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I. United States

1. Inter-Korean Relations

("HANDSHAKE MARKS THAW IN TIES BETWEEN KOREAS," Beijing, 04/19/02) reported that Parliament leaders Lee Man-Sup, speaker of the ROK's National Assembly, and Kim Soo Hak, a parliamentary leader from the DPRK shook hands at a meeting of Asian parliament leaders in the PRC city of Chongqing on Thursday, Xinhua said. "I'm convinced, along with summit-level talks, inter-Korean parliamentary talks will open up a new chapter in the history of Korea," a smiling Lee told Kim. "Such a move is from the bottom of our hearts because we belong to one ethnic group," said Kim, head of the delegation from the DPRK's Supreme People's Assembly. Kim added he hoped the two parliaments would call upon both governments to implement their April 6 joint declaration pledging to revive their rapprochement process, which has been frozen since last year. The vice chairman of Russia's Duma, Artur Chilingarov, call the handshake "an encouraging sign, which

symbolises that the reunification and peace process on the Korean Peninsula is going forward in the right direction." The ROK's Lee said he hoped the two sides could take concrete steps to facilitate inter-Korean projects, to enhance trust between the people of the DPRK and ROK and the international community. Xxx

2. ROK Fighter Jet Project

The Associated Press (Lee Soo-jeong, "SOUTH KOREA SELECTS BOEING'S F-15K FOR AIR FORCE," Seoul, 04/19/02) and Reuters (Jason Neely, "BOEING WINS S.KOREAN JET DEAL," Seoul, 04/19/02) reported that US aerospace company Boeing Co. won a US$4.5 billion contract Friday to build 40 F-15K fighter jets for the ROK's air force, the ROK Defense Ministry said. Boeing's F-15K beat out the Rafale made by French firm Dassault in the competition to build a fleet of new jets for the ROK air force by 2009, the ministry said in a news release. Dassault claims that its Rafale outdid the F-15 in the first-round appraisal of combat capabilities, and has accused the defense ministry of adopting the playoff format as "a lifesaver for the US competitor." "The decision is not fair," said Yves Robins, Dassault's vice president of international relations, shortly after Friday's announcement. Dassault had earlier asked a ROK court to freeze the competition. The court had been expected to rule on the case later this month. "We will proceed with our legal action," Robins said. Also Friday, 60 civic group activists held a peaceful demonstration in front of the Defense Ministry building in central Seoul and urged the government to nullify its selection, which came amid allegations of political favoritism, bribery and industrial espionage. They held red balloons and waved pickets that read: "No to F-15K!"

3. Japan Domestic Politics

Reuters ("JAPAN'S RULING PARTY SUFFERS FRESH SCANDAL BLOW," Tokyo, 04/19/02) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and his party suffered a new blow Friday as the speaker of parliament's Upper House resigned over an aide's alleged scandal and a poll showed support had eroded further. Upper House speaker Yutaka Inoue stepped down from his position as speaker after threats by opposition parties to boycott business in the chamber. Inoue, in a closed-door session with ruling and opposition lawmakers Thursday, denied allegations by a magazine this month that an aide had received hefty kickbacks from a construction firm in connection with a public works project. "We must make every effort to realize the sort of politics in which such things do not happen," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told a news conference after Inoue resigned.

4. Russia-NATO Ties

The Associated Press ("PUTIN: RUSSIA TO BOOST TIES TO NATO, CHINA SIMULTANEOUSLY TO STRENGTHEN GLOBAL STABILITY," Moscow, 04/19/02) reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin stated that as Russia boosts ties with NATO it will also maintain close links to the PRC in an effort to strengthen global stability. Putin is scheduled to sign an agreement on closer ties between Russia and NATO in Rome on May 28, a move that has been made possible by his strong support for the US-led war on terror. In an apparent attempt to assuage China's concerns about a growing rapprochement between Russia and the West, Putin said that Moscow would maintain close links with the PRC, whom it has described as a "strategic partner." Simultaneous development of Russia's cooperation with NATO and friendly Russian-PRC ties will help strengthen global stability, Putin said.

