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I. United States

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1. Light-Water Reactor Project

The Wall Street Journal (Masayoshi Kanabayashi, "NORTH KOREAN POWER- PLANTS DEAL MAY LEAD JAPAN TO EASE SANCTIONS," 10/15/98) reported that Japan must decide whether to sign the burden-sharing agreement for the light-water reactors to be built in the DPRK in time for the scheduled start of construction in November. Yasuhiko Yoshida, a professor of international relations at Saitama University, argued that Japan should not have rushed into sanctions. Yoshida said that Japan's refusal to sign the cost-sharing agreement "is the equivalent of saying to North Korea: 'Please go ahead with the nuclear-bomb-development program.'" He added that Japan's actions have heightened tension in East Asia and created a crack in the alliance with the US and the ROK. Yoshida said that he believes the Japanese government will eventually sign the agreement, but will insist it is doing so at the request of the US and the ROK. However, an unnamed spokesman for the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated, "For the time being, [Japan] won't proceed" with the signing.

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2. Death of Donated ROK Cattle

The Associated Press ("S.KOREA INVESTIGATES DEATH OF CATTLE SENT TO NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 10/15/98) reported that the ROK Ministry of National Unification conceded Thursday that cattle donated to the DPRK may have eaten hemp rope, but said that ingestion did not kill any of them. The ministry said that lumps of rope have been found in the stomachs of some other cattle raised on the Hyundai cattle ranch, which was built on reclaimed land. Hyundai officials said that vinyl and other indigestible materials might have been contained in earth used to make the land. The ministry, however, quoted veterinarians as saying that the rope and vinyl did not kill the cattle. It attributed the deaths to stress caused by the long trip by truck to the DPRK. It also reiterated an ROK proposal Thursday that veterinarians and officials of the DPRK and ROK jointly investigate the deaths.

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3. PRC-Taiwan Talks

Reuters (Benjamin Kang Lim, "CHINA OFFICIAL TO VISIT TAIWAN," Shanghai, 10/15/98) and the Associated Press (Charles Hutzler, "CHINA, TAIWAN CLOSER TO TALKS," Shanghai, 10/15/98) reported that Wang Daohan, chairman of the PRC's Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) on Thursday accepted an invitation from Koo Chen-fu, chairman of Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) to visit Taiwan at a mutually convenient time. Wang stated, "Our dialogue this time embodied real spirit." Koo replied, "We will wholeheartedly and sincerely wait to see you in Taipei." Under a four-point deal reached after two days of talks, members of ARATS and SEF will hold discussions on all matters to explore resuming routine, formal negotiations. ARATS Vice Chairman Tang Shubei said that the talks would cover political matters like reunification. However, Sheu Ke-sheng, a senior PRC specialist for the Kuomintang government, said that formal dialogue would only be restored when the PRC recognizes Taiwan as an equal. Sheu stated, "If you stop threatening us militarily and suppressing our foreign relations, then under such conditions we could raise dialogue on issues such as ending the state of hostility." Koo will travel to Beijing on Friday to meet President Jiang Zemin.

US State Department Spokesman James Rubin ("STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING, OCTOBER 14, 1998," USIA Transcript, 10/14/98) said that the US welcomes the "positive development" of a resumption of PRC-Taiwan talks. He stated, "We've encouraged both Taiwan and the People's Republic of China to resume cross-Strait talks, and welcome efforts by the two sides aimed at restoring a meaningful, substantive dialogue. We believe that this kind of dialogue and these kind of exchanges help promote peace and stability in the region, which is a matter of significant interest to the United States." He added that the US goal "is that the long term issues be resolved peacefully; that in the meantime that concerns each side has about behavior or actions of the others can be discussed, talked through and avoided if at all possible."

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4. US Military on Okinawa

The Associated Press (Yuri Kageyama, "U.S. MARINE HELD IN OKINAWA DEATH," Tokyo, 10/15/98) reported that US Marine Corporal Randall M. Eskridge has been arrested in the death of Yuki Uema, an Okinawan high school who died late Wednesday from head injuries, one week after Eskridge allegedly struck her small motorcycle with his car and fled the scene. Eskridge was charged Tuesday with hit and run, driving under the influence of alcohol, and causing injury through professional negligence. Since the accident, there have been demonstrations on Okinawa demanding that a 1995 agreement between the US and Japan, that requires the US to hand over to Japanese authorities US servicemen suspected of "heinous crimes" before they are officially charged, be reworked. Marine spokesman Captain Bret Curtis said the hit and run was not a heinous crime as defined by the agreement, and the Marines refused to hand over Eskridge when the Okinawa police demanded it last week.

