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I. United States

1. US-DPRK Underground Site Agreement

The Associated Press ("N. KOREA:US AGREED TO PAY "FEE" TO INSPECT UNDERGROUND SITE," Seoul, 03/18/99) reported that the DPRK's Korean Central News Agency quoted an unnamed Foreign Ministry spokesman as saying on Thursday that the US has agreed to pay a "fee" to inspect the underground construction site in Kumchangri. The spokesman stated, "There was a sufficient debate on and agreement on the payment of the 'inspection fee.'" He called US inspection of the site a "wanton violation" of the DPRK's sovereignty and security, and said US negotiators in New York had agreed to make due political and economic compensation. He stated, "We do not bother to conceal

the fact that in the light of the acute military situation ... we build all sensitive important objects underground in different parts of the country. The underground facility whose construction is now in progress in Kumchangri is one of them."

US State Department Deputy Spokesman Jim Foley ("STATE DEPT. NOON BRIEFING, MARCH 17, 1999," USIA Transcript, 03/18/99) said that he did not know the cost of the pilot agricultural program that the US agreed to provide to the DPRK as part of the recent deal on underground construction access. Foley added, "the North Koreans did demand a large monetary payment that we rejected. They also tried to link different forms of payment to satisfying our concerns, our suspicions about the suspect site. We rejected that."

An unnamed senior US official ("MARCH 16 BACKGROUND BRIEFING ON U.S.-NORTH KOREA TALKS," New York, USIA Text, 03/17/99) said that there are three variables in deciding what constitutes satisfactory access to the DPRK's underground construction site: the number of visits, the length of time that the visits are allowed, and the kinds of restrictions put on the visits. The official said that the agreement reached with the DPRK answers all those questions satisfactorily. The official added that the agreement "cannot help but improve the atmosphere" for all other engagement activities with the DPRK, as the removal of suspicions around the underground construction site should have a "salutary affect" on the governments concerned with the DPRK. The official also said that the agreement "does not deal with other sites. It deals only with the site about which we had strong suspicions. If another site emerged and our information had the same level of suspicions attached to it, then we would have to raise it. But I doubt very much that at that hypothetical point in time, that everything would be exactly as it was in late August or last year when we first raised our suspicions about Kumchang-ni and so it's pointless to speculate or conjecture about that kind of hypothetical situation." The official added, "we have laid out for the North Koreans a very detailed agenda for what we would like to see occur in order to allow us to lift sanctions. And these are things that are very well-known to people, and these are the steps that would take them off the terrorism list, to restrain their missile programs or to get them to take concrete, tangible steps to reduce tensions on the Korean peninsula. If any of those things were to occur, we would reciprocate with an appropriate easing of sanctions."

2. ROK Reaction to US-DPRK Agreement

The International Herald (Don Kirk, "KOREA ACCORD APPLAUDED," Seoul, 03/18/99, 1) reported that Song Min- soon, a security expert on the staff of ROK President Kim Dae-jung, said Wednesday that the ROK was pleased about the deal reached by US and DPRK negotiators calling for inspection of the underground construction site at Kumchangri. Song stated, "We really hope that suspicions about the site will be removed. The trend is now moving toward negotiated settlement rather than crisis." Song said that "once a year is enough" for inspecting the site. He added, "I am not so sure they can make other sites. It is too early to say they have more things in their pockets." ROK Foreign Minister Hong Soon-young said that he hoped the US would go further toward normalizing diplomatic relations with the DPRK. Hong stated, "Normalization of ties with the United States would lead to further opening of North Korea with the global community." He predicted that the ultimate result would be "normalization of relations on the Korean Peninsula." He cautioned, however, that the agreement "just the beginning of the process of confirming whether or not North Korea has a nuclear program." He also said that he hoped that "normalization of relations between Japan and North Korea would take place soon." He predicted, "This agreement will pave the way for resolution of the missile matter," which he said would free up Japan's share of funding for the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization. Huh Moon-young, a research fellow at the Korea Institute of National Unification, argued, "War is impossible, but there will always be the threat of military action in accordance with the tactic of brinkmanship." [Ed. note: This article

appeared in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 19.]

3. US Food Aid for DPRK

US State Department Deputy Spokesman Jim Foley ("STATE DEPT. NOON BRIEFING, MARCH 17, 1999," USIA Transcript, 03/18/99) said that the US would evaluate a further response to the last appeal by the World Food Program (WFP) in September for DPRK food aid. Foley noted that there are 200,000 metric tons that are still unmet from that appeal. He added, "We would expect that the WFP ... will issue a new appeal later this year, and we'll consider a response at that time."

4. DPRK Parliamentary Session

Reuters ("N.KOREA SAYS TO CONVENE PARLIAMENT ON APRIL 7," Tokyo, 03/17/99) reported that the DPRK's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said Thursday that the DPRK will convene a full session of the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) on April 7. The report did not say what would be discussed at the session.