II. Republic of Korea

1. China Air Crash Accident

Joongang Ilbo ("PILOTS WERE CHANGED JUST BEFORE AIRLINER LEFT BEIJING ON FATAL FLIHGT," Seoul, 04/19/02) reported that investigators studying Monday's Air China crash said Thursday that a pilot change was made just before the flight left Beijing. Based on the flight schedule data, investigators said, Wu Ning was to have flown the Boeing 767-200. "But the pilot was changed to Wu Xinlu in the morning," an investigator said. Air China informed the Gimhae Airport of the pilot change the same morning, investigators said. The important question, investigators said, is whether the pilot had enough rest before going airborne and whether the pilot was well informed by the Gimhae airport and the weather conditions of the region. At the crash site, a rescue team of 200 police officers and military personnel continued to search for six missing bodies, but found none.

2. DPRK-US Relations

Joongang Ilbo (Oh Young-hwan, "NO INSPECTION DEADLINE GIVEN NORTH," Washington, 04/19/02) reported that despite tension over their 1994 Geneva Agreement, the US has not presented to DPRK specific dates for nuclear inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency, ROK Foreign Minister Choi Sung-hong said Wednesday. Choi, in a news conference after meeting with US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and US National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, said that the US, while still insisting that the DPRK provide explanations for its nuclear activities in the past, had yet to propose inspection deadlines to the DPRK. He said that Armitage also reaffirmed US determination to solve the issue of the DPRK's mass destruction weapons through dialogue. A source at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Seoul said that the New York talks would probably take place after the end of Choi's visit to Washington on Sunday.

3. DPRK-Japan Relations

Joongang Ilbo (Choi Won-ki, "NORTH EXPECTED TO EXPEL RED ARMY," Seoul, 04/19/02) reported that members of the Japanese Red Army who had been protected by the DPRK will likely be expelled after Red Cross talks between the DPRK and Japan, which are scheduled to take place this month. The Japanese leftists, blamed for a string of terrorist attacks in the 1970s and 1980s, received asylum in the DPRK after hijacking a Japan Airlines passenger jet and landing it in DPRK in March 1970. Shin Ji-ho, a researcher at the Samsung Economic Research Center, said the DPRK hopes to improve relations with Japan and the US by severing ties with the terrorist group.

4. ROK-Chile Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("CHILE, KOREA SIGN INVESTMENT PACT," Seoul, 04/19/02) reported that ROK and Chile signed an agreement for prevention of double taxation and tax evasion on income from investments Thursday. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade hosted a ceremony Thursday to celebrate the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between ROK and Chile. Kim Hang-kyung, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Fernando Schmidt, Ambassador of Chile to ROK, signed the convention there. Both men said the agreement will be a step forward in efforts, which have run aground over questions of agricultural trade, to negotiate a free trade agreement between the two countries.

III. Japan

1. Japanese Homeland Defense Bills

The Japan Times (Takuya Asakura, "SDF 'EMERGENCY' CRITERIA STILL VAGUE," Tokyo, 04/17/02) carried an analytical article on the new Japanese emergency contingency bills. Political momentum for the legislation didn't really get another boost until the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the US, to be followed by a gunbattle with a suspected DPRK spy ship in December. "War is not the only emergency," Koizumi said, asserting that terrorism and mysterious intruders also must be addressed. As the government worked on the bills, Liberal Democratic Party lawmakers argued that the legislation should cover nonconventional emergencies that were deemed more likely to occur, even if that meant taking more time to draft the laws. But the government-submitted bills would limit the scope of "emergencies" to conventional military conflicts and exclude more probable scenarios, including terrorist attacks and sea incursions by parties not readily linked to a conventional military force. "It will be meaningful for the Defense Agency to have enacted into law things we have long studied," a senior agency official said. "But what will it mean for the public if laws are created only for what will probably not happen?" Critics also say the "military attack situation" that would prompt government action is so vaguely defined in the bills that a broad interpretation is allowed. The bills pave the way for government action "when a military attack (or the fear of such an attack) has occurred, or when the situation becomes tense and an attack can be predicted." Professor Tetsuo Maeda of Tokyo International University said the primary objective of the legislation is to expedite Japan's support of US military operations in "emergency situations in areas surrounding Japan" -- the scenario stated in the 1997 updated guidelines on Japan-US defense cooperation. In fact, Defense Agency chief Gen Nakatani said in the Diet that a military attack on Japan would be predictable in the event of military conflict in "areas surrounding Japan." The emergency contingency bills also oblige the government to create other laws to "protect the life and property of the citizens," including legislation covering evacuations, recovery of damages, transportation and communications, and public order. But this legislation has yet to be openly discussed, despite public concerns that such laws may infringe on individual rights as guaranteed by the Constitution.

