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I. United States

1. DPRK on DPRK Nuclear StanceThe Korean Central News Agency of DPRK

("SPOKESMAN FOR DPRK FOREIGN MINISTRY ON PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO NUCLEAR ISSUE," Pyongyang, 04/14/03) reported that a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea gave the following answer to a question put by KCNA on Saturday as regards the DPRK-US dialogue for a peaceful solution to the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula: In order to seek a peaceful solution to the nuclear issue the DPRK and the US, the parties responsible for it, should start direct talks. As the DPRK is not a signatory to the NPT, there is no ground whatsoever to internationalize the nuclear issue and any attempt to do so would make its solution quite impossible. The outcome of the meeting of the UNSC held on April 9 clearly indicated that the nuclear issue is a matter to be settled between the DPRK and the US. The DPRK's call for direct talks is aimed to confirm whether the US has a political willingness to drop its hostile policy toward the DPRK or not. It is possible to solve the issue if the US sincerely approaches the dialogue. The US asserts a "multilateral framework" to be participated in by countries around the DPRK but their Korea policy and stand of desiring a peaceful settlement of the nuclear issue are clear by and large. What matters is the US If the US is ready to make a bold switchover in its Korea policy for a settlement of the nuclear issue, the DPRK will not stick to any particular dialogue format. The solution to the issue depends on what is the real intention of the US.

2. DPRK Multilateral Talks?

The New York Times (James Brooke, "NORTH KOREA SHIFTS STANCE ON NUCLEAR TALKS," Seoul, 4/13/03), the Washington Post (Doug Struck, "NORTH KOREA DROPS ITS DEMAND FOR ONE-ON-ONE TALKS WITH US, SHIFT COULD REMOVE OBSTACLE TO NEGOTIATIONS ON NUCLEAR PROGRAM," Seoul, 04/13/03), BBC News ("HOPES RISE OVER NORTH KOREAN CRISIS," 04/14/03) reported that the DPRK today dropped its demand for one-on-one negotiations with the US, saying it "will not stick to any particular dialogue format" but will test whether "the US has a political willingness to drop its hostile policy." The change of position, announced by a Foreign Ministry spokesman, appears to be a concession to the Bush administration's demand for multinational talks about the DPRK's nuclear program. Previously the DPRK had insisted it would only hold direct talks with the US to resolve the crisis. ROK security chief Ra Jong-yil said he thought the war in Iraq had played a part in the DPRK's change of policy. Other officials said they believed increased diplomatic pressure from the PRC and Russia had played a role. ROK officials have now said they are planning to step up efforts to urge the DPRK to take part in multilateral talks as early as possible. In a statement, the State Department said it "noted the statement with interest" and would "follow up through appropriate diplomatic channels." But privately, officials viewed the shift as vindication of the tough line the administration has taken on dealing with the DPRK. "It looks like President Bush was smarter than everyone said he was," a senior administration official in Washington said, ticking off the names of former Clinton administration officials who had scorned the Bush administration's refusal to talk directly with the DPRK.

3. US Response to DPRK Multilateral Talks

Agence France-Presse ("BUSH SEES PROGRESS TOWARD MULTILATERAL TALKS ON NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR CRISIS," Washington, 04/14/03) reported that US President George W. Bush said that he saw progress in moving toward multilateral talks to resolve the impasse over North Korea's nuclear weapons program after Pyongyang signaled some flexibility on the issue. "We are making progress on the Korean peninsula," Bush told reporters at the White House. "We have made it clear that we think that the best way to deal with their proliferation is through a multinational forum. It looks like that might be coming to fruition, that's very good news," he said. "We expect there to be a nuclear weapons free peninsula," he said, a goal he said was shared by the PRC, Japan and the ROK. Bush's comments followed the DPRK's announcement on April 12, 2003 that it would accept any

form of dialogue with the US over its suspected nuclear program if the latter dropped its hostile policy toward the DPRK.

4. Japan on DPRK Multilateral Talks

The Japan Times (Junko Takahashi, "Japan lauds North Korean olive branch on arms talks," reported that Japan on Monday welcomed what appeared to be a softening in the DPRK's stance toward multilateral talks on its suspected nuclear weapons program. "It's a favorable move," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told a news conference. "It shows (North Korea) has become somewhat flexible toward solving the problem." Fukuda was referring to Pyongyang's comment Saturday that suggested a significant shift from its wish to hold talks solely with Washington and toward a more multilateral dialogue. "If the US is ready to make a bold switch in its Korea policy for a settlement of the nuclear issue, (North Korea) will not stick to any particular dialogue format," the official Korean Central News Agency quoted a Foreign Ministry spokesman as saying.

