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I. United States

1. US-DPRK MIA Agreement

US Department of Defense Spokesman Ken Bacon ("PENTAGON SPOKESMAN'S REGULAR BRIEFING," USIA Transcript, 5/15/97) issued the following statement: "I'd like to announce that the United States and North Korea have reached agreement on two important measures to allow us to continue with our efforts to sort out what happened to prisoners of war and soldiers missing in action from the Korean War. As you know, meetings were held in New York last week, and they ended without agreement. But after those meetings, we were able to reach agreement on two of the three issues we had raised with the North Koreans. Those issues are joint recovery operations for remains in North Korea. Both sides have agreed that the U.S. will be able to conduct three joint recovery operations. U.S. teams working with North Koreans in North Korea will be able to conduct three recovery operations this year. Second, U.S. researchers will be able to go to the archives in Pyongyang to look for archival information that may be left over from the Korean War. They also will work in a joint team with the North Koreans. The third issue was our request that we be allowed to interview American defectors in North Korea. We believe that six Americans defected to North Korea in the 1960s, and we believe that four of those are still alive in North Korea. We've asked for permission to go interview them in order to

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2. US Views of DPRK Threat and PRC Role

US Department of Defense Spokesman Ken Bacon ("PENTAGON SPOKESMAN'S REGULAR BRIEFING," USIA Transcript, 5/16/97) commented on remarks made by General John Shalikashvili,

Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, in a speech at the PRC National Defense University on May 14 [Ed. note: See "US Military Leader's Views of DPRK Threat" in the May 15 Daily Report]. Asked whether the US Department of Defense endorsed Shalikashvili's view that the DPRK represents the greatest threat to peace in the Asia-Pacific region and that the intercession of the PRC would be useful, Bacon said, "We welcome efforts by all countries to try to reduce the tensions on the Korean Peninsula. I think our policy on that has been very clear. As you know, President Clinton last year proposed four-party talks to bring about peace and reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula. Those talks involve China, the United States, North Korea, and the Republic of Korea. So we are very much in favor of Chinese involvement in efforts to bring peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula."

3. ROK Food Aid to DPRK

The Associated Press ("SEOUL OFFERS N.KOREA \$10M FOOD AID," Seoul, 5/16/97) reported that the ROK's government-controlled Red Cross, in response to the standing appeal by the UN World Food Program, on Friday pledged to provide US\$10 million worth of corn and powdered milk to the DPRK. ROK Unification Ministry officials said the latest government money will be used to buy 50,000 tons of foreign corn and 300 tons of ROK milk powder, which will be delivered by the World Food Program within two months. Previously, Seoul had donated US\$9 million through the UN to help alleviate the North's food shortage. The pledge followed a proposal by the ROK Red Cross for new meetings with its DPRK counterpart to discuss direct government-to-government food aid. Earlier, Kang Young-hoon, president of the ROK Red Cross society, proposed that Red Cross representatives of both Koreas meet at the border or in either of the two capitals, Seoul and Pyongyang, next Friday. The proposal was made in a message to his DPRK counterpart, Li Sung Ho, passed through the border village of Panmunjom. There was no immediate reply. Earlier this month, the first inter-Korean Red Cross talks in five years were held in Beijing, but negotiations over direct government-to-government food aid broke down after the DPRK refused to discuss procedures of delivery until the ROK specified the amount and timing of the aid. The ROK Red Cross now says it can give the North specific figures.

4. IAEA Inspectors Empowered

The Associated Press (Alison Smale, "NUCLEAR INSPECTORS GAIN MORE POWER," Vienna, Austria, 5/16/97) reported that the International Atomic Energy Agency has given its inspectors broad new powers to probe the nuclear programs of states under its authority. Hans Blix, director-general of the Vienna-based agency, said the new rules should help inspectors catch infractions they previously missed. "This is a leap forward," Blix said. "We think the new measures give us a much greater chance of discovering anything clandestine." Provision of the powers was prompted by recent IAEA failures in Iraq and the DPRK. In the early 1990s, the agency and the world were shocked to uncover details of a secret Iraqi nuclear weapons program that IAEA inspectors failed to detect when they visited facilities of what Iraq claimed was its peaceful nuclear program. Similar suspicions about the DPRK's nuclear program were seemingly confirmed when Pyongyang threatened to withdraw from the 1970 nuclear non-proliferation treaty, and thus avoid IAEA inspections. The new approach vastly expands the IAEA's powers to keep watch on peaceful nuclear programs, to register clues of any clandestine activity, and -- most importantly -- to visit suspicious sites or to investigate suspicious activity. However, whether IAEA inspectors will be able to exercise their new powers remains to be seen, as one of the IAEA's main problems has been the unwillingness of Iraq and the DPRK to cooperate with inspectors. [Ed. note: See also the press release in Section IV, below.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK Famine Situation

