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I. United States

1. DPRK Missile Development

Dow Jones Newswires ("OFFICIAL SAYS N. KOREA CAN BUILD MISSILE REACHING U.S.:KYODO," Tokyo, 02/16/99) reported that Japan's Kyodo news service said that an anonymous senior official at the Japanese Defense Agency said Tuesday that the DPRK possesses enough technology to build a ballistic missile capable of reaching the US mainland. He added, however, that Japan has no knowledge of when the DPRK might test launch a longer-range Taepodong-2 missile.

2. Kim Jong-il's Birthday Celebration

The Associated Press ("N. KOREA VOWS TO BOOST DEFENSE AS KIM TURNS 57," Seoul, 02/16/99) reported that the DPRK celebrated leader Kim Jong-il's 57th birthday on Tuesday. On Monday, 6,000 Communist officials and soldiers filled a stadium in Pyongyang to renew their pledge of loyalty to Kim. Premier Hong Song-nam told the gathering, "Military issues continue to be our primary interest, and we must put utmost efforts into the defense industry to strengthen our defense stronghold to make it undefeatable." He added that all DPRK citizens should defend Kim with their lives and "prepare themselves to be heroes through human bomb attacks and soldiers ready for suicidal explosion."

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA MARKS LEADER'S BIRTHDAY AT CRUCIAL TIME," Seoul, 02/14/99) reported that the ROK National Unification Ministry said that Kim Jong-il's birthday would be marked by a parade of farmers in the countryside, sports matches in Pyongyang, and speeches by workers organizations. The birthday would also be celebrated by sympathizers in 30 countries. Yu Suk-ryul, professor at the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, stated, "Kim Jong-il cannot control his people the way his father did." He added, "Kim Jong-il cannot effectively control people who live in the rural areas. He has tight control of the top military echelon, but at the lower level, North Korean soldiers are very undisciplined." Park Young-ho, a professor at the Korea Institute of National Unification, stated, "Once those two issues [DPRK missile and nuclear development] are resolved smoothly both for the U.S. and North Korea, then maybe Kim could turn his attention to the inter-Korean issues."

3. ROK-DPRK Relations

The Los Angeles Times (Valerie Reitman, "'POSITIVE' SIGNS FROM N. KOREA CITED," Seoul, 02/13/99) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung on Friday gave a positive assessment about the possibility of rapprochement with the DPRK. Kim stated, "North Korea is showing positive signs as well as negative signs," adding that the good must be "seriously considered" along with the bad. He added, "If you look at the attitude of North Korea, we cannot unilaterally say they are not cooperating with us, but you can't say for sure they are coming with an attitude of dialogue." Regarding the DPRK's missile production, Kim argued, "As a sovereign nation, North Korea has never promised that it won't develop missiles, and they have no obligation to anyone not to. The US is very concerned, and Japan is reacting hysterically." As positive signs in the DPRK, he cited: "Aggressive participation" in the four-party talks; a "narrowing of opinion differences" regarding inspections of the underground construction site; resumption of Military Armistice Commission talks; introduction of the private sale of agricultural products; 110 DPRK students sent overseas to study under World Bank and UN sponsorship; permission for ROK citizens to visit Mt. Kumgang; and the recent proposal for direct dialogue with the ROK. Kim stated, "Now we have continuing contact with them for the first time." He added that the US and Japan are considering the idea of an omnibus deal for the DPRK, arguing that if each issue were dealt with separately, agreement could take years. He said that there is "no alternative" to a policy of promoting dialogue, and that "all the countries in the world," including the US, Japan, Russia, and the PRC, agree. Meanwhile, ROK opposition floor leader Lee Bu-young of the Grand National Party said in an interview this week that

he fears the DPRK's ability to "wage a war to level the peninsula." Lee said that the DPRK is "the hungry man with a violent character who carries a hatchet and a pistol. The hungry man fed and full would naturally want to sleep and rest." [Ed. note: This article appeared in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for February 16.]

4. PRC-Taiwan Talks

The Associated Press ("CHINESE PREMIER CALLS FOR TALKS WITH TAIWAN," Beijing, 02/15/99) reported that PRC Premier Zhu Rongji on Monday reiterated calls for talks with Taiwan on reunification as soon as possible. The PRC's official Xinhua News Agency quoted Zhu as saying that reunification was "the common aspiration of the whole nation." He stated, "We call on the Taiwan authorities to clearly see the way things are going, to hold political negotiations with us as soon as possible." He also urged Taiwan to "make practical efforts to formally end the state of hostility between the two sides."

