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I. United States

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1. ROK-DPRK Sports Exchanges

The Associated Press ("S. KOREA WANTS JOINT OLYMPIC TEAM," Seoul, 09/17/98) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung on Thursday asked International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch to help organize joint ROK-DPRK teams for the 2000 Sydney Olympics and other international sports events. Kim stated, "South Korea wants to take part in international sports events as a single team with North Korea. For this, I want the IOC to actively cooperate." Kim's chief spokesman, Park Jie-won, said that the ROK's immediate goal is to organize single teams for the 1999 Asian Winter Games in the ROK, the 2000 Sydney Olympics, and the 2002 Asian Games in Pusan. Park said that Samaranch pledged full IOC support. ROK officials said that the proposal will be discussed when Thomas Bach, a German member of the IOC's executive board, visits the DPRK

this weekend to try to revive sports exchanges between the two Koreas.

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2. ROK-Russia Spy Row

The Associated Press ("RUSSIA, SOUTH KOREA END DIPLOMATIC ROW ON SPYING, EXPULSIONS," Seoul, 09/17/98) reported that ROK Foreign Minister Hong Soon-young said Thursday that Russia and the ROK have officially settled a diplomatic row over allegations of spying. [Ed. note: See ROK-Russia Spy Row in the US Section of the August 6 Daily Report.] " After meeting with Russian Ambassador Yevgeny Afanasyev on Thursday, Hong stated, "Both countries agreed not to raise any issues any more regarding the expulsions of diplomats." He added that a Russian diplomat expelled from Seoul earlier will not return and "the whole matter will be frozen in its current state." Hong also said that he would meet with his new Russian counterpart, Igor Ivanov, next week in the UN to discuss mending the strained ties, possibly through a state visit to Moscow by ROK President Kim Dae-jung.

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3. ROK Corruption Scandal

The Associated Press ("S. KOREA RESIGNATIONS THREATENED," Seoul, 09/17/98) reported that legislators from the ROK's largest opposition Grand National Party on Thursday threatened to resign as a group to protest an investigation of eight opposition members on charges of taking bribes from businessmen to finance last December's presidential campaign. Representative Ahn Sang-soo, opposition spokesman, accused ROK President Kim Dae-jung of using the anti-corruption campaign to break up the opposition party. Prosecutors denied their investigation is politically motivated, pointing out that at least one ruling party legislator also was being investigated.

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4. ROK Labor Unrest

Dow Jones Newswires (Shin Jung-won, "S.KOREA FINCL UNION TO GO ON INDEFINITE STRIKE FROM SEP 29," Seoul, 09/17/98) reported that the Korean Federation of Bank and Financial Labor Union said Thursday that 40,000 of its 130,000 members will go on an indefinite strike, beginning September 29, to protest against planned layoffs. An unnamed member of the federation stated, "We will hold the strike unless the Financial Supervisory Commission and banks withdraw their plans to lay off workers unilaterally. And if the government doesn't change its stance, the remaining members at 25 financial institutions will join in the strike."

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5. Indian Nuclear Tests

The Associated Press ("INDIAN PRESIDENT ASSURES: NO MORE NUCLEAR TESTS," Ankara, 09/17/98) reported that Indian President Raman Narayanan said Thursday that India would no longer carry out nuclear tests. Narayanan stated, "After testing and acquiring minimum deterrence we have declared that we will no longer test nuclear arms." He added, "We call on the world for serious discussion on abolishing these weapons."

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6. Pakistan Adherence to CTBT

Reuters ("PAKISTAN SAYS IT WON'T SIGN NUCLEAR TREATY UNDER SANCTIONS," Islamabad, 09/16/98) reported that Pakistan Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz said on Wednesday that Pakistan would not sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) while under economic sanctions for conducting nuclear weapons tests. Aziz said that the economic sanctions were "unwarranted and unjustified," and demanded that they be lifted immediately. He added that, in terms of signing the CTBT, "No decision will be taken under pressure. No decision will be taken in haste."

