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I. United States

1. US Missile Defense

The Associated Press ("US TESTS LAND-BASED DEFENSE MISSILE," Vandenberg Air Force Base, 08/16/03) reported that a missile was launched Saturday in a test of its flight performance and potential for use as part of a land-based defense system. The prototype, launched from a silo at Vandenberg Air Force Base, is designed to intercept limited long-range ballistic missiles. The Bush administration wants a missile defense system to include rockets based at Vandenberg. The launch did not test the missile's ability to intercept an incoming rocket. Maj. Stacee Bako said more tests

are planned this fall in the Marshall Islands. The three-stage booster was designed by Orbital Sciences Corp.

2. DPRK Regional Relations

The New York Times (James Brooke, "NORTH KOREA LASHES OUT AT NEIGHBORS," Tokyo, 08/18/03) reported that amid signs of growing diplomatic and military isolation, the DPRK lashed out at the US, ROK and Japan today, barely a week before the scheduled start of international talks on the DPRK's nuclear program. Russia, traditionally an ally of the DPRK, embarked today on a 10-day maritime exercise, partly in waters near the DPRK, that will involve two traditional enemies of the North, Japan and ROK. The exercise is the first time that warships from those three countries have conducted joint maneuvers. Also today, the PRC and Japan announced that for the first time they would conduct mutual visits by warships. In addition, on Sept. 1, Shigeru Ishiba, chief of Japan's Defense Agency, is to travel to Shanghai and Beijing, the first visit by a Japanese defense minister in five years. Accentuating the DPRK's isolation, an ROK navy patrol boat fired five rounds today at a DPRK fishing boat, which entered what ROK considers its territorial waters. All this comes only a day after the US announced plans for joint naval exercises next month in the Coral Sea off northeastern Australia, a move that US officials said was intended to send a message to the DPRK to dismantle its nuclear weapons program. 'I'd like to solve this diplomatically, and I believe we can," President Bush told Armed Forces Radio and Television in an interview released by the White House today. "It's going to take a lot of persuasion by countries besides the US to convince him."

3. DPRK-ROK World Student Games

Reuters (Paul Eckert, "N.KOREA DROPS GAMES BOYCOTT AFTER SOUTH'S APOLOGY," Seoul, 08/19/03) reported that the DPRK withdrew its threat to boycott the world student games in ROK on Tuesday, saying it accepted an apology from the ROK's president over the burning of a DPRK flag at protests in Seoul last week. Following an apology by South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun, North Korea said it would show "patriotic will and broad magnanimity" and send a delegation to the August 21-31 Universiade Games in the southeastern city of Taegu. In a move that drew sharp criticism that he kowtowed to the DPRK, Roh expressed regret at the August 15 incident and instructed officials not to let it happen again. "It is improper to burn North Korea's national flag and the portrait of leader Kim Jong-il. I feel regretful over this," the spokeswoman quoted him as saying. "I hope this will not happen again," he said. The decision to end the boycott was made because ROK "clearly expressed regret at it and promised the North that it would prevent the recurrence of such an incident," the committee said in a statement issued by the KCNA news agency.

4. ROK on Anti-DPRK Activism

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT VOICES REGRET OVER ANTI-PYONGYANG RALLIES," 08/19/03) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-Hyun expressed regret over anti-Pyongyang demonstrations here that have pushed inter-Korean reconciliation into stalemate. "Burning DPRK flags and the portrait of Chairman Kim Jong-Il was inappropriate. It is very regrettable," Roh said, according to his office. The comments were seen as a conciliatory gesture toward North Korea which abruptly withdrew its athletes from the World Student Games due to open in the southern city of Daegu on Thursday. Thousands of conservatives held an anti-DPRK rally last week in Seoul, burning DPRK flags and a life-size image of the DPRK leader. They also called for strong ties between Seoul and Washington and urged the Stalinist North to dismantle its nuclear weapons program. Roh instructed his cabinet to take prompt measures so that the World Student

Games will proceed smoothly. The DPRK had promised to dispatch a 218-member delegation, including 88 athletes and 24 journalists, to Daegu. "I hope such incidents will not be repeated," he added.

