NAPSNet Daily Report 14 August, 2003

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 14 August, 2003", NAPSNet Daily Report, August 14, 2003, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-14-august-2003/

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I. United States

1. DPRK Multi-Lateral Beijing Talks

Agence France-Presse ("SIX-WAY TALKS SET FOR AUGUST 27-29 IN BEIJING," 08/14/03) reported that six-way talks on the DPRK nuclear crisis will be held in Beijing from August 27 to 29, ROK's foreign ministry announced. "Six-nation talks involving ROK, the DPRK, the US, Japan, the PRC and Russia will be held from August 27 to 29 in Beijing," the ministry said in a statement. "The government welcomes the six-party talks and appreciates efforts by all concerned nations to realize the talks." Participants in the meeting will be the US, the PRC, Japan, Russia, the ROK and the DPRK. "The government hopes the nuclear issue will be resolved peacefully through the six-way talks and will make active efforts for that goal," the ministry said. Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo-Hyuck is to represent ROK at the Beijing meeting, to be attended by US Assistant Secretary of State

James Kelly and Mitoji Yabunaka, head of the Japanese foreign ministry's Asian affairs bureau. The announcement came amid a series of warm-up talks among diplomats from the six nations to take part in the Beijing meeting. PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing arrived in Seoul Wednesday for talks with ROK officials.

2. US-Japan-ROK DPRK Discussions

Agence France-Presse ("US, JAPAN, ROK WRAP UP TALKS ON NORTH KOREA," Washington, 08/14/03) reported that officials from the US, ROK, and Japan met here to put the final touches on their joint tactics ahead of six-nation nuclear crisis talks on the DPRK. Selected members from all three delegations gathered for less than two hours at the State Department to settle logistics and technical matters, a State Department official said on condition of anonymity. On Wednesday, the department's top East Asia policymaker, James Kelly, welcomed senior counterparts for talks lasting 90 minutes and then hosted a dinner in the evening. The official described the talks as "very useful" in honing the joint position that all three nations want to see a verifiable end to Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions. "We have been on the same page for a long time; we are all agreed what the goal is," he said. No final statement was expected from the meeting. Japan was represented at the talks by Mitoji Yabunaka, director general of Asia and Oceania affairs at the foreign ministry, who was joined by ROK Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo-Hyuck. The PRC confirmed earlier Thursday that it would host the six-nation talks also involving the US, Japan, Russia and the two Koreas from August 27 to 29 in Beijing. PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing earlier said he was optimistic of resolving the DPRK nuclear standoff but warned the talks could fail if Pyongyang's security concerns were not addressed. On Wednesday, Pyongyang fired off a new demand for a non-aggression pact that Washington has refused to grant and ruled out an early inspection of its nuclear facilities. Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov backed Pyongyang's demands for a non-aggression pact as "absolutely logical." The US has consistently rejected such an agreement, but Secretary of State Colin Powell last week suggested there may be a way for the US Congress to take note of a less formal arrangement, especially if it encompassed other regional powers. Powell said Wednesday that the US had not put forward economic incentives for North Korea to end its nuclear program.

3. US DPRK Delegation Leader

Agence France-Presse ("STATE DEPARTMENT'S KELLY TO LEAD US INTO NORTH KOREA TALKS," Washington, 08/14/03) reported that James Kelly -- the State Department's top East Asia policymaker, whom the DPRK has in the past slammed as "arrogant" and "high-handed" -- will lead the US delegation to six-way nuclear crisis talks in Beijing this month. Kelly was the US official who travelled to North Korea last October to confront the Stalinist state with what the US said was evidence of a banned nuclear weapons program, so igniting a nine-month nuclear crisis. "Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs James Kelly will lead the US delegation," said Tom Casey, a State Department spokesman. Kelly will head an interagency group at the talks, also involving the DPRK, and the PRC, Russia, ROK and Japan, Casey said. The veteran diplomat also headed the US side at inconclusive three-way talks on the crisis in Beijing in April. He was also at the head of the table Wednesday and Thursday, welcoming counterparts from ROK and Japan to the State Department to prepare the way for the next round of Beijing talks between August 27 and 29. Stung by Kelly's accusations that it had embarked on a program to enrich uranium for weapons in violation of a 1994 anti-nuclear deal, Pyongyang last October accused Kelly of taking an "arrogant and high-handed" attitude.

4. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA'S FM OPTIMISTIC AHEAD OF NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR TALKS," Seoul, 08/14/03) reported that PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said he was optimistic of resolving the DPRK nuclear standoff but warned six-way talks could fail if Pyongyang's security concerns were not addressed. Li, speaking after the six-party multilateral talks were confirmed for Beijing from August 27 to 29, said he was confident an agreement could be reached after holding strategic discussions with ROK officials. "We face a nuclear problem. There are expectations for good settlement but it is true that there is a danger," Li said Thursday at talks with ROK Unification Minister Jeong Se-Hyun. "We hope that this issue will be resolved peacefully through dialogue, and also that the DPRK's security concerns will be properly removed," said Li, who later met with President Roh Moo-Hyun. Announcing the dates of the talks, the PRC foreign ministry said the PRC was ready to "work with the other parties to promote the process of dialogue so as to ensure peace and stability of the Korean peninsula". Meeting Li, Roh appreciated the PRC's efforts to broker the multilateral dialogue while asking for Beijing's "continued and constructive role to make substantial progress" at the upcoming talks. Li said: "China makes its utmost efforts to make the six-party talks successful.

5. US on New DPRK-US Relations

The Associated Press ("US SEEKS NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH N. KOREA," Washington, 08/14/03) reported that the Bush administration is seeking a new relationship with the DPRK but is not offering economic assistance as an incentive for terminating its nuclear weapons program, Secretary of State Colin Powell says. "We have put no economic proposals forward at the moment," Powell said Wednesday as US, Japanese and ROK officials met at the State Department to forge a common strategy designed to induce North Korea to dismantle its nuclear weapons program. The delegations resumed their deliberations for nearly two hours on Thursday to deal with technical and logistical matters, a US official said. Japanese and ROK delegates left the building, saying only that the talks were over. There was no immediate US statement. Powell has offered to put in writing assurances that the Bush administration does not intend to attack North Korea. "We are looking for a different relationship with North Korea," he told reporters. Powell also noted that President Bush "has said many times that he is concerned about the welfare of the DPRK people. It concerns him that people are in need and starving."

6. DPRK on Multilateral Talks

Korea Central News Agency ("DPRK ACCUSES USA OF 'SOURING' SIX-WAY TALKS ATMOSPHERE," Pyongyang, 08/14/03) carried an article that read US recent act of souring the atmosphere with the six-way talks at hand can not but compel the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to doubt whether the US is really set to have fruitful talks for the solution to the nuclear issue in a sound atmosphere or not, says Nodong Sinmun today in a signed commentary. Recalling that the US is fanning a war fever against the DPRK behind the scene of dialogue, the commentary continues: These military moves are prompted by the U.S sinister intention to put military pressure upon the DPRK in a bid to steer the talks the way it premeditated and desired. It is indecorum bereft of common sense and international diplomatic practice for the US to pressurize its dialogue partner with reckless military actions under the umbrella of dialogue in a bid to attain its sinister aim. It is quite natural that the DPRK would not feel pleased to sit for talks with the very one who puts military pressure upon it. The DPRK owes the US nothing and it does not want to benefit from it. The US should not seek a selfish aim to attain something by wielding a stick against its dialogue partner and partially handle the nuclear issue in its favor. The US persistent moves would only chill the atmosphere of the talks and put them at a peril. It is the stand of the DPRK to participate in the talks with an easy mind, not being subject to any pressure including psychological one and discuss the

issue in a sincere and candid atmosphere on the principle of impartiality and equality so as to make the talks fruitful and thus find a solution to the acute nuclear issue between the DPRK and the US and achieve lasting peace and security on the Korean Peninsula.

