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I. United States

1. DPRK Response to US Nuclear Diplomacy

The Washington Post (Peter S. Goodman, "NORTH KOREA DISMISSES US OFFER AS 'DECEPTIVE,'" Seoul, 01/16/03) reported that the DPRK today dismissed the Bush administration's recent offer to resume aid if Pyongyang abandons its nuclear weapons programs, calling the overtures "nothing but a deceptive drama to mislead the world public opinion." "The US loudmouthed supply of energy and food aid are like a painted cake pie in the sky," the DPRK's Foreign Ministry declared in a statement distributed by the official Korean Central News Agency. The DPRK's rejection of the Bush offer left the administration with few policy options while facing the likely prospect that the DPRK will now resume its recent course of confrontation. On Tuesday, the DPRK issued a veiled and vague threat that it would soon employ "options." Though the DPRK continues to work to reactivate a reactor capable of producing nuclear material that could be used in weapons, the Bush administration has set aside military force as a potential response. The White House has also put aside talk of economic sanctions, recognizing that the PRC opposes that course, rendering it ineffective.

2. DPRK Energy Crisis

The Associated Press (Christopher Torchia, "ENERGY MEANS SURVIVAL FOR NORTH KOREA, WHICH NEEDS BILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO FIX ITS POWER SYSTEM," Seoul, 01/16/03) reported that most DPRK citizens get around on foot because there's little fuel to power vehicles, which lack spare parts. In winter, they often wear overcoats indoors because heating is scarce. The production of coal - a major source of energy - is low because there is not enough electricity to illuminate the mines. Factories that produce fertilizer in a country where food is in desperate need are often idle because of power cuts. By one estimate, the DPRK in rural areas get as little as 10 percent of the power that they had a decade ago. "Without energy, everything stops," said Jean-Jacques Grauhar, head of the European Union Chamber of Commerce in ROK and a regular traveler to the DPRK. "It's really a question of life or death." The United States has said it would consider energy aid for the DPRK if the dispute over its nuclear weapons development is resolved. A long-term approach could involve the ROK, Japan, Russia and other countries because it would take billions of dollars and many years to fix the DPRK's power system. "There's a lot that can be done across the board," said Timothy Savage, a Northeast Asia security analyst at Kyungnam University in Seoul. On a visit to Seoul this week, US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly raised the possibility of energy aid for the DPRK, but he did not offer details about what the US was prepared to offer.

3. DPRK-US Relations

The New York Times (Howard W. French, "TWO KOREAS AGREE TO RESUME TALKS ON NUCLEAR CRISIS," Seoul, 01/16/03), BBC News ("US FEARS SLOW PROGRESS ON NORTH KOREA," 01/16/03) and The Associated Press (Sang-Hun Choe, "US ENVOY: NO QUICK FIX ON NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 01/15/03) reported that a call for patience from US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly followed the DPRK's Korea's angry rejection of US offers to consider energy and agricultural aid to the isolated regime if it gives up its nuclear efforts. Traveling in Asia to seek support in getting the DPRK to give up its nuclear weapons program, Kelly said in Beijing on Thursday that there was no quick-fix solution to the issue and that it would take time to secure a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula. "And we're going to have to talk and work together and communicate with other people including with North Korea very, very clearly," Kelly said before leaving Beijing for Singapore. "It's going to be a very slow process to make sure that we achieve this in the right way." In a statement carried by the DPRK's official news agency, the Foreign Ministry said the confrontation would only end when the US signed a non-aggression pact. The announcement appeared to dash fresh hopes of a conclusion to the crisis which were raised on Tuesday after President George W Bush spoke of a "bold initiative" of benefits for the DPRK. Correspondents say that the DPRK's apparent defiance of the latest US offer should not necessarily be taken as a clear rejection of it. The White House said the KCNA statement was "unfortunate," but added that it would await an official response from the DPRK. "North Korea has a habit of saying very many inflammatory things, and then, even in their inflammatory things can sometimes contradict themselves and so can their private statements," said spokesman Ari Fleischer. The US has also denied a report by Japan's Kyodo news agency that the US had written to the DPRK offering a guarantee that it would not attack

4. ROK US Military Force Visit

The New York Times (Howard W. French, "SOUTH KOREA'S NEXT LEADER REASSURES US," Seoul, 01/16/03) and The Washington Post (Peter S. Goodman, "SOUTH KOREA'S PRESIDENT-ELECT VISITS US FORCES," Seoul, 01/16/03) reported that ROK's president-elect, Roh Moo Hyun, paid a hastily arranged ceremonial visit to US military headquarters here today, seeking to blunt a wave of anti-US sentiment and shore up the alliance as a nuclear crisis intensifies on the Korean Peninsula. "The majority of the Korean population does not forget the fact that US service members

came to Korea to support us during the Korean war to ensure peace and freedom and sacrificed their blood in order to do so," said Roh, who takes office next month. "US forces in Korea are necessary at present for peace and stability, and they will be welcome and needed in the future," he told uniformed US military brass and their ROK counterparts. Roh acknowledged the frequent public demonstrations that have brought tens of thousands of people to the streets of the Seoul in recent months, many calling for an end to the US military presence. He noted that many of the 37,000 US servicemen here continue to live under restrictions that bar them from "walking around downtown Seoul," following violent attacks on some of them. He tacitly validated widespread complaints that the ROK is a less than equal partner in its dealing with the US. "Koreans are demanding that the ROK-US relationship will improve to a more rational and reasonable alliance," he said. However, Roh's visit and words were embraced by US officials as a welcome endorsement of the continued military presence. "The president-elect made a very firm, positive statement about the health of the alliance and the future of the alliance," said Gen. Leon J. LaPorte, commander of US forces in the ROK.