5. ROK Joint Labor Strike

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREAN UNIONS ON JOINT STRIKE OVER SHORTENED WORK WEEK," 08/19/03) reported that ROK's two leading union collectives launched a joint strike nationwide to press for better terms and conditions on the proposed shortened work week. The industrial action was joined by 42,000 workers, members of what is said to be the country's biggest Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU) and the second biggest Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU). FKTU and KCTU have forged a united front since the government sent its own bill on the shortened work week to the parliament for approval after failing to broker a labor-management deal. The rare one-day joint strike had a limited impact on the industry as big unions at Hyundai Motor and other large companies decided not to take part in the action. The umbrella union groups, who say the proposed government bill panders to management instead of meeting labor demands, were planning massive protest rallies before the parliament building in Seoul. Though agreeing to cut the working week to five days, management and labor negotiators have been at odds over how to reschedule paid leave and when to introduce the shortened work week. Workers have demanded paid leave of up to 27 days per year, longer than the management's proposal of up to 22 days under the shortened work week system. They also want to introduce the five-day work week this year, while management want to delay its implementation and start the new system by 2005. An increasing number of South Korean companies have recently allowed employees to take every other Saturday off or to work five days a week. But many SOUTH KOREANS still work six days a week.

6. Australia on PRC Human Rights

Asia Pulse ("AUSTRALIA'S HOWARD POSITIVE ON CHINA HUMAN RIGHTS DIALOGUE," Canberra, 08/19/03) reported that Australian Prime Minister John Howard said today he was satisfied with the PRC's human rights dialogue. He discussed the issue with Premier Wen Jiabao during his short trip to Beijing. "Both of us expressed satisfaction with the human rights dialogue," Howard told reporters. "We both thought it's superior to what used to happen before when Australia joined generic statements about human rights that didn't appear to have any impact. "We think we've made more headway on this issue. "And the premier indicated to me towards the end of the discussion that he would like to keep the momentum of that human rights dialogue going."

7. PRC-Australia Relations

Asia Pulse ("CHINA'S PRESIDENT HU TO VISIT AUSTRALIA BY YEAR-END," 08/19/03) reported that the PRC's President Hu Jintao will visit Australia before the end of the year, demonstrating the importance the PRC attaches to ties with the country, Prime Minister John Howard said. Howard made the announcement of Hu's visit in Beijing after meeting with him, Premier Wen Jiabao and former president and now chairman of the military commission Jiang Zemin. "I can announce that President Hu Jintao will visit Australia later this year," he told reporters. "I am delighted that he has accepted my invitation. "This is a very important symbol of how important the PRC regard the relationship and how important we regard it. "The fact that he will visit Australia as one of the very first countries he visits on a bilateral basis as president is a measure of the closeness of the relationship and the respect that both our countries pay to that relationship." Howard said Hu had a different style to his predecessor and it was important they get to know each other on a personal

basis. He said the PRC president's visit would give them a chance to further explore their formal economic relationship and allow Hu to see Australia. Howard said Canberra and Beijing would start talks next month on a trade agreement that could lead to a free trade deal between the two countries.

