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I. United States

1. Four Party Peace Talks

The Associated Press (George Gedda, "KOREAN PEACE TALKS TO RESUME," Washington, 04/16/99) reported that the four-party Korean peace talks will resume next week. An unnamed Defense Department official was quoted as saying Friday that US officials are hoping for positive signals from the DPRK on modest proposals for a reduction in tension. Representatives of the two Koreas, the US and the PRC will take up that and other issues in Geneva. After lower-levels talks next Friday, plenary sessions will be held over the ensuing four days. Ambassador Charles Kartman will head the US delegation. The delegates will discuss US backed proposals for opening communications channels, exchanges of visits by officers and prior notification of military exercises. A Swiss proposal for a corridor through the truce village at Panmunjom for the delivery of humanitarian supplies to the DPRK will also be discussed.

2. DPRK-ROK Dialogue

The Associated Press ("N. KOREA SAYS IT SEEKS DIALOGUE," Seoul, 04/17/99) reported that on Saturday the DPRK reiterated its willingness to start high-level political talks with the ROK as soon as possible, but only after certain conditions are met. Kim Yong Sun, a secretary of Pyongyang's ruling Workers Party of Korea Central Committee, said the proposed dialogue could open by June. "We are fully prepared for it," Kim was quoted as saying by the Korean Central News Agency. Kim, who also heads the DPRK government committee setting policy toward the ROK, said that talks would only be conducted on the condition that the ROK eliminate its security laws and joint military exercises with the US. The ROK has previously rejected these conditions.

3. DPRK Defectors

The Associated Press ("3 N. KOREANS SEEK ASYLUM IN SOUTH," Seoul, 04/19/99) reported that, according to the ROK National Intelligence Service (NIS), three DPRK nationals have sought asylum in the ROK after escaping the DPRK. The NIS, the ROK's main intelligence agency, identified the defectors as Hong Moon Ae, 40, her daughter Hwang Bo Sook, 20, and unrelated Cho Young Min, 25. The NIS said Hong and her daughter escaped the DPRK in November and Cho fled last month. The three entered the ROK by way of a third country, bringing the number of DPRK defectors to ROK so far this year to 34.

4. ROK Plane Crash

The Associate Press ("KOREAN AIR BLACK BOXES ARE SOUGHT," Seoul, 04/18/99) reported that Korean Air officials said Sunday that investigators have found pieces of a case that contained the flight recorders from a cargo jet that crashed in the PRC last week. However, Korean Air spokesman Kim Sung-joon said the black boxes had not been recovered. Kim was responding to a report by the PRC's state-run Xinhua News Agency that police searching the wreckage of the plane located the case containing the flight recorders on Saturday. Kim also said the bodies of all three of the plane's crew had been found, refuting a report by Xinhua on Saturday that said only two of the bodies had been recovered. Police have had difficulty reaching the wreckage of the cockpit because it was embedded deeply in mud after having dropped 3,300 feet.

5. Alleged PRC Spying

The New York Times (Jeff Gerth, "ENERGY DEPT. BARS RELEASING CHINA SPY DATA," Washington, 04/19/99) reported that on Sunday the chairman of the US House select committee investigating allegations of PRC espionage said that the US Department of Energy was improperly holding up the release of some of the committee's still-classified report. Appearing Sunday on "Fox News Sunday," Representative Christopher Cox, a California Republican, said the Energy Department was objecting to the public disclosure of some information even though agencies including the CIA have determined that its release would not harm intelligence-gathering sources or methods. "I think those kinds of objections not based on sources and methods are not proper in this circumstance," Cox said, adding that his committee is "trying to frankly turn them around on that." The Energy Department's spokeswoman, Brooke Anderson, defended Energy Secretary Bill Richardson's decision to block the release of nuclear weapons information from the public version of the committee's report. Cox hopes to release a declassified version of the report by the end of April, when the committee is scheduled to conclude its business. Cox suggested Sunday that his committee's findings about PRC espionage went beyond what has appeared in news accounts. The

committee's ranking Democrat, Norm Dicks of Washington, appearing on the same television program as Cox, said he talked on Saturday night to Samuel R. Berger, President Clinton's national security adviser, about getting the report out "as quickly as possible." [Ed. note: This article was one of the top stories in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for April 19.]

6. India-PRC Talks

Dow Jones Newswires (Jonathan Karp "INDIA TO HOLD CHINA TALKS DESPITE GOVT'S FALL - FOREIGN MIN," New Delhi, 04/19/99) reported that India's government will go ahead with confidence-building talks with the PRC scheduled for next week despite the fall of India's ruling coalition. Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh confirmed that the meeting of the Indo- Chinese Joint Working Group is scheduled to take place April 26-28, and was quoted by Dow Jones Newswires as saying, "I have just told the foreign secretary to go ahead with it." India's 13-month-old coalition government, led by the Bharatiya Janata Party, collapsed Saturday after it lost a vote of confidence in parliament. The dialogue with the PRC is particularly important following India's recent missile tests. Singh said that he hoped the fall of his government would not disrupt India's efforts to build better ties with not only Pakistan but "all of our neighbors, including the PRC."

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK Defense Budget

The Korea Herald ("NORTH KOREA SUSPECTED OF CONCEALING TRUE EXTENT OF 99 DEFENSE BUDGET," Seoul, 04/16/99) reported that DPRK watchers in the ROK said yesterday that the DPRK's real defense budget is likely much higher than the budget figure the DPRK government revealed last week. Last week, the DPRK government revealed that it would earmark 14.5 percent of its US\$9.38 billion budget for defense (See "DPRK Annual Budget" in the US section of the April 8 Daily Report). ROK analysts said that the real DPRK defense budget was likely closer to 30 percent of the total budget. "It is often the case with the North to use more than 30 percent of its budget for defense and to hide the difference among other items," a ROK Defense Ministry official said yesterday. The official added that the continued large investment in the DPRK's defense despite record budget reductions and massive starvation among its people is a strong warning to the ROK to remain vigilant against a potential attack.