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7. Global Land Mine Ban

Reuters (Anthony Goodman, "PACT BANNING LANDMINES GOES INTO FORCE MARCH 1, 1999," United Nations, 09/16/98) and the Associated Press (Sau Chan, "LAND MINE TREATY TO GO INTO EFFECT," United Nations, 09/16/98) reported that the UN announced on Wednesday that Burkina Faso became the 40th country to ratify the global convention banning anti-personnel landmines. With the required threshold thus passed, the treaty will go into effect on March 1, 1999. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated, "Today, the world has taken a step toward becoming a safer and more humane place." He added, "The entry into force of the convention will have far-reaching implications for both mine-affected and mine-producing countries. It will provide the international legal framework upon which governments who bind themselves to the convention will be required to take measures to break the chain of anti-personnel landmine use."

II. Republic of Korea

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1. DPRK Satellite Launch

The missile that the DPRK fired over Japan last month had three stages and used solid fuel for the first time in a "distressing" signal that the DPRK was attempting to achieve intercontinental range, the US Defense Department said Tuesday. The DPRK used the missile to try to put a small satellite into orbit, but that attempt failed, which showed they still had problems to work out, said Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon. However, US analysts have concluded that the August 31 test represented the DPRK's first successful launch of a three-stage missile and an unprecedented use of solid fuel in the third stage, Bacon said. Asked about the potential range, Bacon said, "We're talking about something that could be approaching intercontinental ballistic missile range." That would be between 4,000 and 6,000 kilometers, he said, far more than the 1,500 kilometer range originally estimated for the missile. (Korea Times, "THREE-STAGE ROCKET SHOWS NK SEEKS INTERCONTINENTAL RANGE: PENTAGON," 09/17/98)

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2. DPRK-Japan Relations

The DPRK has warned Japan that any attempt to use the DPRK's recent rocket launch as a pretext to revive militarism will have "catastrophic" consequences. In a statement issued by its Foreign Ministry, the DPRK accused Japan of trying to use the rocket launch as an excuse to build up its military and said that Japan harbors a plan to ultimately invade the DPRK. The statement, carried Tuesday by the DPRK's official Korean Central News Agency, also said that Japan was using the launch to deflect attention from its domestic economic crisis. "The Japanese authorities must ponder

over what catastrophic consequences will result," it said. A DPRK radio broadcast of the statement, monitored Wednesday by Tokyo-based Radiopress, said that relations between the countries had deteriorated to the point of placing them "on the verge of war." The reference to war, however, was not included in KCNA's text of the statement. The radio broadcast also indicated that the DPRK intends to develop a commercial satellite for sale abroad in order raise foreign currency to help overcome its severe food shortages. (Korea Times, "NK WARNS JAPAN AGAINST REVIVING MILITARISM AFTER ROCKET LAUNCH," 09/17/98)

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3. US-DPRK Liaison Offices

ROK President Kim Dae-jung said that he hopes that the US and the DPRK will act as quickly as possible in following through on their recent agreement to open a liaison office. [Ed. note: See the Correction Section of the September 16 Daily Report for a denial by the US State Department that such an agreement was reached.] ROK President Kim made these remarks in an interview with the German daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung held Tuesday. (Chosun Ilbo, "PRESIDENT ENDORSES ESTABLISHMENT OF US-NK LIAISON OFFICE," 09/17/98)

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4. PRC-US Relations

US Defense Secretary William Cohen gained the PRC's promise of help Tuesday in dealing with the DPRK's test of a two-stage medium-range missile fired over Japan last month. Cohen and PRC General Zhang Wannian, a member of the PRC's Central Military Committee, also signed an agreement to cooperate on environmental issues involving their militaries and discussed plans for expanded military-to-military contacts in 1999. They agreed to allow each other to observe exercises in the Pacific, and that a PRC warship will visit a US port next year. Cohen said that he and Zhang discussed the August 31 DPRK missile test and that the PRC promised help in dealing with that problem, but he offered no details. Zhang described the exchange of views as "positive, constructive and productive," and said there had been "good momentum" in deepening US-PRC military ties since President Bill Clinton's visit to the PRC earlier this year. Taiwan remained "the most important and sensitive issue at the core of the US-PRC relationship," Zhang said, noting the two countries flourished "when this question is well handled." (Korea Times, "CHINA PROMISES HELP IN DEALING WITH NK MISSILE TEST: COHEN," 09/17/98)

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