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CONTENTS

I. United States

1. UN Involvement in DPRK Nuclear Crisis
2. US on DPRK Nuclear Program
3. US on DPRK Refugees
4. DPRK on US Refugee Proposal
5. Japan on DPRK Interdiction
6. Japan on DPRK Multi-lateral Talks
7. DPRK on Multi-lateral Talks
8. ROK Relief Efforts
9. KEDO LWR Project in DPRK
10. ROK-DPRK Relations
11. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Crisis
12. US and the PRC on DPRK Nuclear Program
13. PRC-DPRK Relations
14. PRC Anti-Subversion Laws
15. PRC Flooding and Mudslides

I. United States

1. UN Involvement in DPRK Nuclear Crisis

Japan Times (Kanako Takahara, "UNSC MAY BE BROUGHT IN ON NORTH KOREA: JAPAN, U.S., SOUTH KOREA AGREE TO ACT IF PYONGYANG WON'T RETURN TO TALKS," 07/16/03) reported that Japan, the ROK and the US have agreed that the U.N. Security Council should adopt a statement denouncing the DPRK for its suspected nuclear weapons development if it does not agree to conduct multilateral talks, a senior Foreign Ministry official said Tuesday. If the DPRK shows no sign of accepting the call by the end of July, the three nations would work toward having the UNSC adopt a statement against the reclusive state, the official said on condition of anonymity. Japan has

so far been cautious of adopting a UNSC statement, saying priority should be given to holding multilateral talks. The PRC has also been opposed to the adoption of such a statement, but the official predicted that the PRC would eventually give in if it fails to persuade the DPRK to come to the negotiating table.

2. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

The Associated Press (Matt Kelly "U.S. UNSURE IF N. KOREA BLUFFING ON NUKES," Washington, 07/16/03) reported that Bush administration officials say it's unclear whether DPRK officials were bluffing or telling the truth when they claimed to have finished producing enough plutonium for about a half-dozen nuclear bombs. Bush plans to continue pressing for a diplomatic solution to the impasse with the DPRK over its nuclear weapons program, officials said, despite the DPRK's claim to have finished extracting plutonium from 8,000 spent nuclear fuel rods. "I'm not in a position to characterize the intelligence assessment of what the North Koreans are telling us, but certainly what they've told us in the past has been worth paying attention to," Lawrence Di Rita, a top aide to Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, told reporters Tuesday. A Pentagon official said Tuesday it was unlikely that the DPRK had completed processing the fuel rods at its Yongbyon nuclear complex, although officials from the US and the ROK have said they believe the process has begun. "It's a country that has sent ballistic missile technology to a lot of bad places. It's a country that, if it felt it were in its interest, it would sell nuclear technology," Di Rita said.

3. US on DPRK Refugees

The Washington Post (Glenn Kessler, "WHITE HOUSE MULLS PLAN TO ADMIT NORTH KOREANS: PROPOSAL COULD STRAIN TIES WITH CHINA," 07/16/03, Page A19) reported the Bush administration is considering admitting thousands of DPRK refugees into the US in an effort to increase pressure on the government in the DPRK during the standoff over its nuclear weapons programs, officials said yesterday. Officials have not yet settled on how many refugees the US would be willing to accept a year. One faction is pushing for as many as 300,000 refugees, while officials who believe such a step would hurt relations with the PRC have countered with a proposal to limit the number to 3,000 in the first year, an official said. President Bush's senior foreign policy advisers plan to discuss the proposal tomorrow at a White House meeting that will focus on the DPRK crisis, including the DPRK's recent assertion that it has finished producing the plutonium needed for several nuclear weapons and the administration's efforts to win the DPRK's agreement for multilateral talks that would include Japan and the ROK. The PRC, which participated in the only talks between the DPRK and the US since the crisis erupted last October, has emerged as an important player in trying to resolve the standoff. Some officials are concerned that the plan to accept DPRK refugees would undercut efforts to bind the PRC more closely to the US position. DPRK refugees generally flee into the PRC, which often sends them back, and any move by the US to open up immigration would likely increase the number of refugees. "The Chinese will be enraged by this," one official said. Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.) has pressed the administration to make it easier to accept DPRK refugees. Last week, at Brownback's urging, the Senate voted to change a legal technicality that has made it difficult for DPRk citizens to claim refugee status. A provision in ROK law automatically extends ROK citizenship to refugees fleeing DPRK but that status makes them ineligible to assert they are refugees in the US.