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5. Oil Spill near Japan

The Associated Press ("JAPAN COAST GUARD COMBATS OIL SPILL," Tokyo, 10/15/98) reported that Japanese Maritime Safety Agency spokesman Shingo Nakamura said Thursday that Japanese coast guard ships were working to contain an oil spill after the ROK cargo ship Chun Il ran aground off the Japanese island of Shikoku. Nakamura said that the spill covered 5 square miles of the Pacific Ocean and the agency sent 20 ships to clean it up with booms and chemicals.

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6. Remains of Japanese POWs from Russia

The Associated Press ("RUSSIA RETURNS JAPAN POWS REMAINS," Moscow, 10/15/98) reported that Russia's ITAR-Tass news agency said Thursday that Russia has returned the remains of 13 former Japanese prisoners of war found in a former World War II concentration camp. Workers supervised by the Japanese Health Service and Social Welfare Ministry have been digging up remains from the Khalaza/2 concentration camp in the Russian Far East since the beginning of October. The POWs were kept at the camp from 1945 to 1948. Valentina Buraya, first deputy chairman of the Primorye branch of the Russian Peace Fund, said that Russia and Japan have been working together for six years to find the remains of missing POWs. Buraya said that 113 burial sites have been found in the Primorye region alone and that 1,100 remains have been returned to Japan. Japan is paying for the project.

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7. Asian Financial Crisis

The Associated Press (Jonathan Drake, "ASIAN CRISIS MAY DO SOME GOOD," Singapore, 10/14/98) reported that officials attending the East Asia Economic Summit said Wednesday that the economic and political changes that have swept through Asian nations due to the financial crisis may actually benefit the region by leading it into an era of renewed development and stability. Philippine Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon said that political changes triggered by the crisis are encouraging the creation of more efficient, democratic governments that could be a "bridge to another East Asian miracle." Siazon stated, "When life was good, nobody was really questioning the limitations on individual liberties, because these ... shortfalls were offset by material benefits." He said that because of the economic downturn, there is now "a growing demand for popular participation in governance." Stanley Roth, US Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific affairs, said that political changes prompted by the crisis have been "stabilizing, not destabilizing." He pointed to the ROK as a country that has adopted new leadership as a result of the turmoil that supports progressive economic and foreign policies.

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8. India-Pakistan Talks

The Associated Press (Kathy Gannon, "NEWEST NUCLEAR STATES DISCUSS PEACE," Islamabad, 10/14/98) reported that top officials from India and Pakistan met Thursday to discuss the Kashmir dispute, nuclear safeguards, and other issue. Pakistan Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz stated, "One cannot expect breakthroughs on issues like this in the very first meeting, so we are not expecting any major breakthrough." However, some nuclear non-proliferation activists expressed concern that the talks would become the first step toward rationalizing the deployment of nuclear weapons. Sameena Ahmed, a defense expert with the Asia Foundation, stated, "They could be taking a step down the road to deployment, minimum deterrence. If India deploys, Pakistan deploys, then Chinese missiles target India." She added, "There has been little consistency, no transparency and no real effort to institutionalize confidence-building measures that should stay in place when political relations are not good."

Reuters ("INDIA SAYS UNDER NO PRESSURE TO TALK TO PAKISTAN," New Delhi, 10/15/98) reported that India's foreign ministry said in a statement on Thursday that it wanted to engage Pakistan in a broad dialogue and is not acting under external pressure. The statement said "there was no question of India acting under international pressure and there was no place for any third-party involvement in India-Pakistan ties."

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9. South Asian Arms Control

The Associated Press ("U.S. OFFICIAL: INDIA, PAKISTAN YIELDING ON ARMS CONTROL," Washington, 10/15/98) reported that Karl R. Inderfurth, US assistant secretary of state for South Asian affairs, said Thursday that the nuclear tests carried out by India and Pakistan have had the ironic effect of enabling the two countries to take serious steps toward adopting arms control constraints that would have been impossible without them. Inderfurth said that both countries are contemplating a formal ban on nuclear testing, controls over production of nuclear materials, and restraints on development of nuclear-capable weapons delivery systems.

