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I. United States

1. PRC on DPRK Asylum Seekers Reuters ("CHINA SAYS N.KOREAN REFUGEE SOLUTION NO PRECEDENT," Beijing, 03/19/02) reported that the PRC said its decision to let a group of DPRK asylum seekers leave for Seoul will not set a precedent. "I would like to point out that such a way of dealing with the situation does not constitute a precedent for resolving similar situations in the future," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhang Qiyue told a news conference. Zhang warned potential organizers against similar attempts. "We warn those individuals and organizations who make use of illegal entrants to stir up trouble and deliberately challenge Chinese laws. The Chinese government would by no means allow or ignore their illegal activities," she said. "We hope they will not judge the situation erroneously and make trouble in China," she said.

2. PRC-US Relations

The Associated Press (Ted Anthony, "CHINA LAMENTS U.S. 'ERRONEOUS ACTS,'" Beijing, 03/19/02) reported that PRC foreign ministry spokesperson Zhang Qiyue said Tuesday, "In as short as one month, China has seen a series of erroneous acts by the US side. We hope that the US side can correct its erroneous activities." Otherwise, she predicted, there would be "adverse effects on China-US relations." On Monday, the PRC's official Xinhua News Agency said by letting Taiwan

defense minister Tang Yao-ming visit, the US had "blown a gust of strange, chilly winds into Sino-US relations." The PRC also criticized a newspaper report earlier this month citing the Pentagon's Nuclear Posture Review that listed the PRC as one of seven nations the US could target with nuclear missiles.

3. Philippines-US Anti-terror War

Agence France-Presse ("NO PERMANENT US DEPLOYMENT IN PHILIPPINES: WASHINGTON ENVOY," Manila, 03/19/02) reported that the Philippine ambassador to the US Albert Del Rosario insisted there would be no permanent role for the US military in his country. Del Rosario said that the current deployment of US troops to train Philippine soldiers in their confrontation with Abu Sayyaf guerrillas was of a carefully limited scope and duration. "Our constitution does not allow long term basing by another country in the Philippines," Del Rosario said at a forum at the Heritage Foundation.

Agence France-Presse ("MORE US TROOPS DUE IN PHILIPPINES IN APRIL," Manila, 03/19/02) reported that the Philippines Military announced that another 1,700 US soldiers are due in the Philippines next month for training exercises with local troops. They will join a two-week war game starting April 22 on the main Philippine island of Luzon, armed forces spokesman Edilberto Adan said. Brigadier General Adan said the "Balikatan" or shoulder-to-shoulder drill was separate to a joint training exercise involving 660 American soldiers in the southern Philippines. The objectives of the latest exercise include improving the "interoperability" of Philippine and US forces and combat readiness for combined operations, Adan said.

4. PRC-Australia Falun Gong

Agence France-Presse ("AUSTRALIA RAPPED FOR APPEASING CHINA OVER FALUNGONG," Canberra, 03/19/02) reported that supporters of the Falun Gong religious group is accusing Australia's foreign minister, Alexander Downer, of caving in to the PRC. Prior to the arrival of PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan, Downer invoked a diplomatic privileges law to ban demonstrations outside the PRC Embassy by supporters of the Falun Gong religious group. Australian Greens Senator Bob Brown accused the government of appeasing Beijing. "On the very day the prime minister is flying to London to comment on the Zimbabwean election, we've got the foreign minister here shelving the right to protest as a minister from the communist regime flies in," Brown said.

Reuters (Andrea Hopkins, "CHINA TELLS AUSTRALIA TO CRACK DOWN ON FALUN GONG," Canberra, 03/19/02) reported that PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan urged Australia on Tuesday to crack down on members of the banned Falun Gong spiritual group, who targeted Tang's visit to Australia to protest against their treatment in PRC. Tang said a protest by Falun Gong supporters outside of the PRC Embassy in Canberra should not be tolerated. "To Minister Downer from the bottom of my heart I told him that these people should not be allowed to provoke trouble or create trouble any longer," Tang said. Tang also declared, "Any government of a sovereign country under the rule of law should have Falun Gong, this evil cult, punished according to law." About 100 Falun Gong supporters gathered in front of the Australian parliament during the meeting between Downer and Tang before marching to the PRC Embassy, where a small group of Falun Gong followers have protested since mid-2001.

5. Russia-US Weapons Sales

The Associated Press ("RUSSIAN WEAPONS COMPANY HOPES TO SELL ITS MISSILES TO

UNITED STATES," Moscow, 03/19/02) reported that top Russian weapons manufacturer Vympel said Tuesday that it was negotiating the sale of air-to-air missiles to US. Vympel is Russia's leading manufacturer of aircraft-borne missiles. Vympel company has been negotiating the sale of 18,000 RVV-AE missiles for mounting on US-built F-15 and F/A-18 fighters sold to third nations, its director Gennady Sokolovsky said.

6. Japan Warships in PRC

The Associated Press ("JAPANESE WARSHIPS TO VISIT CHINA," Tokyo, 03/19/02) reported that Japan's Foreign Ministry announced Tuesday that for the first time since World War II, warships from Japan and the PRC will visit each other's ports in a sign of growing military cooperation. A flotilla of PRC naval vessels will likely visit Japan sometime this spring, while the Japanese contingent will likely embark next year, said Keiji Iwamoto of the ministry's PRC division. Details of the visits have yet to be determined. The breakthrough came after military talks Monday evening, in which the two countries strengthened bonds but also discussed differences over nuclear weapons and growing military budgets, which reached record highs this year of US$20 billion in the PRC and US$38.4 billion in Japan.

7. Ehime Maru

The New York Times (Howard French, "JAPAN: ACCORD ON FISHING-BOAT PAYMENTS," 03/19/02) reported that the US Navy has agreed to pay US$10 million to the local government of Uwajima for the sinking of the Ehime Maru, officials said. Nine students, teachers and crew members on the boat died when the submarine Greeneville surfaced beneath the trawler on February 9, 2001. The US$10 million will include the cost to Uwajima of a new training boat. Separate compensation talks are still going on between the Navy and families of the victims.

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.
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BK21 The Education and Research Corps for East Asian Studies
Department of Political Science, Korea University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

International Peace Research Institute (PRIME),
Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan

Monash Asia Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Brandon Yu: napsnet@nautilus.org

Berkeley, California, United States

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

Kim Young-soo: yskim328@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hibiki Yamaguchi: hibikiy84@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Saiko Iwata: saiko@akira.ne.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Hiroya Takagi: hiroya_takagi@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

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

Wu Chunsi: cswu@fudan.ac.cn
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

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