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4. Land Mines on Korean Peninsula
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I. United States

1. Four-Party Peace Talks

The Washington Post (R. Jeffrey Smith "U.S. AIDES PESSIMISTIC ON KOREA TALKS: NO PROGRESS EXPECTED SOON AS NORTH MAKES DEMANDS, SOUTH AWAITS ELECTIONS," Washington, 10/13/97, A24) reported that senior US officials have little hope of making progress soon in the four-nation peace talks for the Korean peninsula, due both to what the officials describe

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2. Kim Jong-il's Ascension

The Washington Post carried an editorial ("NORTH KOREA'S DYNASTY," 10/13/97, A26) which said that, given the DPRK's "cult of personality, it should not have been surprising that when Kim Jong Il assumed the title this week of general secretary of the Workers Party of Korea, thousands of his subjects were said to have taken to the streets in spasms of spontaneous celebration." The editorial argued that "Although U.S. and South Korean officials have expressed hope that Kim Jong Il now would lead his nation on a more conciliatory path, nothing in his record to date gives any reason for optimism. Indeed, the thousands of (hungry) Koreans reportedly celebratin

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The Associated Press ("N. KOREAN LEADER FOLLOWS FATHER," Seoul, 10/11/97) said that the DPRK's Korean Central News Agency quoted Workers Party Secretary General Kim Jong-il as saying on Friday, "However long and difficult the road of our revolution pioneered and led by the Great Leader Comrade Kim Il Sung may be, we must staunchly keep to this road." The remarks were Kim's first reported statement on policy since his election Wednesday as general secretary of the Workers Party.

3. DPRK Famine

The New York Times carried an analysis (Nicholas D. Kristof, "FAMINE ISN'T ALWAYS WHAT IT SEEMS," Tokyo, 10/12/97, WK4) discussing that many analysts agree that recent harvests and foreign aid appear to have alleviated the worst of the DPRK famine for the time being. Namanga Ngongi, deputy executive director of the UN World Food Program, was quoted as saying, "People are looking much better than we expected." Stephen W. Linton, a Korean scholar and aid worker, pointed out that "this is the time of year when the situation is at its best. This is when [DPRK citizens] have the most surplus food." Kim Myong Chol, a DPRK citizen living in Tokyo, said that "From an American point of view, [the food situation] is serious, critical, a famine situation. By North Korean standards, it's very bad, but still not so critical." The article said that food aid may be getting to people in most parts of the country, but that there may be pockets of famine in the mountains, particularly those near the PRC. Ellsworth Culver, a senior vice president of the aid group Mercy Corps, said that the food situation is "not horrible right now because action is being taken. But if action is not taken, then it will get visibly worse."

The Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA WELCOMES JAPANESE AID," Seoul, 10/11/97) reported that the DPRK's Korean Central News Agency said Saturday that food and medicine promised to the DPRK by Japan will "positively contribute to developing friendly ties between the two peoples."

4. Land Mines on Korean Peninsula

The Associated Press (Pauline Jelinek, "KOREAS [sic] WANTS TO KEEP LAND MINES," Seoul, 10/10/97) reported that the ROK's Choson Ilbo said in an editorial, "The argument for banning the use of land mines is right because they indiscriminately destroy human lives. Despite the loftiness of the cause, however ... it is not realistic" for the ROK. ROK officials say that the difference between the ROK and nations known for land mine casualties is that the locations of mines in the ROK are carefully documented and mapped, and are in military zones off-limits to civilians. Because of this, civilian land-mine casualties are infrequent, the officials say. The ROK Ministry of Defense says there have been 35 deaths and 43 injuries from mines since 1992 -- about 11 casualties a year. [Ed. note: See related item in US Section of October 3 Daily Report].

5. DPRK-Russian Relations

The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("RUSSIA, NORTH KOREA OPEN TALKS ON THEIR DECLINING TRADE," Moscow, 10/13/97) reported that Russia's ITAR-Tass news agency said that a joint Russia-DPRK commission opened talks Monday in hopes of reviving economic relations. Last year's trade turnover of US$90 million between the two countries was down from US$100 million in 1995, mainly due to the DPRK's economic crisis and its unpaid debts to Russia, the report said.

