

NAPSNet Daily Report 17 May, 2001

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 17 May, 2001", NAPSNet Daily Report, May 17, 2001,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-17-may-2001/>

CONTENTS

I. [United States](#)

1. [DPRK Warning on Agreed Framework](#)
 2. [DPRK Condition Report](#)
 3. [US Strategic Planning in Asia](#)
 4. [US-PRC Missile Talks](#)
 5. [US-PRC Relations](#)
 6. [PRC Military Exercises](#)
 7. [PRC Foreign Policy](#)
 8. [US Relations with Taiwan](#)
- ### II. [Republic of Korea](#)
1. [ASEAN Forum](#)
 2. [Russia on Inter-Korean Relations](#)
 3. [DPRK Officer to Visit US](#)
 4. [DPRK on ROK Military Exercise](#)
 5. [DPRK Famine](#)
 6. [US Policy towards DPRK](#)
 7. [DPRK-Russia Arms Deal](#)

I. United States

1. DPRK Warning on Agreed Framework

The Washington Post ("N. KOREAN NUCLEAR DEAL WARNING," Seoul, 5/17/01) reported that the DPRK threatened to pull out of a 1994 nuclear deal with the US, saying the US has failed to uphold terms of the Agreed Framework in which the DPRK agreed to freeze its nuclear program in exchange for two nuclear reactors to be built by a US-led consortium. Due to funding and contractual problems, as well as political tensions, the completion of the reactors have been delayed by several years. The DPRK's foreign media outlet, Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), said in a report, "The failure by the U.S. to live up to its obligation . . . by the year 2003 would possibly drive

us to respond to it with abandoning [the] ongoing nuclear freeze." In Washington, the US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said that the US has no intention of abandoning the agreement. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 17, 2001.]

2. DPRK Condition Report

The Associated Press ("LIFE EXPECTANCY PLUMMETS, NORTH KOREA SAYS," Beijing, 5/16/01) reported that DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister Choe Su Hon at a UNICEF conference in Beijing said Wednesday presented a report which said famine and economic collapse cut the life expectancy of DPRK Nationals by more than six years in the 1990's. According to the report, death rates for infants and young children climbed while incomes fell by almost half and figures in the report closely mirror outside estimates. Choe's report portrayed a nation racked by chronic shortages of food and medicine, its economy in collapse and its health care system ruined. The report did not give specific figures for famine deaths, but said average life expectancy fell from 73.2 years in 1993 to 66.8 in 1999. It said the DPRK population grew by 1.5 million people in the same period to a total of 22.6 million and the mortality rate for children under 5 rose during those years from 27 deaths per 1,000 to 48 per 1,000. The report said for infants, the mortality rate rose from 14 to 22.5 per 1,000 births. Meanwhile, it said, the per capita gross national product dropped from US\$991 per year to US\$457. Choe said the disappearance of trading partners with the fall of the Soviet bloc and sanctions imposed on DPRK for not ending missile sales abroad also hurt the economy. The report pledged better cooperation with other countries. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 16, 2001.]

3. US Strategic Planning in Asia

New York Times (Michael R. Gordon, "PENTAGON REVIEW PUTS EMPHASIS ON LONG-RANGE ARMS IN PACIFIC," Washington, 5/16/01) reported that a confidential US Defense Department strategy review has cast the Pacific as the most important region for military planners and calls for the development of new long-range arms to counter the PRC military power. The review was directed by Andrew W. Marshall, a 79-year-old civilian analyst at the US Defense Department and a close adviser to Rumsfeld, and part of a broad effort by US Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld to transform the military after the cold war. The conclusions of Marshall's review are contained in a paper on "Defense Strategy Review." It highlights the importance of Asia and it notes the challenges the US faces in operating region: the vast distances, sparse structure of military bases and the slow but steady PRC military buildup. The basic analysis in the review came down to the fact that adversaries like the PRC are developing new longer- range weapons, like surface-to-surface missiles, as well as chemical weapons and biological weapons. That will create a serious new threat to military bases and aircraft carriers in the region, a problem the US Defense Department has dubbed "access denial." The review concluded that US bases in the Pacific are likely to become increasingly vulnerable as the PRC and other potential adversaries develop more accurate missiles. So, it urges that the US military become less dependent on military bases and put more emphasis on fighting from a distance. The review has drawn a skeptical response from US Admiral Dennis C. Blair, the head of the US Pacific Command. While supporting the call for change, Blair believes the PRC will present less of a military threat to US military bases and naval forces in the region. Military officers in the region are also concerned that the diminished importance of bases close to the action in a new US Defense Department strategy could also make it harder for the US to maintain political support in Japan and the ROK for a continued American presence there. Blair said, "I think we have the tools to keep both air and naval power anywhere we want to in the theater and can for some quite time. If you want to look at serious forces designed to keep the US out of part of the world, look at what the