4. DPRK on US Refugee Proposal

KCNA ("U.S. ANTI-DPRK CAMPAIGN UNDER FIRE," Pyongyang, 07/16/03) reported that the South

Headquarters of the National Alliance of Youth and Students for the Country's Reunification on July 10 issued a statement denouncing the US malicious propaganda against the DPRK, according to a news report. Recalling that the US Senate on July 9 passed a "Bill on Relief of the North Korean Refugees," the statement dismissed this bill as part of a psychological warfare to start a nuclear war against the north as it is aimed to isolate and stifle the north at any cost through false propaganda. The real rogue state is none other than the US seeking to bring a war holocaust to the world, openly infringing upon the independence of the sovereign state, it noted, and continued: The escalated anti-DPRK smear campaign of the US is intended to cover up its despicable nature and encourage the pro-US anti-reunification forces to bring down the north. The US should properly understand the will of the Korean nation to fight the US and achieve reunification.

5. Japan on DPRK Interdiction

Kyodo News, "JAPAN NONCOMMITTAL ON INSPECTIONS OF N. KOREAN VESSELS AT SEA," 07/16/03) reported that Japan was noncommittal Wednesday about a US proposed high-seas inspections of vessels, including DPRK ones, suspected of carrying weapons of mass destruction (WMD), while Australia was positive about it. "We don't know what kind of concrete measures the United States and Australia have come up with," Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi told reporters in explaining why Japan has yet to decide its position on the issue. He made the remarks at a news conference he gave with visiting Australian Prime Minister John Howard after their summit talks.

6. Japan on DPRK Multi-lateral Talks

Reuters ("N.KOREA MAY ACCEPT MULTILATERAL TALKS -REPORT," Tokyo, 07/16/03) reported that the DPRK has told the US it would agree to multilateral talks on its nuclear weapons program if the US guaranteed not to undermine Kim Jong-il's government, a Japanese daily said on Wednesday. Quoting an unnamed PRC government source in Beijing, the Tokyo Shimbun newspaper said the DPRK diplomats at the United Nations made the proposal when they held unofficial talks with US counterparts on July 8. "We would be ready to accept five-nation talks if a promise was made to guarantee (the survival of) the regime," the Japanese daily quoted a DPRK diplomat as telling the US officials. DPRK has previously said the nine-month-old crisis over its nuclear ambitions could only be defused by bilateral talks with the US and a non-aggression treaty between the two. The US has insisted on multilateral discussions, preferably to include the ROK, Japan and the PRC. Japan's top government spokesman, Yasuo Fukuda, said Tokyo would press for five-way talks, which he said could be more effective in persuading the DPRK to abandon its nuclear ambitions. "Nothing will move forward without talks. Participation by Japan and South Korea would be more effective and therefore we call for five-nation talks," he told reporters. In Washington on Tuesday, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher stressed the US demand for multilateral talks. "Our interest is in multilateral discussions in an expanded multilateral setting, period. (I am) not entertaining any other proposals."

