

NAPSNet Daily Report 18 September, 2000

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 18 September, 2000", NAPSNet Daily Report, September 18, 2000,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-18-september-2000/>

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I. United States

1. DPRK Food Aid

Agence France Presse ("WFP SEEKS 100 MILLION DOLLARS FOOD AID FOR NORTH KOREA," Rome, 9/15/00) and Japan Economic Newswire ("U.N. FOOD AGENCY SAYS NORTH KOREA NEEDS SUBSTANTIAL AID," Rome, 9/15/00) reported that the World Food Programme (WFP) appealed to the international community on September 15 for food aid worth US\$100 million to help millions of people at risk of severe food shortages in the DPRK. WFP director Catherine Bertini said, "The winters are particularly tough in North Korea and if we don't extra funds immediately, millions of people will suffer serious food shortages. The situation of children, pregnant women and old people is extremely fragile... and despite the gradual opening of North Korea and improvements in trade, food aid is still necessary for the most vulnerable." The WFO said this year's DPRK maize and rice harvests have been severely hit by bad weather and the lack of infrastructure.

2. Inauguration of Inter-Korean Railway

Agence France Presse ("SOUTH KOREA STARTS WORK ON LANDMARK BORDER RAILWAY,"

Imjingak, 9/18/00) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung on Monday inaugurated work inter-Korean railway. Kim said the railway would mark "the end of Cold War hostility and confrontation" and called it a new landmark in the peace process. No DPRK officials were present at the inaugural ceremony and ROK's opposition leader boycotted the event. Kim said in a speech: "We are beginning the work of merging the divided country into one. Today's groundbreaking for the restoration of the railroad will begin a new age of reconciliation, cooperation and prosperity. The restoration project will send a message to the world that the Cold War has ended and peace set in. It will be a milestone, marking the end of Cold-War hostility and confrontation."

3. US-ROK Military Talks

Agence France Presse ("US, SOUTH KOREA HOLD MISSILE TALKS," Seoul, 9/18/00) reported that officials said the US and the ROK held military talks in Seoul on Monday to hammer out a deal which would put most of the DPRK within range of the ROK's missiles. Robert Einhorn, US assistant secretary of state for non-proliferation, headed the US delegation, while Song Min- Soon, director general of the foreign ministry's North American affairs section led the ROK team. No official announcement was made on progress. Park Wang-Ok, an ROK defense ministry spokesman said, "The security consultation meeting will serve as removing possible US concerns over the alliance following the improvement in inter-Korean ties. That's because we believe the traditional, established US-South Korea military alliance should remain intact." Cohen will meet ROK Defense Minister Cho Sung- Tae on September 21. The ROK is seeking to increase its missile range ceiling of 180 kilometers (112 miles) imposed under an agreement with the US. The ROK has asked the US to help it join the Missile Control Technology Regime, an international agreement which bars signatories from developing missiles with a range of more than 300 kilometers (187 miles). ROK's Yonhap news agency said the US had already agreed in principle to the ROK's request and the sides were working on technical issues. ROK officials said a final deal was expected by the end of this year to allow the ROK to develop missiles with a range of about 300 kilometers, which could hit targets in most of the DPRK.

4. Taiwan Military Exercise

Associated Press ("TAIWAN LAUNCHES MILITARY EXERCISE," 9/18/00) reported that Taiwan started a large-scale military exercise on September 17 to test the army's preparedness in the event of a war or natural disaster. The Taiwanese Defense Ministry said more than 7,000 active and reserve troops plus more than 200 transport vehicles would participate in the drill, which is to end on September 22. A spokesman said the drill is being held primarily to test the co-ordination of troops and their ability "to mobilize quickly should the entire Taiwan need them."