5. SARS Virus

BBC News ("CHINA SAYS SARS SITUATION 'GRAVE,'" 04/14/03) reported that PRC Prime Minister Wen Jiabao has said that preventing the spread of the deadly SARS virus is now the most urgent task facing the country's health authorities. He admitted that while some progress had been made in combating the pneumonia-type disease, the "overall situation remains grave." PRC authorities reported four more deaths from the virus on Monday - taking the total number of reported fatalities in mainland PRC to 64. Wen Jiabao's comments were in contrast to previous PRC official statements, which said that SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) was under control. The World Health Organisation has criticised the PRC - where the disease first emerged in November - for its reluctance to release information on the virus. On Monday, Beijing's mayor confirmed that the outbreak was first recorded in the capital on March 1, 2003, almost a month before its existence there was admitted officially. The revelation appears to confirm claims made last week by a PRC military doctor, who alleged that the SARS outbreak in Beijing was being covered up because it coincided with the annual National People's Congress (NPC) being held in the city.

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA ADMITS SARS HIT BEIJING ON MARCH 1, WEEKS BEFORE ACKNOWLEDGED," 04/14/03) reported that the SARS outbreak was first recorded in Beijing on March 1, 2003 the capital's mayor was reported as saying, almost a month before its existence was finally admitted. The revelation adds weight to claims by a military doctor that the scale of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic in Beijing was covered up because it clashed with the annual sitting of the PRC's parliament. It also came as the World Health Organization revealed another four people had died from SARS in the PRC, bringing the total death toll here to 64. Dr. Jiang Yanyong, 72, told journalists last week that shortly after the parliament session started on March 5 an elderly man was admitted to hospital 301, and after it was suspected that he had SARS he was transferred to hospital 302. At hospital 302, he infected close to 10 doctors and nurses, and died shortly afterwards, Jiang said. His wife was also admitted to hospital 302 and also died within a short period of time. "At this time, the health ministry called the leaders of all the hospitals to a meeting," said Jiang. "The main contents of that meeting was that Beijing now has this disease, but in order to maintain discipline it is not to be made public. It is necessary to create stable conditions for the NPC." The PRC authorities finally admitted three deaths and the existence of SARS in the capital on March 26. The NPC ended on March 18.

The New York Times (Keith Bradsher, "YOUTH AND FITNESS OFFER LITTLE DEFENSE AGAINST DISEASE," Hong Kong, 04/14/03) reported that the new respiratory disease known as SARS is

beginning to kill younger and healthier adults as well as older people here, as medical treatments are proving somewhat less effective than originally hoped, health officials announced here today. Until this weekend, those who died from SARS - severe acute respiratory syndrome - had been largely people over 60, and often were those suffering from other health problems as well. But eight people with the disease died here this weekend, and five of them were ages 35 to 52 and did not have previous medical conditions that might have been contributing factors, said Dr. Liu Shao-haei, a senior manager of the Hong Kong Hospital Authority. Canada and Singapore each reported three more SARS-related deaths as well. Doctors here had also been insisting until today that their treatments for SARS were broadly effective, and they had used that assertion as an incentive for people to enter hospitals when they felt sick. But Dr. Liu said at a news conference here today that a combination of ribavarin and steroids, while helpful for many, had not improved the condition of some patients, whose health has continued to deteriorate even after they entered intensive-care units. "Some of the patients respond well to treatment and some do not," he said. The World Health Organization and other overseas agencies had already been skeptical of the effectiveness of the ribavarin and steroid treatment.

6. Japan Domestic Economy

Dow Jones, ("JAPAN GOVERNMENT: MURKY US OUTLOOK ALSO CLOUDS ECONOMY," Tokyo, 04/14/03) reported that Japan's economy is idling and remains threatened by lingering global uncertainties, the government said Monday, leaving its overall economic assessment unchanged in its April report. But in a promising sign, the government noted some improvement in key areas, such as exports and spending by consumers and businesses - good news for an economy beset by deflation and suffering from a plunge in share prices to 20- year lows. "The economy is idling overall," the Cabinet Office said in its April report. Exports are "growing mildly" and the trade and services surplus is "generally flat," the report said. Both individual assessments were upgraded from last month. Moreover, conditions at home showed tentative signs of improvement. Consumer spending is "generally flat," an improvement from last month's "showing signs of weakness," while corporate capital investment is showing continued signs of picking up, the report said. While such developments are potentially good news for the struggling economy, the Cabinet Office continued to exercise caution, noting the unpredictability of the US economy and the battered domestic stock market.