Foreign governments are not heeding a call for donations to a program to buy high-energy milk for malnourished DPRK children, and relief workers said Wednesday they want to know why. UNICEF, in a combined UN appeal on April 7, asked for US\$4.7 million to buy specially formulated milk to help children recover from extreme malnutrition. But Anthony Hewett, in charge of the UN children agency's regional office responsible for the DPRK, said Wednesday that no donations had yet been received. UNICEF has had to divert funds targeted for other parts of the world to the DPRK. Hewett said the DPRK's long isolation may have contributed to the lack of donor response because some countries "may feel it is remote and unknowable." Relief workers have come back from the reclusive country with accounts of families eating grass, weeds and bark, children whose growth has been stunted by malnutrition, and hospitals running short of medicine and fuel. UN and relief agencies have long warned that the country faces famine unless it receives large-scale aid. The DPRK government has said that 134 children died last year from malnutrition, but "we believe that it is many more children that have perished," said Runar Soerensen, who is in charge of the UNICEF office in the DPRK capital Pyongyang. (Korea Times, "APPEALS FOR NK CHILDREN HIT DEAF EARS: UN AGENCY," 05/16/97)

2. ROK Red Cross Aid to DPRK

The ROK's Korea National Red Cross (KNRC) is considering spending about 5 percent of its annual budget, roughly 1.5 billion won, on food aid to the DPRK. A KNRC spokesman said, "The KNRC plans to earmark some of its budget for DPRK food aid in a bid to bolster private-level aid activities nationwide and show its willingness to actively take part in the food aid drive." The Red Cross society, which called on religious and civic organizations to join fund-raising activities on May 12, is currently receiving commitments from them. "The KNRC is expected to propose a Red Cross meeting with its northern counterpart within this month after coming up with an estimate on how much aid it can provide to North Korea," the official said. The estimate will depend on the level of private organizations' commitments and other civilian donations, he added. "The donation the KNRC is considering might be 5 percent or 1.5 billion won of our total budget of 30 billion won," he said. The plan will be decided on at a meeting of the KNRC's 13 branch heads, scheduled for May 21, he added. The KNRC's idea is construed as a step to mitigate some criticism that it has only played a role in conveying relief goods, collected by the private sector, to its DPRK counterpart. "The KNRC's projected contribution will have a positive influence on the materialization of the second Red Cross talks between the two Koreas," a government official commented. However, the KNRC's planned assistance will be "purely private," because the Red Cross society is only supposed to convey private donations to the DPRK, he said. "There is no change in our stance that the government's large-scale aid (to the North) will be pushed for only after the North accepts the proposed four-way talks for peace on the Korean peninsula," he added. (Korea Times, "KNRC CONSIDERING SPENDING 5 PERCENT OF BUDGET ON NK FOOD AID," 05/16/97)

3. Vietnam Aids DPRK

Vietnam has offered 1,000 tons of rice to help the DPRK through its current famine, the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry said Wednesday. "In order to contribute towards helping the North Korean people overcome their food problems, our Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet decided recently to donate 1,000 tons of rice to North Korean children," a ministry spokesman said. He said Vietnam had last year offered a certain quantity of rice to the DPRK and sold it some more on good terms. According to informed sources, Hanoi had rejected an earlier request from Pyongyang for 50,000 tons of rice on credit for five years. (Korea Times, "VIETNAM TO OFFER 1,000 TONS OF RICE TO N. KOREA," 05/16/97)

4. DPRK Military to Oversee Farming

The DPRK regime has instructed military units to oversee farming in an effort to surmount dire food

shortages, intelligence officials said Wednesday. DPRK leader Kim Jong-il instructed the Ministry of People's Armed Forces earlier this spring to have control over farming, said the officials from the agency for National Security Planning (NSP), revealing the findings of their questioning of the two DPRK families who defected Monday to the ROK by boat. In accordance with the instruction, the defectors were quoted as saying, commanders of military units of all levels were named to chair regional farm management committees and carry out farming plans. Pyongyang has expanded its criteria for military conscription by admitting to the armed forces since 1994 even the so-called "men of impure (non-proletarian) family backgrounds." Youths who were previously exempted from conscription are now allowed to join and serve in the military until the age of 22, the DPRK defectors were quoted as having said. The length of military service has also been extended to 13 years from October last year. The move has resulted in discontent among servicemen who had been about to be discharged from the military. (Korea Times, "N. KOREAN MILITARY OFFICERS OVERSEE FARMING AT KIM JONG-IL'S ORDER: NSP ," 05/16/97)