Russians did in the 70's - dozens of submarines, hundreds of long-range bombers, dozens of satellites, lots of practice. That was a serious system which we were going to have a hard time fighting our way through. Nobody in Asia is even close to that." Blair added, "The ultimate business of the U.S. military is to make it a place where Americans can trade, travel and interact in peaceful ways. That is, build on an alliance structure." Rumsfeld has sent drafts of the review to the chiefs of the military services and senior US military commanders around the world for comment. A senior US Defense Department official said that the strategy was being adapted in light of their comments, but that key themes about the potential threat to US bases and the need for long-range systems have been preserved. Rumsfeld plans to preview the main tenets of the US Defense Department thinking to US Congress next week. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 17, 2001.]

Agence France Presse ("NEW US ADMINISTRATION MAKES FOR UNCERTAIN SECURITY IN ASIA: IISS," London, 5/16/01) reported that the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) said in its annual report Wednesday that Asia confronts a security environment rendered more uncertain by the change in the US administration. The report said, "After eight years of a Clinton administration that embraced China as a 'strategic partner', Beijing faces increased tension with a new administration that considers it a strategic competitor and that is more disposed to arm Taiwan." On the Korean peninsula, the Bush administration has "cramped South Korea's diplomatic style": while former US president Bill Clinton backed ROK attempts to engage the DPRK, US President George W. Bush is deeply skeptical. And Japan, the report continued, "has hard choices to make about whether to complement the United States' more aggressive strategic posture by expanding its own regional security role." The one area where the Bush team has made little impact is South Asia but that only means stasis as India and Pakistan have stabilized their nuclear deterrence and the Kashmir crisis has hit a plateau. In Southeast Asia, IISS said, disruptive stimuli have tended to be homegrown.

4. US-PRC Missile Talks

New York Times (Erik Eckholm, "U.S. ENVOY STYMIED AT CHINA MISSILE TALKS," Beijing, 5/16/01) reported that the PRC government on May 15 publicly called the US proposal on missile defense a fruitless step that would endanger global security. James Kelly, the US assistant secretary of state for Asian and Pacific affairs, spent Tuesday meeting privately with PRC arms control and foreign policy officials, presenting Bush's vision of a "new framework" for security involving missile defenses and a sharp reduction in the US nuclear arsenal. Before leaving Beijing, Kelly released a statement describing Tuesday's talks as "a good exchange of views." The statement said, "Although we clearly still have differences of opinion, our consultations on this subject constitute a good beginning to what both sides agreed would be a continuing dialogue on these important security issues." However, on the afternoon of May 15, at a regularly scheduled news briefing, a PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman, Sun Yuxi, insisted that the PRC opposition to the program was unwavering and said the proposed defenses would "harm others without benefiting the United States itself." He said that if the US pursued the plan, it will "lift a stone only to drop it on its own feet." Sun said the PRC hoped to persuade the US to abandon the plan by diplomatic means, but he also warned that, "China will not sit idly by and watch its national interests suffer harm." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 16, 2001.]