7. Japan Domestic Politics

LA Times ("TOKYO'S OUTSPOKEN GOVERNOR IS REELECTED," 04/14/03) and the Japan Times (Sachiko Hirao, "ISHIHARA HAS NOVEL IDEAS FOR NEW TERM," 04/14/03) reported that Tokyo's governor won reelection in a race seen as a test of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's economic policies and support for the war in Iraq. Shintaro Ishihara, 70, defeated four other candidates to win another four-year term, public TV broadcaster NHK said. Ishihara, considered a potential candidate for prime minister, ran as an independent but was endorsed by Koizumi's party. The outspoken governor has gained popularity with policies that defy the federal government, such as stricter pollution laws. In addition to 11 gubernatorial races, 2,634 seats were up for grabs in local assemblies.

II. People's Republic of China

1. Japan's Oncoming Military Exercises

China Daily (Tokyo, 04/11/03, P11) reported that Japanese F15 fighter planes are to take part in their first joint military exercises in the continental US in June, a move likely to infuriate its neighbor, the DPRK.

2. Russia-ROK Talk on DPRK Issue

China Daily ("DPRK COULD DEFY UN DUE TO IRAQ PRECEDENT," Seoul, 04/11/03, P12) reported that Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov said on April 10 that the DPRK had learned from the US-led war that unseated Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and might ignore any UN decision on its own suspected nuclear weapons program. Ivanov told reporters ROK and Russia agreed the DPRK and the US should refrain from stepping up their rhetoric on the nuclear issue. Pyongyang reiterated its view the same day that the Iraq war had proved the DPRK's security could be ensured only by having "physical deterrent force." Ivanov said Pyongyang's logic in deciding to try to acquire a deterrent - he also did not specifically refer to nuclear weapons - was based on the US strategy towards Iraq, which went from failed diplomatic efforts at the UN to a US-led war that has ended Saddam's 24-year rule. The ROK's Yonhap news agency said in an unsourced report that the ROK's National Security Council agreed to intensify diplomatic efforts to end the nuclear issue.

3. PRC-ROK Relations

China Daily ("SEOUL TIES," Beijing, 04/12-13/03, P2) reported that Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said in Beijing on April 11 the Chinese Government places great importance on its relations with the ROK and is ready to further develop bilateral links. While meeting ROK's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Yoon Young-kwan, the premier said that relations between the two states had grown rapidly since diplomatic links were established in 1992 and had great potential for further development. He said the two countries maintained regular high-level exchanges and continued to deepen mutual trust. They had become major economic partners and expanded the volume of trade and investment, he added in the report.

China Daily (Hu Xiao, "CHINA BACKS NUCLEAR-FREE KOREAN PENINSULA," 04/11/03, P1) reported that PRC stands for the non-nuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and firmly insists on maintaining peace and stability in the region and resolving the issue peacefully through dialogue, said PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing on April 10 when meeting his ROK counterpart Yoon Young-kwan. Li stressed the security of the DPRK should be ensured, urging all concerned not to take any moves that could escalate the tension. Yoon said that the ROK, being a major player on the peninsula, would continue to promote exchanges and co-operation between the ROK and the DPRK and make efforts to maintain a nuclear-free peninsula. Yoon arrived in Beijing the same day for a three-day visit to PRC, said the report. The two foreign ministers also expressed satisfaction with the continuous growth of bilateral relations over the past few years during their talks. Li pointed out the growth of bilateral relations has contributed positively to peace, stability and security on the Korean Peninsula and in the region, said the report.