The Associated Press ("CHINA ENVOY MAY DELAY TAIWAN TRIP," Taipei, 02/13/99) reported that Taiwanese New Party lawmaker Feng Hu-hsiang said Saturday that increasing diplomatic and military tensions with Taiwan could prompt the PRC to put off sending Wang Daohan, head of the PRC's semi-official Association for Relations across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS), to Taiwan in May. Feng cited Taiwan's refusal to hold political talks with the PRC and the PRC's anger over Taiwan's plans to participate in a regional missile defense system as reasons for the delay. He stated, "Mr. Wang would not visit in May and might not even come anytime this year." Feng spoke one day after he returned from Beijing, where he met Wang's deputy, Tang Shubei. However, ARATS informed its Taiwanese counterpart, the Straits Exchange Foundation, on Saturday that it would send a deputy to Taiwan in March to discuss Wang's visit.

5. PRC-Taiwan Diplomatic Rivalry

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN REACHES OUT TO BALKANS," Taipei, 02/14/99) reported that Taiwan's Liberty Times newspaper said Sunday that several countries in the Balkan Peninsula, including the former Yugloslav republic of Slovenia, have expressed an interest in improving ties with Taiwan. The report said that Taiwan wants to use its new relations with Macedonia to demonstrate how recognizing the island can pay off financially for other countries in the Balkans. In exchange for diplomatic recognition, Taiwan reportedly offered to provide Macedonia more than US$300 million in aid over four years, along with technical assistance, loans and business contracts. Macedonian sources have said ties with Taiwan would bring in up to US$1.6 billion in aid and investment.

6. PRC Missile Deployment

The Washington Post carried an editorial ("STILL RATTLING MISSILES," 02/15/99, 28) which said that the PRC's reported missile deployment near Taiwan is designed to intimidate Taiwan and keep it from joining a Theater Missile Defense system. The article argued, "The United States and other interested countries should not hesitate to remind Beijing that in their view reunification can come about only peacefully. Chinese missile rattling has no place in the proceedings." It warned, however, "a missile shield, once developed and deployed, does not stop at protecting the intended beneficiary, here Taiwan. It is in the nature of such a shield that it also could embolden Taiwan to feel it did not really have to negotiate seriously with the Chinese." It concluded, "Negotiations ought to take place without coercion and on the basis of mutual interest. No serious talks seems possible while China is

flexing its missiles, stirring fresh doubts about its appetite for negotiation, heating up a regional arms race and alarming the Taiwanese people whom it ought to be conciliating." [Ed. note: This article appeared in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for February 16.]

7. US-PRC Relations

The New York Times carried an analytical article (Patrick E. Tyler, "SEEING CHINA'S CHALLENGE THROUGH A COLD WAR LENS," 02/14/99) which said that, while the PRC intends to establish itself as a credible regional military power, there is no evidence that it is seeking to compete with the US as a global military power. The article quoted former US Defense Secretary James Schlesinger as saying, "China is not going to be a world power in the existing period, and possibly never. They recognize it, and the last thing they want is to tangle with the United States." He warned that emphasizing the US fears about the PRC might actually produce the hostility that some in the US warn about. Schlesinger stated, "It would be self-defeating as well as a negation of the magnanimity of the United States, to presuppose that China must turn into a hostile nation." Robert Suettinger, formerly the CIA's senior analyst for Asia and now a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution, said that the US intelligence community's consensus on the PRC "doesn't add up to a threat." The article said that PRC leaders believe that the key to national power is economic strength, and that therefore, "China is joining world institutions, not threatening them." [Ed. note: This article appeared in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for February 16.]