5. US-PRC Relations

Washington Post (Nora Boustany, "DIPLOMATIC DISPATCHES: AMBASSADOR SAYS CHINA NOT A THREAT, SUGGESTS A MORE 'SENSITIVE' U.S. POLICY," 5/17/01) reported that PRC Ambassador to the US, Yang Jiechi, told reporters on May 11 that the PRC was not a threat to the US. Yang said,

"I believe at the moment there are problems in the relationship. The major problem now is how to view China. Any idea regarding China as a threat does not square with reality." He stressed the need for a "sensitive China policy" in the US and said his government had its own complaints. He said the recently announced arms deal with Taiwan and stirrings in US Congress about more support for Taiwan are considered by the PRC to be interference and an encroachment on PRC sovereignty. Yang said the PRC has to safeguard its security interests and whether some intellectuals detained in the PRC had US green cards was of no concern to the PRC judiciary. He also underlined the PRC's economic potential and common interests with the US and warned that the PRC will not be happy if its hopes to host the Olympic Games in 2008 are thwarted for political reasons. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 17, 2001.]

6. PRC Military Exercises

The Washington Times (Bill Gertz, "BEIJING READIES CHINA SEA EXERCISES," 5/17/01) reported that the PRC is preparing to conduct large-scale military exercises in the South China Sea from Hainan and Woody Island. US defense officials said preparations for the exercises, including amphibious warfare drills, were detected by US intelligence agencies over the past two weeks. One official said it is not known when the maneuvers will begin. The officials said the PRC military was observed sending an advance team recently to check Woody Island in preparation for upcoming exercises. A third official said the military movements were "unusual" and include ground, air and naval forces on Hainan island and units on the mainland in southern PRC. However, other officials said the preparations so far do not appear threatening or even worrisome. Richard Fisher, a specialist on the PRC military with the Jamestown Foundation, said he believes the upcoming PRC exercises are linked to the recent surveillance aircraft incident. Fisher, a former aide to US Representative Christopher Cox, California Republican, said, "First and foremost, this would be a response to the recent incident. It also would serve to remind the Vietnamese of China's expansive South China Sea claims, and also would be aimed at Manila -- to warn the Filipinos against a revived alliance with the United States." As for Woody Island, Fisher said the outpost has become a "secret aircraft carrier" in the South China Sea for the PRC. The US- Thai-Singapore military exercise began on May 15 and will continue through May 29. This year's exercises for the first time include Singaporean troops and observers from Australia, the ROK, France, Malaysia, Indonesia, Mongolia, Japan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 17, 2001.]

7. PRC Foreign Policy

Agence France Presse ("CHINA FACING GROWING UNCERTAINTY AT HOME AND ABROAD: IISS," London, 5/17/01) reported that the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), a London based think-tank, said Wednesday that the PRC is struggling to cope with huge social change at home and a major upheaval in foreign policy caused by developments in the US, Taiwan and the ROK. The report said the PRC was distracted during 2000 by "an accelerating drift" by Taiwan towards independence and a realignment in power in North Asia following the rapprochement on the Korean peninsula. The report also predicted turbulence in Sino-US relations following US President George W. Bush's entry into the White House in January 2001, with particular tension over Bush's National Missile Defence (NMD) plans. The report said, "China's major problems are still domestic, including the fragility of its political structure and its uneven economic development." The report said that while the PRC's 14-year bid to join the World Trade Organisation would likely succeed, it would bring difficult problems such as factory closures and unemployment. It said moderates retained control of foreign policy despite the rise of virulent nationalism, but the report predicted fresh tension with Taiwan when the island holds parliamentary polls in December. The report was

written before the tension in Sino-US ties caused by April's spy plane incident and Bush's decision to sell Taiwan a major weapons package. The report said that ultimately, despite deep suspicion from hardliners, the PRC wanted a stable relationship and dialogue with the US.

8. US Relations with Taiwan

Agence France Presse ("TAIWAN, WASHINGTON COZY UP AS EACH PUSHES ITS OWN AGENDA," Taipei, 5/16/01) reported that analysts said Wednesday that Taiwan and the US are enjoying better relations and exploiting the shift in perspective created by changes in both administrations. One Taiwan analyst said he had been told by Richard Bush (no relation), the chairman and managing director of the official US Institute in Taiwan, that the US felt comfortable with Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian at the helm, whereas former Taiwan President Lee Tung-hui had been perceived as more provocative. The institute is the body authorized to handle civil contacts with the island after US switched diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to the PRC in 1979. Joseph Wu, deputy director of National Chengchi University's Institute of International Relations, said, "Mr. Richard Bush once told me on a private occasion that Chen was very cooperative with the US. He did not specify in what ways Chen was cooperative but in general the US was very comfortable with Chen."

