Weapons in Japan

The New York Times (Judith Miller, "U.S. VIOLATED NUCLEAR ARMS PLEDGE IN JAPAN,

RECORDS SHOW," 12/12/99) and Agence France Presse ("US HID NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON TWO JAPANESE ISLANDS," Washington, 12/13/99) reported that newly declassified documents show that while the US publicly vowed not to keep nuclear weapons in Japan, it secretly stored them not only on Okinawa but also on the islands of Chichi Jima and Iwo Jima, and was prepared to do the same at as many as 11 other Japanese sites. An article describing the documents is being published in the January/February issue of The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. William M. Arkin, a nuclear-weapons analyst and a co-author of the article, said, "based on these documents, we now see for the first time a much fuller picture of how Japan was integrated into the U.S. nuclear system." The article stated that despite its policy as a non-nuclear nation, Japan stored "an extensive nuclear infrastructure -- at its peak, as large as that of other American allies." The article said that between 1956 and 1966, the US, apparently with Japanese agreement, kept nuclear weapons and in the latter years nuclear bombs without their fissile cores on Chichi Jima, about 500 miles southeast of the Japanese mainland, and on Iwo Jima, about 670 miles southeast of Japan's capital. It said that the US kept nuclear weapons on Okinawa until 1972. After the end of US occupation, nuclear bombs without their fissile cores continued to be stored on Okinawa as well as some other islands and on the Japanese mainland at Misawa and Itazuki air bases, and possibly elsewhere. In addition, nuclear-armed Navy ships were stationed in Sasebo and Yokosuka. The Bulletin article stated that "in all ... 13 separate locations in Japan had nuclear weapons or components, or were earmarked to receive nuclear weapons in times of crisis or war." The US maintained that because the islands were under US occupation at the time and the bombs kept on the mainland did not have their plutonium or uranium centers, the US had honored its agreements with Japan and did not have nuclear weapons "in Japan." The report argued, however, that "this elaborate stratagem" showed that the ostensible lack of a nuclear presence in Japan was a mere "technicality." Walter B. Slocombe, US undersecretary of defense for policy, said in an interview that the report did not accuse the US of violating any of its legal obligations to Japan. Slocombe also said, "our position is that there have been no violations of our obligations under the security treaty and related arrangements."

Agence France Presse ("US INSISTS IT STUCK BY NUCLEAR OBLIGATIONS TO JAPAN," Tokyo, 12/13/99) reported that US Ambassador to Japan Thomas Foley on Monday responded to the US Defense Department document about the secret US storage of nuclear weapons in Japan by saying that the US nuclear weapons policy was consistent with US obligations to Japan. Foley said, "the United States is aware and has been always aware of the special sensitivities of the Japanese people regarding nuclear weapons. We have faithfully maintained our responsibilities and obligations under the US-Japan security treaty." An official at the Japanese foreign ministry's US-Japan security treaty division refused to comment, saying, "it is not appropriate to comment on a report by a private research institute."

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-Japan Normalization Talks

The Korea Times ("JAPAN CONSIDERS TALKS ON TIES WITH NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 12/12/99) reported that Japan is considering holding preliminary talks on setting up diplomatic ties with the DPRK as early as December 20, Japan's Asahi Shimbun newspaper reported on Saturday. The talks would be held in Beijing and involve senior bureaucrats from both sides. They would prepare for the resumption of full-fledged normalization discussions, which broke down in 1992 over allegations that DPRK agents kidnapped Japanese citizens. Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi in a speech on Saturday at the United Nations University in Tokyo stressed the importance of normalizing ties with the DPRK. "Our basic policy is to correct a relationship that has not been normal since the end of World War II," he was quoted as saying by Kyodo News. He added that debate within the

government on the lifting of food sanctions against the DPRK is progressing. Also on Saturday, Kyodo News service reported that Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Toshiba Corporation and Hitachi will sign an agreement by the end of the month to help build two nuclear power reactors in the DPRK.

