

# NAPSNet Daily Report 16 April, 1998

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## Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 16 April, 1998", NAPSNet Daily Report, April 16, 1998,  
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-16-april-1998/>

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### **I. United States**

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#### **1. ROK-DPRK Talks**

Reuters (Paul Eckert, "KOREA NEGOTIATORS FAIL TO REOPEN STALLED TALKS," Beijing 04/16/98), United Press International ("KOREA TALKS CONTINUE IN BEIJING," Beijing, 04/16/98) and the Associated Press ("NORTH, SOUTH KOREA REMAIN AT IMPASSE," Beijing, 04/16/98) reported that Kim Ok-joon, an ROK Embassy official in Beijing, said that negotiators from the DPRK and the ROK met for nearly two hours Thursday in a Beijing hotel, but "there was no result." Kim added that no future meetings were scheduled, but the two sides will stay in contact, and would also to meet for dinner Thursday evening. He said he did not know when the delegations would return home. ROK Deputy Unification Minister Jeong Se-hyun was quoted by the Yonhap news agency as saying, "There are many gaps in opinion."

The Washington Post carried an editorial ("KOREAN TALKS," 04/16/98, A20) which said that ROK

President Kim Dae-jung's decision to focus on small, pragmatic measures to improve relations with the DPRK rather than sweeping arms-control agreements is the appropriate course. However, the article warned that the DPRK government is likely to view any steps to ease its economic crisis involving contact with the outside world as threatening to its survival. The article argued that the ROK's request to hold reunions of separated families is as much a humanitarian issue as the DPRK's request for fertilizer. It added, "Moreover, Mr. Kim is the leader of a democracy who must show his people some positive results if he is to push a policy of greater charity and friendliness toward the North. When the North accepts that premise, some progress may be possible."

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## **2. DPRK Famine**

Reuters ("UN CANNOT CONFIRM NORTH KOREA FAMINE FIGURES," Rome, 04/15/98) reported that Judy Cheng-Hopkins, the World Food Program Director for Asia and the Commonwealth of Independent States, who recently returned from a trip to the DPRK, said Wednesday that she could neither confirm nor dismiss reports by Pomnyun, head of the Korean Buddhist Sharing Movement, and Andrew Natsios, executive director of World Vision Relief and Development, that 3 million people had starved to death in the DPRK since 1995.[Ed. Note: See the NAPSNet Special Report for March 4, [Survey on North Korean Refugees](#).] She added, however, that such estimates "point to a very grave situation that the international community has to pay attention to. I think we cannot afford to have another quiet famine hit us again this century." Regarding the estimates of fatalities, which were based on interviews with DPRK refugees in the PRC, she stated, "I wouldn't dismiss them, but I would say that, when you interview a sample of self-selecting people who cross the border and then extrapolate them to the rest of the population to come up with a final figure, I don't know...how sound that is." She said that the DPRK had been one million tons short of food for each of the last two years. She added, "The worst isn't over and I think no matter how optimistic the prognosis, there is going to be a food deficit again next year...and possibly the year after that." However, she said that a year of emergency food aid operations had dramatically improved the fate of children aged 6 and under. Regarding the earlier DPRK refusal to allow UN food monitors access to 50 counties, she stated, "My people on the ground have already told me this morning that they have put forward a plan to go to 22 out of those 50 counties. We haven't heard from the government yet but I would assume that so soon after the agreement to open up the entire country, that we would make headway. I am quite confident that we will achieve that...in the coming weeks."

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## **3. Taiwan VP to Visit US**

Reuters ("TAIWAN VP TO GO TO U.S. AHEAD OF US-CHINA SUMMIT," Taipei, 04/15/98) reported that Taiwan's state-funded Central News Agency said Wednesday that Vice President Lien Chan will make transit stops at New York and Miami on May 3 or 4 before visiting Costa Rica for a presidential inauguration. The Agency said that the US State Department has agreed to permit Lien's stopover visit.

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## **4. US Missile Technology Transfer to PRC**

The New York Times (Jeff Gerth, "CONGRESS PROBES SALES OF SATELLITE TECHNOLOGY TO CHINA," Washington, 04/16/98) reported that several congressional committees are investigating whether the administration's policy of exporting space satellite technology to the PRC has helped the

PRC and other countries to develop and use nuclear missiles. Senator Thad Cochran, R-Miss, chairman of the Senate Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation and Federal Services, stated, "I'm not blaming China. We're talking about our own government policy-makers responsible for the transfer of this technology, and this case [of Loral Space and Communications and Hughes Electronics] is a glaring example."

