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I. United States

1. DPRK Refugees in PRC

Agence France Presse ("S.KOREAN PRESIDENT CALLS FOR SAFETY OF REPATRIATED N.KOREAN REFUGEES," Seoul, 1/14/00) and Reuters ("SEOUL SEEKS PRESSURE ON N.KOREA OVER FAMILY," Seoul, 1/14/00) reported that ROK presidential press secretary S.J. Yoon said Friday that ROK President Kim Dae-Jung has instructed his new foreign minister to try and secure the safety of

seven DPRK refugees deported by the PRC. Kim was quoted by an aide as saying, "a sense of guiltiness haunts me when thinking of the agony those who had fled in famine but had been deported to North Korea will face at home." Lee Joung-binn, the new ROK Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister, is scheduled to summon PRC Ambassador Wu Dawei later Friday to lodge a complaint about the refugees. A ministry official said that Unification Minister Park Jae-kyu also called for a National Security Council meeting early on January 14 to discuss the matter. Observers said that there was little the ROK could actually do to guarantee the safety of the DPRK Nationals. The daily Munhwa Ilbo newsaper reported that the ROK was also considering raising the issue at the United Nations' conferences on human rights.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees ("UNHCR PROTESTS CHINESE DEPORTATION OF NORTH KOREANS," Geneva, 01/13/00) issued the following press release: "The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) today said it has protested to the Chinese government over the deportation of seven individuals to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), where they could face severe reprisals. UNHCR last month recognised the seven as refugees, including a 13-year-old boy, after they made their way from North Korea to Russia, across Chinese territory. The refugee agency informed both the Chinese and the Russian governments about its decision to grant them refugee status. It also expressed readiness to resettle the group in a third country. But despite UNHCR's pleas, Russia deported the seven to China on December 30. UNHCR then appealed to Chinese authorities to refrain from sending them back to North Korea. But on Tuesday, the Chinese Foreign Ministry told UNHCR that the refugees had been sent to North Korea. The ministry did not specify when they were deported or how it happened. 'We are gravely concerned by the Chinese decision to deport people whom UNHCR has recognised as refugees under the 1951 Refugee Convention,' said High Commissioner Sadako Ogata. She also urged the North Korean authorities to treat the seven deported refugees humanely. Both China and Russia are signatories of the 1951 Convention -- the cornerstone of international refugee law, which clearly bans "refoulement," or forcible return of refugees to areas where they could face danger or persecution. In a letter sent to the Chinese government on Wednesday, UNHCR protested the violation of the 1951 Convention and fundamental humanitarian principles. UNHCR has been in regular contact with Chinese authorities over the past two years in an effort to address the issue of North Koreans in China, some of whom definitely meet the criteria for refugee status. UNHCR strongly urges China to refrain from fresh deportations of North Koreans in the future."

2. DPRK Missile Launch Site

The New York Times carried an opinion piece, "A MISSILE IS A MISSILE," on January 14, 2000 by Mark M. Lowenthal, deputy assistant secretary of state for intelligence, 1988-89. Lowenthal wrote: "A secret North Korean missile base recently revealed in photographs taken by a private spy satellite cannot be wished away because of its minimal creature comforts.... John E. Pike of the Federation of American Scientists is mistaken when he declares that if a site is not up to United States standards, it is not a threat. The photos reveal that North Korea is not a 'mouse that roared' but rather a country that has impoverished itself to create a very real and very dangerous capability." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for January 13, 2000.]

3. US-Taiwan Relations

Agence France Presse ("CONGRESSMEN URGE TAIWAN TO COOL TOUGH TALK FOR SAKE OF US," Hong Kong, 1/14/00) reported that a visiting six-member bipartisan delegation of US congressmen in Hong Kong said on Friday that the US does not want provocative comments from

Taiwan's leadership to interfere with US-PRC relations. Arizona Republican and delegation leader Matt Salmon, a member of the International Relations Committee and its Asia and the Pacific subcommittee, said, "one message I intend to give to (Taiwanese) President Lee Teng-hui is that he needs to be extremely cautious in selecting his rhetoric." Salmon acknowledged the strong support for Taiwan in the US Congress, but said he did not want to see his country "sucked into a needless conflict. We would like to see the bilateral relationship between the United States and China strengthened." Salmon also said, "I believe the comments [Lee] made in July were extremely hurtful (to relations)." The delegation also cautioned the PRC to be patient with Taiwan's presidential elections in March. Delegation member and Pennsylvania Republican Patrick Toomey said that both Lee's "state-to-state" comment and the PRC's military maneuvers four years ago "had caused the United State problems." The delegates leave for Taiwan from Hong Kong on January 14.