7. DPRK Trojan Horse Op-Ed

The Washington Post (Masashi Nishihara, "NORTH KOREA'S TROJAN HORSE," Yokosura, 08/14/03) carried an Op-Ed by Masashi Nishihara that read: It is unfortunate that the DPRK's proposal for a "non-aggression pact" with the US appears to be gaining support among some prominent US policymakers and other influential figures. Such a pact would in fact lead only to a withdrawal of US troops from ROK and perhaps even to Japan's justifying the development of its own nuclear weapons. The DPRK believes that its national security has been seriously threatened by a series of President Bush's remarks and acts, including his "axis of evil" speech in January 2002, which included the DPRJ as one of the evils, and his war against Saddam Hussein. DPRK leaders believe that President Bush is aiming for "regime change" in Pyongyang. Therefore, from the viewpoint of their leader, Kim Jong Il, the DPRK needs nuclear weapons to dissuade Washington from attacking. As an alternative, Kim would accept a non-aggression pact with the US to guarantee the security of his regime. But by deliberately protracting negotiations concerning the format of multilateral talks, the DPRK has actually been buying time to develop its nuclear weapons further. Indeed, Pyongyang's agreement to the multilateral talks involving the two Koreas, the US, the PRC, Japan and Russia does not offer much reason for optimism. Pyongyang can find all kinds of excuses for stalling the talks and continuing to work on its nuclear weapons. The principal condition for the negotiations that the DPRK will try to impose on the US is the proposed non-aggression pact with Washington. In the past the DPRK has demanded such an agreement in return for its renouncing its nuclear weapons program and permitting full inspections of its nuclear facilities. But this is a dangerous offer that could eventually backfire on the United States. Washington should not sign a pact stating that it has no intention of launching a nuclear attack on the DPRK. A non-aggression pact would be extremely risky. First, how would the signatories ensure that the on-site inspections of suspected facilities were complete and that the DPRK had in fact abandoned its nuclear arms programs? Second, once a non-aggression pact was signed, Pyongyang might demand the withdrawal of American troops from ROK. It would argue that an American presence on the Korean peninsula was no longer needed now that both sides had promised not to wage war against each other. Moreover, the ROK public would be likely to support the DPRK's demand. Third, if the American troops left ROK, Pyongyang would appeal to its ROK "brothers" to call for a united Korea without a US role. In addition, some Japanese, particularly those in Okinawa, would probably argue that American bases in Okinawa ought to be downgraded or closed. Finally, and most important, a non-aggression pact between the DPRK and the US would conflict with the Japan-US Security Treaty. A DPRK without nuclear weapons would still possess biological and chemical weapons and could use them to attack Japan. In such an event, the US forces in Japan could not help defend Japan in accordance with their bilateral treaty, since the US would already have promised not to attack North Korea. Facing that possibility, Tokyo could no longer rely on its alliance with Washington and thus might decide to develop its own retaliatory nuclear weapons. Instead of a non-aggression pact, the US, together with Japan and ROK, should offer diplomatic recognition to Pyongyang. Bilateral and multilateral talks involving North Korea have already demonstrated the de facto recognition of that country by the three countries. If it were made official, the three countries could open embassies in Pyongyang, which would then be better able to observe the country and to continue communicating with the government. In the meantime, the US and Japan should target nonmilitary sanctions at the DPRK leaders to convince them that their tactics of buying time are not paying off. Such sanctions should include measures to detect and shelve the trade of technologies and weapons of mass destruction, as well as to retard the trade of illicit drugs and counterfeit currencies. This can

be done through the close observation and possible interdiction of DPRK ships on the high seas. Last month, using the excuse of stricter safety regulations, Japan succeeded in temporarily shutting down the visit to Japan of a DPRK ferry that allegedly was being used as a spy ship and for the illegal purchases of technologies. This was a good first step in the right direction. The writer is president of Japan's National Defense Academy.

