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I. United States

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1. US-DPRK Relations

US State Department Deputy Spokesman James Foley ("SPECIAL STATE DEPARTMENT BRIEFING AUGUST 13," USIA Transcript, 08/14/98) said, in response to threats by DPRK officials to end the 1994 nuclear agreement unless the US lifted economic sanctions, that the US does not acknowledge that the framework agreement is contingent on "extraneous issues." Foley stated, "This is an agreement that was entered into on all sides seriously; it's something that the United States takes seriously; we take compliance with its terms seriously. The range of bilateral issues between the United States and North Korea are a separate matter." He also confirmed reports that US-DPRK bilateral talks are scheduled for August 21 in New York, to be headed by US Ambassador Charles

Kartman and DPRK Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye-gwan. Foley stated, "As in previous meetings, the full range of bilateral issues will be discussed, including implementation of the 1994 US-DPRK agreed framework to which we remain resolutely committed. But we're hopeful that in this session and in others that we'll be able to make progress in the bilateral relationship."

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2. US-ROK Talks

Reuters ("S. KOREA PROPOSES NEW DIALOGUE WITH N. KOREA," Seoul, 08/14/98) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung, in a speech he is to deliver on Saturday, will propose sending a special envoy to Pyongyang to discuss a new channel for talks with the DPRK, according to an advance copies of the speech. The speech calls on the two sides to establish "a standing dialogue mechanism at the ministerial or vice-ministerial level, which will serve as a useful channel for inter-Korean dialogue." Kim will argue that the two Koreas "should open a new chapter of reconciliation, exchanges and cooperation," and take steps to arrange reunions of separated families.

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3. ROK Political Prisoners

The Associated Press (Paul Shin, "SOUTH KOREA PARDONS 7,000," Seoul, 08/14/98) and Reuters ("S. KOREA AMNESTY NEGLECTS MANY POLITICAL PRISONERS," Seoul, 08/13/98) reported that the ROK on Friday granted special amnesty to 7,007 people to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the republic on August 15. ROK Justice Minister Park Sang-cheon stated, "The amnesty was granted to create harmony among the Korean people to overcome a national crisis." Park said that 2,174 of those granted amnesty would be released on parole on Saturday and the rest would either have their civil rights restored or sentences reduced. He added that 94 prisoners of conscience would be freed as they had signed an oath to obey the law as a condition of their release, but 17 long-term political prisoners would remain in jail after refusing to sign. Park also said, "Those responsible for the financial crisis were excluded in this amnesty as public opinion stands firmly against it." The human rights group Amnesty International urged ROK President Kim Dae- jung to waive the oath to include 17 sick and elderly long-term prisoners who have been held in solitary confinement for between 28 and 40 years in the amnesty. Amnesty International said in a statement, "These elderly political prisoners pose no threat to state security." A statement from the ROK Minkahyup Human Rights Group stated, "We are outraged by the August 15 amnesty announcement that left most prisoners of conscience in prison." It added, "The oath requiring prisoners to respect the National Security Law is inhumane."

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4. ROK Restructuring

Reuters ("S. KOREA PROPOSES NEW DIALOGUE WITH N. KOREA," Seoul, 08/14/98) and the Associated Press ("S. KOREAN PRESIDENT OUTLINES NATION-BUILDING PROGRAM," Seoul, 08/14/98) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung will call on Saturday for more democracy, market-oriented reforms, and deregulation in a "second nation-building" process to pull the ROK out of its current financial crisis. According to advance copies of the speech Kim will deliver, he will argue that the country must "establish a new value system based on universalism and globalism, shedding self-righteous nationalism and other anachronistic ideas." Kim will also promise that the 10 trillion won (US$7.5 billion) unemployment fund would be larger next year, and that all regular employees that have lost their jobs would receive benefits without exception. The speech stated, "I

assure you that all unemployed will be guaranteed the minimum requirements of food, clothes, medical care and school tuition." He also will pledge to introduce "a German-type proportional representation system" in which political parties would be awarded cabinet posts based on their strength in parliament. The speech concludes, "More than anything else, the government is firmly committed to eradicating the corruption and injustice that have discouraged people's desire to participate in the national administration and policy making."

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5. ROK Labor Unrest

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREA WARNS HYUNDAI WORKERS," Seoul, 08/14/98) reported that the ROK government on Friday gave Hyundai Motor Co. workers until next week to end their month-long strike or be forcibly removed from the company's plants. Almost simultaneously, Hyundai's management announced an indefinite shutdown of its main plants in a move seen as signaling a government intervention. Kim Soo-min, a senior prosecutor in charge of public security, stated, "We can not let this illegal work stoppage drag down the economy forever. A police raid is inevitable."

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6. Japanese Forced Labor During WWII

The Associated Press (Mari Yamaguchi, "FORMER CHINESE SLAVES SUE JAPAN," Tokyo, 08/14/98) reported that Kyodo News said that six Chinese men forced into slave labor at a Japanese factory during World War II sued the government and a stainless steel maker on Friday, demanding US$137,000 each in compensation. They also demand that an apology be published in Japanese newspapers. The plaintiffs claim they were coerced or kidnapped by Chinese sympathizers of the Japanese military in 1944 and sent to Kyoto as slave laborers at Nippon Yakin Kogyo Co. nickel factory. Nearly 40,000 Chinese were brought to Japan as slave laborers between April 1943 and shortly before Japan's defeat in August, 1945, according to Japan's wartime documents.

