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I. United States

1. ROK-DPRK Relations

Agence France-Presse ("S.KOREAN LEADER AIMS TO GIVE NEW IMPETUS TO ENGAGEMENT WITH NORTH," Seoul, 9/19/01) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-Jung launched a campaign Wednesday to strengthen support for his engagement with the DPRK after the two sides agreed to hold new family reunions. ROK Unification Minister Hong Soon-young will brief opposition leaders on his talks this week with DPRK officials. The rare briefing underlined Kim's desire to breathe new life into his "Sunshine Policy." However, ROK opposition leaders Lee Hoi- chang and Kim Jong-pil agreed on September 18 to press the government to secure national assembly approval before giving new aid to the DPRK or making other changes to its DPRK policy. The US responded to Tuesday's inter- Korean agreement by renewing its offer to talks with the DPRK "at any time and place." US Secretary of State Colin Powell said, "I reinforced to the minister that we are prepared to engage with the North Koreans at any time and place that they wish, to engage without any preconditions and with both sides bringing whatever agenda items to the table they wish to."

2. Analysis of Inter-Korean Relations

Reuters (Paul Eckert, "ANALYSIS-HOPE, SKEPTICISM AT NEW KOREAN AGREEMENT PHOTOS," Seoul, 9/19/01) reported that analysts said the inter-Korean agreement announced on September 18 to resume stalled projects such as family reunions and a cross-border railway and road project merely repackaged deals struck more than a year ago but not implemented. Lee Jung-hoon, a professor of international relations at Yonsei University, said, "There's nothing really new on the agenda. All we have so far is political symbolism. It is very premature to make any positive assessments of North Korea's attitude, which can change overnight." However, he said, the accords would bolster ROK President Kim Dae-jung in the face of criticism of his policies toward the DPRK. Meanwhile, the Chosun Ilbo daily said in an editorial, "It remains to be seen whether, as in the past, it will get what it can economically by agreeing to a few one-time events while dragging its feet on substantial and concrete progress." Suspicions that the DPRK would demand new inducements to stay engaged with the ROK were raised when DPRK envoys to the September 15-18 talks in Seoul requested donations of electricity and rice for their country. The lack of hard evidence of domestic change within the DPRK and its failure to reciprocate ROK goodwill has many observers arguing that the DPRK is merely maneuvering for aid to maintain its communist system. Lee said, "For the Kim Jong-il regime, the priority is regime survival, and the fact is that it is surviving pretty well - even if its people are suffering. So long as the regime is able to survive, then it will be content not to change the status quo." Analysts said the litmus test of DPRK intentions will be whether it moves beyond symbolic events, such as family reunions, exchanges of athletes and even new ministerial talks. [Ed. note: This article appeared in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for September 19, 2001.]

3. UN Role in US Retaliation

The Washington Times (Nicholas Kralev, "CHINA, IRAN SEEK U.N. ROLE IN RETALIATION," 9/19/01) reported that the PRC and Iran led an effort on September 18 to push the US into obtaining UN approval for any military activity against Afghanistan for harboring terrorists. Both countries made such UN approval a condition of their help to the US. Both nations also urged the US to submit evidence of Osama bin Laden's involvement in last week's attacks. US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher replied that a UN resolution "makes clear already that, because of the attacks in East Africa, bin Laden needs to be brought to justice, and the Taliban has to end its practice of harboring terrorist groups." PRC President Jiang Zemin also insisted that the US provide "irrefutable evidence" of bin Laden's involvement before any attacks. However, US Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said that the US would not share its intelligence because it would reveal methods that would be needed to fight terrorists in the future. [Ed. note: This article appeared in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for September 19, 2001.]

4. Taiwan Participation in WTO

The Associated Press (Naomi Koppel, "WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION OKS TAIWAN," Geneva, 9/19/01) reported that members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) formally cleared Taiwan for admission on September 18, a day after the PRC was approved. Terms for Taiwan's admission were completed 18 months ago but the final decision was delayed because of a 1992 understanding that the PRC would join first. The PRC, which claims Taiwan as part of PRC territory, at first objected to Taiwan's joining at all. It finally agreed Taiwan could join the WTO because it is a separate customs territory with different rules on importing goods. It will not be regarded as a country in its own right. Hong Kong and Macao, both recently handed back to the PRC, are also separate members of the WTO.

II. Republic of Korea

1. Inter-Korean Talks

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "TALKS RESTART STALLED RECONCILIATION BETWEEN KOREAS," Seoul, 09/19/01) reported that the inter-Korean ministerial talks that ended in Seoul Tuesday have set the stage for the two Koreas to revive their reconciliation process, ROK officials and analysts said. "The ministerial talks put an end to the six months of stalemate, and provided an opportunity for a great leap in inter-Korean relations," Unification Minister Hong Soon-young said. Officials and analysts noted that the statement contains more agreements and plans for joint projects than any other previous inter-Korean negotiation. They include reunions of long-separated families, an "early" start of construction work for a cross-border railway and a driveway, and the opening of an overland tourist route along the east coast. Park said that the DPRK's "relatively positive" attitude on those programs reflects its desire not to undermine the ROK policy of engagement. Analysts said that the DPRK agreed to end the lull in ties with the ROK partly to save the sunshine policy, from which the DPRK government benefits.

2. ROK-US Talks

Joongang Ilbo ("POWELL URGES RESUMPTION OF DPRK-U.S. DIALOGUE," Seoul, 09/19/01) reported that US Secretary of State Colin Powell expressed support toward ROK President Kim Dae-jung's call for resumption of DPRK-US dialogue once more on Tuesday. Powell, after holding talks with ROK Foreign Affairs Minister Han Seung-soo on Tuesday, said in a press conference that the US is still open to talks with the DPRK without any strings attached.

3. IAEA on DPRK

Joongang Ilbo (Kim In-ku, "IAEA CALLS FOR NORTH'S COOPERATION IN NUCLEAR INSPECTION," Seoul, 09/18/01) reported that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at the 45th General Conference held on Monday in Vienna, Austria expressed concern over the DPRK's failure to implement the convention on nuclear safety and urged the nation to show cooperation for the agency's field inspection. Mohammad El Baradei, Executive Director of the IAEA, disclosed in his opening speech the same day that despite the IAEA's monitoring, the agency is still not able to confirm whether the DPRK is properly upholding its nuclear safety regulations. Nevertheless, Baradei added that IAEA will continue to keep an eye on the DPRK freeze of its nuclear facilities and its graphite reactors.

III. Japan

1. US Allies' Reaction to Attacks

The Financial Times (Alexandra Harney, "US CALL TO ARMS EXPOSES ASIAN DIVISIONS," 09/19/01, 13) reported that US calls for support after last week's attacks is exposing political divisions within its strongest allies in Asia such as Japan, the ROK and the Philippines. Although Japan, the ROK, and the Philippines have promised their backing for US retaliatory action, the support at the top betrays deep-seated reservations in each country that analysts say reflects a fundamental reluctance to participate in the US's anti-terrorism campaign at all. In Japan, Tomohisa Sakanaka, board member at the Research Institute for Peace and Security in Tokyo, called for

restraint in Japan's cooperation with the US, saying "Japan does not understand Islamic fundamentalism. The Middle East is very far away from Japan. It is dangerous to get involved." In Seoul, in addition to political division, demonstrators shouting, "we oppose war" were outside the US embassy. According to the Financial Times, some analysts fear domestic squabbling over potential contributions could damage Japan and the ROK's international reputations.

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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