Chosun Ilbo (Park Jong-hoon, "NK DEMANDS POST WAR COMPENSATION FROM JAPAN," Seoul, 12/11/99) reported that the Japanese newspaper Sankei reported on Sunday that the DPRK had reconfirmed its demands for compensation from Japan for the latter's colonial rule and also for post-war damages suffered by the DPRK people in return for resuming diplomatic talks. The DPRK's Korea Workers Party (KWP) secretary for ROK Affairs Kim Yong- soon reportedly made this point to a visiting Japanese delegation that recently visited the DPRK. According to minutes of the meeting, Kim quoted a clause from an unofficial agreement in 1990 between the KWP and a delegation headed by former Japanese Prime Minister Kanemura detailing "compensation spanning forty-five years, before and after the war," and saying that relations could only improve when "stolen goods were returned." Kim also wanted the Japanese to not use the term "kidnapping," with regard to missing Japanese citizens allegedly taken by the DPRK, saying that the KWP would look into the "missing" people, but that Japan should also ask the ROK government to do the same.

2. Japanese Sanctions on DPRK

The Korea Times ("JAPAN TO LIFT ALL SANCTIONS ON NORTH KOREA NEXT TUESDAY: REPORTS," Seoul, 12/10/99) reported that Japan plans to lift all sanctions it has imposed on the DPRK early next week, but an announcement of fresh food aid is likely to be delayed, news reports said on Friday. Chief Cabinet Secretary Mikio Aoki will announce the end of sanctions on Tuesday, Kyodo News, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun and the Tokyo Shimbun said, quoting government sources. Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi approved the measure on Thursday after meeting Vice Foreign Minister Yutaka Kawashima following a new accord between the two countries to reopen stalled talks, the reports said. Under the measure, Japan will lift the freeze on food assistance and negotiations on establishing diplomatic ties with the DPRK. Japan now hopes to launch negotiations on full normalization of ties in February, and an announcement on fresh aid is expected after a planned meeting between the two sides in Beijing or Singapore on December 24, the reports said. If Japan is satisfied with results of the Christmas Eve meeting, it would offer food aid in two phases, initially limiting it to contributions to international bodies, and later beginning direct bilateral aid depending on the situation, the reports said.

3. Light-Water Reactor Project

The Korea Herald ("MAIN WORK FOR N.K. REACTORS TO BEGIN," Seoul, 12/10/99) and Joongang Ilbo (Hong Bong-ki, "MAIN CONSTRUCTION OF LIGHT-WATER REACTORS IN NK TO COMMENCE," Seoul, 12/09/99) reported that the main work for the construction of two light-water nuclear reactors for the DPRK will begin after a contract is signed next week between the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) and the ROK's state-run Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO). A KEPCO source said on Thursday that the signing is planned for December 15 between KEDO Secretary General Desaix Anderson and KEPCO President Choi Soo-byung.

4. US Special Envoy Visits ROK

The Korea Times ("KARTMAN TO ATTEND SIGNING CEREMONY OF N.KOREAN NUCLEAR REACTOR DEAL," Seoul, 12/12/99) reported that US special envoy for Korean peace talks Charles Kartman will make a visit to Seoul on Tuesday. Kartman will arrive in Seoul after attending an

executive council meeting of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), slated for Monday in Tokyo. Kartman, set to stay in the ROK until Saturday, is scheduled on Wednesday to attend a ceremony to sign a commercial contract between KEDO and the Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO) at KEPCO headquarters in southern Seoul. Kartman will also meet ROK Foreign Affairs-Trade Ministry officials to exchange views on four-party peace talks slated for early next year and current efforts to convene high-level talks between the US and the DPRK.