II. Republic of Korea

1. ASEAN Forum

The Korea Herald (Hwang Jang-jin, "TWO KOREAS, U.S. 'WILL NOT HOLD FORMAL TALKS AT ASEAN FORUM'," Seoul, 05/17/01) reported that ROK diplomatic sources said Wednesday that the two Koreas and the US do not intend to hold formal talks on the sidelines of a two-day Asian security forum, which opens in Hanoi today. Delegations from the three parties have arrived in the Vietnamese city for the senior officials' meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). "No meetings among the three nations have been set as of now, though there may be brief chats," an ROK official said. Officials from the three nations were expected to have informal get-togethers on the sidelines of the security forum. "Even if such meetings take place, serious issues won't be dealt with," he said. The DPRK has sent a three-member delegation led by Ri Yong-ho, councilor in charge of confidence building measures at its Foreign Ministry. The US team is led by James Kelly, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs. The ROK is represented by Choi Young-jin, deputy minister for policy planning and international organizations at the Foreign Ministry.

2. Russia on Inter-Korean Relations

The Korea Herald (Kang Seok-jae, "SPEAKER LEE PROPOSES PARLIAMENTARY TALKS INVOLVING TWO KOREAS, RUSSIA," Seoul, 05/17/01) reported that ROK National Assembly Speaker Lee Man-sup has proposed parliamentary talks involving Russia and both Koreas to promote economic cooperation among the three nations, aides said Wednesday. Lee made the proposal for the tripartite parliamentary talks in a meeting with Russian parliamentary leaders in Moscow Tuesday, a spokesman for the speaker said. Lee was also quoted as saying that such pending economic projects as the natural gas development in the central Siberian region of Irkutsk, and the related gas pipeline construction linking the ROK to Russia through the DPRK, would benefit all the three countries. The ROK and Russia are also pushing for a project to connect the inter-Korean railroad with the Trans-Siberian Railroad (TSR). Lee invited Guennadi Seleznev, the speaker of the Duma, to Seoul, asking him to serve as a mediator between two Koreas by visiting Pyongyang

before or after his Seoul visit, the spokesman said. A spokesman said Seleznev responded positively to Lee's proposal by saying, "I will try my hardest to make the three-party parliamentary meeting a reality this fall by contacting the North Korean side."

3. DPRK Officer to Visit US

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "N.K. VICE FOREIGN MINISTER TO VISIT U.S. NEXT MONTH," Seoul, 05/17/01) reported that an ROK government source said Wednesday that DPRK's Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye-gwan will visit the US early next month to attend a seminar on the Korean Peninsula. Kim will become the highest-level DPRK official ever to visit the US since President George W. Bush took office in January. Kim will visit the United States at the invitation of a Washington-based think tank that is organizing a seminar on the Korean Peninsula, according to the source. The source said that there is a possibility that the DPRK and the US will hold informal talks during Kim's visit. US officials are expected to attend the conference. An ROK administration official confirmed the seminar will coincide with a planned visit by its Foreign Minister Han Seung-soo to Washington for talks with US Secretary of State Colin Powell slated for early next month.

4. DPRK on ROK Military Exercise

Chosun Ilbo (Yoon Jeong-ho, "NORTH KOREA CRITICIZES MILITARY EXERCISES, 05/16/01) reported that Radio Pyongyang reported in a talk show Tuesday that ROK's government is conducting large-scale joint military training with the US Forces in Korea ("American Invaders Military"). The radio continued the ROK is trying to raise tensions on the peninsula through an illicit liaison with foreign powers by performing these exercises. It said that "such an act is a breach of the Joint Inter-Korean Declaration signed on June 15 last year in Pyongyang, an anti-Korean people, anti-unification, criminal act that is trying to turn the relations of the two countries back to one of confrontation and state-of-war." Meanwhile, DPRK's Central News Agency also referred to the ROK Navy's maneuvers Wednesday saying that they were "taking the part in the Americans' unscrupulous war provocation scheme, that is becoming more and more downright undisguised every day," and the "South Korean government officials are trying to strain the situation in Korea by conducting a continuous series of military exercises."

