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I. United States

1. DPRK Six-Way Talks

Xinhua News Agency "NEW ROUND SIX-PARTY TALKS TO HAVE "SUBSTANTIAL" DISCUSSIONS - PRC VICE FM," Seoul, 02/15/04) reported that the second round six-party talks will have "substantial" discussions over the nuclear issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), said a visiting PRC diplomat here on Saturday 14 February . PRC Vice Foreign Minister Wang Yi held talks with ROK Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon, Vice Foreign Minister Choi Young-jin, Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo-hyuck as well as National Security Adviser Kwon Chin-ho on Saturday over the six-nation nuclear talks, said a press release of the PRC delegation on Sunday. Wang said the second round multilateral nuclear talks will start up discussions with "substantial content", "which is an important symbol that the process of the talks will go deeply", said the press release. "After intensified coordination of the involving parties, it is ready to talk about tangible

matters for conditions and foundation were possessed," Wang was quoted as saying. "China hopes the concerning parties will display flexibility in the coming new round nuclear talks, narrow differences and increase consensus, and try to fix concrete goal and direction of solving the DPRK nuclear issue, then make a tangible step," the release said.

2. US on DPRK Concessions

The Washington Post (Glenn Kessler, "US WILL STAND FIRM ON N. KOREA ARMS TALKS TO SET STAGE FOR DEMANDS," 02/16/04) reported that the Bush administration plans to take a tough stance in upcoming six-nation talks over the DPRK nuclear crisis, barely sweetening a position taken at the last round of negotiations six months ago that the DPRK must agree to irreversible and verifiable dismantling of its nuclear programs and weapons, administration officials said. Under the administration's negotiating strategy -- which was broadly decided at a meeting of President Bush's senior foreign policy advisers -- officials would reject the DPRK's offer to freeze its nuclear facility at Yongbyon as woefully inadequate. US officials plan to stress that North Korea must also fully disclose and dismantle a separate program, identified by US intelligence, to produce highly enriched uranium (HEU). Several officials said a failure by the DPRK to admit to the uranium program will make it difficult to continue the negotiating rounds. "If they keep denying HEU, then we aren't going to be able to have some agreement," a senior administration official said. The tough approach outlined by administration officials has caused unease among some of the other nations attending the talks, US and Asian officials said. The PRC has pressed the US to gloss over the uranium program, not mentioning it by name but simply referring to DPRK's "nuclear programs." The PRC has also urged other nations to emphasize the positive in their opening statements and refrain from provocative remarks. ROK officials have warned US officials that focusing on the uranium program in this round may be too much for DPRK, and that the US should be prepared to accept just the dismantling of the Yongbyon facility. The other participants are Japan, which generally supports the administration's tough line, and Russia. But US officials believe they are entering the talks in a strong position, especially because Khan disclosed he had aided the DPRK with its uranium program.

The Associated Press (Stephanie Hoo, "UNITED STATES: NO CONCESSIONS TO NORTH KOREA," Beijing, 02/16/04) reported that the US will not offer concessions to the DPRK before next week's six-nation nuclear talks, a US envoy said Monday, insisting that the DPRK must agree to dismantle its weapons programs. Undersecretary of State John Bolton, who was in Beijing for meetings with PRC officials, urged the DPRK to follow the example of Libya and renounce nuclear weapons. The DPRK says it will freeze its atomic programs in exchange for oil shipments and security guarantees from the US. The Bush administration insists the DPRK begin dismantling the programs before it can receive any concessions. "I don't think our position has changed from what it's been for quite some time," Bolton said. "The issue really is whether North Korea is prepared to make the commitment for the complete verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of its programs." Bolton added: "I think the Libya case shows how one goes about giving up weapons of mass destruction."