8. DPRK and Non-Proliferation Op-Ed

The Washington Times (Robert T. Grey Jr., "COMMENTARY: NORTH KOREA UP IN ARMS," 08/14/03) carried an Op-Ed by Robert T. Grey Jr. that read the Bush administration and its critics agree that the viability of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is crucial to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and nuclear materials. Any actions to prevent nuclear proliferation must reinforce the treaty and not weaken it. The DPRK's withdrawal from the treaty and its claim that it has and will continue to produce weapons grade nuclear material put the NPT and international security at risk. A nuclear armed DPRK with excess weapons grade nuclear material available for export would be an intolerable threat and must be dealt with promptly and firmly. The issue is how to deal with the threat. There are no easy answers, only difficult choices, and even with prudence, patience and the best of intentions it may not be possible to get the DPRK to give up the nuclear option. As a first step, it is imperative that the international community speak with one voice to make it unmistakably clear to the DPRK that its only realistic choice is to seek, through negotiations and dialogue, a non-nuclear solution to its security and economic problems. The DPRK must understand that absent a diplomatic solution, the international community is prepared, however reluctantly, to use force to put an end to the DPRK's pursuit of nuclear weapons. The administration recently put forward the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) in an effort to constrain proliferation by steps that include permitting interdiction of weapons shipments on the high seas. There are 11 states (Australia, Japan, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom and the US) that have joined the PSI. The PSI will only be successful if it operates in the context of the NPT and in compliance with international law. There are those who argue that the DPRK threat is so immediate that the US and others should invoke the doctrine of self-defense under Article 51 of the U.N. Charter and use the PSI to interdict the DPRK shipping now. This pushes the self-defense doctrine well beyond its narrow limits and creates a dangerous precedent. The DPRK's onduct threatens the entire world, not just the US and a handful of its allies. The PRC, Russia and all the other members of the international community have a direct stake in this issue. The DPRK has repeatedly stated that any interdiction of its vessels or aircraft would be regarded as an act of war and that it would react accordingly. Given the nature of the DPRK regime and the desperate condition of the country, forcing a premature confrontation without a clear legal mandate that will guarantee maximum political support carries with it the grave risk of igniting a major war on the Korean peninsula, and if indeed the NORTH KOREANS have nuclear weapons, a war which could become a nuclear one. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty states that when a signatory state withdraws from the treaty, as North Korea did, the matter should be referred to the Security Council. It is imperative that the Security Council be involved now. A Security Council resolution calling for the DPRK to return to and comply with the NPT is the best way to go. The resolution should also make it clear that in the event that the DPRK refuses to comply, its shipping will be interdicted. Such a resolution offers the DPRK an opportunity to achieve a peaceful outcome and involves the entire international community. Such a Security Council resolution with the backing of all five permanent members would carry great weight and send a powerful message. The PRC and Russia may be difficult to persuade. The options appear to be either a negotiated diplomatic settlement which brings North Korea back into the NPT fold or an outcome which could result in the creation of as many as three additional nuclear weapons states in the area or another Korean War, which could involve nuclear weapons. But for the US and its allies, the worst outcome would be a

preemptive interdiction of DPRK shipping without overwhelming international political support followed by another Korean War. As a country that was instrumental in establishing both the United Nations and the nuclear non-proliferation regime, we have an obligation to try to make them work before attempting to round up a posse and going it alone. Robert T. Grey Jr., a former ambassador for the Clinton and current Bush administrations, is director of Bipartisan Security Group, a program of the Global Security Institute.