6. ROK Presidential Elections

Reuters ("S. KOREAN OPPOSITION LEADER WANTS MUD-SLINGING TO END," Seoul, 10/13/97) reported that ROK presidential candidate Kim Dae-jung on Monday warned the ruling New Korea Party (NKP) to end a mud-slinging campaign against him and apologize to the ROK people or face a "larger blow." Responding to the ruling party's allegations, Kim said, "I have received help from businessmen over my 40 years in the opposition. But I never received money with strings attached. All the money received was used on official occasions and there is no money hidden under my name or my relatives' names." The Joong-ang Ilbo released a poll that showed that Kim's lead in the race rose to 35.8 percent on October 11 from 33.4 percent on October 8. Independent candidate Rhee in-je was second with 27.2 percent. But the poll also said that 74.6 percent of those surveyed wanted prosecutors to investigate the claims against Kim Dae-jung. 51.1 percent said that they believed the ruling party claims against Kim Dae-jung but 69.8 percent thought NKP candidate Lee Hoi-chang also received money from conglomerates, and 78.2 percent said that they believed President Kim Young-sam's election funds in 1992 were not "clean."

7. ROK President's Son Convicted

The Washington Post (Kevin Sullivan, "S. KOREAN LEADER'S SON GETS 3-YEAR SENTENCE FOR BRIBERY," Tokyo, 10/13/97, A24) and the Associated Press ("SKOREAN PRESIDENT'S SON CONVICTED," Seoul, 10/13/97) reported that Kim Hyun-chul, the son of ROK President Kim Young-sam, on Monday was sentenced to three years in prison and ordered to pay a US$1.6 million fine in connection with a bribery and tax evasion scandal. Kim was convicted of taking US$3.6 million in bribes from businessmen seeking favors from his father, and of accepting another US$3.7 million in cash donations from businessmen and laundering the cash to avoid paying taxes. Senior judge Sohn Ji-yul said, "The defendant deserves censure because he, disregarding his status as a son of the president, has received money from businessmen with requests for favors and evaded taxes." In a separate ruling today, the court also handed down a suspended 1 1/2-year sentence to Kim Ki-sup,

52, a former senior official in the Agency for National Security Planning, for taking bribes and helping the president's son hide payoffs.

8. Taiwanese Diplomacy

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN V.P. CANCELS VISIT TO SPAIN," Taipei, 10/12/97) reported that Taiwan's China Times Express said Sunday that Taiwan Vice President Lien Chan canceled a private visit to Spain after Spain decided that the visit would hurt its ties with the PRC. It was the first time PRC pressure has led a Taiwanese leader to scrap travel plans, the paper said. The PRC earlier denounced Iceland after Lien met Prime Minister David Oddsun, and reportedly pulled out of talks on purchasing several million dollars worth of fish from Iceland. [Ed. note: See related item in RF Section below.]

9. PRC President's Visit to US

The Washington Times carried an opinion article (Richard Halloran, "JIANG PLANS IMPERIAL PROCESSION INTO THE INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT," Honolulu, 10/13/97) which said that PRC President Jiang Zemin's visit to Washington this month is "less ... a state visit than ... an imperial procession calculated to propel Mr. Jiang onto the center stage of the international arena." The article quoted an unnamed Asian scholar as saying that Jiang's visit "will be more symbolism than substance," but that "Symbols are far more important than substance in China's grand strategy right now, especially in Beijing's relations with America." The article cited PRC citizens "with access to high levels in Beijing" as saying that Jiang will deliver three messages on his trip. "The first, aimed mainly at Mr. Clinton, will be that China has resumed its centuries-old place as the Middle Kingdom, the power in Asia with which the United States and the West must reckon. ... The second message, for China's neighbors, will be that they should see China as being capable of playing in the same league as the world's superpower. ... The third message will be for political audiences in China. ... The new leader seems determined now to demonstrate that he can operate with ... skill in the international arena. "

II. Russian Federation

1. Kim Jong-il's Ascension

Sovetskaya Rossia ("KIM JONG-IL IS ELECTED THE WPK GENERAL SECRETARY," Moscow, 7, 10/9/97) reported that Pyongyang Radio and TV announced that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il was "elected the Secretary General of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK)." The decision was taken by the Central Committee of the WPK and the Central Military Council of the party.