5. DPRK Famine

Joongang Ilbo (Lee Sang-eon, "220,000 DIED OF STARVATION IN THE NORTH FROM 1995~98," Seoul, 05/17/01) reported that about 220,000 people died of famine for past four years in the DPRK from 1995~1998 revealed the Choe Su-hon, the DPRK's Deputy Foreign Minister on Tuesday May 15. The report on the DPRK's famine during the 90s was released in the United Nations International Childrens Emergency Fund (UNICEF) conference held in Beijing, China, according to the Associated Press. This is the first time the DPRK's senior official openly admitted the dire food condition of the country. Choe went on to reveal that due to food and medicine shortage people's average life span dropped from 73.2 in 1993 to 66.8 by 1999, recording a loss of six years. At the same time the infant mortality rate of those under age of five has risen from 27 to 48 per 1,000 people, he added. Choe also added that the supply rate of safe drinking water, which in 1994 reached up to 86 percent rapidly dropped to 53 percent within two years. Likewise for the supply rate of vaccines for polio and measles which plunged from 90 percent in 1990 to 50 percent by 1997.

6. US Policy towards DPRK

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "BUSH UNLIKELY TO MAKE RADICAL CHANGES TO N. KOREA POLICY," Seoul, 05/16/01) reported that ROK officials and analysts here said Tuesday that the US administration is unlikely to dismantle the framework of the engagement policy toward the DPRK pushed under former President Bill Clinton. They said that US moves to resume dialogue with the DPRK indicate that their policy on it will not shift toward a drastically harder line. US officials have vowed to reopen suspended dialogue with the DPRK to discuss improving bilateral relations after completing its policy review of Pyongyang is completed. ROK Unification Minister Lim Dong-won revealed Monday that the US will outline its new policy toward the DPRK at a three-way consultative meeting among Seoul, Washington and Tokyo at senior levels slated to open late this month in Hawaii.

Chosun Ilbo ("POWELL SAYS ENGAGING NK IMPORTANT," Seoul, 05/15/01) reported that US Secretary of State Colin Powell said Tuesday (KST) that Washington will continue to engage the DPRK once the Bush administration's policy review is completed. In an interview with CNN Powell said re-engagement would eventually take place when the time is right as the US understands the importance of engaging the DPRK. When asked about the European Union's decision to open diplomatic ties with Pyongyang, Secretary Powell noted that the overture was a constructive role on the Korean peninsula and Washington wants to work with the EU to promote common goals.

7. DPRK-Russia Arms Deal

The Korea Herald (Hwang Jang-jin, "N.KOREAN OFFICIAL IN RUSSIA TO NEGOTIATE WEAPONS DEAL," Seoul, 05/16/01) reported that ROK officials said Tuesday that the DPRK has sent a ranking official to Moscow to negotiate a contract to buy weapons in a follow-up to their defense agreement signed in late April. "The two sides are engaged in talks over terms of a possible arms deal, including the terms of the North's payment," a high-ranking Seoul official said. The official noted that the DPRK is interested in buying advanced weapons from Russia to modernize its Soviet-era military equipment. Details of the accords were not disclosed, but a report said that the DPRK expressed willingness to acquire fighters, an intelligence gathering system and other advanced weapons, the combined value of which is estimated to be 700 billion won.

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](#) in partnership with:
International Policy Studies Institute Seoul, Republic of Korea
Center for American Studies,
[Fudan University](#), Shanghai, People's Republic of China
[Monash Asia Institute](#),
[Monash University](#), Clayton, Australia

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Gee Gee Wong: napsnet@nautilus.org

Berkeley, California, United States

Robert Brown: napsnet@nautilus.org

Berkeley, California, United States

Kim Hee-sun: khs688@hotmail.com

Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hiroyasu Akutsu: akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp

Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@glas.apc.org

Moscow, Russian Federation

Yunxia Cao: yule111@sina.com

Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn

Shanghai, People's Republic of China

John McKay: John.McKay@adm.monash.edu.au

Clayton, Australia

View this online at: <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report--7-may-2001/>

Nautilus Institute

2342 Shattuck Ave. #300, Berkeley, CA 94704 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org