4. Taiwan Military Development

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN FINISHES FIGHTER JET ORDER," Taipei, 1/14/00) reported that Taiwan on Friday completed construction of the last of two fighter jets from a batch of 130 it began making in the 1980s. The military originally ordered 250 of the Indigenous Defensive Fighters from a state-owned defense contractor, Aerospace Industrial Development Corporation. That number was cut to 130 after Taiwan bought 150 F-16 jets from the US and 60 Mirage fighters from France in 1992.

5. PRC View of US Missile Defense

Associated Press ("US URGED TO DITCH MISSILE PROJECT," Beijing, 1/14/00) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao urged the US to abandon plans for national and regional missile defense systems. Zhu said the systems would have a "profound negative impact on the global and regional strategic balance. China expresses concern over this." Zhu also said that the systems "cannot enhance security and stop missile proliferation. On the contrary, they will jeopardize security." US Embassy spokeswoman Lisa Heller said that US Assistant Secretary of State Stanley Roth, was in Beijing to "take the temperature" of Sino-US ties. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for January 13, 2000.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK Refugees in PRC

Chosun Ilbo (Lee Ha-won, "CHINA CONFIRMS 7 NKCHINA CONFIRMS 7 NK DEFECTORS REPATRIATED," Seoul, 01/14/00) and The Korea Times (Son Key-young, "CHINA REPATRIATES 7 REFUGEES TO NK," Seoul, 01/14/00) reported that a high-level ROK official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MoFAT) said on January 12 that the PRC government confirmed that it had returned seven DPRK refugees to their country of origin. The government official said, "The Chinese Ambassador in Korea, Wu Dawei, reported this fact to the MoFAT and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in Geneva also confirmed the return of the seven." Then MoFAT Minister Hong Soon-young appeared at the National Assembly on December 6 1999 and said that that the refugees were expected to come to the ROK with the help of the UNHCR. On Friday, the Unification, Foreign Affairs and Trade Committee of the National Assembly will convene a meeting and call Minister Hong to get further information on the repatriated DPRK escapees.

2. DPRK on Korean War Massacre

The Korea Times ("N.KOREA ACCUSES US OF COVERING UP KOREAN WAR KILLINGS," Seoul, 01/13/00) reported that the DPRK on January 12 accused the US of trying to cover up alleged mass killings of refugees by US soldiers during the Korean War. The DPRK was commenting on statements by US Army Secretary Louis Caldera in Seoul this week that the US will not investigate "every firefight, every battle" of the 1950-53 war. "Uncle Sam's jargon is the height of impudence," the DPRK's official ruling Workers' Party newspaper, Rodong Sinmun, said in a commentary carried by the country's foreign news outlet, Korean Central News Agency. The report stated, "the US imperialists should clearly know that the more they try to conceal the crimes fully exposed to the world, the more they reveal their true colors as wicked aggressors and murderers."

3. DPRK Foreign Policy

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "RISE IN OVERSEAS TRAVEL BY N.K. OFFICIALS INDICATES SHIFT IN POLICY: NIS REPORT," Seoul, 01/14/00) reported that an ROK National Intelligence Service (NIS) report said on January 12 that overseas tours by DPRK officials have been on the rise since Kim Jong-il formally took office as head of state in September 1998, indicating the DPRK is beginning to practice a more pragmatic diplomacy. The report said that DPRK officials made 134 and 222 overseas visits in 1998 and 1999, respectively, an increase from the 99 visits that DPRK recorded in 1997. The DPRK scaled down diplomatic activity when Kim Il-sung died in 1994. According to the NIS report, DPRK officials took only 80 trips abroad that year. Officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said that the DPRK's increased diplomatic efforts indicate its desire to improve relations with the US and some Western European nations. Diplomatic observers said that the DPRK's aggressive diplomacy proves that Kim Jong-il has successfully completed his reorganization of the government and has placed it firmly under his control.