8. US Missile Defense

The Washington Post carried an opinion article by Senator Joseph R. Biden Jr., D-Delaware, ("ON THE STRATEGIC SLIPPERY SLOPE," 02/16/99, 17) which said that the US is "on a slippery slope" toward deploying a ballistic missile defense system that would violate the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. The article argued, "From a strategic perspective, however, the administration has yet to make the case [for missile defense]." It pointed out that, after 15 years of missile defense research and development, the US still does not have a system that it knows will work. It added, "Even if a national missile defense becomes technologically feasible, will it be in our national interest to deploy it? Would tens of billions of dollars be better spent on maintaining deterrence through our offensive power, which has kept the nuclear peace for more than 50 years? Could we not persuade North Korea to end its long-range missile programs for a fraction of the likely price of a national missile defense?" It also warned, "The strategic arms control process, already threatened by the Russian Duma's inaction on the START II Treaty, could collapse because of Russian concern and anger over missile defense. To win Russia's assent on an amended ABM Treaty, the Pentagon may offer to scrap the ban on multi-warhead ICBMs, the capstone of START II. These missiles can overpower missile defense by delivering more warheads, which is why the Pentagon might offer the deal. But they also threaten strategic stability, as they present a lucrative first- strike target in a crisis." It concluded, "A 'thin' national missile defense may be the best way to deter smaller countries that develop long- range missiles, while maintaining traditional nuclear deterrence with Russia. That is far from clear, however, and the administration has yet to present its strategic rationale." [Ed. note: This article appeared in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for February 16.]

The New York Times carried an opinion article by Robert L. Park, Professor of Physics at the University of Maryland ("ANOTHER 'STAR WARS' SEQUEL," 02/15/99, A21) which pointed out that the US has yet to conduct a single successful test of its proposed anti-ballistic missile system. The article argued, "The uncomfortable truth is that ballistic missiles are a lot easier to build than to stop." It added that the most effective method for reducing missile threats is through arms control

agreements. It warned, "However, the disarmament process set in motion by the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty is only half finished. And all the muscle-flexing about missile-defense deployment threatens to stall it completely by upsetting the nuclear balance of power." The article stated that any nation that can launch an intercontinental ballistic missile is also capable of employing basic countermeasures to defeat an anti-missile system. "So unless robust tests are conducted against dummy missiles employing countermeasures, we won't know if the system is effective. The most dangerous thing we could do is deploy a system that doesn't work." It concluded, "the United States has no choice but to use every diplomatic weapon it can muster to destroy the missiles that already exist, and to prevent rogue states from developing new ones."

9. India-Pakistan Talks

The Associated Press (Amir Zia, "PAKISTAN, INDIA CALL FOR MORE TALKS," Islamabad, 02/13/99) reported that lawmakers from Pakistan and India on Saturday called for bilateral talks on nuclear issues to reduce tensions and control a possible nuclear arms race on the subcontinent. In a statement issued at the end of a two-day conference organized by the English-language daily The News, the lawmakers said, "The governments of India and Pakistan should take all possible steps to lessen the probability of a nuclear catastrophe initiated by accident." Former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto urged the two countries to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK-DPRK Relations

Korea Times ("US APPROVES 'PACKAGE SOLUTION' TO NK ISSUES," 02/13/99) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung said that the US has pledged to consider positively the ROK's initiative to seek a comprehensive deal on DPRK-related issues. Kim also revealed in an interview with the Los Angeles Times that the ROK government will pursue high-level dialogue with the DPRK in the near future. Recently, Lim Dong-won, Kim's top security advisor, visited the US to explain the ROK government's initiative to seek a package solution to a few outstanding DPRK-related issues. So far, the US has been reluctant to endorse the ROK's approach, because it has sought to settle the DPRK-related issues in a case-by-case manner.

2. Alleged DPRK Drug Production

Chosun Ilbo ("NK DIPLOMAT ARRESTED FOR OPIUM DEAL," 02/13/99) reported that Yonhap News Agency reported that an employee at the DPRK consulate in Shenyang has been arrested by PRC authorities on charges of selling opium through an ethnic Korean agent. According to Yonhap, a source said that the DPRK official brought 9,000 grams of opium from the DPRK at the end of last year. He was caught when the agent he had hired to sell the narcotics confessed after being caught by the PRC Public Security Bureau.

3. Japan-ROK Fishing Row

Chosun Ilbo ("JAPANESE HOLD KOREAN BOAT FOR SMUGGLING ALIENS," 02/16/99) reported that Kyoto News Agency reported that Japan patrol boats had arrested the captain of a ROK trawler after the fishing boat ignored orders to stop after being discovered in Japanese waters south of Shimane Prefecture. A Maritime Self-Defense Force official was quoted as having said that the 15

ton ROK fishing boat ignored orders to stop, and was then chased for 90 minutes before being caught with 42 people aboard suspected of having intended to enter Japan illegally.