4. ROK-US Relations

China Daily ("ROK RESISTS US TROOP PULL-OUT FROM BORDER," Seoul, 04/09/03, P12) reported that the ROK Defense Minister Cho Young-kil said on April 8 he opposed any US proposal to pull back its forces from the tense inter-Korean border as talks began between the two sides on how to revise their 50-year-old military alliance. Richard Lawless, US deputy assistant secretary of defense for East Asia, and ROK's assistant defense minister for policy, Cha Young-koo, were engaged in talks

scheduled to last two days. Cho, speaking at the National Assembly, said the agenda would include the relocation of American bases at the request of US officials. But he stressed the relocation of the 2nd Infantry Division and other key bases near the border with DPRK can be discussed only after the DPRK nuclear issue is over. The talks are taking place following massive anti-US protests last year and calls from ROK President Roh Moo-hyun for a more balanced bilateral relationship. However, indications that US may reduce its troop presence or withdraw forces from the border have alarmed the ROK's government. Lawless said in a statement released on his arrival in Seoul that the US would seek ways to strengthen the alliance and develop equal relations while reviewing US military positions around the world. Hints that US wants to move its troops south of Seoul and out of harm's way from DPRK's artillery would be a major switch of alignment. ROK considers the deployment of US bases near the border with DPRK as a "tripwire" that would trigger automatic US involvement in any new conflict on the Korean Peninsula, said the report.

5. DPRK-US Relations

China Daily ("US MOTIVES SUSPECT: DPRK," Seoul, 04/09/03, P12) reported that the DPRK on April 8, on the eve of a key UN review of Pyongyang's suspected nuclear weapons program, accused the US of wanting to "perpetrate military terrorism" against it. Two deadlines loom this week in the long-running nuclear issue, put international ratings agencies on their guard and added to global tensions already heightened because of the US-led war in Iraq. On April 9, the UN Security Council meets to discuss a response to the DPRK's decision 89 days earlier to pull out of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). On April 10, the DPRK's withdrawal from the NPT will become official with the end of a formal 90-day notice period. The DPRK has said the notice period did not apply to it, said the report.

6. Russia-US Relations

People's Daily (Lv Yansong, "RUSSIA CONDEMNS US ATTACK ON DIPLOMATIC CONVOY," Moscow, 04/08/03, P3) reported that Russian Ambassador in Iraq Vladimir Titorenko said to the press, condemning publicly US's "intentional" attack on a Russian diplomatic convoy on April 6, causing 5 diplomats hurt. The ambassador said that US soldiers recognized the foreign convoy and then fired it. Dmitri Rogozin, head of Russian State Duma (lower house of parliament) International Affairs' Committee, said that the shooting at Russian diplomatic convoy near Baghdad "cannot be regarded as an accident and usual explanations at the diplomatic level are not sufficient." "A full investigation should be conducted to find out how our convoy came under fire and who is to blame," he said according to the report.

People's Daily (Dong Longjiang, "RICE SAID US 'NO INTENTION' TO ATTACK RUSSIAN DIPLOMATS," Moscow, 04/08/03, P3) reported that US national security adviser Condoleezza Rice held hastily arranged talks on April 7 with Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, which was called by her as "good discussions". But as for the question that whether US military is concerned with the Russian convoy attack, Rice evaded the issue, said the report. Rice told Russian President Vladimir Putin the same day that even though it was US army that fired on Russian diplomats, they did it with no intention, said the report.

7. DPRK-ROK Relations

China Daily ("INTER-KOREAN RELATIONS FREEZE AS TALKS SCRAPPED," Seoul, 04/08/03, P12) reported that the ROK said on April 7 that four-day cabinet-level talks with the DPRK scheduled for

this week in Pyongyang had been scrapped, effectively freezing ties and deepening a rift over six-month-old nuclear issues. Government officials said the talks were the last official channel of communication between the ROK and the DPRK. The report said ROK has been seeking for several days to contact DPRK to discuss the scheduled talks, but the approaches were met with a wall of silence from the DPRK. Analysts said the DPRK decision reflected anger in Pyongyang over the ROK's decision to send non-combat troops to help the US-led war on Iraq, an "unpardonable criminal act," according to the DPRK's state media. DPRK has also criticized Seoul's decision to launch a probe into allegations that Pyongyang received illicit payments from the ROK Government in return for staging an inter-Korean summit in 2000. A Unification Ministry official said that for now all lines of official communication between the North and the South were cut, said the report.

8. PRC's Attitude towards DPRK Issue

China Daily (Meng Yan, "SPOKESMAN SAYS UN INTERVENTION IN DPRK'S NUKE STAND-OFF 'UNHELPFUL'," 04/09/03, P1) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao on April 8 at a regular press briefing, made it clear that intervention by the UN Security Council in the nuclear issue of the DPRK would be unhelpful. "China has always supported a peaceful settlement of the issue through dialogue, especially dialogue between the United States and the DPRK," Liu said, adding PRC has always been concerned about the situation on the Korean Peninsula, especially the DPRK nuclear issue.

