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In today's Report:

I. United States

- [1. New US Food Aid to DPRK](#)
- [2. Former US Officials to Visit DPRK](#)
- [3. ROK Food Aid to DPRK](#)
- [4. Start of KEDO Reactor Construction](#)
- [5. DPRK-Taiwan Nuclear Waste Deal](#)
- [6. DPRK-PRC Relations](#)

II. Republic of Korea

- [1. Former US Officials to Visit DPRK](#)
- [2. Hwang's Testimonies Scrutinized](#)
- [3. ROK-Japan Relations](#)
- [4. ROK Food Aid to DPRK](#)
- [5. DPRK-PRC Relations](#)
- [6. DPRK Refugee Law Takes Effect](#)

I. United States

1. New US Food Aid to DPRK

US State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns ("STATE DEPT. NOON BRIEFING, JULY 14, 1997," USIA Transcript, 7/14/97) announced that the US will be providing 100,000 metric tons of grain valued at US\$27 million to the DPRK in response to the July 9 request by the UN World Food Program (WFP) for an additional US\$45.7 million in aid. Burns said distribution of 45,000 tons of the US grain will be monitored exclusively by the WFP and provided to starving children, while the other 55,000 tons will go to children and the elderly through a variety of US private, voluntary organizations that will work in conjunction with the WFP. Burns said that the US is using organizations other than the WFP for the first time because the organizations can reach different groups of aid recipients in different parts of the country. The contribution will bring to US\$52 million the total value of US food aid to the DPRK in 1997, following a combined total of US\$8.4

million in 1995 and 1996. Burns emphasized that US food aid to the DPRK is made strictly on a humanitarian basis and is not linked to DPRK participation in the proposed four-party Korean peace talks. "We have never linked food assistance to the political talks. That means that we have never held out as a threat the curtailment of food aid should North Korea not agree to the four-party talks. Similarly and conversely, we have never said that we would reward North Korea if it did decide to go to the four-party talks," Burns said. Burns added that the US responds only to WFP appeals as they arise, and has "no plans for longer term food assistance that I am aware of." Asked to compare the US response to

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[I. United States](#)

- [1. New US Food Aid to DPRK](#)
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- [3. ROK Food Aid to DPRK](#)
- [4. Start of KEDO Reactor Construction](#)
- [5. DPRK-Taiwan Nuclear Waste Deal](#)
- [6. DPRK-PRC Relations](#)

[II. Republic of Korea](#)

- [1. Former US Officials to Visit DPRK](#)
- [2. Hwang's Testimonies Scrutinized](#)
- [3. ROK-Japan Relations](#)
- [4. ROK Food Aid to DPRK](#)
- [5. DPRK-PRC Relations](#)
- [6. DPRK Refugee Law Takes Effect](#)

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In today's Report:

[I. United States](#)

- [1. New US Food Aid to DPRK](#)
- [2. Former US Officials to Visit DPRK](#)
- [3. ROK Food Aid to DPRK](#)
- [4. Start of KEDO Reactor Construction](#)
- [5. DPRK-Taiwan Nuclear Waste Deal](#)

[6. DPRK-PRC Relations](#)

[II. Republic of Korea](#)

[1. Former US Officials to Visit DPRK](#)

[2. Hwang's Testimonies Scrutinized](#)

[3. ROK-Japan Relations](#)

[4. ROK Food Aid to DPRK](#)

[5. DPRK-PRC Relations](#)

[6. DPRK Refugee Law Takes Effect](#)

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Similarly and conversely, we have never said that we would reward North Korea if it did decide to go to the four-party talks," Burns said. Burns added that the US responds only to WFP appeals as they arise, and has "no plans for longer term food assistance that I am aware of." Asked to compare the US response to the DPRK's famine with its responses in other cases, Burns said, "I know that, for instance, in Central Africa, where there has been starvation because of the conflicts in Rwanda and Burundi over the last four years, the United States has contributed US\$1 billion in food and medical assistance to Central Africa. We've contributed far less to North Korea because the dimensions of the problem are not as great."

