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I. United States

1. Australia-DPRK Relations

Agence France Presse ("AUSTRALIA SET TO RESTORE TIES WITH NORTH KOREA: REPORT," Sydney, 4/15/00) reported that The Weekend Australian said on April 15 that Australia is set to become one of the first Western nations to restore full diplomatic relations with the DPRK. The move is scheduled for next month and would coincide with Australian Prime Minister John Howard's visit to the ROK in May. The newspaper said that Australia's move would reinforce efforts by the ROK, the US and Japan to open the DPRK in the hope of encouraging reform.

2. US Sanctions on DPRK

Agence France-Presse (Christophe de Roquefeuil, "PENALTIES TAG IRAN, N. KOREA EXPORTS INVOLVED IN MISSILE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER," 4/15/00) reported that the US said on April 14 that it has imposed sanctions against the DPRK and Iranian entities involved in Scud missile technology transfers. US State Department spokesman James Rubin said, "we imposed these sanctions on North Korean and Iranian entities for the knowing transfer of equipment and technology controlled by the missile technology control regime. In addition, because this activity was judged to make a substantial contribution to missile proliferation, an additional penalty was imposed requiring the denial, for at least two years, of the importation into the United States of all products produced by the sanctioned North Korean and Iranian entities." Rubin acknowledged that the decision could delay the US policy of rapprochement with the DPRK and Iran. He continued, "the causes that have led to these sanctions are an additional hurdle that must be cleared if we are to improve economic and trade relations." However, he declined to go into the details of the technology transfers, but implied that the DPRK has been involved in supplying Iran with Scud technology. The sanctions are being applied against the DPRK's aerospace company Changgwang Sinyong. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for April 17, 2000.]

3. ROK-DPRK Summit

The New York Times carried an analytical article (Howard W. French, "LIVING IN THE PAST: CUBA SI, KOREA NO," Seoul, 4/16/00, WK4) which said that the DPRK may be signaling a historic shift in its strategy by agreeing to the inter-Korean summit and deciding that the ROK was a partner, not foe. Kenneth C. Quinones, a former US State Department Korea expert who is now director of Mercy Corps International's Northeast Asia Project said, "Instead of trying to first disarm the North, as Washington has so adamantly tried but failed to do, Kim sent representatives of nongovernmental organizations north with food, clothing, and medicine. Instead of economic isolation he encouraged businessmen from the South to go North." There are varying views about what brought the DPRK's decision about. One senior ROK official said last week, "they have come to realize that we are likely to become their main donors in areas like food and fuel." Others believe that politics are driving the DPRK regime, which is essentially shielded from internal security threats. They say that now is simply the time when diplomatic relations are aligned with Japan, the ROK, and perhaps the US seeming ready to do business with the DPRK. However, Leon V. Sigal, a Columbia University expert in international relations, said, "we are at a serious moment here, where things could go very, very well. To say they could still go badly is not news on the Korean peninsula. But we could be seeing fundamental shifts in the political relationships, and this is taking place because Seoul, Tokyo and Washington are moving the same direction for once."

The Economist carried an editorial ("IN FROM THE COLD?" 4/15-21/00) which said that the upcoming ROK-DPRK summit could mark the end of "the cold war's first frontier in Asia, and now all but its last redoubt anywhere." While the article said that the summit will be a start to resolving the problem of division, it added, "Yet, when the estranged leaders of the Koreas do meet, their talks are likely to be fraught with difficulty, since all they know of each other is seen down the barrel of a gun. Indeed, that is the first difficulty: without a reduction in military tensions on the peninsula, another crisis could be just around the corner." It argued, "if North Korea wants a new start in relations with the South, this is as safe a time as any for it to crawl out of its bunker. Although the South still officially dreams of reunification, the scale of North Korea's problems makes the dream seem like a nightmare." The article argued, "before handing anything over, the South's president, Kim Dae Jung, would be wise to insist that any such good turn by his country gets another from North Korea." It concluded, "Cold-war borders are dangerous places. The one between NATO and the Warsaw Pact

bristled with weapons too. Yet timely arms-control and confidence-building agreements helped make its eventual dismantling an entirely peaceful affair. Just one of several troubling issues for the southern Mr Kim to think about during his journey north."