9. PRC-Japan Relations

People's Daily (Liu Dongkai, "CHINESE PREMIER MEETS JAPANESE FOREIGN MINISTER," Beijing, 04/08/03, P1) reported that Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao met visiting Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi on April 7. Wen said that, in the new century and faced with a new situation, the two countries should strengthen rather than weaken their friendly relations, should increase rather than reduce exchanges at all levels and should expand rather than scale down their cooperation in the fields of trade and economy. Wen said the Chinese government will continue to attach importance to and develop Sino-Japanese relations. Wen stressed that both countries should emphasize the importance of the consensus of "drawing lessons from history and looking ahead to the future" reached between them. Kawaguchi presented Wen with a letter from Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, saying that the Japanese side stands ready to consider and plan the further strengthening of its relations with PRC oriented toward the future on the basis of a correct recognition of history and in line with the principles set forth in the three political documents signed between the two countries, she said.

10. DPRK-Japan Relations

China Daily ("JAPAN FIGHTER JETS INTERCEPT MYSTERY PLANE," Tokyo, 04/10/03, P11) reported that Japan scrambled fighter jets to intercept at least one unidentified aircraft that briefly entered its air space just over a week ago and which may have come from the DPRK, the daily Mainichi Shimbun said on April 9. An aircraft failed to identify itself as required on entry to Japanese air space over the Sea of Japan on April 1, triggering the dispatch of two F15 fighter aircraft from a base in Ishikawa, about 230 kilometers northwest of Tokyo, the paper said, without citing sources. By the time the Japanese jets reached the area, the mystery plane had gone, the article said. But the paper said that Japan's Ministry of Defense believes the aircraft may have been sent by DPRK to protest Tokyo's recent moves to step up surveillance of its neighbor, including through the launch of two spy satellites, said the report.

China Daily ("PYONGYANG: JAPAN SATELLITE LAUNCH AGAINST DECLARATION," Tokyo, 04/08/03, P12) reported that the DPRK on April 7 called Japan's deployment of two spy satellites late last month a "wanton violation" of the spirit of the two states' Pyongyang Declaration, signed at a summit last autumn. Noting that the declaration "calls on both sides to refrain from threatening each other," the official Korean Central News Agency news agency said the launch has "sparked a new arms race in Northeast Asia." Immediately after the satellites were carried into space by a Japanese H-2A rocket on March 28, Pyongyang denounced the move as a "hostile act" that could trigger a renewed arms race. "If the DPRK is exposed to a grave threat owing to the reckless moves of the Japanese reactionaries, the people and the army of the DPRK will deal merciless blows at the aggressors by mobilizing the tremendous defense capability to the maximum," the agency said in the report.

11. ROK Weapons Development

China Daily ("ROK LEADER ATTENDS LAUNCH CEREMONY," Seoul, 04/12-13/03, P8) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-hyun on April 11 said the government would help equip home-made destroyers with Aegis-class combat systems in the near future. Roh made this promise in a launch ceremony of the South Korean Navy's latest destroyer, the 4,500-ton KDX-?"Moonmu the Great" produced by local firm Hyundai Heavy Industries Co, according to ROK national news agency Yonhap News. The ship is the first ROK's stealth destroyer capable of waging anti-ship and anti-submarine warfare as well as undertaking electronic surveillance operations, said the report.

12. DPRK's Stance on Nuke Issue

People's Daily (Zhao Jiaming, "FORMS OF TALKS COULD BE FLEXIBLE," Pyongyang, 04/13/03, P13) reported that the DPRK Foreign Ministry Spokesman said on April 12 that DPRK and US must resolve the Nuke issue through direct talks, stressing DPRK will not be confined in what forms should the talks take, as long as US through away its anti-DPRK policy. He stressed that US's earnest attitude will lead to successful settlement of the issue, adding that the key to the issue lies in US's real thought, said the report.

