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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Energy Aid

Bulletin of Atomic Scientists (Peter Hayes, "THE SIX-PARTY TALKS; MEETING NORTH KOREA'S ENERGY NEEDS", 2007/11/14) said that it's already evident that only some of the HFO equivalent package promised to the DPRK in the six-party talks can be delivered by the end of 2007. In 2008, assuming the denuclearization process is underway, the Energy Experts Working Group (EEWG) might undertake more stopgap energy assistance, and might also take up the issue of how to redeploy DPRK's atomic industrial complex, helping convert its facilities and thousands of scientists and technicians to new economic roles. The report concludes that all parties "will move cautiously and slowly rather than decisively and rapidly in their negotiations and actions. Therefore, an incoming U.S. president in January 2009 is likely to face a Kim Jong Il still armed with nuclear weapons even if deprived of plutonium production and uranium enrichment capacities." [The entire article is available at http://thebulletin.org/columns/peter-hayes/20071114.html].

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2. Inter-Korean Relations

Korea Times (Yoon Won-sup, "KOREAS TO SET UP BODY FOR PEACE ZONE", 2007/11/15) reported that the prime ministers of DPRK and the ROK have agreed to form an organization for establishing a special cooperative peace zone in coastal areas of the West Sea, and to open a Munsan-Bongdong railway for freight trains this year, according to sources. The agreement came as DPRK Prime Minister Kim Yong-il and his ROK counterpart Han Duck-soo had a second day of discussions in order to produce a joint statement. Another issue high on the agenda is the establishment of a joint fishing area in the West Sea as agreed upon by President Roh Moo-hyun and DPRK leader Kim Jong-il last month.

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3. US on DPRK Terror List Status

Kyodo ("HILL DENIES COMPLETION OF N. KOREA REMOVAL FROM TERROR LIST BY YEAR-END", Washington, 2007/11/15) reported that President George W. Bush will not notify Congress by Friday of his intention to remove the DPRK from a US list of terrorist-sponsoring nations, top US nuclear negotiator Christopher Hill said. Hill made the remark to reporters at an airport outside Washington upon returning from an overseas trip, indicating the United States will not finish removing the DPRK from the blacklist by the end of the year.

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4. DPRK and US-Japan Relations

The Financial Times (Daniel Dombey, David Pilling, "US AND JAPAN PLAY DOWN N KOREA", Washington and Tokyo, 2007/11/15) reported that President George W. Bush on Friday welcomes Yasuo Fukuda to the White House as Washington and Tokyo seek to keep up strong ties despite differing priorities on dealing with the DPRK. In an interview with the FT this week, Mr Fukuda strongly hinted he regarded the nuclear and missile threat from Pyongyang as a more important issue than that of the abductees. However, spelling this out would risk upsetting much of the Japanese public.

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5. DPRK Economy

IFES NK Brief ("NEW RESTRICTIONS ON DPRK MARKET TRADING", 2007/11/15) reported that recently, DPRK authorities have adopted a measure prohibiting women under the age of forty from selling goods in Pyongyang markets. According to DPRK media sources, as internet videos of footage shot in Pyongyang markets by hidden cameras have emerged, and have been viewed with great interest by many in the ROK, authorities have increased restrictions on the markets. The authorities' current restriction on market trading, aimed at pushing these women back to government-assigned work, will likely not last. Because almost all North Koreans, including the authorities, rely on the markets to sustain their lifestyles, market restrictions cannot be anything but temporary.

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6. ROK-EU Trade Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA TO SWEETEN OFFER AT NEXT EU FTA TALKS", 2007/11/15) reported that the ROK plans to accept a number of the European Union's demands for lifting tariffs on EU goods in the fifth round of the Korea-EU free trade agreement talks slated for Nov. 19 in Brussels, Belgium. The ROK will also make concessions on auto technology standards, one of the biggest obstacles in the negotiations. But Korea is also determined to draw concessions from the EU on Korea's major export products like cars and electronics.

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7. Japan Military

Mainichi Shimbun ("DEFENSE MINISTRY'S GUNDAM-INSPIRED HIGH-TECH INFANTRY KIT GRABS OTAKU ATTENTION", 2007/11/15) reported that a high-tech armament system for infantry soldiers sparked interest among anime fans at a recent Ministry of Defense research presentation when officials announced that it was designed with the Gundam anime series in mind. The Advanced Personal Armament System -- Japan's version of the Future Soldier project, designed to modernize combat infantry units -- offers a network-linked helmet providing night and thermal vision, amongst other capabilities. It was introduced at a presentation held by the ministry's Technical Research and Development Institute titled, "Towards the realization of Gundam."