5. Carter on DPRK-US Diplomacy

The New York Times (Philip Shenon, "NORTH KOREA AND THE US MUST TALK, CARTER SAYS," Washington, 01/16/03) reported that former US President Jimmy Carter, who helped defuse a nuclear crisis with the DPRK in 1994, has urged the Bush administration to open direct talks with the DPRK to resolve the latest showdown. He said any settlement should require the DPRK to go beyond its earlier promises and verify that it had shut down all research aimed at the production of nuclear weapons. Carter, who said he was willing to act as a mediator if requested by the White House, was optimistic that the latest dispute would be ended peacefully, so long as both the Bush administration and the DPRK agreed to talk. Carter said on Tuesday that he believed that the DPRK was sincere in its repeated public statements that it wanted to move toward normal diplomatic and trade relations with the US. "There need to be direct talks between North Korea and the United States, without either side having to lose face. My hope and my belief is that it is certainly not too late now, and that there can be some opening," Carter said.

6. ROK on DPRK-ROK Nuclear Crisis

Reuters (Brian Rhoads and Jane Macartney, "SEOUL BRACED FOR 'WORST-CASE' KOREA SCENARIO," Beijing/Seoul, 01/16/03) reported that the ROK on Thursday it was prepared for a worst-case scenario that included war on the peninsula if diplomacy failed to resolve the crisis over the DPRK's suspected nuclear weapons ambitions. At the same time, the top US envoy for Asia said in Beijing the whole international community agreed that the Korean peninsula must be free of nuclear weapons but held out little hope of a speedy outcome. "It's going to be a slow process to make sure we achieve this in the right way," US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly told reporters after talks with Chinese leaders. In Seoul, ROK Defense Minister Lee Jun told parliament that war would be unavoidable if diplomacy failed. "If the North Korean nuclear problem cannot be solved peacefully and America attacks North Korea, war on the Korean peninsula will be unavoidable," Lee said. "Our army is prepared for the worst-case scenario."

7. Russia-DPRK Relations

Reuters (Richard Balmforth, "FEW TRUMPCARDS AS RUSSIA SENDS ENVOY TO NORTH KOREA," Moscow, 01/16/03) reported that Russia joined efforts on Thursday to defuse the nuclear standoff between the DPRK and the US by sending an emissary to Pyongyang, as the ROK warned of war if

diplomacy fails. Though Russia is one of the few countries that have a close relationship with the DPRK, analysts said the chances of any breakthrough from this mission were slim. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov will try to persuade the DPRK to drop its nuclear programs US says are aimed at producing weapons, and return to a global atomic arms pact. "There are no great hopes that Losyukov will succeed in achieving this. This is a huge task and difficult to implement, and Losyukov understands that," said Alexander Vorontsov, a top Russian expert on the DPRK. The influential newspaper Kommersant, in an article by two Korean experts, said: "In the main, the situation for Moscow is not very hopeful. "The only thing that will remain possible for Russian diplomacy is to try to restrain the ones who are about to start fighting and force them to talk to one another with the aim of finding compromise," it said. Analysts expected Losyukov to offer Russia as a guarantor, possibly with the PRC, of any security commitments made by the US. He will stop off in Beijing on his way to Pyongyang.

8. DPRK-ROK Cross-Border Railway

The Associated Press (Soo-Jeong Lee, "NORTH KOREA PROPOSES RECONCILIATION TALKS WITH SOUTH DESPITE NUCLEAR ISSUE," Seoul, 01/16/03) reported that the DPRK on Thursday proposed opening talks next week with the ROK on connecting cross-border railway and roads. The ROK's Red Cross also said negotiators from the DPRK and the ROK would reopen talks next week about more reunions for family members separated when the peninsula was divided in 1945. The inter-Korean talks come amid tension over the DPRK's nuclear weapons development. On Thursday, the DPRK proposed the working-level talks for January 22-25 in Pyongyang, said Kim Jong-ro, spokesman for the ROK's Unification Ministry. The ROK did not immediately respond to the offer.

9. PRC Internet Dissidence

BBC News ("CHINA CHARGES WEB DISSIDENT," 01/16/03) reported that the PRC has charged an internet dissident with trying to overthrow the government, according to a US-based human rights group. Ouyang Yi was charged by police in Chengdu, the southern province where he lives, on 7 January, Human Rights in China (HRIC) said. He is under detention, and his wife is reportedly borrowing money from friends in order to hire a lawyer to represent him in court. He could face up to 15 years in jail. Ouyang is the latest victim of a crackdown on free expression on the web. While the PRC encourages the use of the internet for business purposes, it is wary of its use as a vehicle for political dissent. A recent US study found that it blocks one in 10 web sites to users. Ouyang was arrested on 4 December, and shortly afterwards, police searched his home and seized a number of articles that he had posted on the internet, HRIC said. The group also quoted sources as saying that Ouyang was also arrested for signing an open letter calling for a number of measures to ease political restrictions in the PRC, including the release of dissidents, which was published on the eve of the Chinese Communist Party congress in November. At least seven of the 192 people who signed the letter are now reported to have been arrested.

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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