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I. United States

1. ROK-DPRK Trade Agreement

The Associated Press (Sang-Hun Choe, "SOUTH, N. KOREA SIGN AGREEMENTS," Seoul, 11/11/00) reported that the ROK and the DPRK signed treaties on November 11 to reduce the risk and cost for ROK firms opening businesses in the DPRK. ROK official said that the four treaties will dramatically boost trade and other economic exchanges between the two sides. ROK pool reports quoted Lee Kun-kyong, ROK deputy finance and economy minister, as saying after the signing, "The South and North will soon enter a new era for economic exchanges." The new deals call for the two sides to protect each others' investments, end double taxation, open a direct route for financial transactions, and establish a panel to settle trade disputes.

2. Inspection of DPRK Food Aid

The Washington Post ("N. KOREA ALLOWS AID INSPECTIONS BY SOUTH," Seoul, 11/13/00) reported that according to ROK government officials on a visit to the DPRK, the DPRK allowed ROK officials for the first time to inspect some of its food storehouses to prove that it was not diverting outside aid to its military. The inspection was conducted by ROK government officials on a visit to the DPRK. They inspected some food warehouses near Pyongyang and Kaesong. The DPRK also provided a written statement detailing the distribution of 148,687 tons of food it has received from the ROK. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for November 13, 2000.]

3. Australian Foreign Minister's DPRK Visit

Agence France Presse ("DOWNER HAILS FORTHCOMING TRIP TO NORTH KOREA," Bandar Seri Bergawan, 11/11/00) reported that Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said on November 11 that his visit to the DPRK would be a milestone in the DPRK's emergence from isolation. The three-day visit starting on November 14 will be the first by an Australian foreign minister since 1975, and the first ministerial visit since Australia resumed ties with the DPRK in May. Downer told reporters before meeting Japan's Foreign Minister Yohei Kono in Brunei, on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting, "I think that it's important that we play our part as a significant country in the region to try to help bring North Korea in from the cold. I think a country like Australia can play an important part in the process of building confidence between North Korea and in particular the rest of the Asia- Pacific region." A Japanese foreign ministry official said that Kono did not ask Downer to raise the kidnapping issue during their meeting. The official said, "Mr. Kono understands that Mr. Downer is already aware of Japan's concerns. Mr. Downer assured Mr. Kono that he would brief him on his trip to North Korea. He told him that it's important for North Korea to become a member of the international community."

4. Remains of US Soldiers from Korean War

The Associated Press (Eric Prideaux, "KOREAN WAR BODY REMAINS RETURNED," Tokyo, 11/11/00) reported that US Forces Japan spokeswoman Master Sergeant Eudith Rodney said that remains believed to be those of 15 soldiers missing in action since the Korean War were flown to Japan and handed over to the US military in a ceremony on November 11. Rodney said that Charles W. Jones, a representative from the US Defense Department Missing Personnel Office, in Japan lauded the DPRK government for its cooperation in the return of the remains. Rodney said that the remains will be taken to a US Army laboratory in Hawaii for identification and would afterward be returned to families. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for November 13, 2000.]

5. Taiwan Policy toward PRC

Agence France Presse ("TAIWAN PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY GROUP TO DECIDE ON 'ONE CHINA' IN A MONTH," Taipei, 11/13/00) reported that Shen Fu-hsiung, a member of Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), said on Monday that Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian's advisory group on the PRC is expected to come up with a concrete proposal on the thorny "one China" issue in a month. Shen said, "One may feel a consensus is emerging. My personal idea is that there will be a breakthrough in between two weeks to a month. Our conclusion is very likely to go beyond the traditional way of thinking." He said the final report could suggest "how the one China is

to going be defined, and would Taiwan be part of its territory." Sources close to the group said that Robert Tsao, chairman of the United Microelectronics Corporation, had recommended at the closed-door meeting that a referendum be held to decide if Taiwan is to be reunified with the PRC. The sources said that Tsao's proposal was generally backed by the group, which was named by Chen to work out a consensus in preparation for any rapprochement talks with the PRC. However, Taiwan's pro-reunification New Party (NP) head Hau Lung-pin said on November 12 that he and another NP legislator, Lai Shih-pao, dropped out of the group to protest what Hau said was the president's backing away from his previous commitments to "one China." Hau said that he had "stopped harboring any hopes on Chen. Chen has ducked the 'one China' issue."