5. US-DPRK Talks

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "SEOUL, WASHINGTON REMAIN OPTIMISTIC ON DIALOGUE DESPITE N. KOREA'S THREATS," Seoul, 12/10/99) reported that despite the DPRK's expression of skepticism on Wednesday about the need for continuous dialogue with the US, officials in both ROK and US said on Thursday that they were still optimistic about the resumption of US-DPRK talks in the near future. A DPRK Foreign Ministry spokesman, while criticizing the US Republicans' opposition to US engagement policy on the DPRK, said, "To discuss and make decisions on such a crucial issue as the missile program with the U.S. administration, whose term in office is coming to a close, is risky for us." In his interview with the Korea Central News Agency, the official also denounced US conservatives for "casting dark shadows" on the prospects for high-level US-DPRK talks. ROK officials, however, said that the ROK does not believe the DPRK spokesman's comment would affect the ongoing dialogue between the US and the DPRK. "We do not regard the comment so seriously as North Korea has been frequently issuing such threats," said a government official, speaking on condition of anonymity. "The Pyongyang official's remarks, when examined, do not contain any direct emphasis on ending talks with the United States, nor have there been any notices to that effect in Pyongyang's telephone contacts with Washington," the official said. A US State Department official, meanwhile, predicted high-level talks would be held early next year. The official, requesting anonymity, told ROK correspondents in Washington that the two countries are unlikely to hold a preparatory meeting to arrange the talks this year.

6. Remains of US Soldiers from Korean War

Joongang Ilbo (Kang Joo-an, "NORTH KOREA AND U.S. TO TALK ON REMAINS OF U.S. SOLDIERS FROM KOREAN WAR," Seoul, 12/06/99) reported that the DPRK and the US will hold three days of talks beginning December 15 in Berlin on the joint exhumation of the remains of US soldiers killed during the Korean War. A source at the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said on December 6, "North Korea and the U.S. will discuss the areas, time periods and number of exhumation works for next year." At the talks, US compensation to the DPRK for the exhumation work, which was about US$200,000 this year, will be discussed, along with a reconfirmation that the remains will be directly delivered to the US next year rather than through the UN Forces at Panmunjom.

7. DPRK-PRC Relations

The Korea Herald ("BEIJING REFUSED TO RECEIVE KIM JONG-IL," Seoul, 12/13/99) reported that ROK administration sources said on Sunday that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il tried to pay an unofficial visit to the PRC in the first half of the year to discuss recent developments in US-DPRK relations and other pending issues with PRC leaders, but the PRC would not receive him. "I understand that North Korea delivered Kim's wish to visit Beijing through diplomatic channels, before Kim Yong-nam's trip to China in June," a government source said, requesting anonymity. "China politely denied the proposal, saying that if Kim were to visit Beijing, it should be an official visit," another government source said. The second source, who also wished to remain anonymous, said that the PRC decided to

receive Kim Yong-nam instead.

8. ROK-PRC Relations

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "TANG'S VISIT LAYS STEPPING-STONE FOR MULTIFACETED SEOUL- BEIJING TIES," 12/13/99), Chosun Ilbo (Lee Ha-won, "CHINA-KOREA MINISTERS FAIL TO AGREE ON REFUGEES," Seoul, 12/12/99) and The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "SEOUL, BEIJING PLEDGE CLOSER TIES; HONG, TANG DISCUSS POLITICAL, ECONOMIC COOPERATION," Seoul, 12/11/99) reported that ROK analysts said on Sunday that an ROK-PRC foreign ministers' meeting over the weekend was meaningful in that it laid a stepping-stone for developing bilateral ties beyond trade to political, cultural and even military areas. It was also in keeping with the agreement reached between ROK President Kim Dae-jung and PRC President Jiang Zemin last November to solidify their cooperative partnership for the 21st century in politics, economy and culture. "The accord on reciprocal visits by foreign ministers carries great significance, symbolizing the growth of ties between the two countries, which involved mainly business and trade concerns in the past," an ROK ministry official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "Moreover, given that China is the closest ally of North Korea, the regular exchange of high- level government officials between South Korea and China will help secure stability on the Korean Peninsula, by deterring possible provocation from the North," the official said. Some sensitive issues still remain to be resolved between the two countries, analysts said, noting that most delicate of them is the PRC's treatment of DPRK defectors. ROK Foreign Minister Hong Soon-young requested the PRC treat them in a humanitarian manner. PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan, while promising to heed the ROK's call, reiterated the PRC's previous position.