III. Russian Federation

1. DPRK Missile Development Izvestia's Vasiliy Golovnin ("WILL THERE BE A WAR IN THE FAR EAST?" Tokyo, 1, 6, 2/10/99) reported that the DPRK appears to be planning to test its Taepodong missile either on February 16, Kim Jong-il's birthday, or April 15, his late father's birthday. In the author's opinion, "Most experts believe that ... [the DPRK's] reaction to American punishment might be unpredictable - up to an attempt to unleash a big war in the Far East and to die heroically 'in the last battle for honor and dignity.'" Concerning the missile test, Georgiy Toloraya, Deputy Director, 1st Asian Department, RF Foreign Ministry commented: "We were surprised by Japan's reaction ... to the missile tests undertaken in North Korea. The fact is that in past also there were missiles in the DPRK capable of reaching practically any point in Japan's territory. According to our data, the new North Korean-made three-stage missiles hardly pose a greater threat than their predecessors." He added, "Moscow continues to hold consultations with the North Korean party and all other interested countries on those problems. So far we have detected nothing threatening interests of either Russia, or regional security." However, Li Sok-bae, Press Secretary of the ROK Embassy in Moscow, said, "Military experts and politicians unequivocally believe that this new weapon poses a serious threat to South Korea and the whole Northeast region of Asia. At the same time our government believes that all dispute issues must be resolved at negotiation table, not by forceful methods. We hope that Pyongyang will fulfill commitments on non-proliferation of mass destruction weapons undertaken by it at the Geneva talks and that nobody will wish to resort to military actions as regards their neighbors." Izvestia's author pointed out also, "In general the Japanese would like to peacefully 'constrict' the DPRK through collective efforts, making it to reject missiles and atomic bomb in exchange for economic assistance." The article added, "influential forces in Clinton's administration do not desire a total destruction of the present regime in Pyongyang.... DPRK collapse may entail unpredictable geopolitical consequences, and the US has detected no internal opposition forces there which could replace the present military Communist dictatorship of Kim Jong-il." It also warned, "what if fanatical elements in the DPRK would not understand that were dealing with a limited vengeance from the US and rush into a bayonet attack against South Korea? In that case casualties among US troops stationed there would be unavoidable, and Clinton would not be forgiven for that." As for the DPRK, "it will never abandon its military research and development, because, in the opinion of Kim Jong-il and his associates, only those make Washington talk with Pyongyang on equal terms." Aleksei Arbatov, Deputy Chairman, RF State Duma Committee in Defense, warned that "the result of testing of new North Korean missiles will be quite different from what Pyongyang desires. Japan will start creating a tactical anti-missile defense system, and the US will start striving for a revision of the Soviet-American ABM treaty to protect its territory from ballistic missiles."

2. PRC Missile Deployment Izvestia's Vladimir Skosyrev ("ALERT ON TAIWAN," Moscow, 3, 2/12/99) reported on the repercussions of a recent publication in the Financial Times concerning data from the US Department of Defense on the "massive build-up of strike forces" in PRC provinces close to the Straits of Taiwan. Izvestia's author pointed out that the data was leaked to the media precisely at the time when the US and Japan were discussing the feasibility of creation of a TMD "umbrella" to defend Japan, US bases, and possibly Taiwan. Many experts believe that a positive decision on the TMD project would harm PRC-US relations. Therefore the leakage can be seen as Pentagon's answer to the critics of the project. Izvestia's author concluded that "Beijing could bring some clarity to the issue, but the secrecy that shrouds Chinese top military's plans just spills water

on the mill of the proponents of TMD system deployment in the Far East."

3. PRC-Taiwan Diplomatic Rivalry

Segodnya's Kirill Privalov ("PEACE-KEEPING IN THE BALKANS STUMBLED ON THE TAIWAN ISSUE," Moscow, 11, 2/11/99) reported that the PRC severed its diplomatic and all other relations with the Republic of Macedonia. Having found itself in an economic blockade due to its conflict with Greece, the Macedonian government decided to establish diplomatic relations with Taiwan, which promised to invest US$1 billion in the Macedonian economy very soon. As for the PRC, it obviously is not going to stop and "seems to be ready to do everything, so that nobody would ever wish to establish diplomatic relations with 'the Republic of China' on the island." Recently a PRC spokesman said that the mandate of UN peacekeeping forces in Yugoslavia will expire by February 20, and that in case the world community does not render its influence on Macedonia, the PRC in the UN Security Council will veto any sending of UN peacekeepers to the Balkans. Afterwards, Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov said he had not been consulted by the government concerning the rapprochement with Taiwan, and that he would veto that "imprudent decision." The next UN Security Council session is to be held on February 26.