8. US Navy Submarine Hunts

USA Today (Emma Schwartz, "SUB HUNT RISKS STIRRING UP CHINA, NORTH KOREA," 08/19/03) reported that the Navy plans to begin testing a new method for hunting hostile submarines this fall off the coast of Japan, and the test will include looking for the real thing: diesel-electric DPRK and PRC subs prowling in the Sea of Japan. The Navy says the tests are not intended to be hostile and technically involve hunting only for submarines from allies such as Japan. But Navy officials acknowledge that the tests will also be watching for DPRK and PRC subs because they frequent the areas where the tests will take place. Defense officials say both nations' submarines pose threats that are getting more serious. "North Korea maintains one of the world's largest submarine forces," said a defense official who asked not to be named. The official monitors the threat posed by potentially hostile naval forces. "Although they are antiquated by US standards, they could pose a significant risk to naval operations" in the event of a war on the Korean peninsula, the official said. The official said that the PRC is committed to extending the size and range of its submarine fleet while acquiring modern weapons to transform itself "from a coastal defense navy to a force capable of sustained open-ocean operations." The tests, as well as similar trials off Hawaii, are scheduled to begin in about two months. They are intended to try out the prototype of a detection device that analyzes underwater color patterns and detects color gradations too faint for the human eye to notice. Early versions of the device called the Littoral Airborne Sensor Hyperspectral, or LASH have spotted whales and submarines below the surface. Current detection methods used by the Navy rely on sonar and other methods to "hear" the location of enemy submarines. The LASH system is designed to permit the Navy to see where submarines are. Analysts fear the tests will provoke an angry reaction from the DPRK. "No matter what the US military says, you are going to get an adverse reaction from the DPRK," says Charles Ferguson, a former submariner and a Korea expert at the State Department from 2000 to 2002. "I think the Pentagon is willing to live with that."

9. PRC Mustard Gas Crisis

Reuters ("CHINA MUSTARD GAS CRISIS," Beijing, 08/18/03) reported that leaking barrels of Japanese chemical weapons from World War II that poisoned dozens of people in the PRC have been neutralized and are no longer a threat, the official New China News Agency said today. Forty-three people had been sent to the hospital since five barrels of mustard gas were unearthed at a construction site in the northeastern city of Qiqihar on Aug. 4, it said. The agency quoted the top Communist Party official in Qiqihar as saying that the chemical weapons had been "disinfected thoroughly." Last week, Japan apologized, and the government pledged to dispose of the arms as soon as possible. Japanese doctors who came to China to help treat the ill went back to Japan today, the news agency said.

10. PRC Super ID Card

The New York Times (David W. Chen, "CHINA READIES SUPER ID CARD, A WORRY TO SOME," Beijing, 08/18/03) carried an analytic article that reported that for almost two decades, PRC citizens have been defined, judged and, in some cases, constrained by their all-purpose national identification card, a laminated document the size of a driver's license. But starting next year, they

will face something new and breathtaking in scale: an electronic card that will store that vital information for all 960 million eligible citizens on chips that the authorities anywhere can access. Officials hope that the technologically advanced cards will help stamp out fraud and counterfeiting involving the current cards, protecting millions of people from those problems and saving billions of dollars. Providing the cards to everyone is expected to take five or six years. But the vagueness and vastness of the undertaking has prompted some criticism that the data collection could be used to quash dissent and to infringe on privacy. The project comes at a time when the PRC is doggedly remaking itself into a leaner economic machine in line with the standards of the World Trade Organization. But the PRC is also struggling to track a restless and poor rural population that continues to gravitate toward the cities. So officials are no doubt gambling that the cards can help them juggle two important if conflicting interests: promoting economic liberalization, while monitoring citizens in an increasingly fluid society. There has been little public discussion or news about the new cards. Brief but rapturous accounts in the official press say the cards will "protect citizens." Yet many of China's toughest critics, at home and abroad, are skeptical, objecting to the concentration of so much information at the government's fingertips. "Given the record of the PRC government on protecting the privacy of its citizens and given the prevalence of corruption, how can we ensure that this information will be managed properly?" asked Nicolas Becquelin, research director at the Hong Kong office of Human Rights in China. "It's scary what the PRC government is doing, because there is no counterweight."