9. US Missile Plot

The Associated Press (Steve Strunsky, "MISSILE PLOT READS LIKE SPY NOVEL," Newark, 08/14/03) reported that the three men charged following an international sting operation that involved a fictitious plot to shoot down American airliners form a shadowy trio from far corners of the globe. Hemant Lakhani, who is charged with trying to provide material support to terrorists and dealing arms without a license, is identified by federal prosecutors as a 68-year-old British citizen of Indian descent who lives in London. Yehuda Abraham, charged with money laundering and conspiracy, is a 76-year-old Manhattan diamond dealer who lives in Queens. The third defendant, Moinuddeen Ahmed Hameed, 38, also charged with money laundering and conspiracy, is an Indian citizen who prosecutors say had been living in Malaysia. Beyond that, prosecutors have revealed little about the men, and the primary source of information on the case has been affidavits by FBI agents made public Wednesday. The affidavit accompanying Lakhani's charges in particular, reads like pages from a spy novel. The 18-month investigation began in December 2001, when the first of what eventually amounted to 150 conversations occurred between Lakhani and an FBI informant, the affidavit said. In the conversations, Lakhani allegedly expressed an interest in brokering an arms sale. Speaking primarily in Urdu, a language spoken by many Indians, Lakhani was captured on tape telling the informant he had made similar deals in the past, and praising Osama Bin Laden and the September 11 terror attacks. During the same time period, Lakhani, who traveled back and forth between New Jersey and London, developed what he thought were contacts with Russian suppliers of shoulder-launched missiles who were actually Russian agents working in cooperation with the FBI in what officials called an unprecedented cooperative investigation. For example, on April 25, the affidavit said, Lakhani met the informant in a hotel overlooking Newark Liberty International Airport, assuring him he could secure missiles. "It can be done," he was quoted as saying. "I'm ready to work with you." In a conversation on Aug. 17, 2002, Lakhani was told by the informant he understood his desire to have a missile before the first anniversary of the terror attacks, less than a month away, the affidavit said. Three days later, the affidavit said, he faxed the informant a price breakdown for an Igla-S portable anti-aircraft missile. On July 12, 2003, Lakhani traveled to Moscow to finalize the missile sale. Two days later, he met there with the Russian undercover agents and the informant, when he was shown what appeared to be a live missile, the affidavit said. The weapon was actually an inoperable replica. The next day, the affidavit said, Lakhani went with the Russians and the informant to St. Petersburg, Russia, where a shipment of 50 missiles was to be sent to the US. That night, he told the Russians he would like delivery by Aug. 30, the affidavit said. The second anniversary of the terror attacks would be just 12 days later. On the same visit, the affidavit said Lakhani also asked the Russians for several tons of C-4 plastic explosive. Months earlier, in October 2002, the affidavit said Lakhani explained a furtive system for passing along payments on the missiles to an individual in New York. That individual would wire the payments overseas to an account controlled by Lakhani, the affidavit said. Prosecutors identified the individual as Abraham. Prosecutors said Hameed was to perform a similar function. Hameed and Abraham were arrested together Tuesday at Abraham's office in Manhattan's diamond district. Lakhani was arrested the same day at a hotel near Newark Airport. All three remained in custody in New Jersey on Thursday. Bail was set for Abraham at $10 million, and the others awaited bail hearings. None of the defendants have entered a plea. Hameed's lawyer, Cathy Fleming, said her client maintained his

innocence. Lakhani's lawyer, Donald J. McCauley, declined to comment. Abraham's lawyer, Larry Krantz, did not return calls Thursday seeking comment.