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK-DPRK Trade Agreement

The Korea Herald (Joint Press Corps, "TWO KOREAS SIGN FIRST ECONOMIC AGREEMENT," Pyongyang, 11/13/00) and The Korea Times ("KOREAS FORGE 4-POINT ACCORD ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION," Seoul, 11/13/00) reported that delegates succeeded in signing the first working level inter-Korean economic pact on Saturday. The four part treaty would lay the groundwork for reducing risks of conducting trade to boost cross-border economic exchanges, officials said. Consequently, both governments agreed to guarantee each other's corporate investments, avert double-taxation, designate local banks to allow direct financial transactions, and establish a bilateral body to settle potential trade disputes. "Inter-Korean trade levels have been minimal so far but the agreement will allow for bilateral investments to grow," said DPRK chief delegate Jong Un-op, who is also the Chairman of the National Economic Cooperation Federation. However, both sides conceded that it is too early yet for the treaty to go into effect because both countries still need to approve it at the ministerial-level before passing it on to their respective parliaments. Although optimistic that the process would be moved expeditiously, officials ceded that this could take anywhere between one-to-three years.

2. DPRK Foreign Relations

The Korea Herald (Kil Byung-ok, "MORE COUNTRIES ANNOUNCE TIES WITH N. KOREA," Seoul, 11/13/00) and The Korea Times ("AUSSIE FOREIGN MINISTER TO VISIT N. KOREA TUESDAY," Seoul, 11/11/00) reported that an ROK Foreign Ministry official said on Sunday that the Netherlands and Belgium have announced their decision to take steps for diplomatic normalization with the DPRK in earnest. "Both the Dutch and Belgian governments approved their diplomatic normalization initiatives with Pyongyang at their respective cabinet meetings last week," said the official, who requested not to be named. "The South Korean government welcomes such diplomatic moves by the European Union (EU) nations," the official said, adding the DPRK's integration into the international community is the most desirable way of achieving gradual, step-by-step changes in the DPRK.

3. Four-Party Peace Talks

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "N.K. MULLS RESUMING 4-WAY PEACE TALKS," Seoul, 11/13/00) reported that ROK officials said Sunday that the DPRK is considering resuming the four-way Korean peace talks that have been stalled for more than a year. The DPRK revealed its position when Foreign Minister Paek Nam-sun met a visiting PRC delegation comprised of government officials early this month, they said. "The North expressed its willingness to consider the resumption

of the four-way talks," said a ROK Foreign Ministry official, who asked to remain anonymous. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for November 13, 2000.]

III. People's Republic of China

1. DPRK-ROK Relations

Xinhua News Agency ("SOUTH-NORTH RECONCILIATION IS NOT IRREVERSIBLE," Seoul, 11/08/00, P3) and People's Daily (Wang Linchang, "KIM DAE-JUNG EMPHASIZES RECONCILIATION AND COOPERATION WITH DPRK," Seoul, 11/08/00, P6) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung said, when reporting to the Congress on the 2001 Administrative Program, that it is an irreversible historical trend for the DPRK and the ROK to reconcile and cooperate. The ROK will be, as it has always been, facilitating the reconciliation and cooperation process with the DPRK, Kim said. On ROK-DPRK relations in 2001, Kim said that the ROK will expand and develop exchanges and cooperation in all fields with the DPRK based on the existing confidence, with focus on establishing the institutional framework for lasting peace on the Peninsula. He pointed out that the ROK will consolidate its cooperation with Japan and US regarding its policy to the DPRK, and maintain unswervingly good relations with China and Russia. The improved relationship with the US and Japan will help to eliminate the cold-war situation on the Peninsula and influence positively the cooperation between international organizations and the DPRK.

People's Daily (Gao Haorong, "ROK PROPOSES FOR SOUTH-NORTH MILITARY CONTACT," Seoul, 11/10/00, P6) reported that the ROK Defense Minister sent a letter to the DPRK Defense Chief, proposing to hold ROK-DPRK military contacts to arrange the time and place of the second defense chiefs talks. According to media report, the DPRK expressed that it will reply as soon as possible.

