

NAPSNet Daily Report 14 June, 2001

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 14 June, 2001", NAPSNet Daily Report, June 14, 2001,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-14-june-2001/>

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I. United States

1. US-DPRK Talks

The New York Times (Jane Perlez, "AMERICAN AND NORTH KOREAN DIPLOMATS TALK," Washington, 6/14/01) reported that diplomats from the US and DPRK met in New York on June 13 for what the US State Department called a useful beginning to a dialogue between the two countries. The talks were between fairly low-level officials: the US special envoy, Jack Pritchard, and DPRK's permanent representative to the UN, Li Hyong Chol. The US State Department described the atmosphere of the talks as "businesslike" and said the discussions would continue. US State Department deputy spokesman Philip T. Reeker said in a statement, "We have no details about next steps." Neither Pritchard nor Li is empowered by his government to make major decisions. The ROK government reacted favorably to promptness and willingness of the DPRK to meet the US. However, an ROK official also quickly added that the ROK hoped the talks between the US and the DPRK would move "outside the United Nations channel." A US expert on the DPRK, Selig Harrison, who returned from Pyongyang on June 13, said the DPRK, in sending no one specially for the New York talks, had signaled that there had not been "anything very substantive." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for June 14, 2001.]

2. DPRK Drought and Food Crisis

Reuters (Song Jung-a, "RECORD DROUGHT WORSENS N.KOREA FOOD CRISIS," Seoul, 6/14/01) reported that experts said Thursday the DPRK experienced its worst spring drought in more than eighty years and needs more international aid to feed its people. Kim Woo-keun, research director at the Korea Rural Economic Research Institute, said, "North Korea is experiencing a worsening food crisis because of the dry weather. They will have a harder time getting through the summer as their crops of wheat, barley and potatoes are expected to drop." An official DPRK media report monitored in the ROK early this month said high temperatures and dry weather had continued for more than three months since early March - the longest spring drought since 1919. Researchers in the ROK estimated the DPRK's potato and corn 2001 harvest would be halved unless there are rains by the end of June, while barley and wheat crops could drop 80 percent. The U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) said last month it expects 2001 to be the most difficult year in the DPRK since 1998. The ROK Unification Ministry said it had no aid plans for the DPRK this year as it battles its own drought. A spokesman said, "The drought in the South is serious enough. We haven't thought about its effects on the North."

3. PRC-Russian Views of US NMD

Reuters ("CHINA, RUSSIA JOIN FORCES AGAINST U.S. MISSILE DEFENSE," Shanghai, 6/14/01) and the Associated Press (Martin Fackler, "CHINA, RUSSIA PRESIDENTS HOLD TALKS," Shanghai, 6/14/01) reported that PRC President Jiang Zemin and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin showed a united front on Thursday against US plans to build a national missile defense (NMD) system. Jiang and Putin met in Shanghai to kick off a six-nation summit aimed at combating Islamic militancy in Central Asia just days before Putin is due to meet US President George W. Bush in Slovenia. PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao said of the meeting, "President Putin reiterated Russia's principled position on that matter and China stated that it will continue to support Russia in its efforts to maintain the global equilibrium." Regarding NMD, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov said, "Our views on this fully coincide with China." He also added that Jiang and Putin had discussed Putin's upcoming meeting with Bush. Ivanov said, "The Chinese side attaches great importance to its relations with the United States for international stability. The Chinese leadership intends to pursue a constructive policy in its relations with Washington."

4. US-PRC Military Contacts

Associated Press (Regan Morris, "US, CHINA OFFICERS MEET ON WARSHIP," Aboard the USS Inchon, 6/14/01) reported that naval officers from the US and the PRC got together Thursday aboard the US Navy warship USS Inchon to observe military exercises in the South China Sea. US and PRC officers said they did not discuss tensions during their meetings aboard the Inchon. PRC military Commander Xue Feng said, "Maybe the topic is too sensitive at this time. I'm sure the relationship will improve. This won't last very long." The mine hunt was part of an 11-day exercise in the waters of Singapore and neighboring Indonesia, an area with some of the world's busiest and most vital shipping lanes. Xue said the PRC did not send any ships to the exercise.

5. PRC Arms Sales to Cuba

The Washington Times (Bill Gertz, "CHINA CLAIMS SALE OF 'LOGISTICS ITEMS,' NOT ARMS," 6/14/01) reported that the PRC government on June 13 denied US State Department claims that it was selling weapons to Cuba. Zhang Yuanyuan, a PRC Embassy spokesman, said in an interview that the PRC has not shipped weapons to Cuba. Zhang said, "China and Cuba have diplomatic relations, and the two countries' militaries have relations. For some years, China has supplied the Cuban

military with logistics items -- never arms." He declined to specify what type of equipment was transferred. Asked if explosives were delivered, Zhang would not answer directly but said, "explosives could be used for civilian purposes, to clear some mine shaft." US State Department lawyers and arms officials, meanwhile, are reviewing intelligence reports about the military shipments delivered to Cuba on the PRC's state-run shipping company over the past several months. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for June 14, 2001.]

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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