4. US Policy toward DPRK

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "PYONGYANG REGIME CURRENTLY IN STATE OF GREAT TURMOIL, U.S. EXPERT SAYS," Seoul, 01/14/00) reported that a US expert on the DPRK said on January 12 that the DPRK is in a state of great confusion right now, providing the US administration with an unprecedented opportunity to dismantle the "rogue" regime. Chuck Downs, author of "Over the Line: North Korea's Negotiating Strategy" said, "US policymakers should take this chance and not repeat their past mistakes." He argued that US leaders have missed at least three major opportunities to dismantle the DPRK in the past. Downs said that the DPRK was on the verge of dissolution in 1990-92, when the Socialist bloc disintegrated, and again in 1994-97, when it suffered a power vacuum between the death of leader Kim Il-sung and the rise of his successor Kim Jong-il. Downs stated that the DPRK is also currently experiencing extreme economic and diplomatic difficulties and "to take advantage of this situation, Washington has to press Pyongyang to make concessions instead of allowing itself to be exploited by North Korea's incredibly consistent and organized negotiating strategy." Downs serves as an advisor for the Republican Policy Committee of the US House of Representatives.

5. DPRK Food Aid

The Korea Herald ("WFP SAYS FOOD AID TO NORTH KOREA IN DANGER," Seoul, 01/14/00) reported that the World Food Program (WFP) has warned that if the international community fails to make additional commitments to its food aid program for the DPRK, the program will be

discontinued in mid-May. In its first report this year on emergency aid to the DPRK, released on January 11, the UN agency appealed to nations of the world to make additional contributions to its food aid program this year. If it fails to secure additional assistance in January, the DPRK's food supply will be greatly reduced this coming spring, by which time the country fall's harvest will have been depleted. The report said that it would place the entire food aid program in jeopardy. The report also said supplies of edible oil may last until late July and stocks of soybeans could last until mid-September.

6. ROK-DPRK Economic Cooperation

The Korea Herald ("HYUNDAI REQUESTS PERMIT TO SHIP 20,000 TV SETS TO N.KOREA," Seoul, 01/14/00) reported that the ROK Unification Ministry said that the Hyundai Group has applied for the government's permission to ship 20,000 20-inch television sets to the DPRK on a deferred payment basis. The DPRK's Asia-Pacific Peace Committee had asked Hyundai to ship 20,000 25-inch TV sets before the inter-Korean basketball games last month. A ministry official explained that Hyundai agreed to ship 20-inch sets because 25-inch sets are not available. The televisions will be exported on deferred payment terms. The official said that the ministry is consulting with related agencies as to whether Hyundai's application for the shipment permit should be issued.

7. DPRK Environmental Research

Joongang Ilbo ("GEF SUPPORTS NK ECOSYSTEM RESEARCH," Seoul, 01/13/00) reported that the DPRK has decided to carry out research into its ecosystem with the help of the Geographic Environment Fund (GEF). A source at the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said on January 12, "The North requested support from the GEF, which is made up of the United Nations Development Plan (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Plan (UNEP), last year and will start its research with the international organization this year." With financial support worth US$1.49 million, the DPRK will start its first research in the fields of biological diversity and climate change. It is planning to carry out two biological diversity projects named "Saving the ecosystem of Mount Myohyang" and "Saving the ecosystem of the Yellow Sea." The Mount Myohyang project will continue until the year 2002, while the Yellow Sea project will finish in 2004.

8. ROK Foreign Minister

The Korea Herald (Lee Chang-sup, "MIN. HONG REPLACED OVER HANDLING OF NK REFUGEE ISSUE," Seoul, 01/14/00) reported that the replacement of ROK Foreign Affairs-Trade Minister Hong Soon-young came as a surprise to the diplomatic community. Many claimed that he became a "victim" of the handling of the DPRK refugee issue.