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10. US Nuclear Secrets

The Associated Press (John Diamond, "NUCLEAR SECRETS MADE PUBLIC," Washington, 10/15/98) reported that a US Department of Energy review discovered that mismarked and misplaced files led to the mistaken declassification of documents containing highly classified nuclear weapons information. Energy officials said that some material they discovered in a spot check of files slated for release would advance the capabilities of emerging nuclear states such as Pakistan and India. A US Department of Defense review turned up similar examples of nuclear- related files in boxes of material about to be made public. A 1995 executive order by US President Bill Clinton requires automatic declassification by the year 2000 of national security documents more than 25 years old. Republican Senators Jon Kyl of Arizona, Bob Smith of New Hampshire, and Richard Shelby of Alabama complained to Clinton's national security adviser, Sandy Berger, that "in a frenzied attempt to meet the deadline," agencies were releasing whole boxes of classified material without looking at the documents. The administration now has accepted page-by-page declassification review, but allows bulk declassification when boxes are deemed "highly unlikely" to contain nuclear weapons information. David Leavy, spokesman for the National Security Council, said the measure will protect against "inadvertent release of records containing nuclear weapons information while also preserving the goal of speeding the declassification and release to the public of older records that no longer need protection." However, the Federation of American Scientists said that the provision would cripple the government's declassification program.

II. Republic of Korea

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1. Light-Water Reactor Project

JoongAng Ilbo (''LIGHT WATER REACTOR CONSTRUCTION DELAYED AGAIN,'' Seoul, 10/15/98) reported that the Korea Energy Development Organization (KEDO) announced on October 15 that it will delay the construction of the basic reclamation work for three months until January 15, 1999. A source from KEDO commented, "An additional 9 million dollars will be needed for construction in DPRK and we, the ROK, will start construction in January before the advanced payment comes in June, 1999." The Korea Electric Power Corporation will thus continue the basic construction work until early next year because the signatory countries have not yet reached a financial agreement.

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2. Future of Agreed Framework

Korea Herald (''DPRK WARNS US AGAINST CUT IN OIL SUPPLY,'' Seoul, 10/15/98) reported that the DPRK has warned against any attempts by the US to decrease the supply of heavy oil provided under the 1994 Geneva agreement. In a statement issued by the spokesman of the ROK Foreign Ministry, the DPRK accused ''conservative hard-liners'' of attempting to reduce the supply of heavy oil. It said that the DPRK would not argue if the US decided to abolish the 1994 agreement. ''If it is U.S. policy to review the basic agreement, we have no intention of deterring it,'' the DPRK said. ''It would be all right to abolish it if the US side regards it as something uncomfortable.'' The DPRK statement followed an ROK warning that failure to finance the US$4.6 reactor project, which includes the heavy oil supply, would give the DPRK an excuse to restart its nuclear program. The ROK foreign minister, Hong Soon-young, urged the US Congress to help finance the provision of heavy oil to the DPRK when he met with foreign correspondents based in Seoul on Tuesday.

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3. DPRK Famine

JoongAng Ilbo (''DPRK FACES A 0.8 MILLION TON SHORTAGE IN 98 HARVEST,'' Seoul, 10/14/98) reported that the ROK Ministry of Unification announced on October 14 that the DPRK's harvest this year will fall short by 0.8 million tons of the necessary amount to feed its population. An official from the ministry said, "The DPRK's harvest this year is estimated to be from a maximum of 4.4 million tons to a minimum of 3.6 million tons. Therefore, the shortage will be 0.8 million tons or so, because the amount the DPRK needs is approximately 4.8 million tons." He explained that the ministry calculated the amount of 4.8 million tons on the basis of the DPRK's daily food distribution amounts of 358 grams per capita. Earlier in the day, Kang In-duck, the ROK unification minister, said, "The DPRK's harvest this year is estimated to be no more than 3.3 million tons."

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4. Deaths of Cattle Donated to DPRK

Chosun Ilbo (''HYUNDAI REGRETS COW DEATHS,'' Seoul, 10/14/98) reported that Hyundai expressed regret Wednesday over the death of cows sent to DPRK after an investigation conducted at its Seosan cattle farm. The company revealed that 9 out of the 62 cows there had also ingested the same indigestible material that DPRK claimed was responsible for the deaths. Materials found in the Seosan cows were 5cm to 10cm long pieces of jute rope, which used to be used for fishing at agricultural villages, but not at the Hyundai farm. The company said that the rope was probably used for growing seaweed prior to 1982 when Seosan was a fishing village, and had been left there when Hyundai reclaimed the land to build a farm. Hyundai said that there had been no deaths from ingestion of the rope, but that it would institute stricter controls for future shipments.