2. PRC-US Relations

People's Liberation Army Daily ("PRC CONDEMNS US'S NEWLY-SIGNED LAW," Beijing, 11/11/00, P6) and China Daily (Shao Zongwei, "NATION ACCUSES US OF INTERFERENCE," 11/10/00, P1) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhu Bangzao and leader of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chinese National People's Congress (NPC) both made remarks on the US President's signing into law the Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs Appropriation Act of 2001. The NPC statement noted that the act, containing a number of anti-China provisions, interferes in China's internal affairs and undermines China's interests by focusing on the issues of Taiwan, human rights and Tibet. Zhu Bangzao said that the PRC has make solemn representations to the US over the appropriation act. The PRC is "strongly displeased" and "firmly opposed" to the signing, said Zhu. According to the Associated Press, the act authorized funds to support non-governmental organizations that seek democracy in the PRC and to buy land for Tibetan refugees living in northern India. It also requires the US administration to consult with Congress on the sale of weapons to Taiwan.

China Review (Xia Liping, "US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AND SINO-US RELATIONS," November 2000, No. 35) published an article on the new US President's global strategy and its implication on PRC-US relations. Judging from the recently released documents, the presidential candidates' speeches and their party platforms, he predicted that US foreign policy would show continuity no matter who is elected. The adjustments will be mainly strategically oriented. Xia argued that the mainstream view in the US concerning the US international position in the new century is that the

US is still leading the world. There is no obvious divergence between the two political parties in this regard. Concerning what kind of roles and means the US should play to maintain its national interests, the Democrats and Republicans have consensus on leading the world, the only difference being the way to achieve this goal. On the China issue, Permanent Normal Trade Relations has secured support from both parties. Although they diverge on how to define PRC-US relations, neither Gore nor Bush mentioned the "constructive partnership." Xia concluded that due to the common interests existing between PRC and US on regional security, economy and other areas, the basic guiding policy will remain a mixture of engagement and containment.

3. PRC Premier's Visit to Singapore

People's Daily ("ZHU RONGJI WILL VISIT SINGAPORE," Beijing, 11/10/00, P1) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhu Bangzao announced at a press conference that PRC Premier Zhu Rongji will visit Singapore from November 24-25 at the Singapore Premier's invitation. Premier Zhu will attend this year's summit meeting of members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the PRC, Japan and ROK, and another summit between the ASEAN member states and the PRC later this month. Zhu Bangzao said, "China hopes that the summits will further strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation among countries in East Asia and enhance their understanding and trust." On the sideline of the summits, a trilateral meeting between the PRC, Japan and the ROK has been scheduled and cooperation will be the main topic, according to the spokesman.

4. Russia's View on Asia-Pacific

Xinhua News Agency ("ASIAN COUNTRIES STILL TOP PUTIN'S AGENDA," Singapore, 11/09/00) reported that, in an article published on November 8, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Russia will continue to tilt its foreign policy towards Asia and is examining practical projects aimed at turning the region into a common home. Writing in Singapore's Straits Times newspaper, Putin mentioned power engineering, environmental protection and the development of transport links as among the possible areas for cooperation between Russia and its Asian neighbors. Putin wrote, "Russia foreign policy has made a decisive turn towards the Asia-Pacific in the past few years. This policy will be continue." He added, "I think the time has come for us and the countries of the Asia-Pacific region to go from words to deeds, that is, to build up economic, political and other contacts." Russia in return was open to foreign investment to upgrade its transport network and container terminals in the Far East and in St. Petersburg to speed cargo shipments on the Trans-Siberian Railway. Russia's network of satellites could be used by Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) countries for meteorological and environmental purposes and to prospect for natural resources, Putin added. Without mentioning US influence in Asia, Putin said that the region would always need Russia, both to maintain stability and security and to ensure a balance of interests.

5. Russia's View on US Election

People's Daily (Sheng Shiliang, "RUSSIA HOPES TO CONTINUE EQUAL DIALOGUE WITH US," Moscow, 11/08/00, P6) reported that Russian political elites made remarks on the eve of US Presidential election, concluding that the result of the election will not have a fundamental impact on Russia-US relations and hoping that the two countries will continue their dialogue. The Deputy Director of the Russian Presidential Office told Russia's Itar-Tass News Agency that Russian authorities are preparing to cooperate with the US government under any future President. Russia hopes to develop mutually beneficial relations with the US in bilateral and international affairs, he added. The Chairman of the Russian Duma said on November 7 that a candidate's speech at this

time would have little say on the practical policies of US toward Russia later. He said that Russia has accumulated lots of experiences on dealing with US parties' leaders. The leader of the Russian Duma's Communist Group also pointed out that both the Democratic and Republican Parties have no fundamental divergences on basic values, and both seek to maintain US interests in the global sphere.

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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