The Associated Press ("US TO SEND \$27M IN GRAIN TO N.KOREA," Washington, 7/14/97) reported the US announcement, adding no new details.

2. Former US Officials to Visit DPRK

The Associated Press ("LANEY AND NUNN TO VISIT N. KOREA," Seoul, 7/12/97) reported that officials in the ROK Foreign Ministry said Saturday that former US Senator Sam Nunn and former US Ambassador to the ROK James Laney will visit the DPRK from July 20 to 22 at the invitation of the DPRK government, and will stop in Seoul July 22-24 to brief ROK officials before returning home. Laney and Nunn were expected to urge the DPRK to agree to join the four-party talks to formally end the Korean War. Representatives from the DPRK, the ROK, the US and the PRC are to meet in August 5 to discuss opening the formal peace talks. The report said one ROK official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Pyongyang may have invited the former US officials to help get more food aid.

US State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns ("STATE DEPT. NOON BRIEFING, JULY 14, 1997," USIA Transcript, 7/14/97) commented on reports that former US Senator Sam Nunn and former US Ambassador to the ROK James Laney will visit the DPRK July 20-22. Burns confirmed that the visit "occurs at the invitation of the North Korean Government," and that topics of discussion are likely to include the four-party peace talks proposal, food aid, the Agreed Framework, and other issues in US-DPRK relations. Burns said the visit, while private, is important because both Laney and Nunn "are senior respected figures who can convey a straight message from the United States to North Korea in advance of the four-party preparatory meeting on August 5th." Burns added, "We have briefed by Senator Nunn and Ambassador Laney on the latest analysis we have of the Korean Peninsula issues. We, of course, look forward to hearing their impressions upon their return." Burns said the former officials will be accompanied by Sukhan Kim, a long-time private advisor to both, and by two working-level US Government officials: David Straub, a foreign service officer in the State Department's Office of Korean Affairs, and Richard Finn, an official working on Korean issues in the Defense Department.

3. ROK Food Aid to DPRK

Reuters ("SEOUL OFFERS N.KOREA NEW RED CROSS AID TALKS," Seoul, 7/14/97) reported that Kang Young-hoon, president of the ROK Red Cross, on Saturday issued a statement offering new food aid talks between the two Korean Red Cross organizations, proposing a meeting on July 22 in the Panmunjom border village or at "any convenient place" on the Korean peninsula. Pyongyang has previously rejected talks on the Korean peninsula, insisting instead on Beijing. The two Red Cross societies signed an agreement in Beijing in May to ship 50,000 tons of food aid, mostly corn, to the DPRK by the end of July. Trains carrying the first shipments of food aid entered the North on June 12. Kang was quoted as saying the last batch of aid and an additional 2,000 tons of fertilizer would be delivered to the port of Nampo between July 21 and 28.

Reuters ("S.KOREA BUYS 50,000T CORN TO AID N.KOREA," Seoul, 7/14/97) reported that the ROK-

run Agricultural and Fishery Marketing Corp. (AFMC) said on Monday that it has bought 50,000 metric tons of corn, at US\$151.80 per ton, to provide as aid to the DPRK. An AFMC official said the corn was purchased at the weekend from The Korea Express Co. Ltd., and will be delivered by the end of August to the western DPRK port of Nampo, near Pyongyang. Traders said the corn was bought from the PRC in view of geographical proximity and the need to transport the grain quickly.

4. Start of KEDO Reactor Construction

The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("S. KOREA PREPARES TO START WORK ON NORTH'S NUCLEAR REACTORS," Seoul, 7/14/97) reported that officials of the ROK's state-run Korea Electric Power Corp. (KEPCO) said Monday that a barge will leave for the DPRK on Tuesday carrying technicians and office supplies to the DPRK's east coast port of Yanghwa, heralding the beginning of long-delayed construction on two nuclear reactors by the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO). The DPRK and KEDO signed an agreement earlier this month to break ground for the reactors in early August. The barge, carrying equipment and other supplies for the project, is the first ROK vessel sailing DPRK waters under the ROK national flag since the division of the Korean peninsula in 1945. Yanghwa will be a supply base for construction of the reactors in Sinpo, a nearby fishing village.

