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I. United States

1. Albright's Visit to DPRK

The Associated Press (Barry Schweid, "ALBRIGHT TO MEET N. KOREAN LEADER," Shannon, 10/18/00) and Agence France Presse ("ALBRIGHT TO MAKE HISTORIC TRIP TO NKOREA, MEET KIM JONG-IL," 10/18/00) reported that US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said Wednesday that she would make an historic trip to the DPRK next week, traveling to Pyongyang to meet the nation's leader, Kim Jong- il. Albright said, "We are leaving for North Korea on Sunday. I've had confirmation of my meeting with Kim Jong-il." The DPRK meeting will take place October 23-24 with a meeting in Seoul immediately afterwards with ROK and Japanese officials. Albright also said that she would be "probing to see whether the openings for which Kim Dae-jung got the much-deserved Nobel prize allows for us to look at a different set of relationships with North Korea - but based on our own national interests."

2. ROK-DPRK Joint UN Resolution

Japan Economic Newswire ("S., N. KOREA JOINTLY URGE U.N. TO BACK PEACE EFFORTS," New York, 10/17/00) reported that the UN said on October 17 that the DPRK and the ROK have jointly submitted a draft resolution to the UN General Assembly reaffirming their goals of a durable peace and reunification on the Korean Peninsula. The resolution, which is expected to be adopted in November, will become the first official UN document expressing support for the inter- Korean peace process to date. In a statement, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said that he hopes that the UN General Assembly decision to include the Korean draft resolution on its agenda would spur international support for "positive developments" on the Korean Peninsula. The draft resolution, co-sponsored by the US, Russia, Japan and 42 other countries, underlines the historic significance of the June inter-Korean summit.

3. Japanese Food Aid to DPRK

Japan Economic Newswire ("LDP PANEL HEAD SLAMS KONO OVER RICE AID FIGURES," Tokyo, 10/18/00) reported that Yasuhisa Shiozaki, head of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party's foreign relations panel, criticized Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono on Wednesday over the cost of proposed rice aid to the DPRK, demanding that he quit if he does not know how much the aid will cost the Japanese taxpayer. Kono, who left Japan for the ROK on Wednesday to attend the ministerial preparatory meeting for the Asia-Europe Meeting, was not at the meeting. According to a Japanese Foreign Ministry estimate, if domestically grown rice is used for the proposed 500,000 tons in aid, the total cost would be around 120 billion yen, but this may go down to around 40 billion yen if imported rice is used. Shiozaki said, "The nation is not interested in the amount of rice (for aid) but in how much taxpayers' money will be spent on it. This is totally irresponsible. The foreign minister said he wants to continue the rice aid program under his own responsibility, so he should be held responsible for not knowing how much money it will cost."

4. PRC View of Korean Peninsula

Agence France Presse ("CHINA VOWS NEW SUPPORT FOR KOREAN PENINSULA PEACE MOVES," Seoul, 10/18/00) reported that PRC Premier Zhu Rongji peninsula during talks Wednesday with ROK president Kim Dae-jung promised to play a "constructive role" in attempts to ease tensions on the Korean Peninsula. Officials from both sides said that Zhu and Kim also agreed to expand ties between their countries. PRC foreign ministry spokesman Sun Yuxi said, "Zhu praised the recent rapprochement on the peninsula and said that China sincerely hopes that reconciliation will further develop to eventual peaceful reunification." Kim asked the PRC to play a leading role in efforts to find a peace formula to replace the armistice that ended the Korean War. Zhu responded, "China will continue playing a constructive role." He also said that the PRC supported closer ties between the DPRK and the US and Japan. Zhu and Kim agreed that four-way discussions on a peace treaty among the ROK, DPRK, PRC, and US should begin, but did not set a date for meetings among the four countries. They also agreed to step up military exchanges, including warship visits, and their foreign ministers signed a criminal extradition agreement.