4. ROK-DPRK Sports Exchange

Reuters ("FIRST INTER-KOREAN MOTOR RALLY TO BE HELD IN MAY," Seoul, 4/17/00) reported that an organizers said Monday that an unprecedented inter-Korean motor rally will be held along a course linking Seoul and the DPRK's Mount Kumgang area on May 26-30. The ROK-based Wooinbang Communication Company and the DPRK's Asia-Pacific Peace Committee reached an agreement early this month on the rally after three years of negotiations. An official at Wooinbang said, "the rally is aimed at promoting national reconciliation and unification." The official said that DPRK organizers will receive US$1 million for the race, and have already been paid US$300,000. Wooinbang said that it planned to hold the inter-Korean rally annually at least for the next five years.

5. ROK-PRC Talks

Reuters ("S.KOREAN MINISTER TO DISCUSS N. KOREA WITH CHINA," Seoul, 4/17/00) reported that an ROK government statement said on Monday that ROK Foreign Minister Lee Joung-binn will visit the PRC later this month for talks on the DPRK. The ROK Foreign Ministry said that Lee will be in Beijing for the three-day official trip starting April 27 and will discuss the DPRK, the PRC's treatment of DPRK defectors, a bilateral fisheries agreement, and economic cooperation. The ministry said in a statement that PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jianxuan had invited Lee. A ministry official said that Lee would seek the PRC's support for the inter-Korean summit planned for June 12-14.

6. US Arms Sales to Taiwan

The Washington Post (Steven Mufson and Thomas E. Ricks, "PENTAGON WON'T BACK TAIWAN DEAL," 4/17/00) reported that US Defense Department sources said on April 16 that the US Defense Department has decided to recommend that the US put off Taiwan's request to buy several submarines, the P-3 Orion anti-submarine aircraft, and four Arleigh Burke-class destroyers equipped with the Aegis battle management system. According to an official involved in the discussions, the US Defense Department will instead recommend selling Taiwan a long-range radar that can detect and monitor ballistic missiles and performing a comprehensive study of Taiwan's naval defense needs, which could lead to future sales of some or all of these weapons. Under the US Defense Department recommendation, the long-range radar, known as PAVE PAWS, would be sold only after Taiwan shows how it would be integrated into its air defense system. An administration official said that the US would then deliver it within one to two years. The US Defense Department has also decided to back the sale of advanced medium-range air-to-air missiles (AMRAAM) to Taiwan, on the condition that they be stored in the US. A Defense Department official said that while this would be the first sale of such weapons to any Asian country, storing them on US soil would help to avoid an arms race in Asia. Taiwanese forces would be trained in the US on how to use the missiles. A Defense Department official said that the missiles would be moved to Taiwan if the PRC acquired a similar, Russian-made missile called the AAX-12. The Defense Department also wants to sell Taiwan an upgraded version of the Maverick air-to-ground missile. [Ed. note: This article was included as a Top Story in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for April 17, 2000.]

