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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Korea Herald (Lee Joo-hee, "N.K. WILL STOP ENRICHING URANIUM WITHIN YEAR: HILL", 2007/10/16) reported that top U.S. nuclear negotiator Christopher Hill said that he believes the DPRK will stop its uranium enrichment program by the end of this year. He added that if the DPRK agreed to abandon the last 50 kilograms of plutonium already produced at its main Yongbyon reactor, then peace talks for the Korean Peninsula could commence. His ROK counterpart Chun Yung-woo also expressed hope that six-party talks on next steps to dismantle the DPRK's nuclear programs will begin by the year's end.

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2. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

IFES NK Brief ("KAESONG PRODUCTION SURPASSES 200 MILLION USD", 2007/10/16) reported that the Kaesong Industrial District Management Committee reported on October 10 that after two years and nine months of operation, the total value of goods manufactured in the Kaesong Industrial Complex (KIC) surpassed 200,000,000 USD. In 2005, production by companies in the KIC totaled 15,000,000 USD; in 2006, 74,000,000 USD; and in the first 9 months of 2007, 124,000,000 USD, for a total since 2005 until last September of 213,000,000 USD. There are currently a total of 45 companies operating in the complex, employing 19,433 DPRK workers and 800 workers from the ROK, for a total of over twenty thousand employees.

Chosun Ilbo ("PHASE ONE COMPLETION OF KAESEONG COMPLEX SET FOR OCT. 16 ", 2007/10/16) reported that a ceremony will take place in the DPRK to mark the end of phase one construction at the Kaeseong industrial park. Some 340 ROK delegates will attend the milestone event. Heading them up will be Seoul's Unification Minister Lee Jae-joung joined by the heads of the Korea Land Corporation and Hyundai Asan, operator of tours to the North's Mount Geumgang region. Phase two, to cover an even bigger footprint of over 8 million sq.m, will break ground next year with the land corporation taking the helm.

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3. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap ("GOV'T TO PAY US$29,000 TO EACH FAMILY OF KOREANS HELD IN N. KOREA ", Seoul, 2007/10/16) reported that the ROK government approved an act that grants up to 27 million won (US$29,000) to each of the families of ROK citizens abducted to the DPRK since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War. The act also calls for the provision of up to 140 million won to abductees, the exact amount of which will depend on how long the abductee lived in the communist nation, according to a Unification Ministry official.

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4. DPRK-Vietnam Relations

Agence France-Presse (Frank Zeller, "VIETNAM PARTY CHIEF HEADS TO NORTH KOREA ", Hanoi, 2007/10/16) reported that Vietnam's Communist Party chief left for a three-day visit to the DPRK as state media stressed Hanoi's desire to support peace efforts on the Korean Peninsula. Nong Duc Manh was joined by Foreign Minister Pham Gia Khiem, who is also deputy prime minister, on the visit at the invitation of DPRK leader Kim Jong-Il. "The visit to the DPRK by General Secretary Manh is aimed at fostering the traditional friendship and economic ties between the two countries," said the state-run Vietnam News Agency (VNA). "It is also expected to help increase Vietnam's role, position and prestige in the international arena and demonstrate the country's involvement in resolving international issues and promoting peace on the Korean Peninsula."

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5. ROK-US Trade Relations

Yonhap (Park Sang-soo, "BEEF ISSUE KEY TO CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR TRADE PACT: USTR OFFICIAL ", Seoul, 2007/10/16) reported that a visiting US trade official urged the ROK to further open its beef market, saying such a move is key to winning Congressional support for a free trade pact that the two countries signed in June this year. "We are expecting our trading partners to import beef, all products, all ages. Congress made clear it is necessary for Seoul to open its beef market if the trade deal with South Korea is to be considered," Assistant U.S. Trade Representative Wendy Cutler said.