The Japan Times (Kanako Takahara, "RULING BLOC APPEARS UNITED ON CONTINGENCY BILLS' PASSAGE," Tokyo, 04/17/02) reported that the ruling parties appear united -- at least for now -- in seeking passage during the current Diet session of emergency contingency bills that were approved Tuesday by the Cabinet, despite doubts voiced by some key lawmakers. New Komeito, the larger of the LDP's two coalition partners, is particularly sensitive about measures that would give greater power to the government or restrict the rights of the people in emergencies. "There are not many points in the (latest) legislation over which the LDP and New Komeito are likely to disagree," as it only maps out the framework of how Japan copes with emergencies, a senior New Komeito member said. "Differences will become more apparent when legislation that would restrict people's rights is submitted." Meanwhile, remarks by LDP heavyweight Hiromu Nonaka over the weekend indicated there is discord in the party over how fast to proceed with Diet debate on the emergency laws. "Why must we rush?" he asked, speaking to reporters at a Beijing hotel. "We are too concerned with this issue. The most important things to be discussed now are matters pertaining to the economy." But because Nonaka's political influence has declined in recent months, his caution is not expected to have much impact. On the other hand, the opposition camp does not seem to have a united stance toward the government-submitted bills. Last month, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) adopted a basic policy on the issue. It wants the government to discuss SDF responses to natural disasters and emergencies that police would not be able to handle, including large-scale terrorist attacks. The party said the government must give more authority to the Diet in dealing with emergencies,

including the power to halt SDF operations. But a schism may surface within the DPJ if its top leaders - - and not its labor-backed party ranks -- agree to support amended versions of the bills.

2. US-Japan Relations

The Asahi Shimbun (Toshiaki Miura, "SCOWCROFT: DISPATCH OF SDF SHIPS A 'HALLMARK' CONTRIBUTION," Washington, 04/17/02) held an interview with Brent Scowcroft, a former lieutenant general in the Air Force, on the state of the Japan-US alliance following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the US. Asked about the implications of the war on terrorism on the US-Japan alliance, Scowcroft answered, "I don't think it will fundamentally change the alliance, but it changes the United States' perspective. The main aspect of the war on terrorism will be intelligence. It will not be military combat." He praised the Japanese contribution at the same time, saying, "What's important about this one is that for the first time you have made a military contribution. It's a hallmark in a sense." Asked about his assessment of a report by Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and others which says that the Anglo-American relationship should be the role model for the US-Japan alliance, Scowcroft stated, "Not the way the Anglo-American relationship is because their culture works toward drawing us together. We speak the same language and have the same historical heritage. So it's kind of a "natural" relationship. The peoples (of the US and Japan) don't understand each other very well and so there's lot of misunderstanding. A lot of misunderstanding breeds some hostility. There hasn't been much hostility, but that's because we've worked so hard at being allies. It will take a strong effort of will on both sides to overcome the lack of natural ties between us."

3. Japanese Logistical Support for US

Kyodo ("JAPAN, U.S. TO DISCUSS SDF DEPLOYMENT EXTENSION," Washington, 04/18/02) reported that Japan and the US agreed Tuesday to hold a meeting in Tokyo in early May to confirm the need for Japan's armed forces to continue supporting the US military campaign in Afghanistan, Japanese officials said. The US told Japan that the US military's need for support will continue because the fight against the al-Qaeda network is expected to last beyond May 19, the end of the term of the deployment. The Japanese government is seeking to extend the support duration. Japan also called on the US to improve the implementation of the bilateral Status of Forces Agreement and redouble efforts to prevent rape and other crimes committed by U.S. service members in Japan. At the meeting, the two sides also agreed to closely discuss measures to be taken by Japan under proposed war contingency legislation designed to facilitate the operation of US forces helping the Self-Defense Forces, the officials said.

4. Japanese New Envoy to CD

The Asahi Shimbun ("PACIFIST HOPEFUL OF SECURE FUTURE," Tokyo, 04/19/02) reported on political science scholar Kuniko Inoguchi, the newly appointed ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. In explaining her dedication to her new post, Inoguchi proposed that ordinary people be allowed to have a say in policy-making for disarmament. She also suggested a disarmament fund be established and called on schools to put more emphasis on ways of achieving disarmament. Progress at the multinational Conference on Disarmament has slowed recently. But Inoguchi said, "I want to convey the notion of sustainable disarmament. I hope to persuade the United States to commit to this."

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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