5. PRC-Taiwan Talks

The Associated Press (Christopher Bodeen, "CHINESE NEGOTIATOR TO VISIT TAIWAN," Taipei, 03/18/99) reported that Li Yafei of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) on Thursday reiterated the PRC's demand to place reunification on the agenda for ARATS chief Wang Daohan's visit to Taiwan in the autumn. Li said that Wang was unable to come sooner due to scheduling difficulties, but would make the visit sometime around September. He said that Wang would like to visit for about six days and wished to travel to both the capital Taipei and the southern port city of Kaohsiung.

6. Alleged PRC Nuclear Espionage

The Washington Times (Jerry Seper and Bill Gertz, "FBI PROBES NEW LEADS IN CHINA SPYING," 03/18/99, 1) reported that law enforcement sources said Wednesday that an FBI investigation of alleged PRC nuclear espionage has widened to include additional targets and a review of new information. One unnamed official stated, "New information is being evaluated and the focus of the probe has certainly expanded. Where this all will lead is anybody's guess, but the FBI is leaving no stone unturned." FBI Director Louis J. Freeh testified during a House of Representatives appropriations hearing on Wednesday that the FBI was attempting to discover whether the alleged leaks involved the actual exchange of documents or the recitation of memorized material. He also noted there was an ongoing review of other than traditional methods of espionage in which information may have been compromised. Meanwhile Gary Samore, the National Security Council official in charge of nonproliferation, stated, "I think everybody agrees that some compromise of sensitive information took place, and that it did in some degree facilitate Chinese efforts to modernize, miniaturize their [nuclear] capability." He added, "In 1995, we learned that China had obtained sensitive U.S. information in the mid-1980s in connection with China's efforts to modernize its nuclear weapons capability." Samore said, "Although we had a rough idea when the compromise occurred, we did not know how the Chinese obtained this information or where it came from. Nor was it clear how much the Chinese obtained from the U.S. or its significance for China's efforts." [Ed. note: This article was one of the top stories in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 19.]

Dow Jones Newswires ("CHINA DEVELOPS NUCLEAR WEAPONS "ON ITS OWN": OFFICIAL," New York, 03/18/99) reported that PRC Minister Counselor He Yafei on Thursday disputed US allegations that a Taiwanese-born scientist at Los Alamos National Laboratory stole nuclear weapons intelligence for the PRC. He stated, "Nothing of this sort has ever happened. Is this a categorical denial? Nothing of this sort has ever happened." He said he was puzzled about the accusations, adding, "Some people in the US are not happy to see any progress in relations between China and the US. They still have a Cold War mentality." He said that as one of five nuclear powers, the PRC will develop its nuclear weapons technology according to its own conditions and in light of its economic capabilities. He added, "But I can assure China's efforts in developing nuclear weapons are entirely its own. Chinese nuclear scientists are as intelligent and diligent as US scientists, if not more clever, because China has a long tradition." He argued, "In next century, the key relationship - state to state - will be between China and the US. The US is the biggest developed country, and China is the biggest developing country. There is no reason for us not to cooperate."

7. PRC Missile Development

Reuters (David Storey, "CLINTON SET TO WORK WITH CHINA DESPITE NUCLEAR FUROR," Washington, 03/17/99) and the Los Angeles Times (Norman Kempster, "WHITE HOUSE SEES PERIL IN ANTI-CHINA STEPS, Washington, 03/18/99) reported that Gary Samore, US President Bill Clinton's top adviser on weapons proliferation, said that the PRC had the capacity to expand its nuclear force but had decided for strategic reasons not to. He stated, "I think an engagement strategy toward China which emphasizes areas of cooperation and tries to resolve areas of tension and dispute, decreases the chances that the Chinese will feel compelled to pursue ... nuclear expansion." He added, "Right now there are less than two dozen long-range systems that China could potentially use against the United States." Samore argued, "I think they have decided that for their strategic purposes it is better to have a minimal force necessary to deter and retaliate than a force that could pose any first strike threat. And part of that has been because of China's perception of the threat to itself." He added, however, "There is no question they are keeping their options open. They have a long-term modernization program in place, they have developed the basic technology so that if they wish they can pursue a much more capable force." Joseph Cirincione, the director of the Carnegie Non-Proliferation Project, estimated that in the worst case, in the next 10 years the PRC could update its arsenal to give it "100 to 150 warheads on land-based missiles capable of striking the United States." He added, "Even in the worst case, the sum total of all these allegations has little or no impact on the national security of the United States." He argued that the PRC would be deterred by the "catastrophic damage" that the US could inflict.