4. Hong Kong Constitutional Crisis Izvestia's Yuriy Savenkov ("CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS IN HONG KONG," Moscow, 3, 2/12/99) reported that a decision of the Hong Kong high court to grant Hong Kong citizenship to illegal children of Hong Kong citizens and to those born before their parents became citizens would open citizenship to up to 400,000 persons. 80 percent of the Hong Kong population--fearing an increased competition for jobs, housing and health care at a crisis time--access the verdict negatively. The PRC's official reaction was "moderate," with some government members privately denouncing it. Yet the Hong Kong parliamentary opposition supported the verdict and stressed that "reaction in Beijing is a prelude to interference in the independent judicial process." In addition, Hong Kong has seen demonstrations of some PRC tourists who demanded to be immediately granted temporary residence permits.

5. PRC Foreign Policy

NG-Stzenarii--a monthly supplement to Nezavisimaia gazeta ("THE RISING CHINA," Moscow, 15, February/99, #2(36)) published a full- page article by Professor Oleg Arin, D.Sc., dedicated to "the security strategy of the PRC and the place of Russia in Beijing's foreign policy." The author argued that the PRC's approach to foreign policy is "based on the conviction that the world develops according to objective laws with inevitable cause-and-effect ties in accordance with which foreign policy strategies are to be pursued." He said that the PRC's policy "lacks an element of offensiveness or imposition, because the objective laws ... coincide with China's strategic interests." He added, "Chinese views of the general situation in East Asia in principle coincide with official US and Japanese assessments," as concerns the fact that there is "peace and relative stability in the region." However, the PRC believes that in addition to the instability in Korean Peninsula, East China and South China seas and the arms race, one should take into account other conflict-generating issues: economic security, with US-Japan economic contradictions bound to shape the general security situation; ethnic contradictions bound to fragment East Asian nations; and religious problems threatening the integrity of both other countries and the PRC itself. Analysts in the PRC also do not rule out a conflict due to civilizational incompatibility between the "egotistic" Western culture and humanistic Confucian culture. Even more important, the Chinese in their analyses take into account all four powers, while considering the differences between the USA as the only superpower, the PRC and Japan as "on the rise," and the RF as just "a regional power." Thus, priority is given to relations

with the US, yet the list of US-PRC contradictions make the relations "unstable, situation-influenced and unpredictable." The PRC is against not just US "predominance" in East Asia, but against US presence there in general. PRC Parliament Speaker Ziao Shi told Kim Dae-jung of the ROK in 1995 that "peoples of China, South Korea and other Asian countries closely united with each other and progressing in their development can defend themselves on their own against hegemonism and power policy." The idea that peace and stability in Asia must be maintained by the Asian countries themselves was officially voiced by PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman in April, 1997. As for the RF, the experts in the PRC are satisfied with PRC-RF border demarcation, positively assess military technical cooperation with the RF, and hope for its assistance to upgrade enterprises build with Soviet equipment in the 1950s and for energy supplies from the RF. Finally, as U Singbo, Professor, Fudan University, said, PRC-RF cooperation "is to counter the dominating influence of the US."

6. RF-Japanese Trade Izvestia's Vasiliy Golovnin ("PANASONIC AND OTHERS WAVE GOOD-BYE TO RUSSIA," Tokyo, 3, 2/12/99) reported that, according to the Finance Ministry of Japan, its bilateral trade with the RF in 1998 fell by 16.7 percent to US$4.3 billion. "Not only our own problems were the reason, but the crisis in Japan itself, which presently buys less Russian timber and metals," Izvestia's author added. After the RF decided not to pay back its foreign obligations, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Trade and Industry in fact froze state insurance guarantees of deals with the RF, and without those "no more or less sane company would make contacts with Russia." That is precisely the reason why practically all joint economic projects are not being implemented nowadays, even with soft credits provided by the Eximbank of Japan. Izvestia's author quoted an official of the Ministry as telling him: "Anyway Russia accounts for less that one per cent of Japan's export and import operations, and any ups and downs as regards you can be quietly ignored, sorry."

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

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