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7. US Military in Philippines

The Associated Press ("FILIPINOS PROTEST MILITARY PACT BY HURLING EGGS AT U.S. EMBASSY," Manila, 08/13/98) reported that demonstrators pelted the US Embassy in Manila with eggs Thursday to protest a pact that would allow US troops to train in the Philippines. The Visiting Forces Agreement has already been signed by the two sides, but must still be approved by the Philippine Senate. Philippine Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon said that under the agreement, Filipino troops who commit crimes while on duty in the US will be subject to local prosecution, while the US will have automatic jurisdiction over US troops who commit crimes while taking part in exercises in the Philippines.

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8. Indian Nuclear Tests

Reuters ("INDIA'S PRESIDENT SAYS N-TESTS A 'SALUTARY SHOCK'," New Delhi, 08/14/98) reported that Indian President Kocheril Raman Narayanan said in an interview broadcast on Friday that last May's nuclear tests were a "salutary shock" to the complacency of the world's recognized nuclear powers. Narayanan asserted that nuclear arms must be abolished by all nations. He argued

that the world seemed to have forgotten that the five nuclear powers had vast nuclear arsenals, "but when we conducted the tests, then suddenly everybody has woken up and feels that there is such a threat [of nuclear war]." Narayanan said that people talked about the danger of India and Pakistan possessing nuclear arms, but in time the two countries would settle down to the status quo and realize the "inescapable need" for a peaceful settlement of their disputes. He added that India's problems with its neighbors, including the PRC, were temporary and the result of a misunderstanding of India's regional objectives.

II. Japan

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1. DPRK Tourism

The Yomiuri Shimbun (Akihiro Ito, "UNIFICATION CHURCH ALSO PARTICIPATES IN DPRK TOURISM," Seoul, 08/14/98) and the Asahi Shimbun ("DPRK AIMS TO EARN FOREIGN CURRENCY THROUGH TOURISM," Seoul, 08/14/98) reported that Kumgangsan International announced on August 13 that the company will launch a one-day-trip program in the DPRK in September. According to the reports, Pak Po-hi, president of the company, visited the DPRK this month to sign a contract with the government. A high-speed boat will be used as transportation from the ROK eastern coast to Mt. Kumgang. The company will also ask for the ROK government's approval of the project. The Yomiuri article added that the development project of Mt. Kumgang has already been approved by the ROK government, and the Hyundai Group is promoting the project. The company, according to the reports, is part of the Unification Church, led by Moon Sun-myong.

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2. DPRK Defectors

The Asahi Shimbun ("MOST DPRK DEFECTORS ARE LISTENERS OF ROK RADIO BROADCASTING," 08/13/98) reported that the ROK's national radio broadcasting station KBS announced the results of the survey it conducted on the 120 DPRK people who have defected to the ROK since 1990. According to the results, 68 (57.6 percent) of them had listened to the ROK's radio programs while they were still in the DPRK, and most of them are either highly-educated or came from Hanghwe Province and Pyongan Province, which are close to the ROK. The report pointed out that, although in the DPRK the radio sets are originally set to receive only DPRK programs, the survey results indicate that ordinary radio sets are also secretly increasing in the DPRK. The defectors were able to access information through the ROK programs regarding Japanese, US and ROK culture, songs, and political affairs. In response to the question of whether the ROK radio programs influenced their decision to defect from the DPRK to the ROK, 80 percent of the 68 respondents answered positively. The most popular program was the KBS midnight social education program, which was originally directed at the DPRK.

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3. Japan's TMD Policy

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("FOREIGN MINISTRY AND DEFENSE AGENCY ARE AT ODDS WITH EACH OTHER OVER TMD BUDGET," 08/14/98) reported that the Japanese Foreign Ministry and Defense Agency are at odds with each other over whether to include the US-led Theater Missile Defense (TMD) program in the budget for fiscal year 1999. According to the report, while the Foreign

Ministry does not want to provoke the PRC by including the program in the budget before PRC President Jiang Zemin's visit to Japan slated for September 6, the Defense Agency strongly insists on including the program. The report added that the TMD program aims to deal with the DPRK's Nodong I, that the Japanese government already launched the program's cost-benefit analysis in 1995, and that the cost is estimated to reach approximately 20 billion yen over five years. It also said that the PRC has been criticizing the program because it may fuel military competition. According to a defense agency source, the PRC is also concerned that if the US TMD technology is transferred to Taiwan, this may nullify PRC ballistic missiles more than the New Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation may do.

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4. Russian Nuclear Fuel

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("RUSSIA TO ELIMINATE NUCLEAR FUEL FROM RETIRED NUCLEAR SUBS," Moscow, 08/14/98) reported that, according to a Itar-Tass News Agency report, the Russian Energy Department announced on August 12 that Russia will eliminate all the remaining spent fuel from its 400 retired nuclear submarines by 2005. The article pointed out that the spent fuel remaining in the decommissioned nuclear subs has flowed into the Far Eastern and Northern Sea coastal regions, raising grave concern. The article also quoted a Russian high-ranking official as saying, "So far, there has been no present danger of nuclear contamination, but if the spent fuel remains untreated, radioactive materials may flow into the sea."

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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The Center for Global Communications, Tokyo, Japan
Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Wade L. Huntley: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Choi Chung-moon: cily@star.elim.co.kr
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hiroyasu Akutsu: akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@glas.apc.org
Moscow, Russian Federation

Chunsi Wu: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn

Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

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Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org