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I. United States

1. ROK Iraq Troop Final Decision

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREA ANNOUNCES FINAL DECISION TO SEND 3,000 TROOPS TO IRAQ," 12/17/03) reported that the ROK government announced its final decision to send a contingent of 3,000 troops to support US-led stabilization efforts in Iraq, officials said. The decision was endorsed at a high-level security meeting chaired by President Roh Moo-Hyun, the presidential office said Wednesday. The ROK contingent will include combat and non-combat troops who will undertake an independent operation in the war-torn country. "The plan was approved today," said a spokesman for the National Security Council which is made up of cabinet-level security and foreign affairs advisors to Roh. The decision must be endorsed by parliament and a motion will be sent to the National Assembly next week where it is expected to win approval, the official said. The conservative Grand National Party which controls the legislature has already publicly backed the deployment. A ROK military delegation is to leave soon for the US for coordination on location, timing and other details concerning the deployment. ROK officials have suggested a northern Iraqi region. The South Koreans will not engage in combat but will be assigned to rehabilitation work, the president's office said.

2. Japan Iraq Troops Dispatch

The Associated Press ("REPORT: JAPAN TROOPS HEAD TO IRAQ IN FEBRUARY," Tokyo, 12/10/03) reported that Japan plans to send the first of two large contingents of ground troops to Iraq in late February, a newspaper reported on Wednesday, as South Korea also began finalizing plans to send peacekeepers. The Defense Agency submitted the deployment schedule to the Liberal Democratic Party-led ruling bloc for approval on Tuesday, the national Mainichi newspaper said. It was the first sign that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's administration is drawing up detailed plans since his Cabinet last week approved a basic blueprint to send 1,000 military personnel focusing on humanitarian assistance, including restoring water service and rebuilding schools in southern Iraq. Under the latest plan, about 135 troops would leave for Iraq on Feb. 21, after the first advance team of ground troops - about 28 people - has had about a month to prepare for their arrival in the southern city of Samawah, according to the Mainichi. They will stay at the Dutch military's base camp there, it said. About 550 others, who will make up the bulk of the deployment, are expected to be in Iraq by late March, the newspaper said. An advance team of 78 soldiers would leave on Jan. 31. Air force personnel will be based in Kuwait, with the first team of 12 expected to leave on Dec. 25. Transport aircraft, including three C-130 planes, would be there by mid-January to begin flying supplies into Iraq, it said. Armored vehicles and other heavy equipment would be shipped on Jan. 14, the paper said.

3. ROK Roh Resignation Offer

Agence France-Presse ("ROH REPEATS OFFER TO RESIGN, APOLOGIZES OVER CORRUPTION SCANDAL," 12/16/03) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-Hyun has reiterated a conditional pledge to step down over a corporate slush fund probe implicating his aides and said he was ready to appear before prosecutors for questioning. Roh, 57, apologized to the nation twice during a 45-minute press conference at the presidential Blue House for the widening scandal that has plunged South Korea into political turmoil. He repeated a pledge made only two days ago to resign if prosecutors found his supporters had raised merely one-tenth of the illegal funds collected by his opposition rival in last year's presidential election. "I will keep my word if it turns out to be true," said Roh. "I will take my responsibility after all for what I said." A day after the former conservative candidate Lee Hoi-Chang admitted receiving millions of dollars in illegal corporate donations, Roh said he was ready to answer questions from prosecutors if necessary. "As I said already, as a president I am ready to face investigation without sanctuary," Roh said. "I am not voluntarily going to present myself to the prosecution office. However, if needed for the investigation I will let them question me."

4. ROK Al-Qaeda Visits

Agence France-Presse ("AL-QAEDA SCOUTED US TERROR TARGETS IN SOUTH KOREA -- INTELLIGENCE REPORTS," 12/16/03) reported that agents from Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda terror network made repeated visits to South Korea recently scouting for US targets, a lawmaker said, citing a closed-door intelligence briefing to parliament. Ham Seung-Hui, a member of the Millennium Democratic Party, said that South Korea's National Intelligence Service (NIS) was now on anti-terrorism alert to respond to reported al-Qaeda activity in the ROK. "The NIS briefing said suspected al-Qaeda members had checked security of the US troops in South Korea on two or three occasions recently," Ham told AFP. One suspected al-Qaeda member was detained at a ROK airport for 10 hours last year prior to being expelled, he said, citing the intelligence briefing. Another was expelled earlier this year from the ROK. He was believed to be examining security at ROK airports and carrying out the same task in the Philippines.

5. Taiwan Independence

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN OPPOSITION SAYS FUTURE GENERATIONS SHOULD DETERMINE INDEPENDENCE," 12/16/03) reported that Taiwan's opposition presidential candidate has vowed to maintain the status quo with China if elected next year, saying any decision on the island's independence should be made by future generations. Lien Chan, of the Kuomintang (KMT), also accused President Chen Shui-bian of trying to force Taiwanese people to decide on their future now by pushing for a referendum on March 20, the day of the presidential election. "We insist on the maintenance of the status quo between the mainland and the Republic of China (Taiwan's official name). We are opposed to the idea of so-called immediate independence. We are also opposed to be labeled as reunificationists," Lien told a news conference. "This issue is crucial and important, but that can only be solved in the future. Maybe far into the future, maybe in the foreseeable future, but not at the present time," Lien said. "This is an issue that perhaps can only be solved by our children, by the next generation or generations," he said. He said he opposed Chen's timetable on Taiwan's future.

6. Cross-Straits Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN'S PARLIAMENT URGES CHINA TO SCRAP MISSILE DEPLOYMENT," 12/16/03) reported that Taiwan's parliament has passed a resolution urging the PRC to remove hundreds of ballistic missiles targeting the island to pave way for reconciliation. The resolution proposed by the opposition Kuomintang (KMT) and People First Party (PFP) said: "China is currently aiming some 500 ballistic missiles at Taiwan, forcing the two sides to stay in 'cold war' and threatening regional peace. "Despite 15 years of bilateral economic and cultural exchanges, the two sides have not be able to reconcile due to military confrontation. "To seek cross-strait progress and ensure the safety of the Taiwanese people, we hope China will stop deploying more missiles and dismantle current deployment in stages... to pave way for the reconciliation and normalization of bilateral relations."

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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