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6. ROK-Japan Relations

Japan Times ("JAPAN, S KOREA TO PROMOTE DEFENSE EXCHANGES", Tokyo, 2007/10/13) reported that Japanese and ROK senior foreign and defense officials agreed to further promote defense exchanges at various levels, including an envisioned visit to Japan by members of the ROK Military Academy in November, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said. The officials also reaffirmed in their meeting in Busan to continue close cooperation in dealing with the DPRK nuclear standoff and other issues at the six-party talks and exchanged opinions on the Korean Peninsula situation following last week's inter-Korean summit.

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7. Russo-Japanese Territorial Dispute

Kyodo ("RUSSIA'S LAVROV TO VISIT JAPAN OCT. 23-24 FOR TALKS ON ISLAND DISPUTE ", Tokyo, 2007/10/16) reported that Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov will visit Japan on Oct. 23 and 24 for talks with his Japanese counterpart Masahiko Komura on bilateral issues including a long-standing territorial dispute, as well as on pressing international affairs, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said. ''The territorial issue of course is going to be covered and the two governments have to work hard to cut a deal that could be accepted by both countries,'' the ministry's Deputy Press Secretary Tomohiko Taniguchi said.

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8. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Mission

Kyodo ("RULING PARTIES' PANEL OKS BILL FOR NEW REFUELING LAW", Tokyo, 2007/10/16) reported that a joint panel of the two-party ruling coalition endorsed an outline of a contentious bill that would allow Japan to continue refueling support for U.S.-led antiterrorism operations in and near Afghanistan after agreeing to limit the mission to one year. The approval is expected to pave the way for the government to endorse the bill Wednesday. The bill limits Japan's activities to supplying fuel and water to forces from the United States and other countries engaged in operations against ships linked to terrorists in the Indian Ocean. It also limits the period of the envisioned law to one year.

Agence France-Presse (Kyoko Hasegawa , "JAPAN'S OPPOSITION REJECTS COMPROMISE ON MISSION ", Tokyo, 2007/10/16) reported that Japan's main opposition leader refused to back down in his bid to cut off support for US-led troops in Afghanistan and force early elections. The stance appeared to reject a poll in the Asahi Shimbun newspaper which found that while support was only lukewarm for the naval mission providing fuel in the Indian Ocean, nearly two-thirds of voters wanted the opposition to compromise in its campaign to end it. "I think the figures would be different if concrete and specific explanations on the mission are made to the public," Ichiro Ozawa, head of the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan, said of the newspaper's findings.

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9. Japanese Myanmar Sanctions

Kyodo ("JAPAN CANCELS 552 MIL. YEN IN GRANTS TO MYANMAR OVER CRACKDOWN ", Tokyo, 2007/10/16) reported that Japan has decided to cancel grants-in-aid of up to 552 million yen to finance the construction of a human resources center in Myanmar in light of Tokyo's ''strong concerns'' over democracy and the human rights situation in the Southeast Asian country, Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura said. ''Japan has to show its stance and we can't effectively be supporting the military junta at this point in time,'' Komura told reporters after briefing the Cabinet. Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda told reporters that the government's decision is ''a sign'' to the Myanmar government that Japan is working with the international community to deal with the situation in Myanmar.

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10. PRC-US Relations

Washington Post (Edward Cody, "CHINA ANGERED AT U.S. RECEPTION TO DALAI LAMA", Beijing, 2007/10/16) reported that the PRC expressed outrage Tuesday at the honors being accorded the Dalai Lama in Washington, warning that the unprecedented embrace by Congress and the White House would harm U.S.-PRC relations. "We in no way want to stir the pot and make China feel we are sticking a stick in their eye," White House press secretary Dana Perino said. "The move will seriously damage China-U.S. relations," a Foreign Ministry spokesman, Liu Jianchao, told reporters at a regular briefing.

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11. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN'S CHEN SAYS NO PEACE DEAL WITH CHINA ", Taiwan , 2007/10/16) reported that Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian snubbed a peace overture made by the PRC, saying Taipei would never sign what he called a "surrender agreement" based on Beijing's "one-China" principle. "Since Hu Jintao still demands 'one China' as a precondition, this would be a surrender agreement rather than a peace agreement," Chen said. "Taiwan is our country, Taiwan is our motherland; therefore there is no such question if Taiwan is independent or not from the motherland," said the independence-leaning Chen, qualifying Hu's offer as mere lip service.