7. DPRK on Multi-lateral Talks

KCNA, ("U.S. URGED TO MAKE SWITCHOVER IN ITS KOREA POLICY," Pyongyang, 07/16/03) reported that US Secretary of State Powell described the DPRK's exercise of right to self-defense as "bad behavior", saying that the US will not reward it. Dismissing such remarks as naive and ridiculous, Rodong Sinmun today says in a commentary: Recently, Powell said that the US call for "North Korea's scrapping of its nuclear program first" and "multilateral talks" enjoys broad-based "support" of the international community and that the US would not reward somebody's bad

behavior. We declare once again that the DPRK's possession of nuclear deterrent force is a very just self-defensive measure intended not to get any reward from the US but to cope with its hostile policy. The DPRK made flexible and innovative, new proposals to hold the bilateral talks first and then the US-proposed multilateral talks. They are the most realistic and just proposals that took into consideration the origin of the nuclear issue between the two countries, the present situation, a solution to the issue and even the US "concerns". However, the US has turned down the bilateral talks, insisting on the "scrapping of the nuclear program first" and talking about "effectiveness" of the multilateral talks. This behavior is of no help to the solution of the issue but will complicate it, the commentary notes, and goes on: The US should accept the DPRK's flexible proposal for holding the bilateral talks before the multilateral talks in order to find a reasonable solution to the issue. A key to settling the nuclear issue between the DPRK and the US is for the US to respond to the bilateral talks with the will to make a switchover in its hostile policy towards the DPRK. without such measure, any form of talks would be fruitless and meaningless. If the US truly hopes for a peaceful solution to the issue, there will be neither reason nor pretext for it to shun the bilateral talks. It is well advised to come out to the talks, properly understanding the nature and peculiarities of the issue and the reality.

8. ROK Relief Efforts

Yonhap News Agency ("SOUTH KOREAN CHRISTIAN BODY TO SEND 4M US DOLLARS WORTH OF RELIEF GOODS TO NORTH," Seoul, 7/16/03) reported that South Korean Christian relief body will ship five billion won (4.1m US dollars) worth of pharmaceutical goods Thursday to the DPRK at Inchon port west of Seoul, the body said Wednesday (16 July). The body, affiliated with Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, said the shipment is part of its 10m dollars pledge that it made to the DPRK's Asia-Pacific Peace Committee in November last year for treatment of tuberculosis patients in the DPRK. The body will also send 50 tons of high-performance fertilizer to the North along the shipment. The DPRK will use the fertilizer known as "Zeta" for experimental cultivation of crops. It has sent 500m won worth of goods, including greenhouse vinyl and fertilizer, in aid to the North this year.

9. KEDO LWR Project in DPRK

Kyodo News ("KEDO OFFICIALS END MEETING ON N. KOREA NUCLEAR PROJECT," New York, 07/16/03) reported that officials from member countries of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) Executive Board on Tuesday ended a two-day meeting to discuss technical issues concerning a US proposal to call off the construction of two nuclear reactors in the DPRK. The KEDO executive board, made up of Japan, the US, ROK and the European Atomic Energy Community, met in New York. A ROK government official who attended the six-hour session Tuesday told reporters the officials confirmed the current situation of the nuclear reactor project, but the official refused to go into detail. But the official said the meeting did not decide on whether to scrap the project. The US wants to halt the reactor project, part of a 1994 deal between the U.S. and the DPRK to stop the DPRK from developing nuclear arms. Diplomatic sources said earlier the meeting is intended for the KEDO Executive Board to discuss technical issues that may follow once KEDO decides to end the project. 'The meeting will be limited to technical issues and there won't be any show of direction' regarding the nuclear project, a diplomatic source said earlier. The US is anticipating a decision in August to halt the project before Congress begins deliberating in early September budget spending for fiscal 2004, which begins Oct. 1, a source close to US-DPRK talks said Monday.