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8. Sino-US Security Relations

Washington Post (David Cho and Ariana Eunjung Cha, "PANEL: CHINA'S SPYING POSES THREAT TO U.S. TECH SECRETS", 2007/11/15) reported that the PRC's extensive spying inside the US is the greatest threat to the security of American technology secrets. Advances by the PRC military are catching US intelligence officials by surprise. And the Defense Department may be inadvertently outsourcing the manufacturing of key weapons and military equipment to factories in the PRC. These are among the key findings released today by the bipartisan US-China Economic and Security Review Commission commissioned by Congress to study the economic and security relationship between the US and the PRC.

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9. Sino-Russian Border Security

Vladivostok News ("RUSSIA, CHINA TO COOPERATIVELY COMBAT SMUGGLING", 2007/11/15) reported that Russian and PRC customs officials have agreed to strengthen cooperation in the fight against contraband by improving information exchange on goods crossing the border, a statement from the Russian Far East's customs department said. The agreement, reached in Vladivostok on November 9 by the Department officials and a five-member delegation from Harbin, the PRC's Heilongjiang province, aims to prevent the trafficking of goods and drugs across the Russian-PRC border in both directions.

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10. PRC Government

The Associated Press (Anita Chang, "MINOR PARTIES ADVISE CHINA'S COMMUNISTS", Beijing, 2007/11/15) reported that the PRC's communist government wants several small political parties to play a greater role in advising the leadership, though without challenging its authoritarian hold on PRC society, the government said. The statement of support for the eight minor parties came in a policy paper that follows on PRC President Hu Jintao's call last month for more open, consultative decision-making to help the government cope with a fast-changing society. While stressing the advisory and supervisory roles played by the small, powerless parties, the policy paper said plainly that the Communist Party "holds the leading and ruling position."

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11. PRC Energy

The Los Angeles Times (John M. Glionna, "IN BEIJING, THEIR PRE-WINTER OF DISCONTENT", Beijing, 2007/11/15) reported that an estimated 200 million of the PRC's poor have been forced to shiver as they mark off the days until Nov. 15 arrives. That's when municipal managers switch on boilers, radiators and immersion heaters, firing up central heating systems that are a throwback to the Communist-planned economy of the 1960s. In today's free-market PRC, many homeowners can

flip a switch to heat their homes and offices. Others rent in buildings, such as hotels and foreign compounds, that have their own natural-gas heating systems. Central government officials, as well as military personnel and their dependents, also get heat much earlier. That cozy accommodation does not extend to the Flower Garden Apartments, a community without thermostats. The complex was built a decade ago to house 500 farm families after their *hutong* , or ancient alley community, was demolished to make way for upscale apartment buildings.

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12. PRC Environment

The Associated Press ("CHINA SEES REDUCTION IN COAL EMISSIONS", Beijing, 2007/11/15) reported that the PRC said measures to improve the environment by cutting pollution at coal-fired power plants has started to show results, with emissions of a key air pollutant falling so far this year. Emissions of sulfur dioxide, a main marker of air pollution, fell by 1.8 percent year-on-year in the first three quarters of 2007, State Environmental Protection Administration Director Zhou Shengxian said. This compared to a 1.2 percent rise in 2006 from a year earlier. Zhou attributed the decrease to the installation of facilities that cut emissions of sulfur from coal-fired power plants.

The International Herald Tribune (Elisabeth Rosenthal , "DIRE CLIMATE WARNING LINKED TO CHINA AND INDIA", Rome, 2007/11/15) reported that the average global temperature will rise to a devastating level by 2030 if the PRC and India do not begin curbing energy use and carbon emissions immediately, officials of the International Energy Agency predicted Wednesday. Speaking at the World Energy Congress, the officials noted that 60 percent of the global increase in emissions from 2005 to 2030 would come from India and the PRC. Citing a World Energy Outlook from the agency last week, the officials said that if current development trends continued unchanged, total carbon emissions would rise by 57 percent by 2030, leading to a global temperature increase of 6 degrees Celsius, or 10.8 degrees Fahrenheit, by 2030.

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Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org