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12. PRC Party Congress

The Associated Press (Christopher Bodeen, "CHINESE COMMUNISTS HOLD PRIVATE TALKS ", Beijing, 2007/10/16) reported that the PRC's ruling Communist Party offered the media a rare glimpse of two rising political stars, giving them a chance to show themselves as self-effacing, businesslike and worthy for promotion to the senior leadership. The public appearances by Li Keqiang and Xi Jinping on the sidelines of a major party congress were likely no coincidence, given the secretive party's penchant for carefully stage-managed public events. The party congress, held once every five years, sets broad policy goals and apportions senior leadership posts.

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13. PRC Environment

Washington Post (Maureen Fan, "GRAY WALL DIMS HOPES OF 'GREEN' GAMES", Beijing, 2007/10/16) reported that Beijing officials preparing for the Games point proudly to a state-of-the-art control room that measures pollutants at 27 monitoring stations around the city. They say they are adding subway lines and have moved many factories out of town. And in a four-day experiment in August that could be a model for action during the Games, officials eliminated more than a million cars from the city's streets by ordering motorists with odd- and even-numbered license plates to drive on alternate days. But critics point to evidence of their own: Beijing does not regularly

measure or evaluate some serious pollutants, including ozone and some types of fine particulate matter that can easily be inhaled deep into the lungs. Meanwhile, they have refused to publicly release figures on the amount of pollutants at any given location, such as the Olympic Village or Tiananmen Square, preferring to stick with a citywide average.

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14. PRC Space Program

The Associated Press (Alexa Olesen, "CHINA HOPES FOR PLACE ON SPACE STATION ", Beijing, 2007/10/16) reported that the PRC hopes to join an international space station project that already counts leading space powers like the United States and Russia as its members, a government official said. On Tuesday, state-run newspapers said the PRC will launch its first lunar probe later this month, just weeks after regional rival Japan successfully sent a lunar satellite into orbit.

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II. ROK Report

15. Public Opinion on NLL

Chosun Ilbo (Hong Young-rim, "MOST PEOPLE DO NOT SYMPATHIZE WITH ROH'S REMARK ON NLL", Seoul, 2007/10/17 05:15:00 GMT+0) reported that most people in ROK do not express sympathy with President Roh Moo-hyun's remark, "The Northern Limit Line (NLL) in the West Sea is not a territorial line." Gallup Korea did a survey on the issue and 59% of people answered said that they did not agree with it, while 32.1% agreed. Over half of respondents in all age groups gave a negative answer. 71.6% of Grand National Party members and the half of members of other parties disagreed. Even 37.4% of Roh's adherents didn't agree with it.

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16. 'Self-Contradictory' Position on NLL

Ohmynews (Jung Chang-oh, "OVERREACTING ON NLL ", Seoul, 2007/10/17) reported that Jang Chang-jun, a policy researcher with the Democratic Labor Party, insisted at a DLP policy forum yesterday that the conservative parties are focusing on the NLL in accordance with their excessive concern with security. He also asserted that the conservative parties' action derogates the true meaning of the inter-Korean Summit. He emphasized that the constitution says that the ROK's territory includes the Korean Peninsula and attached islands, but the DPRK's territory which is north of NLL is not the part of ROK's territory according to the conservative's approach, which is thus self-contradictory.

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17. US-ROK Free Trade Agreement

Ohmynews (Go Tea-jin, "FTA OR FBA(FREE BEEF AGREEMENT)?", Seoul, 2007/10/17) reported that Wendy Cutler, the US representative to US-ROK free trade talks, strongly demanded yesterday that the ROK allow the import of all American beef importation to get FTA ratification. However, the importation of US beef is not an agenda of the US-Korea FTA. The ROK now imports US beef restrictively, banning certain age of cattle and beef with bones. It is better to change the name of FTA to FBA (Free Beef Agreement) because the beef importation decides all about the FTA. ROK government should address this situation according to the best interests of national health.

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