10. ROK-DPRK Relations

Asia Pulse ("PLANNED CROSS-BORDER TRIP BY 1,000 SOUTH KOREANS UNLIKELY," 07/16/03) reported that a plan for a 1,000-strong ROK civilian delegation to visit the DPRK across the border is likely to be cancelled because of opposition from the ROK's military, organizers said Wednesday. Hyundai Asan Co., a subsidiary of the giant Hyundai group, planned to invite 1,000 ROK civilians to attend a ceremony in the DPRK's capital, Pyongyang, in August to mark the dedication of a gym it has built there. The 12,309-seat "Ryugyong-Chungjuyung" gym was built by Hyundai in honor of its late founder, Chung Ju-yung. Chung, a native of what is now DPRK, launched the project before he died in 2000. Hyundai planned to take the ROK visitors to the DPRK via a recently built temporary cross-border road but that would be in violation of an agreement between the ROK's military and the US-led U.N. Command which oversees the implementation of the armistice agreement that ended the Korean War in 1953. The accord, signed in January, calls for the temporary route to be used only for transportation of manpower and materials for an industrial park being built near the DPRK's border town of Kaesong. Cross-border travel by civilians from the two Koreas should wait until year's end when a permanent, main land route across the border is put in service, military officials said.

11. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Crisis

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT CHAIRS SECURITY MEETING ON NUCLEAR CRISIS," 07/16/03) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-Hyun convened a security meeting of cabinet ministers and top advisers Wednesday to discuss the deepening crisis over DPRK's nuclear weapons drive, his office said. The meeting came a day after Washington expressed "serious concern" over the DPRK's claim to have reprocessed spent nuclear fuel rods to make atomic weapons and a former top US official warned that the US and DPRK could go to war before the end of the year. "Today's meeting covered North Korea's nuclear problem and other major security concerns," Roh's office said in a statement. No further details emerged, but the statement said Unification Minister Jeong Se-Hyun, Foreign Minister Yoon Young-Kwan and Defense Minister Cho Yung-Kil were among officials attending the meet along with Roh's top advisers and National Intelligence Service chief Ko Young-Koo. "These discussions were secret. Nothing is being disclosed," said a senior official with the president's office.

12. US and the PRC on DPRK Nuclear Program

Reuters (Linda Sieg, "POWELL, CHINA TALK AS CLOCK TICKS FOR N.KOREA," Tokyo, 07/06/03) reported that Secretary of State Colin Powell discussed the DPRK nuclear crisis with his PRC counterpart Wednesday as diplomats said the DPRK had little time to respond positively to the PRC's push to renew talks. "The two sides agreed to keep contact and exert efforts to further the Sino-US constructive and cooperative relationship," the PRC's official Xinhua news agency said after Powell spoke by telephone with PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing. Unnerved by the tense standoff between the DPRK and the US, the PRC is pushing a compromise for talks that it hopes will bring the two sides back to the table after an initial round in Beijing yielded little. Tuesday, the PRC said it had suggested a multilateral framework that would allow for two-way talks on the sidelines -- a proposal that has so far met a chilly US response. A senior Japanese Foreign Ministry official said on Wednesday that the PRC's proposal offered hope for a breakthrough. But he added that the DPRK had limited time to respond before the US and its allies turned up the heat. "The window of opportunity is limited and we are hoping that China will make a breakthrough, so that we can at least arrive at an entry point for a comprehensive settlement," the Japanese official told Reuters in an interview.

13. PRC-DPRK Relations

Central Broadcasting Station ("RADIO REPORTS CHINA TO PROVIDE NORTH KOREA WITH "FREE" DIESEL FUEL" Pyongyang, 07/16/03) reported that the PRC government has decided to provide the DPRK with diesel fuel free of charge. Recently, the PRC government decided to provide the DPRK with 10,000 tons of diesel fuel free of charge.