5. Cross-Straits Relations

The Associated Press ("TAIWANESE LEADER URGES CHINA TO ADOPT 'SUNSHINE POLICY'," Taipei, 10/18/00) reported that Taiwan president Chen Shui-bian on Wednesday urged the PRC to stop threatening the island and adopt a "sunshine policy," a term borrowed from ROK president Kim

Dae-jung. During an interview with Voice of America on Wednesday, Chen said that the PRC should abandon its "verbal attacks and military threats" and use a "sunshine policy" to win over the Taiwanese public. According to a presidential office statement, "Leaders from both sides should use wisdom and creativity to solve the problems between the two sides."

Agence France Presse ("TAIWAN MAYOR OFF TO CHINA FOR 'ICE-BREAKING' TRIP," Taipei, 10/18/00) reported that Taiwan's Hsinchu Mayor Tsai Jen-chien, a member of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), flew to the PRC on Wednesday to attend a three-day meeting in Nanjing in what he termed an "ice-breaking" trip. Tsai said, "I am hopeful the visit will help thaw the icy ties between the two sides." He is the first local government chief to visit the PRC since the DPP government was sworn in on May 20.

6. PRC Military Exercises

Agence France Presse ("TOP TAIWAN ARMY OFFICER SAYS CHINA'S DRILLS NOT TARGETED AT ISLAND," Lungtan, 10/18/00) reported that Taiwanese military authorities on October 17 dismissed fears that the PRC's biggest military exercise in 36 years posed a threat, saying that it was not targeting the island. Lieutenant General Chang Chu-hsun, head of Taiwan's National Defense University, said, "They could not possibly do this to influence Taiwan's stock market because such an exercise usually takes a long time to prepare. The drills were aimed to evaluate any problems regarding joint combat functioning of their forces." Chang also dismissed the PRC military's joint combat capability, citing intelligence sources from the US. He said, "They did not fare well in the operation of command and communication, which is not expected to dramatically improve in two to three years."

7. PRC Defense White Paper

The Washington Post (Philip P. Pan, "CHINA OFFERS DETAILS ON MILITARY OPERATIONS," Beijing, 10/18/00) reported that US scholars and former US military officials praised the PRC's white paper on national defense issued on October 16 by the PRC State Council. They said that the PRC has gone a long way toward meeting demands by the US and others that it be more open about its military goals to minimize the potential for conflict in Asia. David Shambaugh, director of the China Policy Program at George Washington University, said, "This is a phenomenal document. It goes far further than anything they've ever done before. With a couple of exceptions, mainly their refusal to provide information about weapons and deployment of forces, this is exactly the kind of thing we've been calling for, and it puts China on par with Japan, Taiwan and South Korea as far as transparency of its military." The paper attributed increases in announced military spending--from US$11.3 billion in 1998 to US$14.8 billion last year--almost entirely to higher personnel costs. However, many analysts believe the PRC's military budget is actually two to three times greater, but Shambaugh said the paper's figures still suggest that the PRC "hasn't been able to spend much on modernizing hardware.... Weapons is their major weakness across all services." Analysts also said the paper acknowledges for the first time the existence of the Second Artillery Force, a service branch independent of the army, navy and air force that controls the nation's missile units. The report also stated for the first time explicitly that the PRC's nuclear weapons are under the direct command of the Central Military Commission. Western analysts said that there were few major surprises in the white paper but emphasized that the disclosures were significant because they indicate that the PRC is making an effort to reduce tensions in the Pacific. Rear Admiral Eric McVadon, a former defense and naval attache at the US Embassy in Beijing, said, "They may be recognizing that you produce a more secure environment when people can trust you a little bit. They're recognizing that transparency isn't something the West is cramming down their throats, but may be something that

serves their own interests." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for October 18, 2000.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. Inter-Korean Project

The Korea Herald ("MINE CLEARING FOR S-N VENTURES 44 PERCENT COMPLETE," Seoul, 10/18/00) reported that the ROK Defense Ministry said on Tuesday that the military has cleared land mines in about 190,000 square meters of land south of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) for the inter-Korean rail link and adjacent highway projects. The figure represents about 44 percent of the total 430,000 square meters of land in which the military has to clear mines and do ground- clearing work for the cross-border projects, it said. He said that mine- clearing work inside the DMZ could start as early as next spring as the two Koreas have to agree on detailed measures for the cross-border railway and highway ventures at their proposed working-level military commission meeting.

2. Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)

The Korea Herald (Chon Shi-yong, "'ASEM SHOULD BE OPEN TO N.K., OTHERS'," Seoul, 10/18/00) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung, the chair of this year's Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), said on Tuesday that the forum should be open to accepting the DPRK and other countries as its new members. "Basically, ASEM is an open and gradual process, and it is our government's position that the forum should give positive consideration to any country that wants to join," Kim said. He said the DPRK, Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos have yet to make a formal request for their membership in ASEM. "But if North Korea makes a formal request, we will consult with other member states on the basis of the guidelines to be formulated in the Seoul meeting," the President said.

The Korea Times ("MORI CALLS FOR WIDER EU-NK CONTACTS," Seoul, 10/18/00) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori on Tuesday welcomed wider contact between the DPRK and the international community, including the European Union. "Problems remain regarding North Korea's security and humanitarian matters, and each nation in Europe will have different opinions about ties with North Korea. I hope that dialogue on such issues will proceed."

3. ROK-US Missile Talks

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "S. KOREA, U.S. AGREE ON EXTENDING MISSILE RANGE," Seoul, 10/18/00) reported that wrapping up five years of negotiations, the ROK and the US have almost struck a deal on the ROK's bid to upgrade its missile capabilities. The accord enables the ROK not only to produce and deploy missiles with a 300-km range and 500-kg warhead, but also to develop missiles with a range of up to 500 km for research purposes. "Both sides have almost agreed on the content of our missile guidelines. But additional consultations are needed to settle the form of the agreement," said a brief statement released by the ROK Embassy in Washington. ROK government sources said that the ROK insists that the missile accord should be in the form of an ROK "policy declaration," while the US wants it to be a kind of "memorandum" to make the agreement more binding.

4. ROK-PRC Talks

The Korea Herald ("PRESIDENT KIM, CHINESE PREMIER ZHU TO DISCUSS DEVELOPMENTS ON PENINSULA," Seoul, 10/18/00) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung was to meet visiting PRC Premier Zhu Rongji on Wednesday to discuss the rapid developments on the Korean Peninsula, including the recent high-level talks between the DPRK and the US. During the meeting at Chong Wa Dae, President Kim will seek the PRC's continuing support for the improvement of inter-Korean ties and the resolution of ROK-DPRK problems by the two Koreas themselves. The officials said President Kim and Premier Zhu will also exchange their views on a wide range of ways to promote cooperation between the two countries.

5. Inter-Korean Relations

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "INTER-KOREAN ECONOMIC TALKS DELAYED AT P'YANG'S REQUEST," Seoul, 10/18/00) reported that the ROK and the DPRK failed to begin working-level economic talks set to open Wednesday in Pyongyang, as the DPRK asked for the meeting to be postponed, officials said. The DPRK's proposal for delaying the talks came through its liaison officers at the border village of Panmunjom on Tuesday, the ROK Unification Ministry officials said. The DPRK also proposed to discuss a new schedule at a later date, they added. The DPRK's slowness in responding to the ROK's offer fanned additional concerns in the ROK, as there had been mounting suspicions that the DPRK could be stalling joint projects with the ROK while concentrating on its rapprochement with the US. Meanwhile, a ship carrying the first batch of 10,000 tons of rice arrived in the DPRK port of Nampo, South Pyongan Province, Tuesday morning after 11 days of sailing from Thailand, a Unification Ministry official said.

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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International Policy Studies Institute Seoul, Republic of Korea
The Center for Global Communications, Tokyo, Japan
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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

Leanne Payton: lbpat1@smtp.monash.edu.au
Clayton, Australia

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Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org