13. ROK's Attitude towards DPRK Issue

People's Daily (Xu Baokang, "ROK CONVINCED DPRK NUCLEAR ISSUE CAN BE SOLVED PEACEFULLY," Seoul, 04/14/03, P3) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-hyun on April 13 reiterated that he believed the nuclear issue of the DPRK could be solved peacefully through dialogue and diplomatic ways. The same day, an unidentified ROK official was quoted as saying the government welcomed the remarks made by a DPRK Foreign Ministry spokesman on April 12 that Pyongyang will not stick to any particular dialogue format for settlement of the nuclear issue if the US drops its anti-DPRK policy. "We consider the remark by the DPRK Foreign Ministry spokesman as a positive step," said the official, adding, "We will wait and see if the DPRK will take concrete measures." In order to maintain peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, the most important task is to settle the DPRK nuclear crisis, Roh stressed. The president also said he will discuss carefully on the DPRK nuclear issue with US President George W. Bush during his trip to the US slated in mid-May, and seek close cooperation from Japan, PRC, Russia and the European Union, according to the report.

III. Japan

1. Japan-RF Relations

The Japan Times ("OFFICIAL IN RUSSIA TO DISCUSS PIPELINE," 04/09/03) reported that a top energy official of Japan left last Tuesday for Moscow to hold talks with Russian officials over a planned pipeline to carry crude oil from eastern Siberia. Iwao Okamoto, director general of the Agency of Natural Resources and Energy, is expected to try to sell a Japanese proposal that the pipeline be laid between Angarsk, near Lake Baikal, and Nakhodka on the Sea of Japan. Japan and the PRC are competing to try to get the RF to decide in their favor. The PRC wants the pipeline to be laid from Angarsk to Daqing, an inland city in Heilongjiang Province, northeastern China. A compromise that the RF is drafting suggests building the Chinese route first, then adding a branch to supply Japan. Japan has said that trying to supply both countries would make it difficult for Japan to receive sufficient supplies. The Russian government is scheduled to make a decision on the route in May.

2. Japan-PRC Relations

Kyodo ("YASUKUNI SHRINE VISITS BURN KOIZUMI'S TICKET TO BEIJING," Beijing, 04/08/03) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi did not make any progress in talks with Chinese leaders in an attempt to realize a trip here by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. At a meeting with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, Kawaguchi delivered a letter of friendship from Koizumi and extended an invitation for Wen to visit Japan. Wen welcomed the invitation to visit but said it is important to first create an environment in which such a visit could be realized, apparently calling on Koizumi not to visit Tokyo's controversial Yasukuni Shrine. Wen did not specifically mention Koizumi's repeated visits to the shrine, which honors Class-A war criminals along with the nation's war dead. Kawaguchi also met with former Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan, now a councilor on China's State Council, to discuss issues concerning the DPRK and Iraq. Kawaguchi later told reporters that she and Tang had not discussed which parties should be involved in debating the DPRK issue. Japan, in cooperation with the US and the ROK, has been calling for a multilateral approach, including the participation of the PRC and the RF.

3. Japan-DPRK Relations

Mainichi Daily News ("INVASION OVER JAPAN SEA CAUSED JETS TO SCRAMBLE," 04/09/03) reported that an airplane, possibly from the DPRK, entered Japan's air defense identification zone (ADIZ) over the Sea of Japan April 1 causing Self Defense Forces (SDF) fighters to scramble. The SDF law requires the nationality of airplanes that fly near the ADIZ to be identified and to scramble jet fighters in response if the aircraft are on course to invade the territory. The two F-15 fighters took off from the SDF Komatsu base in Ishikawa Prefecture after the mysterious airplane ignored a request by the SDF made on an international emergency frequency to change its route, sources said. When the airplane made a U-turn, the SDF fighters returned to base. After analyzing its flight routes, Defense Agency officials said that the unidentified aircraft was possibly from the DPRK. The airplane was apparently heading toward a location where another SDF intelligence gathering plane was flying over the Sea of Japan to watch the DPRK's intelligence activities. But the sources tried to downplay the seriousness of the plane's ADIZ invasion by saying, "We should not overreact." SDF sources said no North Korea airplanes have entered Japan's ADIZ for the last three years.