5. PRC Concern over DPRK Exodus

An average of 30-40 starving DPRK residents are fleeing across the border to the PRC every day, a German daily reported Wednesday. The daily, citing internal data from the PRC government, said PRC border guards used to look the other way out of sympathy, but are now unconditionally turning back the refugees out of the fear that hundreds of thousands of North Koreans could flee across the border if the situation is allowed to continue. (Joong Ang Ilbo, "30-40 NORTH KOREANS ESCAPE TO CHINA DAILY," 05/16/97)

6. ROK Foreign Minister's Itinerary

ROK Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-ha will visit the PRC, the US, France and Germany on a trip May 18-29, according to the ministry spokesman. Yoo will visit Beijing May 18-20 at the invitation of his PRC counterpart Qian Qichen on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the normalization of relations between the ROK and the PRC. Yoo and Qian are expected to review the overall situation of the past five years of their countries' bilateral links and exchange opinions on wide-ranging issues of mutual interest. After his Beijing visit, Yoo will fly to New York to preside over a meeting of the United Nations Security Council as its president. During his May 21-22 stay there, Yoo will meet with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to discuss questions facing the world body and issues related to the Korean peninsula, a ministry spokesman said. On May 22, he will speak at a working luncheon sponsored by the Korea Society on the theme of Korea-US relations. From New York, he will visit Washington DC May 22-24, during which he will have talks with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and other senior Clinton administration officials on issues the two countries have in common. Minister Yoo will then go onto France, where he will attend a ministerial conference of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which will be held in Paris May 25-26. Then, Yoo will make an official visit to Germany May 26-27 for a meeting with German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel. (Korea Times, "FOREIGN MINISTER YOO TO VISIT CHINA, UN, OECD MAY 18-29," 05/16/97)

7. IAEA Chief to Visit ROK

Hans Blix, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), will visit the ROK on May 25 to attend an international symposium on atomic energy to be held in Taejeon. During his four-day stay here, Blix is scheduled to pay a courtesy call on ROK President Kim Young-sam at Chong Wa Dae, officials said. Blix is to meet with high-ranking Seoul officials such as Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-ha and Science-Technology Minister Kwon Sook-il to exchange views on issues of mutual concern. Topics for their dialogue will be the ROK's efforts to block Taiwan's plan to ship nuclear waste to the DPRK, Pyongyang's freeze of its nuclear activities under the 1994 deal in Geneva, and

the upcoming election of his successor. The symposium will be held under the joint auspices of the IAEA and the Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute. (Korea Times, "IAEA CHIEF BLIX TO VISIT KOREA MAY 25," 05/16/97)

III. Japan

1. DPRK Missile Threat

The Sankei Shimbun (Hiroshi Yuasa, "JAPAN MAY FALL WITHIN DPRK'S RODONG I TARGET RANGE," Washington, 1, 5/13/97) reported that US military sources revealed that despite the common perception that the DPRK's Rodong I intermediate ballistic missile has a maximum range of one thousand kilometers, it actually can travel one thousand and three hundred kilometers, far enough to reach Tokyo. According to the report, US reconnaissance satellites found that three Rodong I missiles have already been deployed along the Sea of Japan, and seven more missiles will soon be in place. The report pointed out that given the Rodong I's ability to carry not only nuclear but also chemical warheads, review of Japan's defense policy -- especially Japan's policy toward a US-led theater missile defense (TMD) initiative -- is becoming more critical.

2. Japan-Russia Relations

The Sankei Shimbun ("JAPANESE FOREIGN MINISTER TO VISIT RUSSIA LATE THIS MONTH," 2, 5/11/97) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda revealed that he has decided to pay a three-day visit to Russia May 23 to lay new ground work for negotiations on the Northern Territory issue. The report pointed out that Ikeda's visit is expected to reactivate Japan-Russia negotiations on fishing and economic exchange in the Northern Territories. Negotiations have been deadlocked because of Yeltsin's health and Russia's domestic problems. The report also said that Ikeda will encourage Russia's cooperation in strengthening anti-terrorism, which is one of the agenda items at the Denver Summit slated for late June.