9. ROK Military Readiness

The Korea Times (Lee Chang-sup, "KIM ASKS MILITARY TO INCREASE VIGILANCE AGAINST NK'S POSSIBLE PROVOCATION," Seoul, 12/12/99) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung on Saturday instructed the military to increase vigilance against DPRK armed provocation. In a visit to the 2nd Navy Command south of Seoul, Kim said that the military should maintain a watertight defense posture against the threat of military action by the DPRK. He said that the DPRK might seek to take military action in an attempt to gain consolation following its defeat in last June's naval clash. Kim said that such an attack could be carried out by air, sea, or land. "I have already instructed the defense minister to prepare for such action by the North," he said. Kim claimed that the DPRK could choose one of three options in the future: waging a war, maintaining the status quo or adopting a policy of openness and reform under the communist system. The President stressed that the ROK must be patient and consistent in its policy of engagement with the DPRK so that it can choose openness without concern. He said the communist era is over worldwide. Kim said that the ROK would deal sternly with any type of armed action by the DPRK although "we will embrace North Koreans as brethren."

10. ROK Assemblyman to Visit DPRK

Joongang Ilbo ("OPPOSITION PARTY ASSEMBLYMAN VISITS NK FROM DEC.7," Seoul, 12/10/99) reported that a source from the ROK Unification Ministry said that Kim Il-yun, assemblyman of the opposition Grand National Party, has been visiting the DPRK from December 7 in order to negotiate with DPRK authorities on the establishment of a Lions International branch in Pyongyang. The assemblyman, who is also a director of the international club, delivered US$280,000-worth of supplies, including 6,000 blankets, clothes, and wheat flour, to Pyongyang as aid for DPRK children.

Kim will reportedly negotiate with DPRK Authorities on the foundation of an ophthalmic hospital, in which DPRK residents possibly threatened with the loss of their eyesight can be treated, during his visit to the country until December 14.

11. DPRK-ROK Environmental Cooperation

Joongang Ilbo ("SOUTH AND NORTH KOREA TO DISCUSS PRESERVING WILD ANIMALS IN NK," Seoul, 12/12/99) reported that animal protection activists in the ROK and DPRK will jointly develop a wild animal protection plan in the DPRK. According to Yonhap News Agency on December 12, the Korea Animal Rescue and Management Association announced, "We will meet with North Korea's Nature Preservation Federation in January to discuss the plan to protect wild animals in NK. The Ministry of Unification already approved our application for contacting NK citizens." A source at the association explained that they will discuss with the DPRK organization conducting a joint survey of animals' habitat on and around Mt. Paekdu and documenting the existence of rare species near the Demilitarized Zone. The source said, "We are considering sending feed to NK's zoos, which currently have a diverse collection of rare animals. We plan to widen our activities in the event negotiations with NK are successful. We will seek the support of international animal protection agencies to initially survey then preserve endangered animals in NK."

12. DPRK Foreign Missions

The Korea Herald ("N.K. REPLACES MISSION CHIEFS IN 27 NATIONS," Seoul, 12/10/99) reported that the DPRK changed the chiefs of 27 overseas missions this year and made most of them responsible for diplomatic affairs involving neighboring nations as well, the ROK Unification Ministry said. The DPRK replaced the heads of its diplomatic missions in 10 nations in Africa, eight in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, four in Asia and three in the Middle East and two other countries. Twenty DPRK embassies and other diplomatic offices are in charge of more than one host nation, apparently in line with DPRK's decision early last year to close 30 percent of its overseas missions due to its financial situation.