14. PRC Anti-Subversion Laws

The Associated Press (Dirk Beveridge "Two Hong Kong Officials Resign in Crisis," Hong Kong, 07/16/03) reported that Hong Kong's embattled leader announced the resignations of his security chief and financial secretary Wednesday as the government struggled with its biggest political crisis since Britain returned the territory to the PRC in 1997. Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa did not link either resignation to recent events that critics say seriously undermine his credibility: a conflict-o--interest scandal and the government's botched attempt to pass an anti-subversion bill over the objections of critics who said it would erode civil liberties. But the departures followed calls by opposition lawmakers for Tung - or at least some of his top officials - to step down and growing demands among ordinary Hong Kongers for government accountability and democracy. The anti-subversion legislation that Tung's security chief, Regina Ip, tried to push through the legislature brought a half-million protesters to Hong Kong's streets July 1 and prompted a humbled government first to water down the bill, then to delay plans to pass it. Opposition lawmakers said Ip and Tung had failed to listen to public concerns about legislation that critics called a threat to the territory's freedoms of expression and assembly. Ip's was the first resignation announced Wednesday. Hours later, Tung announced the resignation of Financial Secretary Antony Leung. It had been revealed earlier Wednesday that prosecutors were pondering criminal charges against Leung for buying a luxury car just weeks before he raised auto taxes. Ip said she resigned "entirely due to personal reasons" but also expressed regrets that the anti-subversion bill was "not completed as scheduled" despite her persistent efforts. The legislation originally was scheduled to be passed July 9. Tung has shelved it for now, but insists it will be passed as required by Hong Kong's mini-constitution.

15. PRC Flooding and Mudslides

Agence France-Presse ("LANDSLIDES AND MUD FLOWS CLAIM DOZENS MORE LIVES IN CHINA AS FLOODS CONTINUE," 07/16/03) reported that landslides and mud flows have claimed dozens more lives in central and southern PRC, where torrential rains have caused severe flooding, official sources and state media said. While water levels along the swollen Huai River in central and eastern PRC have receded, they remain dangerously high and officials said they feared more rain forecast in coming days could cause repeat disasters. "Now the water is at the receding stage, but we are still on high alert," said a flood official from central PRC's Anhui province, one of the worst affected areas. "Prevention and preparation work has not been reduced. Based on past experience, when the water is receding, dangers can occur because dykes have been submerged for a long time and can easily break," he said. "Also, anti-flood workers tend to become careless and relaxed." Meteorologists said more torrential rain was likely Thursday. Meanwhile, the death toll from rain-related landslides continued to climb Wednesday. Seven people were killed and four were missing in a mud and rock slide in Guangyuan city in southwest PRC's Sichuan province, which has been pounded by severe thunderstorms, a local official said. "There is little chance of finding survivors," said Yang Youcai, an official from the district of Wangcang. In the middle reaches of the PRC's longest river, the Yangtze, in Hubei province, the death toll from a landslide Sunday rose to 14 while 10 others remained missing, according to the Xinhua news agency. Rescuers told AFP they hold out little hope for those missing from an accident in Qianjianping village, where the collapse of part of a

cliff off the river sank several boats and forced 1,200 people to flee their homes, the Xinhua news agency said. And in the central province of Hunan, local media and local officials said a landslide on July 9 in the district of Yongshun killed 17 people. Nine others are missing, a local official told AFP. On Tuesday, officials in Danba district, a region populated by Tibetans in Sichuan province, also said they had little hope of finding alive the 49 people who disappeared when a hillside collapsed Friday. Officials in eastern Jiangsu province, which lies in the path of the raging Huai River, were tensely watching water levels at Hongze Lake on Wednesday as they hovered 14.18 meters (46.7 feet) above alert levels. Song Yu, an engineer at the provincial anti-flood office, said the water level was expected to remain high for some time because it was not flowing smoothly into the lower reaches of the Huai River, which tips first into the Yangtze River and then the Yellow Sea. "The problem is that at the stretch of Yangtze River that flows into the Yellow Sea, the sea water level has risen, forcing back the river water and making it difficult for the river to discharge its water into the sea," Song said. In northern PRC's Shandong meanwhile, water levels in several smaller rivers were rising due to torrential rain and flowing south into Hongze Lake. The official death toll from flooding this year stood at 569 as of July 11, but at least 126 more people have since been reported dead or missing in landslides. The Huai River is experiencing its worst flooding in more than a decade.

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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