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I. United States

1. Biden on US-DPRK Talks

New York Times (Don Kirk, "BIDEN CRITICIZES WHITE HOUSE ON KOREA MOVE," Seoul, 8/13/01) and the Associate Press ("U.S. MISSILE DEFENSE COULD COMPLICATE TALKS WITH PYONGYANG: U.S. SENATOR," 8/13/01) reported that US Senator Joseph Biden, a Democrat from Delaware and the head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said on August 11 that the US Bush administration's plans for a national missile defense system (NMD) could overshadow its efforts to resume talks with the DPRK. Biden said the US and the DPRK were conducting "a little bit of a dance" ahead of a likely resumption of negotiations. He said the process could unravel if the US abandons the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and pushes ahead with a missile defense system. Biden said, "The North Koreans and all parties must understand, we should be very concerned about the pace being too slow, because events may overtake the ability to negotiate." He added that construction of a US missile defense network "will render moot an awful lot of the issues that we have to discuss and I can't believe the North Koreans don't understand that." Biden continued, "I think we should focus on where the urgent need is. Conventional (troop strength) is at the bottom of the list in my view." ROK President Kim Dae-jung told Biden in a meeting on August 11, "It is

desirable for the United States to hold talks with North Korea as soon as possible. Inter-Korean relations must proceed side by side with North Korea-U.S. relations." Kim also said DPRK President Kim Jong-il's recent trip to Russia and an expected visit to the DPRK by PRC President Jiang Zemin next month augured a resumption of inter-Korean contact. [Ed. note: Both articles were included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for August 13, 2001.]

2. US Impact on Inter-Korean Relations

The Washington Post (Doug Struck, "KOREAS' RELATIONS BOG DOWN," Seoul, 8/14/01) reported that the ROK's "sunshine policy," which brought hopes for reuniting the Korean Peninsula seems to be foundering in the shadow of the US Bush administration's tougher approach to the DPRK and the country's sullen response to the approach. ROK Foreign Minister Han Seung Soo said in an interview on August 9, "All contacts are stopped. We had expected North Korea to take up the process again, but they haven't." ROK Kim Dae Jung is making repeated calls for the DPRK leader, Kim Jong Il, to save the process by visiting the ROK, but his calls have gone unanswered, while domestic economic problems and political criticism take away public support for his sunshine policy. The DPRK is unwilling to move ahead in its relations with the ROK unless that is part of a deal that involves better ties with the US. Shin Wook Hee, a professor of international relations at Seoul National University said, "The United States and South Korea are going in two different directions. Our dilemma is to get a consensus with our allies." Although the US Bush Administration has played down the initial demands it set for negations with the DPRK in June, the DPRK has not been responsive. A Western diplomat in the ROK said the DPRK "are signaling they are not in a happy mood with the United States. [The Bush administration's talk of negotiating DPRK's troops] has got the North Koreans very spun up." Officially, the ROK government remains optimistic. Yim Sung Joon, ROK deputy foreign minister for political affairs, said, "I don't think we have a lot of time, but we have enough time [before the ROK administration leaves office.] We still have 1 1/2 years. If North Korea doesn't come to negotiate because of lack of time, it's a grave mistake." Kim Kyung Min, chairman of the political science and diplomacy department at Hanyang University in Seoul, said, "South Korea has no room to negotiate with North Korea now. The government is putting all its efforts to inviting Kim Jong Il to visit. That makes Kim Jong Il the emperor, with all the power to decide." Han, the ROK foreign minister, said they could prepare for the trip very quickly, but acknowledged that the trip will become problematic by next year. Han said, "We have a political schedule next year, and all the domestic and foreign issues can be easily politicized in that election process." Suh Jin Young, a professor of politics at Korea University, said ROK President Kim "feels time is running out. He wants to come up with some visible and detailed results under his term, but I do not expect that to happen." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for August 14, 2001.]

3. Koizumi Visit to Yasukuni Shrine

Agence France Presse ("SOUTH KOREA MAKES FORMAL PROTEST OVER KOIZUMI VISIT," Seoul, 8/14/01) reported that ROK Vice Foreign Minister Choi Sung-Hong summoned told Japanese Ambassador to the ROK, Terusuke Terada, on Tuesday to make a formal protest over a visit to a Tokyo war shrine by Japan's Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. Choi read a prepared statement for ROK Foreign Minister Han Seung-Soo, who is on a tour of the Middle East. Choi told Terada, "It is deeply regrettable that Prime Minister Koizumi paid respects at Yasukuni Shrine, which is a symbol of Japanese militarism, in defiance of the South Korean government's repeated expressions of concern." The ROK minister said the Japanese government should have a correct sense of history and respect the feelings of the ROK public.