5. DPRK-Taiwan Nuclear Waste Deal

The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("TAIWAN WASTE SHIPMENTS TO NORTH KOREA APPROVED - REPORT," Taipei, 7/13/97) reported that Taiwan's United Daily News newspaper reported Sunday that Taiwan's Atomic Energy Council (AEC) has initially approved shipments of radioactive waste to the DPRK that could begin in September. The nuclear authority reportedly gave high marks to the DPRK's design and environmental impact study for twin storage sites now under construction, and will give final approval after further "substantive" checks and formal issuance of permits for the sites, the newspaper said. AEC officials are expected to visit the sites themselves, and Taipower can begin shipping the waste in September if plans proceed on schedule. The ROK strongly opposes the plan to ship up to 200,000 drums of radioactive waste to the DPRK, saying it can't be trusted to follow international safety standards. The international environmental group Greenpeace also denounced the shipments, claiming the waste contains highly radioactive materials produced in the nuclear power generating process. Taipower says the barrels contain mostly clothing and other materials exposed to radiation at the island's three nuclear power stations. The company is expected to pay at least US\$227 million for storing the waste in abandoned mine shafts near Pyongsan, about 90 kilometers north of Seoul.

6. DPRK-PRC Relations

The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("CHINA, NORTH KOREA TOAST LONGTIME ALLIANCE - XINHUA," Beijing, 7/13/97) reported that official reports over the weekend from the PRC's official Xinhua News Agency and the DPRK's official KCNA news agency stated that the DPRK and the PRC marked the 36th anniversary of their Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance with parties in Beijing and Pyongyang. However, top echelon PRC officials did not attend the Beijing festivities, perhaps signaling that the DPRK commands a less significant status in Beijing's eyes than in the past. Song Pong Hwan, acting charge d'affaires for the DPRK Embassy in Beijing, hosted a banquet Friday attended by other senior PRC officials, Xinhua reported. Meanwhile, PRC Ambassador Wang Yongxiang threw a party Friday in the Pyongyang, KCNA reported. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the PRC has been the DPRK's principal ally, providing shipments of weapons, food and fuel. However, Beijing has in recent years strengthened its economic and diplomatic ties with the ROK, hoping to draw more trade and investment, complicating its relationship with the DPRK. [Ed. note: See the related item in the ROK section, below.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. Former US Officials to Visit DPRK

At the invitation of the Pyongyang government, former US Ambassador to Korea James Laney and former US Senator Sam Nunn will fly into the DPRK on July 20 for three days of discussions with DPRK leaders. As the DPRK has invited numerous US politicians, Seoul and Washington share an understanding that Laney and Nunn are the most appropriate Americans to deliver the positions of the ROK and the US to the DPRK in an objective manner. Although it is still not known whether they will be allowed to meet de facto DPRK leader Kim Jong-il, DPRK officials are expected to offer an in-depth briefing on its food situation and make some important proposals regarding inter-Korean relations as well as US-DPRK ties. After their visit to the DPRK, Laney and Nunn are scheduled to visit Seoul to brief senior ROK and US officials. (Korea Times, "LANEY, NUNN TO VISIT N. ROK JULY 20-22 FOR `SERIOUS' TALKS," 07/14/97)

2. Hwang's Testimonies Scrutinized

The ROK minister of justice, Choi Sang-yop, said at a National Judicial Committee meeting held Friday that statements by DPRK defector Hwang Jang-yop should be looked at extremely closely to establish their veracity. Choi expressed that instead of accepting answers to specific questions, authorities should investigate Hwang's statements to determine whether high ranking officials are actually spying for the DPRK. The minister continued that such an operation will commence shortly and, if necessary, Hwang himself will be subject to a closed interrogation. Choi also said that he recently received a pre-investigation summary from the National Security and Planning Agency (NSPA) concerning Hwang, but was dissatisfied by its contents which mainly contained information from the press conference, and made no reference to contacts he had in Pyongyang and abroad. (Chosun Ilbo, "MOJ QUERY HWANG'S STATEMENTS," 07/14/97)