3. US Asia-Pacific Defense Policy

The Nikkei Shimbun ("CURRENT US MILITARY PERSONNEL NUMBERS TO REMAIN IN ASIA-PACIFIC," Washington, 2, 5/13/97) reported that US Defense Secretary William Cohen revealed at a think tank session in Washington May 12 that the coming Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) will announce that the ten thousand US military personnel presently in the Asia-Pacific region will remain. Cohen cited as reasons for maintaining the current troop strength the uncertainty of the PRC's future intentions in the wake of expanding PRC military power, in addition to tensions on the Korean Peninsula. However, Cohen emphasized that containment is not a US policy option and that the decision to maintain current forces in the region is not meant to antagonize the PRC but instead to prepare for the uncertainties in the region.

4. Japan-DPRK Relations

The Asahi Shimbun ("JAPAN'S LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (LDP) POLICY RESEARCH COUNCIL HEAD URGES RESUMPTION OF JAPAN-DPRK INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS," 2, 5/13/97) reported that Taku Yamazaki, LDP Chairman of the Policy Research Council, said during his speech in Tokyo May 12 that quick resumption of Japan-DPRK negotiations, including those on the DPRK's suspected kidnapping of Japanese civilians, is urgent.

The Daily Yomiuri ("SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDP), NEW PARTY SAKIGAKE (PIONEERS) AGREE ON N. KOREA VISIT," 2, 5/15/97) reported that the SDP and Sakigake agreed at a regular meeting May 14 to send a joint delegation to the DPRK, involving the ruling LDP. According to the

report, leaders of the General Federation of Korean Residents (Chongryun) told SDP Secretary General Shigeru Ito that the DPRK Workers' Party wants the delegation to come soon. Both the SDP and Sakigake will ask the LDP to discuss forming a joint delegation. The report added that although not part of the Cabinet, the SDP and Sakigake both support the LDP-led government.

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("DPRK MAY ALLOW JAPANESE WIVES TO VISIT JAPAN," 1, 5/16/97) reported that several governmental sources revealed that the DPRK has told the Japanese government that it will allow Japanese wives and relatives in the DPRK to visit their relatives in Japan. The move came in response to the Japanese government's demand, during a secret Japan-DPRK working-level consultation held May 10-11 in Beijing, that the DPRK respond to the alleged abduction cases. This is the first time in forty years that the DPRK has expressed its intention to allow Japanese wives to visit Japan. The report pointed out that the reasons for the DPRK's decision may include potential Japanese food aid to the DPRK, a possibility supported by a source from the Japanese Foreign Ministry. The report also expects that the decision may re-energize Japan-DPRK negotiations on normalization of bilateral diplomatic relations. However, the report pointed out that the process may take some time because, according to some high-ranking Foreign Ministry official, the number of Japanese wives who will be allowed to visit Japan is not yet clear, and because difficult problems still remain unsolved between the two countries, including the alleged abduction cases.

5. DPRK Rice Diplomacy

The Sankei Shimbun ("DPRK GETTING CLOSER TO SOUTHEAST ASIA FOR RICE," Bangkok, 5, 5/11/97) reported that the DPRK has invited the foreign ministers from Myanmar, Vietnam and Thailand to enter negotiations on rice aid to the DPRK. According to the report, the DPRK has criticized the US for its harsh stance on Myanmar's alleged human rights abuse and has supported Myanmar's entry into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to facilitate rice aid from Myanmar, which has been frozen since 1994 because of the DPRK's inability to pay for the deal. The report also said that the DPRK invited a visit by a high-ranking Thai official in February 1996, and that the DPRK Vice Prime Minister visited Vietnam last month to ask both Thailand and Vietnam for food aid to the DPRK, although both countries declined the offer. The report pointed out that Thailand and Vietnam are unlikely to accept the most recent offer, but warned that given that some countries have different views on human rights in Southeast Asia, DPRK diplomacy should be watched carefully.

6. Japan-US Defense Relations

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPAN-US JOINT PLAN ON REGIONAL CRISES," Evening Edition 1, 5/15/97) reported that the Japanese and US governments decided to start work later this year on a plan to jointly tackle crises in the region around Japan. This new effort is tentatively titled "The Joint Plan to Deal with Crises in Areas Around Japan," and will cover not only the role of Japanese Self Defense Forces but that of other ministries and agencies in the event of an emergency. However, the possibility of a confrontation on the Korean Peninsula will certainly be a central concern, said the sources cited in the report. The report also said that concrete measures will include Japan's logistical support for the US military and the way Japan and the US would deal with refugees. The work will begin after a review of guidelines for Japan-US Defense cooperation is completed, and is expected to clarify so-called "gray zone" cooperation, left unclear because of Japan's constitutional restraint on collective defense.