7. Taiwan Military

The Associated Press (William Foreman, "TAIWAN SEEKS HIGH-TECH WARSHIPS," Taipei, 4/17/00) reported that some analysts have recently expressed doubt over Taiwan's war readiness and have raised questions about whether morale, loyalty and training has slipped in recent years. Tyson Fu, director of the Strategic Studies Institute at the Armed Forces University, which trains Taiwan's military leaders, does not believe the military is facing a talent crisis and doubts there is an ideological conflict. However, Damon Bristow, a researcher with Britain's Royal United Services Institute for Defense Studies, doubts that Taiwan's military could find enough trained sailors to crew the Aegis ships it is seeking to buy from the US. Bristow, who has spent the past six months in Taiwan researching the military, said that the Taiwanese should suspend purchases of expensive weapons and focus on trimming their ranks and building a professional armed forces. Jonathan Pollack, an Asia specialist at the Rand Corporation, agrees that Taiwan needs to shift more of its resources to the navy and air force. Analysts said that while the Taiwanese military's top leadership still favors eventual reunification with the PRC and opposes independence, it is not clear whether junior officers and the enlisted ranks agree. A growing number of young people call themselves Taiwanese, not Chinese, are interested in developing their own culture, and oppose reunification with the PRC. Bristow said that this could create a generation gap that could drain the morale or motivation of the troops.

8. PRC Missile Threat to Taiwan

The Wall Street Journal (Russell Flannery, "TAIWAN'S NEW FOREIGN MINISTER URGES U.S. TO PRESS CHINA TO SLOW MISSILES," Taipei, 4/17/00) reported that Hung-mao Tien accepted the position as Taiwan's foreign minister on April 14. Tien made remarks in an interview earlier this month saying, "the US has to tell China straightforwardly, 'You can't use force to change the status quo.' They respect power." Tien said that the PRC aims to pressure Taipei to accept a precondition for talks that could imply mainland sovereignty over Taiwan. He continued, "the game China is playing is to put Taiwan into a cage. Once you are put in the cage, you can't get out." Tien said that whether the PRC attempts to resolve the issue by military force will depend on how it perceives its own strength. He also said that one of his chief concerns is the PRC's increased deployment of ballistic missiles capable of hitting Taiwan. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for April 17, 2000.]

9. Cross-Straits Tensions

Reuters ("FORMER U.S. OFFICIALS TO VISIT TAIWAN, CHINA," Taipei, 4/17/00) reported that a diplomatic source said Monday that former US assistant Secretary of State Winston Lord will visit Taiwan and the PRC in late April to understand the positions of the two countries following the recent presidential elections in Taiwan. The source said that Lord was scheduled to arrive in Taiwan on April 23 for a three-day visit before heading to the PRC. However, the source said, the trip was strictly "academic" and "private." The source said that Lord would be accompanied by Douglas Paal, former US National Security Council official, and possibly Professor Donald Zagoria of US foreign policy think-tank Hunter College. The group would meet outgoing Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui and Taiwan's President-elect Chen Shui-bian in Taipei. They were expected to meet PRC President Jiang Zemin and Premier Zhu Rongji in Beijing. The source said that the group also wanted to meet Wang Daohan, the PRC's top negotiator with Taiwan, in Shanghai.

10. Bombing of PRC Embassy

The New York Times (Steven Lee Myers, "CHINESE EMBASSY BOMBING: A WIDE NET OF

BLAME," Washington, 4/17/00) reported that, driven in part by articles in two European newspapers suggesting that the NATO bombing of the PRC Embassy in Belgrade had been deliberate, The New York Times interviewed more than 30 officials in the US and in Europe. While the investigation produced no evidence that the bombing of the embassy had been a deliberate act, it provided a detailed account of a broader set of errors than the US or NATO have acknowledged, and a wider circle of blame than the US government's explanation of a simple error of judgment by a few people at the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). None of the people interviewed at the US Defense Department, the CIA, the State Department and the military mapping agency, or at NATO offices in Brussels, Mons, Vicenza, Italy and Paris said that they had ever seen any document discussing targeting of the embassy, nor given any approval to do so. No one asserted that he or she knew that such an order had been given. According to the officials, the bombing resulted from error piled upon incompetence piled upon bad judgment in a variety of places. [Ed. note: This article was included as a Top Story in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for April 17, 2000.]