4. Japan's Role in Iraq War

The Asahi Shimbun ("TOKYO STEPS ON THE GAS TO SPEED POSTWAR HELP," 04/11/03) reported that the Japanese government officials were shifting into high gear their efforts to map out Japan's contribution to Iraq's postwar reconstruction. "The war has entered its final stages and things have proceeded smoothly," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said at a Thursday news conference, adding negative economic effects were disappearing fast. But he remained cautious, saying, "We should not be overly optimistic." He added, "As the No. 2 economy in the world, Japan should cooperate (in the reconstruction effort in Iraq) in accordance with its status." Speaking the same day, Senior Vice Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi said the Japanese government will enter into detailed talks with concerned nations over the reconstruction effort soon. Government officials are working to set up a telephone conference between Koizumi and US President George W. Bush as soon as possible to allow the two nations to coordinate their efforts. The government is expected to first place priority on humanitarian aid, which would then be followed by the dispatch of civilian experts to aid the interim Iraqi authority in the reconstruction of the country. Lastly, the government would consider sending Self-Defense Forces (SDF) troops, sources said. "If Japan sends aid personnel to a risky area and they are killed, that would trigger a domestic political disaster," said a government source. The official explained UN involvement would provide political cover for the administration. As a result, senior Foreign Ministry officials decided last Wednesday night to press the UN Security Council for a resolution on Iraqi reconstruction. "Japan could become a mediator in the reconstruction process because of its neutral stance," an aide to Koizumi said hopefully Wednesday night.

Kyodo ("KAWAGUCHI TRIES RALLYING SUPPORT FOR POSTWAR IRAQ," Paris, 04/12/03) reported that French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin played coy with his Japanese counterpart, Yoriko Kawaguchi, on Thursday as the two met to discuss the postwar reconstruction of Iraq. De Villepin said France cannot know how it will respond to the situation in Iraq -- or even whether it considers a new UN Security Council resolution necessary -- until the US clearly indicates its stance regarding an UN role in reconstructing the country. Kawaguchi told de Villepin that the collapse of the government of President Saddam Hussein has created an opportunity for the international community to stand together and help rebuild Iraq, and that a resolution by the UN Security Council is necessary to show such solidarity. De Villepin replied that it is not a question of whether the UN will play a "central role" or a "vital role" in postwar Iraq, but of what the UN Security Council will actually do. He also said the Iraq issue must be placed within the context of the entire Middle East, an apparent reference to the continuing military and terrorist incursions between Israelis and Palestinians. The French foreign minister also touched on the DPRK's nuclear program and expressed France's readiness to help try to resolve the issue within the framework of the UN Security Council and the European Union. Earlier in the day in Berlin, Kawaguchi and German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer agreed on the need for the UN to play a key role in postwar Iraq, according to Japanese officials. Kawaguchi and Fischer told a joint news conference that they also agreed to urge the US and Britain to beef up measures to restore the now-deteriorating security situation in Baghdad.

The Japan Times ("STAFF DISPATCH MULLED," 04/12/03) reported that Toshimitsu Motegi, senior vice foreign minister, denied Friday that it would be unconstitutional for the government to dispatch staff to the US Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), intended to support the postwar reconstruction of Iraq. "It would be a problem if the organization was integrated with military action," Motegi said. "But there is no problem sending civil staff to an international organization or a foreign government." Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda meanwhile said the government cannot say whether it will send officials to ORHA, "as it is still unclear what kind of organization it would be." According to a government statement released Friday, Japan is

considering what constitutes a "suitable" way to support ORHA.

Kyodo ("U.S. ASKS JAPAN TO PROVIDE 'CONSIDERABLE' ASSISTANCE," Washington, 04/13/03) reported that US Treasury Secretary John Snow on Friday asked Japanese Finance Minister Masajuro Shiokawa for "considerable" Japanese help in reconstructing Iraq, adding that the US would agree to cooperate through an international framework. The two also agreed the global economic outlook will be better once the war in Iraq is over, Shiokawa said. Both Shiokawa and Snow said they will work toward surpassing growth projections for 2003 that the International Monetary Fund presented last week, Shiokawa told reporters. The IMF projection for Japan is 0.8 percent, while that for the United States is 2.2 percent.

Kyodo ("KAWAGUCHI, STRAW SAY UNITY CRUCIAL TO REBUILDING," London, 04/13/03) reported that the Japanese and British foreign ministers agreed Friday that the international community must achieve unity in rebuilding postwar Iraq, Japanese officials said. Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi, in London on the last leg of a three-nation trip to Europe, told reporters after the meeting that the two countries will monitor other countries' positions in deciding whether to call for a new UN resolution on reconstruction. The two countries basically agree that the UN should play an important role in the reconstruction of Iraq, Japanese officials said.

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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