3. ROK-Japan Relations

Negotiations on revision of the ROK-Japan double taxation avoidance agreement is unlikely to be resumed this year as bilateral ties have worsened with Japan's recent seizure of ROK fishing vessels for allegedly intruding its unilaterally-declared territorial waters. To date, Seoul and Tokyo have held two meetings, one in Tokyo in April 1996 and the other in Seoul last September. Both sides reached agreements on many issues regarding the non-taxation on income accruing from stock investment. However, Japan held firm on a few undisclosed points, and the originally planned third round in May has yet to be finalized, an official at the ROK Ministry of Finance and Economy said yesterday. Because the current ROK-Japan tax agreement lacks clauses on stock investment gains and other incomes since its conclusion in 1970, businesses of both nations have had great difficulties in investing in each other's stock market. The ROK is currently not imposing taxes on stock investment profits of foreign investors from approximately 40 nations, but is taxing profits of Japanese investors, resulting in a stoppage of the introduction of funds from Japan. (Korea Herald, "SEOUL-TOKYO TAX TALKS UNLIKELY TO RESUME," 07/14/97)

4. ROK Food Aid to DPRK

The ROK's Korean National Red Cross (KNRC) has proposed holding a third round of inter-Korean Red Cross talks on July 22 to discuss aid which would include medical supplies and fertilizer. KNRC President Kang Young-hoon suggested to his DPRK counterpart, Ri Sung-ho, that the two parties meet at either Panmunjom or a place convenient to both sides. "As the delivery of the 50,000 tons of aid agreed at the May 26 talks nears completion, we should meet to assess progress and further discuss the range and scope of the next round of aid," Kang said. (Korea Herald, "KNRC PROPOSES

FURTHER AID TALKS TO DPRK," 07/14/97)

5. DPRK-PRC Relations

The PRC and the DPRK celebrated the 36th anniversary of the DPRK-PRC Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance with a banquet at the DPRK embassy in Beijing, Xinhua reported Saturday. The banquet, hosted by Song Pong-hwan, charge d'affaires at the DPRK embassy, was attended by Bu He, vice chairman of the PRC parliament. "The Chinese Communist Party and government place great importance on enhancing Sino-Korean friendship and will make due efforts to improve cooperative relations," Bu said. But DPRK analysts in Beijing said that Bu's presence, as only a medium-level official, was an indication of the estranged relations between the two countries as previous celebrations have been attended by much higher-level PRC officials. Nevertheless, the PRC has already pledged 150,000 tons of grain this year to help the DPRK overcome its major famine and economic stagnation. (Korea Times, "PRC, DPRK CELEBRATE MUTUAL ASSISTANCE TREATY," 07/14/97)

6. DPRK Refugee Law Takes Effect

The enforcement ordinance to the new law dubbed the "Act Governing North Korean Defectors" will take effect today. The new law was devised to come up with effective measures to help those who have fled from the DPRK to settle in the ROK. Accordingly, the previous policy that focused on simple subsidies will shift to more practical measures. Under the new law, educational degrees and professional and training certificates earned in the DPRK will be broadly recognized. DPRK defectors' vocational and social adaptability training will be further reinforced as well. In addition, employment preference will be given to escapees who worked for the government or the military in the DPRK. All matters related to DPRK defectors, currently dispersed among various ministries, will be taken over by the Council for DPRK Defectors under the ROK Ministry of National Unification. The Council will be chaired by the unification vice minister and composed of officials from 19 ministries including Chong Wa Dae, the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of National Unification, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Justice. (Joongang Ilbo, "NORTH KOREAN DEFECTOR LAW TO TAKE EFFECT TODAY," 07/14/97)

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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](#).

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[Return to the top of this Daily Report](#)

[Go to the Daily Report Archive](#)

[Return to the Nautilus Institute Home Page](#)

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[Return to the top of this Daily Report](#)

[Go to the Daily Report Archive](#)

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