11. Russian Ratification of START II

The New York Times (Michael R. Gordon, "PUTIN WINS VOTE IN PARLIAMENT ON TREATY TO CUT NUCLEAR ARMS," Moscow, 4/15/00) reported that Russian president Vladimir V. Putin won approval on April 15 of the Start II nuclear arms reduction treaty from the lower house of the Russian Duma. Putin warned that Russia's willingness to carry out the treaty depended on continued US adherence to the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. Putin said, "I want to stress that, in this case, we will have the chance and we will withdraw not only from the Start II treaty, but from the whole system of treaties on the limitation and control of strategic and conventional weapons." The treaty still must receive the approval of the upper house of Parliament, which is not in doubt. However, the Russians made it clear that they would not implement Start II until the US Senate approves several protocols which extend the schedule for carrying out the weapons reductions to 2007 and clarify the terms of the ABM treaty. US President Bill Clinton released a statement saying, "I congratulate President-elect Putin and his government, members of the State Duma, and Russian citizens who supported this giant step toward a safer future. Now we and Russia can and must seize this opportunity to intensify our discussions on both Start III and the ABM treaty, so we can take further concrete steps this year to strengthen the security of the United States, Russia and indeed the whole world." Aleksandr Pikayev, an arms expert at the Moscow office of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace said, "today's ratification has two aims. The first aim is send a message to Washington that Putin is ready to improve relations that have deteriorated over the past several years. The second aim is to put Russia in a better position to press on the ABM treaty issue." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for April 17, 2000.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-ROK Summit

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "PLANNING BOARD FOR S-N SUMMIT TO HOLD INAUGURAL MEETING TODAY," Seoul, 04/17/00), Joongang Ilbo (Lee Young-jong, "PREPARATORY STEPS FOR SOUTH-NORTH SUMMIT," Seoul, 04/16/00), Chosun Ilbo (Kim In-ku, "PYONGYANG SUMMIT PLANNING TEAMS ORGANIZED," Seoul, 04/15/00) and The Korea Times (Lee Soo-jeong, "GOV'T INITIATES PREPARATORY TEAMS FOR S-N SUMMIT," Seoul, 04/16/00) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung on April 15 endorsed the launch of a temporary interagency panel responsible for preparations for the inter-Korean summit in June. ROK Unification Minister Park Jae-

kyu will head the Summit Talks Promotion Committee, which will comprise the ministers and vice ministers of six related agencies, including the foreign, economic and home ministries, officials said. The committee will operate a working-level board, called the summit planning board, comprising the assistant ministers of 15 agencies. The board will be led by Vice Unification Minister Yang Young-shik and will hold its inaugural meeting on Monday to discuss the size and scope of the ROK's delegation to preliminary talks with Pyongyang. The ROK government plans to offer the DPRK a proposal on the preliminary talks through telephone calls by Red Cross officials at the truce village of Panmunjom on Tuesday. DPRK watchers said that the inclusion of presidential economic advisor Lee Ki-ho in the committee indicates Kim's determination to focus on inter-Korean business projects during the summit meeting.

Chosun Ilbo (Kim Min-bai, "GOVERNMENT SEEKS REGULAR SUMMITS WITH NK," Seoul, 04/16/00) reported that the ROK government will be seeking regular summit talks with the DPRK to ensure that a lasting peace system is established on the peninsula. To this end, an invitation to visit Seoul will be forwarded to DPRK leader Kim Jong-il. An official said that it would be important to build mutual confidence between the two countries to effect this, and so the inter-Korean summit must not be a one-time affair. He added that contacts between the former East and West Germany could be a model.