8. US-PRC Military Relations

The Wall Street Journal (Matt Forney, "U.S. MIGHT LIMIT MILITARY CONTACT WITH CHINA AMID NUCLEAR SCANDAL," Beijing, 03/18/99) reported that Larry Wortzel, a former army attache in Beijing who now directs the Strategic Studies Institute at the US Army War College, argued that the US should not restrict military contacts with the PRC despite recent spying allegations. Wortzel stated, "We would be poorer in our knowledge of China if we were not able to sit face to face and talk about the consequences of military action. They would be poorer if they weren't able to have stood on one of the ships with a missile battery that can take out the entire Chinese navy from 1,500 miles away." However, Richard Fisher of the Heritage Foundation argued that such visits "have resulted in far greater transparency of the American side than the PLA [People's Liberation Army] side, to an embarrassing degree." Fisher stated that once on a ship's bridge, Chinese officers "gain a level of knowledge that can prompt further questions for intelligence officers, and help determine whether to target a ship in wartime." Joseph Nye, dean of the John F. Kennedy School of

Government at Harvard University, stated, "But if we're trying to make an impression on them, then we're shooting ourselves in the foot if we demand perfect reciprocity -- we can't go on a [petty] basis."

9. PRC Views of US Missile Defense

Reuters ("CHINA VOICES CONCERN OVER U.S. MISSILE SHIELD," Beijing, 03/18/99) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Sun Yuxi expressed "serious concern" Thursday over a US Senate vote to deploy a national missile defense system. Sun stated, "Since the end of the Cold War, seeking development and peace has been the trend. Developing a theater missile defense or national missile defense runs against the trend and is counterproductive to international arms control and disarmament. It will have a negative impact on the global strategic balance."

10. Pakistan Adherence to CTBT

The Associated Press ("PAKISTAN MAY SIGN NUCLEAR TREATY BY SEP - FOREIGN MINISTRY," Islamabad, 03/18/99) reported that the Pakistan foreign ministry, in a written statement to the country's Lower House of Parliament on Thursday, said that Pakistan might sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) before September. The letter said, "Pakistan may sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, even before September 1999... but that will happen only under pressure-free conditions and in the best interests of the country." Also on Thursday, Siddiqe Kanju, the minister of state for foreign affairs, stated, "We have no great power ambitions, nor is our nuclear program a status drive, but like any self-respecting nation, we cannot compromise our security."

II. Republic of Korea

1. Perry's DPRK Report

Chosun Ilbo ("PERRY'S REPORT DUE IN APRIL," Seoul, 03/18/99) reported that William Perry, the US DPRK policy coordinator, is expected to release his report on US policy toward the DPRK in the week of April 12, according to diplomatic sources in Washington, DC. Reportedly, many issues are still pending, and as the US Congress goes into spring recess from March 27 to April 10, the submission of the report will be made after the break. Perry, the former US Defense Secretary, is due to return to Seoul for a brief visit on March 27 to participate in an economic conference jointly sponsored by the Korean Political Science Society and the Chosun Ilbo.

2. Defection of DPRK Diplomat

Chosun Ilbo ("NK APOLOGIZES FOR BANGKOK KIDNAPPING," Seoul, 03/18/99) reported that the DPRK offered an effectual apology for their kidnap attempt at a meeting participated in by DPRK's special envoy Lee Do-sup and the Thai government, which will announce its position on this issue soon, according to a Thai foreign affairs official. Lee arrived in Bangkok on Tuesday and went into discussions with Thai officials regarding the aborted kidnapping attempt of former DPRK science attache Hong Soon-kyung and his wife by DPRK embassy staff based in the Thai capital. After the meeting, Lee said he had expressed "official regret" to the Thai government on behalf of the DPRK. He said his government would seek to solve the problem primarily on the basis of humanitarian principles, indicating that Hong's son, allegedly still being detained in the DPRK embassy in Bangkok, might be released.

3. DPRK Hang Glider Unit

Chosun Ilbo ("NK TRAINING HANG GLIDER UNIT," Seoul, 03/18/99) reported that for the last two years, the DPRK has been importing hang gliders, gliders, motorized paragliders and hot air balloons, and is training a special unit to use them for infiltration into the ROK, according to a high-ranking military official. He said that the unit would be able to penetrate the Demilitarized Zone at a height of between 1500m and 3500m undetected by ROK radar. Due to multiple submarine failures, he thinks that the DPRK is considering airborne techniques, which would be most effective in spring when the winds are in its favor. The Ministry of Defense will run an exercise against this kind of infiltration on Friday north of Seoul and will hold regular joint training sessions with civilians, as well as beefing up security watches at the border.

4. Japan's Concern over Nuke Inspection

Korea Times ("JAPAN WANTS TO JOIN NUKE INSPECTION IN NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 03/18/99) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi on Thursday pressed for access to the suspected DPRK underground nuclear site that is to be inspected by the US. Obuchi said that Japan, as a major contributor of an international nuclear agreement with the DPRK, had a "profound interest" in the status of the site. The DPRK on Tuesday reached a breakthrough deal with US on US inspections of the site at Kumchangri. "If Japan can check (the suspected site) for itself, it will find it easier to solicit cooperation from the Japanese people," the premier told the Diet. "It is indeed a matter to be pursued by the United States and North Korea but we have a profound interest in it." Asked by reporters later whether Japan wanted to inspect the site jointly with the US, he said, "It is nothing so specific, I meant to say we want to do it if we can." Obuchi noted Japan's contribution, expected to be about US$1 billion, to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO).

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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