10. US Airlines Anti-Missile Technology

Reuters (Charles Aldinger, "MILITARY COULD AID COMMERCIAL JETS ON MISSILE THREAT," Washington, 08/14/03) reported that the US military could provide sophisticated anti-missile technology to commercial airlines to guard against shoulder-fired missiles, but the step would be very expensive for companies, top defense officials said on Thursday. "My guess is if they wanted the technology that we have on some of our military aircraft to defeat this threat, that would be made available," Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, the chairman of the military Joint Chiefs of Staff, said. "It's widely available technology, although sometimes fairly sophisticated. But to my knowledge, they haven't asked for that at this point," Myers said when asked at a "Town Hall" meeting with Pentagon workers how the military might help commercial airlines protect their aircraft. "It's very expensive," Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told the meeting. "It would change the economics of commercial flight to some extent, in that, obviously the ticket prices would go up to support those kinds of capabilities." Government and other estimates for equipping commercial airliners vary from $10 billion for installation -- depending on the technology -- to nearly $100 billion, which would include training and maintenance costs.

II. Japan

1. Japan-PRC Relations over DPRK Abduction Issue

The Asahi Shinbun ("CHINA LETS OFFICIALS SEE ACTIVIST,"08/13/03) reported that PRC authorities allowed representatives of the Japanese Consulate-General in Shanghai to meet Fumiaki Yamada, 54, an associate professor at Osaka University of Economics who heads the Society to Help Returnees to North Korea (HRNK). Japanese officials said Yamada was in good health and told them, "Tell my family not to worry about me. I want you to lobby Chinese officials to not expatriate (the North Korean asylum seekers) because they would be executed if deported."Yamada was detained Aug. 7 with Kim Ki Ju, a Korean resident of Japan, and two ROK photographers. They arrived with seven DPRK who had fled their country to seek asylum in ROK, the group said. Other reports said eight North Koreans had been detained by PRC authorities. Yamada told the consular officials the North Koreans he was trying to help were all relatives of Koreans who previously lived in Japan. In Beijing, PRC Foreign Ministry officials acknowledged that Yamada and the three South Koreans were being detained. They criticized the efforts of Yamada's group as an "organized attempt to smuggle people into China."No mention was made of the North Koreans who were with Yamada when he was detained. Separately, HRNK officials submitted a letter to the PRC Embassy in Tokyo on Tuesday asking that Yamada and the South Koreans be released and that the North Koreans not be repatriated. The NGO also asked the Foreign Ministry to ensure the safety of Yamada and his ROK collaborators. HRNK officials said they decided to have the North Koreans enter a Japanese school in Shanghai to seek asylum after the Foreign Ministry was cool to taking them into protective custody after they fled DPRK to PRC.

2. Japan's Missile Defense

The Asahi Shinbun ("MISSILE DEFENSE NOW HAS PRIORITY,"08/13/03) reported that with an erratic DPRK only minutes away as the missile flies, Japan's Defense Agency plans to request 140

billion yen to purchase and deploy a U.S.-made missile defense system. The price, to be incorporated in the next fiscal year budget, would vastly exceed the entire amount-15.6 billion yen-spent since 1999 on a joint missile defense research project with the US. While agency officials are in accord on the massive price tag, the final budget figure will be negotiated with officials close to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and the Finance Ministry. Filling the agency shopping cart will be the surface-t--air Patriot Advanced Capability 3 (PAC3) system and an Aegis destroyer-based Standard Missile 3 (SM3) system. Defense Agency officials hope to deploy the systems by 2006, at the earliest. The money would go not only for new hardware, but to upgrade current platforms to accommodate the new weapons as well as for new command and communications systems. Defense Agency officials are looking at a layered missile defense. The first line of protection would be the Standard Missile 3, designed to shoot down incoming ballistic missiles in mid-flight beyond the Earth's atmosphere. The four Aegis destroyers of the Maritime Self-Defense Force would be retrofitted to accommodate the weapons. The Aegis ships are the only vessels in Japan's fleet capable of carrying the SM3. If the hostile missile gets past the SM3, the PAC3 system is designed to knock it out at the terminal flight stage, not long before impact. It will be an improved version of the PAC2 system designed to counter short-range ballistic missiles. Japan has already deployed about 120 PAC2 missiles.