Agence France Presse ("RELATIONS WITH CHINA TO SUFFER IF KOIZUMI VISITS SHRINE: ANALYSTS," Beijing, 8/14/01) reported that analysts said on August 13 that the PRC is suspicious that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's nationalist leanings and a visit to the Yasukuni Shrine would cause a major rift in Sino-Japanese relations. Zhao Dawei, a specialist on Sino-Japanese relations at China's Institute of International Studies in Beijing, said, "It will definitely ignite strong opposition from the Chinese government and Chinese people. If Koizumi went to the shrine on Wednesday, it would create the biggest crisis in Sino-Japanese relations in years. If he moved it to another day, China would oppose it but the opposition would not be as strong." The visit is viewed by the PRC not only as a sign the current Japanese government condones Japan's wartime aggression towards Asian countries but also as a test of where Koizumi stands on Japanese militarism. An editorial from the PRC's official Xinhua news agency said, "On such a remarkable day, Japan should never hold any activities to beautify the war if it really has learnt past lessons and determines never to wage wars of aggression in future." Lau Siu-kai, a political analyst at Chinese University in Hong Kong, said, "Koizumi has a background of being a nationalist and Beijing is wary he may want to boost Japanese military might. China still does not trust Japan's intentions after so many years, particularly because Japan still has not apologized to China." However, analysts said that while the PRC would stoke up the rhetoric to avoid appearing weak before the population, it would not allow the issue to cause lasting damage to relations. Lau said, "Beijing wants to focus on improving Sino-US relations and doesn't want a military alliance between Japan and the US." Analysts said Koizumi also would want to avoid damaging relations with the PRC, as that would lead to closer anti-Japanese alliances between the PRC and its other Asian neighbors. Xinhua's editorial accused Koizumi of wanting to visit the shrine in a bid to woo votes from Japanese rightists. ROK-Japan Relations

4. PRC-DPRK Talks

The Washington Post (John Pomfret, "CHINA'S PRESIDENT WILL VISIT NORTH KOREA," 8/12/01) reported that Asian diplomatic sources said PRC President Jiang Zemin will visit the DPRK and meet DPRK leader Kim Jong Il on September 20. Diplomats said they considered the PRC engagement with the DPRK important for security in northeast Asia, and hoped Jiang would press Kim to resume talks with the ROK.

5. Sino-US Non-proliferation Talks

Agence France Presse ("US NAMES DATE ON CHINA NON-PROLIFERATION TALKS," Washington, 8/14/01) reported that the US State Department spokesman Philip Reeker said on August 13 that a team of US experts will travel to the PRC this month for talks on halting the spread of missile technology. Reeker said the talks, agreed to when US Secretary of State Colin Powell was in Beijing late last month, will take place on August 23, and if necessary conclude the following day. The US inter-agency team will be led by the acting US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Non Proliferation Vann Van Diepen.

6. Cross-Strait Relations

Agence France Presse ("NEW TAIWAN PARTY WILL HARM CROSS-STRAIT TIES, CHINESE MEDIA SAY," Beijing, 8/14/01) reported that the PRC's official Xinhua news agency said on August 13 that a new pro-independence party founded in Taiwan called the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) will jeopardize cross-strait relations. TSU is linked to former Taiwan president Lee Teng-hui and was founded on August 12, four months ahead of Taiwan's parliamentary elections. Xinhua cited an

unnamed news article, entitled "Political buffoon under the wings of Lee Tung-hui", which criticized the new party, led by former Taiwanese minister Huang Chu-wen, as divisive. It said the party went against the "One China" principle and undermined the development of cross-strait ties. The article also said Lee and others involved in the new party had shown that they were "not only troublemakers for cross- strait relations but also disaster-makers."

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK Number 2 Man Hospitalized

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Hee-sung, "N.K. NO.2 MAN HOPITALIZED IN BEIJING," Seoul, 08/13/01) reported that Jo Myong-rok (age 71), DPRK's First Vice Chairman to the National Defense Commission - also known as the number two man in the government - is currently hospitalized in Beijing under critical condition caused by kidney disease. According to sources in the PRC, Jo has been staying in the Beijing Military Hospital 301 since July 17 and has recently undergone a kidney transplant. Hospital people declined comments except that there is nothing much to fuss about.

3. Kim Jong Il's Trip to Russia

Joongang Ilbo (Hwang Song-joon, "CHAIRMAN KIM TO OPEN TRADE OFFICE IN ST. PETERSBURG," Moscow, 08/13/01) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il is out to establish a trade office in Saint Petersburg, Russia. An ROK government source said on August 13, "The North's side revealed its desire to open a trade office in St. Petersburg during the Chairman's tour to the region just after his summit meeting with Russian President Putin. St. Petersburg also responded positively to the request, making it highly likely for the North to have its wish. However the overall trade volume between the North and St. Petersburg is meager, recording just $640,000 for export and $570,000 for import this year alone. Even with a trade office significant improvement in bilateral trade is not expected." Meanwhile, Kim who toured around the city of Saint Petersburg last week, has expressed further interest in the city's beer industry, frigate (ship) construction, petroleum and gas system, road construction, lumber equipment and many others.

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.
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