3. ROK DPRK Diplomacy Strategy Talks

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREA HOLDS STRATEGY SESSIONS WITH ALLIES AHEAD OF NUCLEAR TALKS," 02/17/04) reported that the ROK has embarked on a flurry of diplomacy to fine-tune strategies with allies ahead of six-nation talks in Beijing next week on the DPRK nuclear crisis. Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo-Hyuck, left for Tokyo to meet with Japanese counterpart Hitoshi Tanaka, the foreign ministry said. In Seoul, the ROK's ministers for foreign affairs and national defense held talks with US officials on improving cooperation between the two nations. In Tokyo, Lee will be briefed on the outcome of Takana's trip to the DPRK last week, the ministry said. Lee, the

ROK's chief negotiator at next week's six-nation talks, will also meet Mitoji Yabunaka, director-general of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's Asian Affairs Bureau. Lee and Yabunaka are scheduled to hold a strategy session with James Kelly in Seoul on February 23, two days before the six-party talks open in Beijing. Kelly, the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, visited Seoul in early February, followed by China's point man on North Korea, Vice Foreign Minister Wang Yi. Meanwhile Foreign Minister Ban Ki-Moon and Defense Minister Cho Young-Kil met with the US' top envoy in Seoul, ambassador Thomas Hubbard and General Leon LaPorte, commander of US forces in the ROK. A foreign ministry statement said they would discuss ways to improve cooperation in foreign policy and security.

4. ROK-US Troop Relocation

Agence France-Presse ("US, SOUTH KOREA FAIL TO AGREE ON COST SHARING FOR US TROOP RELOCATION," 02/14/04) reported that US and ROK officials failed to wrap up talks on relocating US army bases in South Korea and postponed the signing of a deal until April, a defense ministry spokesman said. The two sides were to have finalized the two-day talks here Saturday and sign documents on moving US military headquarters from its base at Yongsan in central Seoul to the south of the capital. At previous talks last month in Hawaii, the allies agreed to pull some 7,000 US troops out of Seoul to the new base in Pyeongtaek, 70 kilometers (40 miles) south of the capital, by the end of 2007. "The two sides have come within an inch of signing the documents but decided that they need more time to consider legal aspects of the documents," the spokesman of the defense ministry told AFP. "We expect the documents to be initiated in April," he said. He declined to elaborate on the sticking points. Defense ministry officials earlier said the two allies remained split over how to cover the cost of the move, estimated at more than three billion dollars.

5. Japan-US Arms Control

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN, US SECURITY OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS ARMS CONTROL," 02/17/04) reported that US arms control envoy John Bolton is scheduled to arrive in Japan to meet with his Japanese counterparts for arms control and nonproliferation talks, Japanese officials said. He will lead the US delegation for the seventh Japan-US Commission on Arms Control, Disarmament, Nonproliferation and Verification, which will be held Wednesday morning in Tokyo. "It will be a forum to discuss global arms control issues, not just about certain regions," said a Japanese official with the foreign ministry's arms control section, when asked if they would discuss the DPRK nuclear crisis. The agenda for the forum includes strengthening of the US-led Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), aimed at interdicting air and sea shipments of weapons of mass destruction, as well as administration of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the foreign ministry said.

6. Russia Missile Launch Failure

The Associated Press (Vladimir Isachenkov, "PUTIN WATCHES AS MISSILE LAUNCH FAILS," Moscow, 02/17/04) reported that a technical glitch thwarted the launch of Russian ballistic missiles in the Barents Sea on Tuesday during naval maneuvers overseen by President Vladimir Putin, who watched the massive exercise while decked out in naval officer's garb aboard a nuclear submarine. The failed launch - part of an exercise described as the largest show of Russian military might in more than 20 years - marred an event apparently aimed at playing up Putin's image as a leader attempting to restore the country's military power and global clout. Putin, who is expected to easily win the presidential election March 14, went to the Barents Sea on board the giant Arkhangelsk submarine to observe maneuvers set to involve numerous missile launches and flights of strategic

bombers. But the ambitious exercise hit a snag when a ballistic missile - a missile that is launched on a high-arch trajectory to hit a designated target - failed to blast off as scheduled from another submarine, the Novomoskovsk, a government official said on condition of anonymity. The official said the automatic safety system blocked the launch for unspecified reasons. A Defense Ministry spokesman refused to comment. And Russian state-run television channels, which are lavishly covering the daily activities of Putin ahead of the election, did not report the failed launch. But the event became a hot topic for Russian analysts and military figures. "The failed launch has shown the gap between the real condition of the Russian military and the ambitions and muscle-flexing of the Russian leadership," said Yevgeny Volk, the head of the Heritage Foundation's Moscow office.