III. Japan

1. DPRK Missile Launch Site

The Daily Yomiuri (Ryuichi Otsuka, "N. KOREAN MISSILE BASE DETAILED US FIRMS GIVES PUBLIC CLEAR VIEW OF TAEPODNG LAUNCH SITE," Washington, 01/09/2000) reported that a Colorado-based commercial satellite-image provider recently revealed its first detailed view of a DPRK Taepodong ballistic missile base. According to the report, the Taepodong-1 ballistic missile was launched in August 1998 from the base, located in Musudan-ri, DPRK. The high-resolution

satellite image of the entire base was made public by the firm Space Imaging, Incorporated, based in Denver, Colorado. The report said the satellite image, which was taken from Space Imaging's IKONOS commercial satellite on November 1,1999, showed a missile-launching facility at the center of the photo. The Space Imaging photo did not have the high resolution of images taken by state-o--the-art military spy satellites, but it did have the highest resolution of commercially available aerial images. The photo of the base showed a sizable building thought to be missile-assembly facilities connected to roads possibly used for missile transport. Scores of buildings standing to the left of the launch site are thought to be residential facilities for base workers. The base and its facilities are surrounded by farmed land, indicating that the food supply in the DPRK remains a vital issue. Even the areas adjacent to the launch site are cultivated.

2. Japanese-DPRK Relations

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("EMERGING TWO-STAGE PROPOSAL ON FOOD AID TO DPRK," 01/13/2000) reported that there is an emerging proposal to send food aid to the DPRK within the Japanese government to see how the DPRK will respond to the resumption of the normalization talks between Japan and the DPRK. Japan would then decide whether or not to send another package. According to the report, the reason for the emergence of this proposal is the Japanese Foreign Ministry's desire to reconcile with the strong opposition within the ruling Liberal Democratic Party against early food aid the DPRK before the issues of the suspected abduction of Japanese civilians and the suspected launch of a missile make any progress. Regarding the recent arrest in the DPRK of Takashi Sugisima, Japanese researcher at the Institute of Market Economy, a high-ranking Foreign Ministry official said, "(the Japanese government) would not politicize the issue unnecessarily. We will deal with the issue from the humanitarian point of view."

3. Japan's CTBT Policy

The Sankei Shimbun ("JAPANESE GOVERNMENT TO DISPATCH SPECIAL ENVOY TO URGE FOR CTBT RATIFICATION," 01/14/2000) reported that the Japanese government decided on January 13 to send ex-Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura, State Secretary of Foreign Affairs Taichi Yamamoto, and others to Africa, the PRC, and countries that have not ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) to urge for early ratification. According to a high-ranking Foreign Ministry official, the government wants to send influential special envoys to 18 countries that have not yet ratified CTBT to urge for ratification before the next review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in April. The Japanese government has already sent special envoys to India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Indonesia, Ukraine and Indonesia. Japan told those countries that it would exchange its official development assistance (ODA) in the form of technologies and devices for detection of underground nuclear tests for these countries' ratification of CTBT. The report added that for India and Pakistan, who have not signed the treaty, the Japanese government would be willing to lift its economic sanctions in exchange for their signing of the treaty. However, the report said that the offer has not been successful so far.

4. India's CTBT Policy

The Asahi Shimbun ("INDIAN DEFENSE MINISTER SAYS INDIAN GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERING SIGNING CTBT," 01/13/2000) reported that the Indian Defense Minister said during his seminar at Japan's National Institute for Defense Studies on January 13, "the Indian government already announced its tentative hold on nuclear tests, and the government is now considering turning this stance to legally signing the treaty." The report also said that the minister emphasized

that the Indian government will maintain some degree of nuclear deterrence by watching Pakistan's nuclear development, while maintaining the policy of no first use or use of nuclear weapons against non- nuclear weapons countries.

5. Japanese Nuclear Fuel

The Daily Yomiuri ("MOX FUEL PLAN SHELVED PENDING SAFETY CHECKS," 01/08/2000) reported that Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) President Nobuya Minami on January 7 told Fukushima Prefecture Governor Eisaku Sato that a plan to use plutonium-uranium mixed oxide (MOX) fuel at the power firm's Fukushima Number 1 nuclear reactor from February will be postponed until a review proves the Belgian-processed fuel is safe. According to the report, Minami passed on the information during a visit to Sato that followed the discovery of falsified inspection data for MOX that had been processed in Britain and was destined for use beginning November 1999 at the Kansai Electric Power Company's Takahama Number 4 nuclear reactor in Fukui Prefecture. Minami reportedly told Sato that officials at TEPCO were currently reviewing the data for the Belgian-processed MOX fuel and that he will consult with Sato after the review about whether or not to use the fuel at TEPCO's nuclear reactor located in Fukushima Prefecture's Okumamachi. Sato reportedly responded by saying that it was wise to ensure the fuel was safe to use, especially after the September accident at the JCO plant in Tokaimura.

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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