2. DPRK Aid

The Korea Herald ("U.N. AGENCIES TO SEND US\$376 MILLION IN AID TO NORTH KOREA THIS YEAR," Seoul, 04/16/99) reported that, according to ROK Ministry of Unification officials, the UN plans to send aid worth US\$376.11 million to the DPRK this year. Last year, UN relief agencies provided US\$218 million worth of aid to the famine-stricken DPRK. The projected aid for this year includes 300,000 tons of wheat worth US\$101.35 million, which the US donated to the UN last year. The officials said that the UN will send humanitarian aid to the cities and counties where it can monitor and confirm that the food aid is properly distributed. The WFP is set to provide 208,815 tons of food worth US\$124.29 million to 5.45 million children and elderly people in the DPRK. The UNDP also plans to raise US\$74.22 million for irrigation and restoration of farmland, while the Food and Agricultural Organization and the UNDP will donate \$39.19 million for improving DPRK's agricultural industry. The UNICEF and the WHO will also raise US\$20.44 million and US\$7.28 million, respectively, to help ease the DPRK's health and medicine problems, the officials said.

3. Three Party Talks for DPRK Policy

The Korea Herald ("SEOUL, WASHINGTON, TOKYO TO MEET IN HAWAII FOR N.K. POLICY TALKS," Seoul, 04/17/99) reported that high ranking officials from the ROK, the US and Japan will meet in Hawaii on April 24 to coordinate their DPRK policies, according to the ROK officials. Diplomatic sources said meeting will be routine and "businesslike," but added that the consultation may prove to be quite crucial as the US finalizes its review of its DPRK policy. "The three countries will coordinate and decide their final stances on the DPRK ahead of the finish of William Perry's report [on US DPRK policy]," a ROK Foreign Ministry official said. Some sources reported that, due to the meeting's significance, officials above the rank of deputy minister might attend, including Lim Dong-won, the ROK's senior presidential secretary for foreign affairs and national security, and Shunji Yanai, Japan's vice foreign minister. However, ROK ministry officials refused to comment on the level of participants. The three-party consultation also coincides with the opening of the fifth round of the four-party peace talks on the Korean Peninsula.

4. ROK Missile Project

Chosun Ilbo ("US PROTEST ON SOUTH KOREAN MISSILE," Seoul, 04/19/99) reported that, according to a ROK diplomatic source, the US government filed a protest with the ROK government over its possible violation of the letter of understanding prohibiting the ROK from developing missiles with a range exceeding 180 km. According to the source, the US has concluded that a missile fired in early April at a test site near the West Sea actually had a range of at least 296 km, even though it flew only around 50 km. The source said US officials suspect that scientists intentionally filled the missile with a reduced amount of fuel to limit its range and thus not provoke a response. An official at the Ministry of National Defense confirmed the protest by the US Government and said that the ROK government stressed the missile flew only 50 km, and therefore did not violate any US-ROK agreement. He did not disclose the actual range of the missile, saying it was a military secret. The ROK is reportedly developing a 300 km range missile, since it interprets the letter of understanding as expiring automatically by the end of the year, as does the Hyonmoo Project. The ROK government signed the missile agreement in 1979 in order to acquire technology to develop a ROK surface-to-surface missile named Hyonmoo. Some consider a 300 km missile vital for ROK security, as it can strike most of the DPRK's strategic targets.

5. DPRK Refugee Issue

JoongAng Ilbo ("THE U.N. PETITION COMMITTEE FOR NK REFUGEES PROPOSED," Seoul, 04/16/99) reported that the Christian Council of Korea (CCK) held a ceremony on Friday at the Korean Church Centennial Memorial Building in Seoul, as part of the UN petition committee for DPRK refugees. About 200 participants rallied, saying that the residents fleeing from the DPRK in order to escape starvation are refugees according to international law. The participants called on the UN to stop enforced repatriation and build facilities to protect refugees. The CCK sent this message to the ROK churches, the international Christian community, and defenders of human rights and liberty. The committee plans to launch a petition to obtain 10 million signatures, mobilizing ROK churches and missionaries throughout the world. The CCK will also collect contributions to build and maintain a refugee protection center. Minister Lee Jong-yun was assigned as chairman of the petition committee, which includes noted minister Han Kyung-jik and internationally recognized evangelist Billy Graham.

6. ROK-DPRK Economic Cooperation

JoongAng Ilbo ("RECOVERING SOUTH-NORTH KOREA'S ECONOMIC COOPERATION," Seoul, 04/19/99) reported that the ROK Minister of Unification, Kang In-duk, announced that economic cooperation between the DPRK and ROK is showing signs of recovery. At a breakfast lecture hosted by Ewha Womans University's Graduate School of Information Science at the Hotel Shilla on April 19, Minister Kang stated, "The government will continuously propel South-North economic cooperation according to the principle of economic and political separation. Unification is sustaining interchanges and cooperation, unraveling problems one by one, because it's a process rather than an end in and of itself." The trade between ROK and DPRK as of the end of February this year was US\$35.24 million, a 65.4 percent increase over the same period last year, while last year's total trade was US\$221.94 million dollars, down 28 percent from the year before.

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
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[Center for American Studies](#),
[Fudan University](#), Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Wade L. Huntley: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Lee Dong-young: UNPOL@netsgo.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hiroyasu Akutsu: akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@glas.apc.org
Moscow, Russian Federation

Chunsi Wu: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

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