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK-DPRK Defense Ministers' Talks

The Korea Herald (Kang Seok-jae, "SEOUL TO PROPOSE OPENING JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION," Seoul, 09/18/00) and Chosun Ilbo (Yoo Yong-won, "DEFENCE MINISTERS MEETING TO BE HELD ON CHEJU," Seoul, 09/17/00) reported that an ROK government source said on September 17 that the ROK will propose the establishment of a military commission at the inter-Korean defense ministers' talks. The DPRK and the ROK reached a final decision to meet in Cheju Island from September 25-26. The anonymous source said the proposed military commission would

serve as a working-level support group for the defense ministerial talks. The source said, "For the efficient operation of the defense ministerial talks, we will propose the establishment of a military commission. If the North accepts our offer, it is expected to help accelerate inter-Korean confidence-building efforts in the military field." He said the operation of the military commission would enable military negotiators from the two sides to concentrate on building mutual trust and reducing military tension when officials convene for defense ministers' talks. Among the major items on the agenda at the defense ministers' talks, he said, would be the establishment of military hot lines, the offering of prior notification of large-scale military drills and troop movements, and the arrangement of military support for the projected reconnection of a cross-border railroad and adjacent highway.

2. Red Cross Talks

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "POWS, ABDUCTEES EMERGE AS TRICKY ISSUES; GOVERNMENT TO FOCUS ON ESTABLISHING REUNION STATION AT INTER-KOREAN RED CROSS TALKS," Seoul, 09/18/00) reported that with another round of inter-Korean Red Cross talks slated for September 20, officials and analysts in the ROK are focusing on whether the DPRK will agree to discuss the issue of ROK POWs and abductees held in the DPRK. In a briefing on the September 14 agreements, a senior ROK Unification Ministry official stressed that the cited measures concerning family reunions would also apply to former ROK soldiers and ROK citizens kidnapped by DPRK agents, although the DPRK has yet to make any official commitment on this matter.

The Korea Herald (Kang Seok-jae, "DEFENSE CHIEFS OF 2 KOREAS EXCHANGE LETTERS ON MILITARY TALKS," Seoul, 09/16/00) reported that in a letter sent to ROK Defense Minister Cho on September 13, DPRK People's Armed Forces Minister Kim Il-chol welcomed Cho's offer to hold the historic defense ministers' talks. DPRK Minister Kim also proposed in the letter that topics for discussion at the meeting include all military matters concerning the projected reconnection of the severed Seoul-Shinuiju railroad and the construction of an adjacent highway linking Kaesong, the DPRK, to Munsan, the ROK.

3. ROK to Revise Nat'l Security Law

The Korea Times (Kim Kwang-tae "RULING PARTY TO REVISE NATIONAL SECURITY LAW," Seoul, 09/17/00) reported that the ROK ruling Millennium Democratic Party (MDP) decided to revise or abolish six to seven clauses in the National Security Law, (NSL) during the forthcoming regular session of the National Assembly. A senior MDP official said the ruling party has named Representative Yoo Jay-kun to head a special committee to come out with a draft revision to the existing anti-spy law in a month. The main focus of the revision will be centered on supporting the inter-Korean relations and abolishing the "cancerous" clauses of the law. Among other things, the governing party plans to rewrite Article Number 2 which defines the DPRK as an anti-state organization. They will also abolish an item which cites the DPRK as an illegitimate regime in the Korean peninsula and automatically making the DPRK an anti-state organization. Despite the revisions, the ruling party believes that the main structure of the NSL will remain intact and the national security will not be compromised, as safety measures in the criminal code would be kept in place.

4. ROK-DPRK Railway

The Korea Times (Sah Dong-seok, "GROUND TO BE BROKEN FOR RAIL LINK," Seoul, 09/18/00) and Chosun Ilbo ("RAILROAD CONSTRUCTION TO COMMENCE SEPTEMBER," Seoul, 09/17/00)

reported that the ROK government will hold a ground-breaking ceremony Monday to reconnect rails and roads with the DPRK. The railway, scheduled for completion by next September, will stretch from Seoul to Shinuiju, DPRK's border city with the PRC. The government plans to spend 54.7 billion won for laying 12 kilometers of rail tracks from Munsan to Changdan on the border. Another 100 billion won will also be poured into building a four-lane highway along the railway, which is also due to be completed by next September. The construction would require landmines, some decades old, to be removed from the path crossing the Demilitarized Zone, which has bisected the two Koreas for more than five decades. The DPRK will build its own rail and road links under an agreement with the ROK.

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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