II. Japan

1. Japanese-DPRK Normalization Talks

The Daily Yomiuri ("NORTH KOREA TALKS TO OPEN DEC. 21," 12/13/99) reported that the Japanese government plans to hold preliminary talks with the DPRK from December 21 in Beijing to pave the way for the resumption of normalization talks. The report said that bureau chief-level Foreign Ministry officials will participate in the preliminary talks and that Red Cross officials from both Japan and the DPRK will meet for separate talks. For the preliminary talks, the governmental officials will focus on coordinating the itinerary, agenda and level of representation at the normalization talks, slated for early next year.

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("DPRK APPOINTS CHUNG TAE-HWA AS DPRK-JAPANESE NORMALIZATION AMBASSADOR," 12/09/99) reported that the DPRK appointed Chung Tae-hwa as DPRK-Japanese normalization talks ambassador, according to a Japanese government source on December 7. The Japanese government already decided to appoint Koji Takahasi, currently Japanese Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, as Japanese Ambassador for the normalization talks. The report added that both governments will have a preliminary talk in Beijing this month and decide on the content of the talks.

2. Japanese Sanctions on DPRK

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("US HIGH-RANKING OFFICIAL STATES THAT JAPAN'S LIFTING OF SANCTIONS ON DPRK IS JAPAN'S OWN DECISION," Washington, 12/11/99) reported that US State Department deputy spokesman James Foley said on December 10 that Japan's decision to lift sanctions on the DPRK was its own. Foley stated, "Above all, this is something our friends have to decide on…. We fully support the recently accelerated talks between Japan and the DPRK. We are closely consulting with Japan and the ROK, and I believe that this is the best way for success."

The Nikkei Shimbun ("GOVERNMENT TO FULLY LIFT SANCTIONS ON DPRK," 12/10/99) reported that the Japanese government decided on December 9 to fully lift economic sanctions on the DPRK as early as December 14. The report said that after getting the final approval from the Liberal Democratic Party, the Liberal Party and Komeito, the Japanese government will officially decide to resume both normalization talks and food aid to the DPRK. However, the government is still carefully watching how the DPRK will behave at the normalization talks slated for this month. The report added that the Japanese government already resumed Japanese-DPRK chartered flights in October and financial aid to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization in November this year.

3. Light-Water Reactor Project

The Nikkei Shimbun ("KEDO EXECUTIVE MEETING ON STARTING CONSTRUCTION TO BE HELD IN TOKYO," 12/13/99) reported that the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) will have its executive meeting on December 13 to pave the way for the construction of the light-water reactors in the DPRK. The report added that KEDO also plans to finalize its contract with the Korean Electric Power Company (KEPCO), main contractor for the light-water reactor project. In addition to the project itself, the meeting will discuss Japanese-DPRK normalization talks, according to the report.

4. Japanese Peacekeeping Operations

The Daily Yomiuri ("LDP MOVES TO CHANGE PKO PARTICIPATION LAW") reported that the ruling Liberal Democratic Party proposed adding a clause to the Japanese UN Peacekeeping (PKO) Cooperation Law that would permit the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to perform guard missions when the ban on SDF participation in frontline UN peacekeeping operations is lifted. The report said that because the current law does not allow Japan to participate in guard missions, the country must ask the armed forces of other nations to protect Japanese civilian police officers and other officials even when SDF forces are on-site. It added that even if the ban on participation in UN PKO forces is lifted, the current law allows SDF members to use weapons only to protect themselves or other SDF members at the same location. The LDP also proposed allowing SDF members to use weapons to protect Japanese nationals, others, and military equipment used in peacekeeping operations and relaxing the restriction on sending personnel into areas where no ceasefire agreement exists, which is currently a condition for dispatching the SDF on peacekeeping missions. The report added that the Liberal Party (Jiyuto) proposed passing a law in the next ordinary Diet session to allow the SDF to join multinational peacekeeping forces and urging the prime minister to instruct relevant ministries and agencies to start discussing the establishment of a law pertaining to emergency and territorial patrols.

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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