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I. United States

1. US-Russia ABM Treaty

The Associated Press (Vladimir Isachenkov, "RUSSIA ASSAILS U.S. OVER ABM TREATY," Moscow, 01/16/02) and Reuters ("RUSSIAN PARLIAMENT DENOUNCES U.S. ABM MOVE," Moscow, 01/16/02) reported that the lower house of Russia's parliament on Wednesday condemned US plans to withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and urged President Vladimir Putin to consult lawmakers on Russia's response. The State Duma voted 326-3 for a non-binding resolution assailing last month's decision by US President George W. Bush to withdraw from the ABM treaty to deploy a national missile defense. The resolution declared the US move to be "mistaken and

destabilizing since it effectively ruins the existing highly efficient system of ensuring strategic stability and paves ground for a new round of the arms race." The Duma also requested that Putin hold urgent consultations with parliament on ways to "ensure national security and preserve strategic stability," including future development of Russia's nuclear forces. Putin has called Bush's ABM withdrawal notice a mistake but not a threat to Russia.

2. International Response to Afghanistan

Agence France-Presse ("INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY MOVES TO EASE AFGHAN CASH CRISIS," 01/16/02) reported a spokesman for UN special envoy to Afghanistan Lakhdar Brahimi said Afghanistan was teetering on the brink of bankruptcy, with assets of less than 10 million dollars. The following day representatives of 16 donor countries met to try to find ways of easing Afghanistan's cash crisis and restoring its links with the rest of the world. Secretary of State Colin Powell announced that the US would free some 220 million dollars in frozen government assets for aid to Afghanistan. Powell also stated, "It's really just the beginning, though. They're really going to need a lot of help. There are a lot of bills there."

3. Inter-Korean Relations

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREAN TANK TRAPS DEAL NEW BLOW TO PEACE HOPES," 01/16/02) reported that the DPRK is building tank traps and establishing anti-tank positions on the eastern and western fronts of the de-militarized zone (DMZ). The DPRK has gone ahead with the construction despite its repeated demands that the ROK destroy its own defensive posts along the DMZ. An unnamed ROK government source said that more than 50 new defense bunkers have been spotted on flat land and roads which could be used by tanks and other armored vehicles. The structures have holes at the front, left and right for anti-tank guns, and are camouflaged by earth and sand.

4. DPRK-ASEAN Relations

Reuters ("NORTH KOREAN NO. 2 LEADER TO VISIT SOUTHEAST ASIA," Bangkok, 01/16/02) reported that the DPRK's number two leader, Kim Yong-nam, will visit Thailand in late February in an attempt to seek investment cooperation between the two countries. A Thai Foreign Ministry official stated, "He will be here between February 27 and March 2. But we have yet to work out details with the North Korean side." The official said Thailand would be the first leg of a three-nation tour, which would also include Malaysia and Indonesia. He said Kim was likely to meet Malaysian King Bhumibol Adulyadej and Indonesian Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

5. PRC-India-Pakistan Relations Reuters ("JIANG HOSTS PAKISTANI MILITARY LEADERS," Beijing, 01/16/02) reported that PRC President Jiang Zemin met Pakistan's chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mohammad Aziz Khan on Wednesday. Meanwhile, PRC Prime Minister Zhu Rongji continued his tour through India. Jiang, while avoiding specific reference to the India-Pakistan conflict, stated, "Without South Asia's development and stability, there cannot be peace and prosperity throughout Asia. We sincerely hope South Asia can preserve peace and stability, and its economy can develop speedily and healthily."

6. Cross-Straits Relations

Reuters (Alice Hung, "TAIWAN WIDENS CHINA TRADE IN BID TO IMPROVE RELATIONS," Taipei, 01/16/02) reported that Taiwan opened its doors to more than 2,000 products from the PRC on Wednesday. The list, which includes 901 agricultural products and 1,225 industrial goods, was part of Taiwan's commitments after it entered the World Trade Organization this year. Taiwan Premier Chang Chun-hsiung said that the opening was the latest in a string of goodwill gestures by Taiwan to improve relations with the PRC. "We have fully demonstrated our determination and sincerity to normalize cross-strait relations." Wednesday's opening to new imports from the PRC brings the total number of permitted products to 7,757, with items ranging from fruit, fish, and beer to bicycles and cosmetics. However, Taiwan officials said the island would have a special defensive mechanism ready to protect the island from unfair competition. They did not elaborate.

7. Taiwan Military Development

Deutsche Presse-Agentur ("PRESIDENT CHEN REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO DEFEND THE COUNTRY," Taipei, 01/16/02) reported that Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian reaffirmed his country's commitment to defending itself Wednesday at a ceremony inaugurating its second F-16 fighter jet into its air force. "The modernization of communist China's military poses threat to our national security. Therefore, we must constantly upgrade our weapon system," Chen said. "We have no intention to start an arms race with communist China. The sole purpose of our building up the military is to ensure military stability across the Taiwan Strait."