3. Six Way Talks

The Asahi Shinbun ("FUKUDA:ABDUCTIONS A BILATERAL MTTER,"Beijing, 08/12/03) reported that the issue of abductions by DPRK must be tackled on a bilateral basis, not during six-way talks slated later this month on ending the nuclear standoff with Pyongyang, Japan's top government spokesman said here Monday. "In considering a comprehensive resolution of oustanding issues (involving DPRK), the abduction issue cannot be avoided," said Yasuo Fukuda, the chief Cabinet secretary. "While we want that issue to be taken up at the six-nation talks, (DPRK's) nuclear weapons development is the most pressing issue for those talks and the common issue of concern for the international community." Six-way talks to be held here in late August will involve both DPRK, Japan, the US, PRC and RF. Fukuda was in Beijing as part of a delegation for events marking the 25th anniversary of the Japan-PRC Treaty of Peace and Friendship. The treaty was signed when Fukuda's father, the late Takeo Fukuda, was prime minister. Fukuda was scheduled to return to Japan later Monday. Without mentioning specifics, Fukuda told reporters the abduction issue would have to be raised at the bilateral level with DPRK. Officials had hoped to hold talks with Pyongyang on the abduction issue on the sidelines of the six-nation talks. Fukuda sought to gain PRC's understanding and cooperation during his visit. But the general response from the PRC leadership only highlighted the different approaches to the abduction issue. Fukuda met with PRC President Hu Jintao on Saturday and thanked him for Beijing's efforts to get DPRK to agree to the six-nation talks. When Fukuda raised the abduction issue, all Hu said was, "We support a resolution of the abduction issue through dialogue."Hu expressed a similar sentiment when he met Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in St. Petersburg in May. PRC, analysts said, is wary of becoming too involved in what it considers a bilateral issue between Japan and DPRK. The hesitancy to cooperate more openly with Japan also reflects lingering resentment among the PRC leadership over repeated visits to the controversial Yasukuni Shrine by Koizumi. During talks Sunday with PRC Premier Wen Jiabao, Fukuda invited Wen to visit Japan as soon as possible. Wen, touching on the Yasukuni issue, replied that the "proper environment" had first to be laid before such a visit was possible. "There is the issue of Japanese leaders continuing to visit Yasukuni Shrine," Wen said. "Compared to the difficulties during the talks toward normalization of relations, this is a very minor issue. I look forward to the possibility of mutual visits by the leaders of the two nations under a good atmosphere and hope that the opportunity is not too far off in the future."Fukuda told reporters on Monday that it was "unnatural not to have exchanges between the leaders of the two nations."

The Asahi Shinbun ("ANALYSIS:LACKING SUPPORT, TOKYO SEPARATES ABDUCTION ISSUE FROM NUKES,"08/13/03) reported that in what amounts to a reality check, Japanese officials say they will adopt a two-pronged approach in dealing with DPRK by separating the abduction issue from the standoff over Pyongyang's nuclear weapons development. In a nutshell, Japanese officials concede that the rest of the world doesn't care very much about what essentially is a bilateral issue and one that is greatly overshadowed by the specter of a nuclear-capable DPRK. Officials cited general disinterest in the abduction issue among other nations taking part in six-way talks involving DPRK to be held in Beijing this month. PRC officials told Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda and Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi in recent days that while they understand Japan's preoccupation with resolving the abduction issue, DPRK's nuclear weapons development program must occupy center stage at the talks involving both Koreas, the US, Japan, RF and PRC. The US and ROK have informed Japan that the abduction issue must not be allowed to become a focal point of the talks. ROK officials said they do not object to having the abduction issue discussed, so long as it isn't a catalyst for the talks' collapse. Fukuda told reporters in Beijing on Monday that the abduction issue would be discussed in a bilateral setting with DPRK, likely on the sidelines of the six-way talks. This point was hammered home on Tuesday when visiting PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing told lawmakers that PRC would be put in a difficult position if issues other than the nuclear problem were raised at the six-way talks. If those bilateral talks are held, it would mark the first official contact between the two nations since a meeting in late October in Kuala Lumpur. Despite immense national joy at the return of five abductees from DPRK nearly a year ago, no progress has been made on normalization talks nor closing the file on abductions. That is because the abduction issue became entwined with the nuclear weapons development issue. Had Japan pushed hard for early resolution of the abduction issue, it could have upset concerted international efforts in getting DPRK to back down on its nuclear weapons development. Japanese officials were also concerned that advances on the nuclear issue would render the abduction issue a forgotten cause among other participating nations. Officials also realize they may make little progress on the abduction issue since Japan has little negotiating leverage right now.