II. Japan

1. Japan-Germany Relations over DPRK Issues

Kyodo ("KOIZUMI WINS SCHROEDER'S SUPPOORT OVER ABDUCTIONS," Beijing, 08/18/03) reported that Japanese and German leaders reaffirmed their commitment Monday to peacefully address Pyongyang's nuclear arms program, with Berlin expressing support for Tokyo's efforts to resolve DPRK's past abductions of Japanese. In a joint news conference after the summit, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said he and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder also agreed to cooperate to help rebuild Iraq. "I explained (to Schroeder) that Japan will seek a peaceful diplomatic solution," Koizumi said, referring to scheduled six-party talks Aug. 27-29 in Beijing on the North's nuclear ambitions involving the US, DPRK and ROK, PRC, Japan and Russia. "We agreed on the need for efforts to (make the North) scrap the nuclear program through the six-nation talks," Schroeder said at the news conference. Schroeder said he told Koizumi during the meeting that Germany, which maintains diplomatic ties with DPRK, will keep urging it to abandon the nuclear program and to settle the issue of the past kidnappings of Japanese. "I'll maintain today's remarks (supportive for Japan over the unresolved issues) in any occasions including talks with North Korea," the German chancellor said. Japan has never had diplomatic ties with the North but many European countries, including Germany, maintain ties with it. The kidnapping issue is the main obstacle preventing the two countries from normalizing bilateral ties. Last September, DPRK admitted it abducted 13 Japanese nationals decades ago and repatriated five, saying the others are dead. The abductees' families dispute the claims. Koizumi said Sunday that Japan will raise the abduction issue during the six-way talks. The comments apparently underscore Japan's willingness to increase pressure on DPRK to resolve the issue quickly on the international stage, though he added he anticipates the talks' main focus will be the nuclear standoff. On Iraq, Koizumi said the leaders reaffirmed a policy to cooperate with each other in helping reconstruct the postwar country "as a responsible member in the international community."

2. DPRK Multilateral Talks

Kyodo ("N.KOREA SHOWS TOUGH STANCE ON 6-WAY TALKS," Beijing, 08/18/03) reported that DPRK said Monday it will stick to its nuclear weapons program unless the US changes its policy toward Pyongyang during upcoming six-nation talks. The official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said in a commentary that DPRK will not abandon its policy of using nuclear weapons as a deterrent if Washington does not agree to change its hostile policy toward Pyongyang. The Korean-language KCNA report was monitored in Beijing. The six-party talks to discuss a solution to the dispute arising from the North Korean nuclear standoff are set to begin in Beijing on Aug. 27 and last for three days. The meeting will bring together the US, DPRK and ROK, PRC, Japan and RF. DPRK had previously insisted on bilateral negotiations with the US on its nuclear arms. The US has told Japan and ROK it is ready to hold bilateral dialogue with DPRK in Beijing, a US-DPRK negotiating source said. Washington reiterated the policy at a preparatory meeting of the US, Japan and ROK last Wednesday and Thursday in Washington. KCNA also quoted the Rodong Sinmun, the mouthpiece of the North's governing Workers Party of Korea, as saying Monday that if Japan raises DPRK's past abductions of Japanese at the multilateral meeting, the North will take harsh steps against Japan. Without elaborating, the newspaper said the abductions are not an issue to be discussed at the six-way conference and reiterated the matter has already been settled. Japan intends to raise the abductions of decades ago during the talks and hold specific discussions about them in bilateral talks with DPRK. The Japanese government has demanded a settlement to the abduction issue, saying it will not resume talks with the North on normalizing bilateral ties unless DPRK sends to Japan the relatives of five Japanese who were abducted by the North in 1978 and repatriated last year.

3. Koizumi's Tour of European Countries

Asahi Shinbun ("KOIZUMI IN EUROPE TO MEET 3 LEADERS,"08/18/03) reported that before wrap-up of tour of European countries, Koizumi is scheduled to meet with the leaders of Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic. "All three countries are important to Japan's relationship with the EU, with Germany having been in a leadership position and Poland and the Czech Republic about to become new members," Koizumi said last week. "Strengthening ties with those countries will in turn enhance Japan's relationship with the EU." Germany is a core member of the EU, while the Czech Republic and Poland are scheduled to gain membership to the union in May 2004. There are no major outstanding issues to be discussed during the visit. In Germany, Koizumi's itinerary even includes attending a full five-hour performance of Richard Wagner's opera "Tannhauser" at the Bayreuth Festival. Among the 10 countries expected to join the EU next May, Poland and the Czech Republic, because of the size of their populations and economies, are particularly important. The last Japanese prime minister to visit Poland was Toshiki Kaifu in 1990. Koizumi will be the first Japanese leader to visit the Czech Republic. Koizumi wants his overtures to Poland and the Czech Republic to serve as an example of how to conduct future relations with other EU members as the union expands. Joint communiques will be issued following Koizumi's meetings with the leaders of both countries. One of the issues the leaders will discuss is that of international support for Iraq reconstruction.