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK-US Relations

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Jin, "U.S. DIPLOMATS WILL WEIGH IN ON HWANG TRIP," Washington, 01/16/02) reported that the US State Department will encourage the ROK to allow Hwang Jang-yop, the highest-ranking DPRK official to defect to the ROK, to testify before Congress. The US House of Representatives' International Relations Committee has been trying to arrange for Hwang to appear before the congressional committee. The ROK government has opposed his travel. However, the US State Department responded that it was a matter between the ROK and the US Congress. Joongang Ilbo (Kim Hee-sung, "GOVERNMENT SAYS HWANG'S U.S. TRIP NOT DESIRABLE," Seoul, 01/16/02) reported that the ROK government reconfirmed on Wednesday that the trip of Hwang Jang-yop to the US is "not desirable." An official ROK spokesperson stated, "Hwang's trip is a matter to be entirely decided by our government which means he'll leave only if the government believes it would be a benefit to us."

2. ROK's Role in Afghanistan Reconstruction

Joongang Ilbo (Ser Myo-ja, "SEOUL MULLS $200 MILLION ON AFGHAN AID," Seoul, 01/16/02) reported that the ROK is considering a donation of about US$200 million to support reconstruction in Afghanistan over the next five years. An Afghanistan reconstruction conference will be held on January 21-22 in Tokyo; delegates from donor countries will discuss the scope of the overall aid package for Afghanistan. Foreign Minister Han Seung-soo, US Secretary of State Colin Powell and representatives of about 60 countries and international organizations, including UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, will attend. ROK's support effort in Afghanistan will reportedly focus on building roads and hospitals. It plans to urge domestic construction companies to join the nation-building projects rather than donate cash directly.

3. Pre-Flight Inspection in ROK to Japan

Joongang Ilbo (Nahm Yoon-ho, "PRE-INSPECTION SET ON FLIGHTS TO JAPAN," Tokyo, 01/16/02) reported that the Japanese government plans to hold preliminary immigration inspections at the Incheon International Airport in ROK during the World Cup period. About 350,000 visitors, including 50,000 Koreans, are expected to fly from the ROK to Japan during the one-month soccer festival. The ROK government applauded Japan's plan to speed up immigration inspections.

4. DPRK Fishermen Repatriated from ROK

Joongang Ilbo ("RESCUED FISHERMEN RETURN TO THE NORTH," Seoul, 01/16/02) reported that three DPRK citizens were repatriated through the truce village of Panmunjeom on Tuesday. Park Do-yeol and two other fishermen were found adrift Wednesday by the Russian commercial vessel Sormovsky off the DPRK east coast. A ROK Red Cross official said that the repatriation was voluntary and was handled through the North and South Korean Red Cross organizations. The men were released after the ROK determined their intentions and gave them a medical checkup.

III. Japan

1. Japan-US Relations

The Japan Times (Takashi Kitazume and Junko Takahashi, "OKINAWA'S STRATIGIC ROLE RULES OUT CHANGE: BAKER," Tokyo, 01/02/02) reported an interview of US Ambassador to Japan Howard Baker. Asked about a difficult situation over Okinawa issues, Baker said, "There is a great concentration of American forces in Okinawa, and it has long been the policy of the US that we want to reduce and minimize the impact of American forces in Okinawa. But it is also true that Okinawa represents an essential, important and indeed vital part of the mutual-defense link in the Pacific. For the foreseeable future, I do not see a significant reduction in the American presence in Okinawa." He also reiterated the argument that setting a 15-year time limit on the use of a new airport near Nago to take over the functions of Futenma Air Station is unacceptable because "the US understands it is difficult to see what will happen in one year in the future, let alone 15 years in the future."

2. US Bases in Okinawa

Kyodo ("NAGO MAYORAL RACE HEATS UP," Naha, 01/04/02) reported that a member of the Nago Municipal Assembly opposed to the construction of a joint civilian-US military airport formally announced on January 3 that he will run in the upcoming mayoral election on February 3. Yasuhiro Miyagi, 42, stated that if he wins he will repeal the city's support for the airport. Miyagi is the former leader of a citizen's group that opposes the plan and spearheaded the drive against the airport prior to a referendum on the issue in December 1997. Two other candidates, including the current mayor, Tateo Kishimoto, 58, have already said they will run in the election. Kishimoto has thrown his support behind the new airport plan and has been working closely with the national and prefectural governments to get it off the ground.

3. Overseas A-Bomb Survivors

The Japan Times ("STATE APPEALS RULING ON A-BOMB SURVIVOR," Tokyo, 01/09/02) reported

that the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry filed an appeal on January 8 against a Nagasaki District Court ruling that ordered the state to pay 1.03 million yen to Lee Kang Young, 74, an ROK survivor of the 1945 atomic bombing, for health-care benefits he was denied. Lee claimed the 1994 Atomic Bomb Victims Relief Law fails to stipulate that Atom bomb survivors are excluded from receiving benefits while living outside Japan. The state has appealed the Osaka court ruling. The ministry said it believes a ruling from a higher court is necessary since the district court ruling is divided.

IV. Russian Federation

1. RF Far East Crime Wave

Nezavisimaya gazeta's Sergey Kaz ("DRAGON'S STEP", Irkutsk, 5, 01//16/02) reported that criminals from the PRC continue to step up their activities in RF Far East. They primarily extort money from their compatriots engaged in business there. Recently there have been more cases of murders within the PRC diaspora community. The author claims the problem is aggravated by corruption among the local RF police getting bribes both from businessmen criminals of PRC origin.

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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