Dow Jones Newswires ("CHINA DENIES GETTING CLASSIFIED U.S. MISSILE TECHNOLOGY," Beijing, 04/16/98) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao on Thursday denied a New York Times report that Loral Space and Communications and Hughes Electronics provided technology that helped the PRC's ballistic missile program. Zhu stated, "The issue of providing missile technology is nonexistent."

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## **5. Russian Technology Sales to Iran**

Dow Jones Newswires ("US STATE DEPT DENIES RUSSIAN COS AID IN MISSILE FLAP -REPORT," Arlington, 04/16/98) reported that USA Today said Thursday that the US State Department has declared 20 Russian agencies and research facilities ineligible to receive US assistance because they may have provided missile technology to Iran. Gary Samore, a special assistant to President Clinton, was quoted as saying, "What we're doing is limiting our cooperation with Russian entities which might have or might be providing assistance to Iran's missile program. If someone came to us proposing a project involving one of these entities, we might still approve it, depending on the specifics."

## **II. Republic of Korea**

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### **1. ROK-DPRK Talks**

A senior DPRK official, Chon Gum-chol, on Wednesday welcomed a push for parliamentary talks between the two Koreas, as the first direct negotiations in four years ground to a standstill in Beijing. "We'll consider it positively," Chon said answering a question on whether the DPRK would agree to resume inter-Korean parliamentary talks with the ROK. But he added that the ROK should first offer fertilizer aid requested by the DPRK to create an atmosphere conducive to improving inter-Korean relations. Neither side has so far been willing to back down over demands that the other side should make concessions first before progress can be made, as the talks dragged into a fifth day. The ROK wants the DPRK to make a clear commitment to helping reunite families split by the division of Korea in return for fertilizer aid. But the DPRK first wants the ROK to ship half a million tons of fertilizer aid, while the ROK has offered to supply no more than 200,000 tons. In Seoul, ROK Unification Minister Kang In-duk on Tuesday threw his support behind the push for dialogue between ROK and DPRK legislators to improve ties, although he objected to uncontrolled dialogue between multiple parties and organizations as proposed by the DPRK. (Korea Times, "PYONGYANG WELCOMES IDEA OF PARLIAMENTARY TALKS," 04/15/98)

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### **2. DPRK Military**

DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has ordered the promotion of 22 new generals in a reshuffle marking the 86th anniversary of his late father's birth, DPRK media said Tuesday. In his order No. 00102, dated

Monday, Kim promoted Choe Song-su to colonel general, Jong Hong-gyong to lieutenant general and Ri Hui-song and 19 others to major general, the DPRK's official Korean Central News Agency, KCNA said. It was the first military reshuffle in the famine-stricken DPRK this year, showing Kim's continuous efforts to cement his grip on the powerful 1.1million-strong military, ROK monitors said. (Korea Times, "NORTH KOREA ANNOUNCES PROMOTION OF 22 NEW GENERALS," 04/15/98)

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### **3. DPRK Famine**

The United Nations' food agency warned Tuesday of a lean summer ahead in the DPRK as supplies run dry, but refused to distribute aid to areas that it cannot monitor. "We have found that the problems of hunger, malnutrition and starvation are growing," said Catherine Bertini, executive director of the UN World Food Program. Aggressive international aid was needed at "this time in particular when the country is facing particularly lean months because the food distributed by the public distribution system in the country is drying up," Bertini said. Everyone in the country relied on public food handouts, she said but "there is going to be a very lean summer" as the country relies increasingly on overseas aid at least until the next harvest in October. (Korea Times, "UN WARNS OF LEAN SUMMER IN NORTH KOREA, " 04/16/98)

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### **4. ROK Involvement in UN**

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has appointed Choi Young-jin, an ROK diplomat, as assistant secretary- general of the Department of Peace Keeping Operation (DPKO), the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade announced Wednesday. Choi, 50, the highest ranking ROK official working in the UN Secretariat, will head the Office of Planning and Support of the DPKO, which mainly deals with mission planning, financial management, logistics, and communications. (Korea Herald, "CHOI YOUNG-JIN MADE DEPUTY HEAD OF UN DPKO," 04/15/98)

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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