IV. Press Releases

1. DPRK-Taiwan Nuclear Waste Deal

[On May 15, Greenpeace issued the following press release, entitled "Taiwan Power Company Misrepresents Radioactivity Of Nuclear Waste To Be Sent To North Korea."]

Greenpeace today announced the discovery of major misrepresentations in the classification of radioactive waste to be exported by Taiwan Power Company (Taipower) to North Korea. Greenpeace spokesperson Ho Wai Chi said the discovery raises serious concerns for the safe transport and storage of the waste.

"The waste is significantly more radioactive than Taipower claims," said Ho. "Taipower has misled the people of Taiwan, the international community and the governments of neighboring countries about the dangers associated with shipping and disposing of their radioactive waste in North Korea."

Taipower, Taiwan's government-run power utility, signed a contract in January to ship up to 200,000 barrels of low level waste for final storage in North Korea. The shipments are expected to begin in a few months.

The Greenpeace team was accompanied by Mr. John Large of Large & Associates, a British nuclear engineering firm retained by Greenpeace to do an independent evaluation of Taiwan's nuclear waste sector. The group conducted a 10-day study of the nuclear waste sector, and inspected waste facilities at the Kuo Sheng nuclear power plant and on Lanyu Island.

They discovered that the so-called low level radioactive waste, which Taipower plans to export to North Korea, contains ion exchange resins and filter masses, some of the most dangerous wastes produced by nuclear reactors.

"The waste that Taipower chooses to call low level, and claims will not demand special handling, is actually a soup of highly radioactive poisons that requires complex technology, highly trained personnel, and a fully developed infrastructure in order to fulfill the most rudimentary safety requirements," said Mr. Large. "it is difficult to believe Taipower assurances that North Korea can deal with this waste safely, when they don't ever tell the truth to their own people about what the waste contains."

Greenpeace also discovered unsafe conditions at Taiwan's Lanyu Island radioactive waste storage site. Radiation levels recorded on the perimeter of a Storage trench indicate that radioactive materials may be leaking from storage drums. In addition, there appeared to be a lack of adequate facilities for treatment of contaminated water, a serious shortcoming in a climate of typhoons and torrential rains.

This compares with a new waste storage facility, built at the Kuo Sheng plant after lengthy protests from local residents which contains a number of basic safety features, and replaces an older Lanyu-type facility which officials say was unsatisfactory.

"It took Kuo Sheng residents 10 years to force Taipower to build a storage facility that conforms to even basic safety requirements," said Ho. "The people of Lanyu, despite years of protest, are still living atop a leaking dump. And if the barrels are moved to North Korea, what voice will those residents have to protect their families from danger?"

"By exporting their waste, Taipower is creating the potential for serious environmental consequences for North Korea," Ho added. "Taipower must deal with their own waste, including removing it from Lanyu island, and they must immediately cancel this dangerous and irresponsible agreement with North Korea."

2. IAEA Inspectors Empowered

[On May 16, VERTIC issued the following press release, entitled "Letting The Nuclear Watchdog Off The Leash."]

At a special meeting, the International Atomic Energy Agency's Board of Governors last night approved radical plans to reform nuclear safeguards and therefore fortify the 186-member Non-Proliferation Treaty.

With the discovery of Iraq's clandestine nuclear-weapon programme and problems verifying North Korea's nuclear activities, it was clear that the 1972 nuclear safeguards agreement was in need of an overhaul. Although the study on the new safeguards system was completed by 1995, since then there have been protracted negotiations to finalize the necessary protocol.

Last month, the Special Safeguards Committee approved the language of a draft Additional Protocol which, if implemented, will give the IAEA crucial tools to catch a state cheating on its commitments not to have nuclear weapons. These tools include extensive information about nuclear fuel cycles, related equipment and exports, far-reaching access for inspectors, and the revolutionary scientific technique of environmental sampling, which can provide unequivocal signatures of nuclear activities.

"This represents a major change in the culture of nuclear safeguards and a bold step forward for verification generally," says Dr. Patricia Lewis, Director of VERTIC.

"However, Board agreement of the Protocol is not the end of the story," adds Suzanna van Moyland, VERTIC's Arms Control and Disarmament Researcher. "States must demonstrate their commitment to non-proliferation by signing up to the Protocol and through early implementation of this remarkable Programme."

For further information contact Dr. Patricia Lewis (pml@vertic.org) or Suzanna van Moyland (svm@vertic.org).

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.

Produced by [the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development](#).

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