7. Taiwan Presidential Debates

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN FIRST TELEVISED PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE RAISES REFERENDUM PLAN," 02/15/04) reported that Taiwan's opposition leader criticized President Chen Shui-bian's plan to hold a referendum on relations with rival China, in the island's first televised debate between presidential candidates ahead of the March polls. Opposition presidential candidate Lien Chan, from the Kuomintang (KMT) party, said Chen's decision to hold the referendum, which is due at the same time at the March 20 election, threatened national security. Lien said Chen's handling of issues such as the referendum "shows he insists on doing things his way, jeopardising national security and the people's well-being." The two, both eloquent and appearing confident, also debated other domestic issues, including education, taxes, judicial reforms, state enterprises and corruption, during the two-hour session. They answered questions fielded by five people selected from the public rather than from the media. Chen, from the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), defended his referendum plans Saturday, saying it was "the right choice for the Taiwanese people to safeguard peace and democracy on the island" against the PRC's threat. "Facing the 496 ballistic missiles targeting Taiwan deployed by China and Beijing's constant pressure to impose its 'one China' or 'one country, two systems" policy on us, what else can we do?" Chen asked. He said the referendum was a mechanism "to protect our sovereignty and maintain cross-strait peace." "We must never put aside the country's sovereignty.... We don't want any change in the status quo under military threat from China," Chen said. Lien, a former vice president who lost the 2000 presidential polls to Chen, questioned the legitimacy of the referendum. "Please tell us, Mr. Chen, is our national sovereignty being altered that you need to hold such referendums?" Lien asked.

8. PRC on Hong Kong Democracy

Agence France-Presse ("BEIJING RULES OUT HK DEMOCRACY BEFORE 2007: REPORT," 02/16/04) reported that the PRC will not allow Hong Kong to choose its next leader through full elections, according to a local press report that quoted unnamed sources close to the Beijing leadership. Also a consultation exercise to seek the public's view on increased democracy in the city was just a "show" intended to placate the pro-democracy camp, the South China Morning Post reported. The source told the Post that the PRC would draw up its own plan to guide what form the next selection process for the city's chief executive would take in 2007. Hong Kong's democratic development is enshrined in the Basic Law, the mini constitution that came into force at the handover of sovereignty from Britain to the PRC in 1997. However, it is vague on how the chief executive and legislature should be selected after 2007, prompting expectations that full elections would be introduced.

9. PRC on Bird Flu Source

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA SAYS IT COULD IDENTIFY SOURCE OF BIRD FLU WITHIN A WEEK," 02/16/04) reported that scientists are close to identifying the source of bird flu in the PRC, state media reported, as warnings were stepped up about the dangers posed by migratory birds as the weather starts to get warmer. Lei Fumin, a bird researcher at the Institute of Zoology of the PRC Academy of Science, was cited by the China Daily as saying the source of the outbreak could be found "maybe within one week." Lei and his institute are conducting a research project, approved by the Ministry of Science and Technology, into the origins of the H5N1 outbreak that has hit 14 of China's 31 provinces and provincial-level municipalities. "Determining the source of the virus will contribute greatly to preventing and controlling the epidemic," Lei said, noting that it was proving an easier task than nailing down the source of the SARS virus that swept the country last year. Over the past week, PRC officials and scientists have started suggesting that droppings from migratory birds could be the cause of the avian flu that has led to the slaughter of more than a million chickens, ducks and geese. Lei said this could not be confirmed but it was looking increasingly likely. "Although there is not enough evidence to confirm that the migratory birds spread the deadly virus in China, they have been highly suspected by scientists," he said. Beginning next month, migratory birds will begin flocking to the PRC's north, possibly carrying avian flu with them, Lei warned.