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5. ROK Contributions to US Military

Korea Times (''ROK LIKELY TO PAY HEAVIER US TROOPS MAINTENANCE COSTS,'' Seoul, 10/15/98) reported that the ROK government is expected to shoulder a heavier financial burden for the maintenance of the US forces here in seven years, the Board of Audit and Inspection (BAI) said on October 14. The expected rise was brought about in this year's negotiation with the US about the ROK's share in the costs of maintaining the US troops, which amounted to US$399 million last year. In a report to the National Assembly's Legislation-Judiciary Committee, the BAI said that the ROK saved US$102 million in the negotiation by setting the foreign exchange rate at 907.6 won per dollar, compared to current rate of about 1,350 won. However, the ROK, in return, promised to exempt the value-added tax that used to be levied on munition supplies, as per the US government request. The ROK also accepted a US request that the ROK provide material aid equivalent in amount to the value-added tax, unless the tax is not exempted. The BAI noted that the ROK's financial burden would increase in seven years if it should provide material aid without exempting the value-added tax levied on munition supplies.

III. People's Republic of China

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1. Four-Party Talks

China Daily ("RESOLVE DISPUTES WITH LAW - SPOKESMAN," 10/14/98, A1) reported that a PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman said in Beijing on October 13 that PRC Ambassador Qian Yongnian will head a delegation to the third meeting of the Four-Party Talks regarding the Korean Peninsula, scheduled for Geneva on October 21.

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2. US-DPRK Missile Talks

China Daily ("US-DPRK TALKS," 10/15/98, A4) excerpted an article on the US-DPRK missile talks from China Youth Daily. The article said that, although the US and the DPRK have not forged diplomatic ties so far, they still keep diplomatic contact through various channels, of which their dialogue on the missile problem is the most significant. On October 2, representatives of the two sides held a new round of talks in New York in an effort to reach some agreement on the missile issue--a factor deterring the further development of their relationship. The US side held that the DPRK had been keen on developing and improving its missile system, which poses a threat to security of the world, and they pointed the finger at the DPRK for exporting missiles. The DPRK firmly denied the charges made by the US, saying the allegation was groundless. The DPRK states that developing missiles is the right of a sovereign country, and no other country is empowered to stop it. Also, the DPRK blamed the US for supplying missiles to the ROK, an act that heightens the tense situation on the Korean Peninsula. Analysts hold that the missile talks are not just a bilateral negotiation, but involve the interests of neighboring countries and are closely lined to the security of the Korean Peninsula.

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3. PRC-DPRK Relations

People's Daily ("DPRK THANKS CHINA FOR FREE ASSISTANCE," Pyongyang, 10/15/98, A6) reported that the DPRK expressed its heartfelt gratitude to the PRC on October 14 for the supply of 80,000 tons of crude oil as free assistance. The PRC government's decision to provide oil was conveyed by Wan Yongxiang, PRC Ambassador to Pyongyang, to the related department of the DPRK on October 13.

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4. Kim Dae-jung's Visit to Japan

China Daily ("APOLOGY MAY NOT HEAL ALL OLD HURT," 10/10/98, A4) reported that, despite a landmark rapprochement between Japan and the ROK over Japan's colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula, the two Asian neighbors face a rough road ahead in building a true partnership. Analysts in Tokyo are divided over their assessment of a join declaration signed by Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi and ROK President Kim Dae-jung, the report said. "The people in South Korea would not be convinced unless Japan's apology for its past actions had been officially documented," Masao Okonogi, professor of Korean history and diplomacy at Tokyo's Keio University said. Whether the two countries could bury the past to forge a new relationship would hinge on Kim's leadership at home and the behavior of Japanese politicians. But some political analysts said it would not be enough for the Korean people. Ahead of the summit on October 9, dozens of Japanese legislators from both the ruling and opposition parties had urged Obuchi not to apologize. Analysts also noted that Obuchi and Kim did not discuss two thorny issues: that of "comfort women" and the sovereignty dispute over small islands located between the two countries.

People's Daily ("A POSITIVE SIGN IN NORTHEAST ASIA," 10/13/98, A6) said that the improvement of the Japan-ROK relationship is a positive sign which occurred recently in Northeast Asia. A comment on the daily said that the development of international relationships in Northeast Asia cannot ignore the issue of history. It will be impossible to establish mutual confidence without the resolution of historical problems.

People's Daily ("NEW CHANGES IN ROK-JAPAN RELATIONSHIP," 10/15/98, A6) published an article analyzing the differences between this ROK-Japan summit and the previous ones. How to recognize history is a topic of every summit, the article said, but this is the first time that an apology by Japan has been written into a document. Another regular topic for every summit is the future-oriented bilateral relationship between the ROK and Japan. There was also some progress on this issue in this summit. First, the two sides paid more attention to the concrete measures that will be helpful to improve the bilateral relationship. Second, President Kim Dae-jung actively advocates the Japanese Emperor's visit to the ROK. Third, besides political and economic issues, cultural exchange became a new topic in this summit. It is undoubted that the improvement of the ROK-Japan relationship will be conducive to the peace and development of Asia and of the world. However, there still are some problems between the two countries that will take time to be resolved.