Segodnya ("NORTH KOREA WENT FORWARD TO MEET 'THE DEMANDS OF THE MODERN EPOCH," Moscow, 4, 10/9/97), Nezavisimaia gazeta ("KIM REPLACED KIM," Moscow, 2, 10/9/97) and Kommersant-daily ("KOREAN PEOPLE'S DREAMS HAVE AGAIN COME TRUE," Moscow, 5, 10/9/97) reported that Pyongyang radio broadcast on 10/8/97 that Kim Jong-il's appointment as Secretary General of the Workers' Party was "an old aspiration of the Korean people and an urgent demand of the modern epoch." The broadcast also said that celebrations and public festivities are underway in the DPRK.

Nezavisimaia gazeta's Stanislav Petrov ("KIM JONG-IL'S DREAM HAS COME TRUE," Moscow, 4, 10/10/97) quoted Kim Ho-deun, a former Assistant to ROK President Kim Young-sam, as saying "Were an intensification of power struggle in the North Korea to be expected, it would be waged only within the clan of Kims, who in fact seized all key positions." Kim Jong-il allegedly has to deal with two hidden rivals, the report said: his uncle, DPRK Vice President Kim Yong-deu, and his step-

mother, Kim Sung-ai. But as early as in 1981 Kim Jong-il allegedly created a special unit to deal with his relatives by collecting discrediting facts and planting rumors about them. All other relatives are considered loyal to Kim Jong-il. Five of them are secretaries of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party and three hold ministerial positions. "The nepotistic tree of the North Korean Kims is impressive," Kim Ho-deun said. "The total collapse of the North Korean economy is the only thing that blemishes the general political idyll."

Sovetskaya Rossia ("THESE DAYS .... MOSCOW," Moscow, 1, 10/11/97) reported that Song Sung-p'hir, DPRK Ambassador in Moscow, told Russia's ITAR-Tass news agency that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il will assume the DPRK Presidency "in a not far future." He added, "I think Kim Jong-il undoubtedly will be the head of state, but there have not been official reports on this theme."

2. Light-Water Reactor Construction Project

Segodnya's Ivan Shomov ("THE PROJECT OF THE CENTURY IS AGAIN ENDANGERED," Moscow, 2, 10/8/97) reported that DPRK agents found a crumbled copy of the DPRK newspaper Rodong Shinmun with pictures of Kim Il-sung and leader Kim Jong-il discarded at the light-water nuclear reactor construction site. DPRK authorities demanded apologies, put permanent guards on the site and forbade ROK workers to leave their residences. Officials for the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization stated that such actions violated the joint protocol signed three years ago. [Ed. note: See the related item in the US Section of the October 6 Daily Report.]

3. PRC Weapons Purchase

Segodnya ("CHINA INTENDS TO BUY SU-27S FROM RUSSIA... AND BOEINGs FROM USA," Moscow, 4, 10/9/97) reported that according to the Japanese Sankei Shinmun, the PRC will start producing SU-27SK fighters under RF license in the first half of 1998. It plans to produce 20 annually for 15 years. Under the RF-PRC agreement, the PRC will abstain from selling them to other countries. Also the PRC plans to buy 55 ready-made Su-27s from the RF within two years starting from 1998. The relevant final agreement is expected to become official upon RF President Boris Yeltsin's visit to the PRC in November.