10. PRC Three Gorges Dam Displacement

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA PLANS TO RELOCATE 108,000 THIS YEAR TO MAKE WAY FOR THREE GORGES DAM," 02/14/04) reported that the PRC plans to relocate 108,000 people this year to make way for the Three Gorges dam, bringing to nearly a million the total number resettled because of the controversial project, state media said. Among those to be moved from their homes in 2004 are 23,400 peasants, who will be asked to settle in other parts of the country, the Xinhua news agency reported, citing the Chongqing municipal government in southwest PRC. The peasant families will join 800,000 others who have already been forced to move because of the expensive project, meant to tame the Yangtze River. State media previously reported some have been moved as far away as east the PRC's Zhejiang province, 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) from the dam. To the relocated farmers, it is like being moved to a different country, as the Zhejiang dialect is as different from the one spoken in Chongqing as the French language is from Italian. By the time the dam is completed in 2009, 1.13 million people, mostly residents of the Chongqing area, will have been moved, the agency reported. The 2004 agenda also includes moving 130 industrial and mining enterprises from areas where the enormous dam is due to be built, the agency said. The Three Gorges project has been criticized for its huge costs, involving a total investment of 180 billion yuan (22 billion dollars) and an unproven capacity to control floods on the lower reaches of the Yangtze. Critics have also cited environmental problems, including silt accumulation and pollution controls in hundreds of cities and villages along the reservoir.

11. Kim Jong-Il Birthday Rally

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA MARKS LEADER'S BIRTHDAY WITH ANTI-US RALLY," Seoul, 02/16/04) reported that the DPRK celebrated the birthday of hereditary ruler Kim Jong-Il, the so-called "sun of the 21st century," using the occasion to threaten the DPRK's enemies with merciless destruction. Kim turned 62 Monday, with his birthday celebrated as the impoverished country's biggest holiday. "Preparatory committees were formed in over 50 countries of the world to celebrate February 16 and greet the sun of the 21st century," said the official Korean Central News Agency. "Six months or one year were set as celebration periods, unprecedented in history." Among congratulatory messages, a tribute from Russian President Vladimir Putin was singled out. "I hope that your efforts to enhance the welfare of your people, boost the traditional relations between our

two countries and resolve the Korean problem peacefully will pay off," Putin said in his message quoted by Pyongyang Radio.

II. CanKor E-Clipping Service

1. Issue #153

Russia and the DPRK sign a protocol defining the border between the two nations, settling disagreements over 40.3 km of border region around the mouth of the Tumen River and the East Sea coast, where Russia, China and the DPRK meet. Russia has been working on defining its Tumen River border with North Korea since 1986, when it formed a committee of experts to study the problem. A border agreement between Russia and China was signed during PRC President Hu Jintao's trip to Russia last year. Software and multimedia, used machinery, mining and small- and big-ticket consumer goods are the five brightest spots of the DPRK economy, according to the former director of the DPRK branch of the Zurich-based technology group ABB at a seminar hosted by the Swiss-Korea Chamber of Commerce in Switzerland. With the six-party talks back on schedule for the end of February, officials participating in the negotiations consider setting up a working group to regularize and accelerate the settlement of the lingering nuclear standoff. The KoRus Gas Company, a consortium of American, Russian and ROK owners, outlined two non-nuclear solutions to the DPRK's critical energy shortage at a recent regional energy forum. Both ideas -- a 235-mile electric power line from Vladivostok, and a 1,500-mile natural gas pipeline from Sakhalin -- highlight Russia's future as an energy exporter to Northeast Asia.

For further details, please visit: <http://www.cankor.ca>

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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