4. Japan's Roles in Iraqi Restruction

The Asahi Shinbun (Katsura Ishibashi, "JAPANESE WELCOMED BY IRAQI KURD LEADER,"08/18/03) reported that a Kurdish member of the Iraqi Interim Governing Council says Iraq needs every support from Japan to help it back to its feet. "We need to rebuild Iraq from zero, (and we are) expecting all kinds of assistance, including investment from Japan," Jalal Talabani, head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, one of the two major ruling parties in the Kurdish region, said in an interview last week. He said sending the Self Defense Force (SDF) to Iraq on a humanitarian

mission would be a good first step. The 70-year-old Talabani claimed major parts of Iraq have become stable and suggested the SDF should be stationed in cities like Najaf in the south, adding that it would also be welcome in Kurdish-inhabited areas, such as Khanaqin. As examples of possible Japanese contributions, he suggested rebuilding infrastructure such as schools and hospitals, something he recommended to Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda and Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi on Friday. Concerning the U.S.-led coalition force stationed in Iraq, he estimated that it will take one or two years before it can leave, and only after a new Iraq is formed with a democratically elected government and administrative bodies, including police and self-defense forces. Talabani also made clear at a news conference Friday that the demand for an independent Kurdistan is not a central issue, saying, "The dream will remain." Before that, with a realistic view of reuniting the country, he said, "A pluralistic, democratic and federalist government is the only way."

5. Yasukuni Shrine Issues

The Asahi Shinbun ("KOIZUMI:SHRINE NOT ISSUE," 08/18/03) reported that Perhaps mindful of the furor triggered by his visits to Yasukuni Shrine, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's policy manifesto for the Liberal Democratic Party presidential election will not include any mention of annual visits on Aug. 15, the anniversary of Japan's surrender in World War II. Asked by reporters whether the Yasukuni issue would feature in the policy document, Koizumi replied: "That was settled two years ago. Upon consideration of different factors, I have decided to avoid Aug. 15. I already explained my reasons two years ago." The LDP presidential race is scheduled for late September. Prior to his election as party president in April 2001, Koizumi vowed he would visit Yasukuni Shrine each Aug. 15 "no matter what form of criticism I may face." His pledge was directed at winning the support of the Japan War-Bereaved Association, which wields considerable influence at voting time. With both PRC and ROK hinting at diplomatic fallout if he visited Yasukuni Shrine on the war anniversary, Koizumi in 2001 went two days earlier. He has since made two subsequent visits, but never during August. Visits are controversial because Yasukuni Shrine honors all of Japan's war dead, including Class-A war criminals. Koizumi also told reporters he did not think plans for a secular war memorial to take the place of Yasukuni had stalled, even though no go-ahead has been given for building an alternative memorial.

6. US-DPRK Relations

The Asahi Shinbun ("US. OPEN TO N.KOREA ONE-ON-ONE,"Washington, 08/16/03) reported that US officials are now ready to have one-on-one contact with their DPRK counterparts during six-way talks on Pyongyang's nuclear arms program slated for Aug. 27-29 in Beijing, sources said. The US officials discussed the issue at a meeting here Wednesday and Thursday with senior officials from ROK and Japan. US officials stressed that they would make "contact" with DPRK representatives but not hold an official bilateral meeting. Washington had refused to enter into bilateral talks on grounds that Pyongyang envoys could talk to the US side while officials from the other countries are at the table.

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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