4. PRC President to Visit US

Nezavisimaia gazeta ("JIANG ZEMIN IS EXPECTED IN THE USA," Moscow, 4, 10/8/97) reported that PRC Chairman Jiang Zemin will make his first state visit to the US on October 29. Two years ago he made a "working" visit. He is expected to meet with US President Bill Clinton and several US Congressmen and to visit Philadelphia, Boston, Los Angeles and other cities. Bilateral issues, including "military cooperation problems," are to be discussed.

5. Taiwanese Diplomacy

Segodnya ("CHINA OBJECTS TO CONTACTS WITH TAIWAN," Moscow, 4, 10/8/97) reported that the PRC warned European countries about "very serious consequences" resulting from the visit of Taiwan's Vice President Lien Chan.

6. RF Nuclear Weapons Safety

Segodnya's Pavel Felgengauer ("LEBED DENIED THE NUCLEAR BRIEFCASES," Moscow, 2, 10/7/97) reported that Aleksandr Lebed, the former Secretary of the RF Security Council, in an interview with the MSNBC news service, said that in 1996 he actually did not have any information about so-called "nuclear briefcases" with which former Soviet special troops were allegedly armed. According to Lebed, in March of 1997 he told visiting US Congressman Kurt Veldon that the issue

was urgent even though he did not know anything for sure. "They asked me how many of those exist," he said, "I said: maybe 100, maybe 500, I don't know precisely. Then the speculations started." Security experts, including many US ones, say that in military terms a "briefcase nuke" is nonsense and that the whole story stems from a desire of certain people to obtain additional US budgetary money to thwart a "new fresh danger."

7. RF Uranium Production

Finansoviye izvestia ("URANIUM PRODUCTION IN RUSSIA IS TO GROW THREE FOLD BY 2010," Moscow, I, 10/9/97) reported that Vyacheslav Krotkov, Vice President of the Russian Academy of Sciences, forecast that uranium production in the RF will grow at least 2.5-3 times by 2010, reaching over 10 thousand tons per year. He based his forecast on the General Concept for Russia's Atomic Energy Sector Development, adopted by the RF Atomic Energy Ministry this August. According to the Concept, the RF is to double its nuclear electric power plants' output by 2010-2015. Presently 29 nuclear reactors in the RF nuclear power production sector account for 12.5% of national electric energy output and consume about 4 tons of uranium annually. Additionally, the RF delivers 2.2 thousand tons to nuclear power plants abroad.

8. Chemical Weapons Ban Convention

Nezavisimaia gazeta ("A CIVILIZATIONAL TEST," Moscow, 2, 10/7/97) published an article by Prof. Sergey Baranovskiy, Vice President and Executive Director of the Russian National Organization of the International Green Cross, that argued in favor of a prompt ratification by the RF State Duma of the International Chemical Weapons Ban Convention. Baranovskiy rebuked objections based on the lack of funding to undertake the elimination of the huge stockpiles of chemical weapons inherited by the RF from the former USSR. He argued that it is precisely the delay in ratification that hinders the necessary financial assistance from abroad. He also quoted a message sent by 20 public organizations and representatives of research and industrial bodies to the RF State Duma, that claimed that the Convention should be ratified because "1. All developed countries by ratifying the Convention thus abandoned the possibility of using chemical weapons; 2. Russian citizens are hostages to the former military policy of the USSR; 3. Russian chemical weapons pose a real and ever growing threat only to our own people."

9. RF-US Nuclear Disarmament

Nezavisimaia gazeta ("MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENTS OF RF AND USA IS UNDER PREPARATION," Moscow, 1, 10/10/97) reported that "a high ranking representative of the American Administration" said yesterday that the US received promises from the RF leadership that the START-2 treaty will be ratified by the end of the year. Only after that, he said, will the US be ready to negotiate further nuclear arms reductions within the START-3 framework. Also he said that, in accordance with a general agreement between the two countries' presidents, a special document will be drafted on nuclear non-proliferation issues, in particular concerning technology transfers to Iran. Those topics will presumably be discussed at the next RF-US summit next year.

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.

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