Kyodo ("JAPAN, US, S.KOREA TO PREPARE WED.FOR 6-WAY," Tokyo, 08/13/03) reported that senior officials from Japan, ROK and the US will gather Wednesday and Thursday in Washington for policy coordination ahead of six-nation talks on DPRK's nuclear program later this month. In the preparatory gathering, Japan plans to seek strong support from the US and the South on raising the issue of Japanese abducted by DPRK at the conference as host PRC has shown reluctance on that being a major item on the agenda, Japanese officials said. The three countries are also expected to finalize a package of proposals to be presented to comprehensively resolve the DPRK nuclear standoff, they said. The participants at the preparatory meeting will be Mitoji Yabunaka, head of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs James Kelly and Lee Su Hyok, ROK assistant secretary of foreign affairs and trade. The six-nation talks are to be held Aug. 27-29 in Beijing. In the proposals, the three nations are expected to urge DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons development program in a verifiable and irreversible manner. They would also consider the establishment of an inspection regime of their own to verify the North is complying. The regime would be supplementary to one expected to be set up by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) once DPRK agrees to dismantle its nuclear weapons programs and accepts IAEA inspectors back into the country. The three countries will also consider providing economic, energy and food assistance to the North in exchange for the complete scrapping of its nuclear program. The six-way conference will be the second round of high-level talks involving DPRK and the US following three-party talks involving PRC held in Beijing in April. Japan is expected to tell the US and ROK it is placing importance on seeking progress in resolving the abduction issue. Washington has already expressed support for Japan's stance, but PRC has said the issue should be discussed bilaterally, not multilaterally. PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, however, told Japanese lawmakers on Tuesday, "It would put the host

country in a very awkward position if one of the countries broaches an issue unrelated to the (DPRK) nuclear program. We would hope the main focus is a peaceful solution to the nuclear issue." Tension between Japan and the North over the abductions of Japanese decades ago is the main obstacle to normalizing bilateral ties.

Kyodo ("BUSH TO SHORTLY APPOINT HEAD OF TEAM FOR 6-WAY N.KOREA TALKS," Washington, 08/12/03) reported that US President George W. Bush will shortly appoint the head of the US delegation to planned six-country talks on DPRK's nuclear weapons programs, the White House said Tuesday. "The president will be the person who will choose who will head the U.S. delegation," White House spokeswoman Claire Buchan told reporters in Crawford, Texas, where the president is taking a summer vacation at his ranch. "That decision hasn't been made, (it is) expected shortly." At a news conference earlier in the day in the Australian capital of Canberra, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said John Bolton, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, is not scheduled to participate in the six-way talks in Beijing on Aug. 27-29. DPRK has voiced opposition to Bolton representing the US in the Beijing talks. In Washington, State Department spokesman Philip Reeker said Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs James Kelly will lead the US delegation to informal three-way talks to be held by the U.S., Japan and ROK in Washington on Wednesday and Thursday. At the meeting intended to coordinate policy among the three countries ahead of the six-country talks, Mitoji Yabunaka, head of the Foreign Ministry's Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, will represent Japan and Lee Su Hyok, assistant secretary of foreign affairs and trade, will head the ROK team, Reeker 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.

Produced by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development in partnership with:

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