2. US Sanctions on DPRK

Chosun Ilbo (Cho Young-joon, "U.S. ANNOUNCES SANCTIONS ON NK AND IRAN," Seoul, 04/16/00) reported that US State Department spokesman James Rubin announced on April 15 that the US would impose sanctions for two years on the DPRK's Chang-gwang Credit and four Iranian companies involved in the intentional transfer of weapons technology. The sanctions include the banning of new contracts with the US government, suspension of export licenses on controlled items from the State and Commerce Departments, and the banning of imports into the US. Rubin failed to go into details, but the Associated Press reported that the DPRK company had exported Scud missiles and technology to Iran and Syria. Rubin said that the DPRK is a communist state so the sanctions on Chang-gwang were effectively against the government and easing of restrictions promised in September last year may be affected. He added that the DPRK had placed new obstacles that must be solved before improvement of economic and trade ties with the US, and that the sanctions were to emphasize the US position with regard to weapons proliferation.

III. AUSTRALIA

1. Australia-DPRK Relations

The Australian (Robert Garran, "CANBERRA OPENS DOOR TO NORTH KOREA," 4/15/00) reports that Australia is to restore full diplomatic relations with the DPRK next month, becoming one of the first Western nations to establish full relations with the DPRK. The decision comes 25 years after the DPRK suspended diplomatic relations with Australia for reasons it has never fully explained, recalling its diplomats from Canberra and expelling the Australian mission in Pyongyang. The thaw in DPRK-Australian relations began with a meeting of officials in Bangkok last June, followed by a meeting at the UN in New York in September between Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and his DPRK counterpart Paek Nam-sun, and a visit by four Australian officials to Pyongyang in January. The article stated, "The Australian move will reinforce efforts by South Korea, the US and Japan to open the closed Stalinist dictatorship to the outside world in the hope of encouraging reform." The announcement appears planned to coincide with Prime Minister John

Howard's planned visit to the ROK next month. Australia will be represented in the DPRK by Beijing ambassador David Irvine. The article noted, "North Korea remains a brutal state where thousands have died of starvation in recent years. But Canberra believes the policy of spurning Pyongyang has failed to reduce tensions in the region." A spokesman for the ROK embassy in Canberra said that the ROK had encouraged Australia's decision to become more engaged with the DPRK.

2. ROK-DPRK Summit

The Australian Financial Review (Geoffrey Barber, "PENINSULA'S PERILS PUT HISTORY IN PERSPECTIVE," 4/11/00) stated that the proposed ROK-DPRK summit is unquestionably historic news, but it is hardly surprising news, and the meeting is unlikely to produce any rapid or substantial change on the Korean Peninsula, although it might improve the atmospherics. The article stated, "What the move to the summit reflects is the North's increasing concern over its deteriorating economic situation and the South's desire to head off the possibility of the collapse of a failed Stalinist North." It added that despite the DPRK's increased diplomatic activities in recent months, nothing suggests that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has been converted to "strategic and diplomatic sanity." It argued that Kim Jong-il is desperate for food and other economic aid and for investment, and is driven exclusively by the imperative of propping up his "bizarre and reclusive" regime. It noted that the PRC, struggling with problems of economic and political stability, has no interest in risking hostilities over a "failed state" with which it has declining relations, while Japan does not want to be forced into military responses that would alarm the ROK and the PRC. It concluded that there thus is an international consensus for letting the DPRK "sink slowly" and to be reunified gradually with the ROK. It predicted that reunification will be a long, uncertain and unpredictable process in which the summit is likely to be a small and tentative step.

The Australian (Greg Sheridan, "SUNSHINE POLICY PRODUCES RAY OF HOPE," 4/11/00) argued that the inter- Korean summit is the most important event on the Korean Peninsula in a decade, and a vindication of ROK President Kim Dae-jung's Sunshine Policy. It is also the most important indicator yet of a possible fundamental change in the "bizarre, closed, Stalinist, cult-like state of North Korea." Noting that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has almost never traveled overseas and dislikes meeting foreigners, it argued that the real political logic behind the regime's reclusiveness is that if the population of the DPRK were exposed to the affluence and liberty of the ROK, they would quickly throw off the communist system. It concluded, however, that the economic situation in the DPRK is now so grave that apparently its leaders are willing to take that risk.

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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