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5. ROK Economy

China Daily ("ROK ECONOMY CASHES IN ON RISING YEN," 10/13/98, A4) reported that the Japanese yen's resurgence has provided a ray of hopes for the ROK's economy, battered by financial crisis, dwindling exports, and plunging domestic consumption. However, it is premature to say whether this break in the clouds will last long enough to shield the ROK from severe recession. Efforts to fix weak points in the economy's structure are still in early stages. Skittish foreign investors have yet to come back to Asia, especially with concerns growing about a global downturn. Local consumers are also "battening down the hatches," fearing the worse may be yet to come.

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6. US-ROK Military Exercises

Jie Fang Daily ("COMMAND POST TO BE SET UP IN YOKOSUKA," 10/12/98, A3) reported that the command post for US-ROK joint military exercises will be set up at the US military base in Japan's Yokosuka. This indicates that the US military is also considering setting up its command post in Japan if a war breaks out.

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7. PRC-Taiwan Relations

China Daily ("SPOKESMAN REJECTS 'CHINA CONFEDERATION' CONCEPT," 10/09/98, A1) reported that the PRC government refuted on October 8 the idea of a "China confederation" upon its reunification with Taiwan. PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao said that throughout its history, China has always had a unified central government, and never had the form of a "confederation" or "federation." Commenting on the "China confederation" idea raised by a private research body, he said the reunification of the Chinese mainland and Taiwan can only follow the formula of "one China, two systems," which means the island province can maintain its current capitalist mode while the mainland operates under a socialist system. This formula is the "most realistic and most applicable" plan. There should be a peaceful reunification with Taiwan under the

policy of "one country, two systems" as proposed by Deng Xiaoping, he said. The province can retain its current armed forces and also send officials to hold posts in the central government.

People's Liberation Army Daily ("FOREIGN MINISTRY OPPOSES ANTI-CHINA RESOLUTION," Beijing, 10/14/98, A4) reported that the PRC opposes a US House of representatives resolution supporting Taiwan's efforts to join the World Heath Organization (WHO). PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Tang Guoqiang said that the WHO is an international organization that only sovereign countries can join. As a part of China, Taiwan has no right to join such an organization.

People's Daily ("WANG DAOHAN MEETS KOO CHEN-FU," Shanghai, 10/15/98, A4) reported that President of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) Wang Daohan met with Koo Chen-fu, Chairman of the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF), in Shanghai on October 14. During their talks, Wang said that at the current stage, pushing forward the political negotiations across the Straits is the key to the comprehensive promotion of cross-Straits relations. The PRC consistently advocates that any issue can be talked under the prerequisite of "one China." Ending the state of hostility across the Straits under the principle of "one China" is a necessary step to further develop the cross-Straits relationship. At present, the two sides should make some procedural arrangements for the above-mentioned political negotiations. Wang suggested that ARATS and SEF carry out dialogues, including political dialogues, as soon as possible to prepare for the procedural talks on the cross-Straits political negotiations. Ending the state of hostility and achieving the "three direct links" are the two most substantial factors for protecting people's rights, Wang Daohan said.

China Daily ("TOP OFFICIAL HEADS GROUP FOR TAIWAN," 10/15/98, A2) reported that the PRC has sent its first vice-ministerial level official to Taiwan to explore two-way economic cooperation. Deputy Governor Zhang Jiakun from East PRC's Fujian Province left the provincial capital Fuzhou on October 12 for Taiwan via Hong Kong at the invitation of a Taiwan official, Wen Linnan from the provincial Taiwan Affairs Office said in a telephone interview on October 14. Zhang is leading a nine-member delegation with the aim of deepening contacts, introducing Fujian's investment environment to Taiwanese compatriots, and seeking new channels for the booming trade between Taiwan and Fujian, Wen said. According to Wen, Zhang will stay in Taiwan for 10 days.

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8. PRC Military's Business Activities

China Daily ("PLA TOLD TO ABIDE BY POLICY," 10/12/98, A1) reported that a senior military leader said that members of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and Armed Police Force must abide by the central authorities' decision that they refrain from business activities. Yu Yongbo, member of the Central Military Commission of the PRC and director of the PLA General Political Department, made the comments during a recent Beijing work conference. The session focused on preparations either to transfer, dissolve, or restructure enterprises operated by military and armed policy units. The army and armed police must support the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Yu said, urging the units to implement the decision.

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We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to

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