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I. **United States**

1. **ROK Multi-lateral Talks Pessimism**

Agence France-Presse ("S.KOREA WARNS AGAINST HOPES OF NUCLEAR CRISIS SOLUTION AT SIX-WAY TALKS," 08/20/03) reported that ROK Foreign Minister Yoon Young-Kwan warned against expectations of a settlement at next week's six-way talks addressing the DPRK nuclear crisis. Yoon said finding a solution to the stand-off would be difficult at a single meeting, and said further rounds of negotiations were likely necessary before the crisis could be resolved. "It would be hard to resolve the problem through a few rounds of talks, given the nature of nuclear issues," Yoon said in a meeting with journalists from local and foreign media. "It is a correct view to say that a long process for settlement is now beginning, rather than being too optimistic or pessimistic about the outcomes of the first round of talks." Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Lee Soo-Hyuk, will lead the ROK delegation to the six-nation talks to solve the 10-month nuclear crisis over Pyongyang's nuclear weapons drive, Yoon said.

2. KEDO DPRK Reactor Project

The Japan Times, ("KEDO TO SCRAP REACTOR PROJECT IN NORTH KOREA," Tokyo, 08/20/03) reported that an international consortium in charge of constructing two light-water nuclear reactors in North Korea is likely to decide to freeze the project next month, diplomatic sources said Tuesday. Executive board members of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization, including Japan, the US and South Korea, are likely to call off the construction work when they meet in late September, the sources said. Any decision to effectively abandon the KEDO project would be put off until after the six-nation talks in the PRC scheduled for Aug. 27 to 29, but the board members have determined it cannot be postponed indefinitely, the sources said. The sources said that among the KEDO board members, Japan and the US already agree that halting the project is inevitable and would be difficult to resume in the future even if the DPRK agrees to halt nuclear weapons development. "As long as the Kim Jong Il administration is in place (in North Korea), it is dangerous to allow it to have a nuclear-related facility," said a source close to Japan-DPRK relations. A meeting of the KEDO Executive Board will be called around September 20 to decide on freezing the project, the sources said. The remaining member of the four-party board is the European Atomic Energy Community. However, the DPRK is not expected to swallow such a decision. The DPRK has already demanded compensation for losses incurred due to delays in the construction of the reactors during its talks with the US and the PRC in late April in Beijing.

3. DPRK on Russian Naval Exercises

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA DENOUNCES RUSSIAN NAVAL EXERCISES," Moscow, 08/20/03) reported that days before six-power talks on its nuclear program, the DPRK has denounced naval exercises Russian forces are about to begin with three other participants in the conference, Russia's defense minister said on Wednesday. Itar-Tass news agency said minister Sergei Ivanov told a video conference with Russian navy chiefs that Pyongyang had turned down an offer to send observers to the Far Eastern maneuvers, saying they would lead to "a sharpening of the atmosphere on the Korean peninsula." The sharp reaction from the DPRK came a week before the start of six-country talks on its nuclear program which has led to an international stand-off between Pyongyang and the US. Russia said its naval vessels would link up with US coastal forces in exercises in the Bering Straits and with Japanese and ROK forces for allied maneuvers in the Japan Sea, south of the Russian port of Nakhodka. Tass said up to 70,000 Russian military and civilian personnel as well as 60 vessels and 35 support ships would take part in the exercises, the main phase of which was due to take place between August 22 and 27.

4. DPRK on US Nuclear Inspection Demand

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA REJECTS US-DEMANDED EARLY NUCLEAR INSPECTION," Seoul, 08/20/03) reported that the DPRK rejected a US-demanded early inspection of its nuclear facilities as "absolutely unacceptable," toughening its stance ahead of six-nation nuclear crisis talks. The statement by the DPRK's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) came as the ROK's Foreign Minister Yoon Young-Kwan warned against expectations of a settlement at next week's talks in Beijing. KCNA said Washington was insisting on the formation of a new inspection team by the PRC, Japan, Russia, ROK, and the US, who are attending six-way talks. "The US demand for an early inspection of the DPRK (North Korea) nuclear facilities is absolutely unacceptable as it is a blatant interference in its internal affairs and an infringement upon its sovereignty," KCNA said. "This is little short of demanding the DPRK surrender to it. Surrender means death. The US call for an 'early inspection' of a sovereign state would only spark a conflict," KCNA added. The DPRK reiterated its demand for a softening in US policy towards the communist regime to ensure a

solution to solve the nuclear crisis.

5. DPRK-ROK World Student Games

Agence France-Presse ("DPRK TEAM ARRIVES FOR UNIVERSIADE IN SOUTH KOREA," Daegu, 08/20/03) reported that DPRK athletes arrived to take part in the World Student Games after the ROK made a rare expression of regret over anti-Pyongyang protests in Seoul last week. A 218-member delegation, including 94 athletes, arrived at the athletes' village under tight security Wednesday after officials reversed a shock decision to pull out of the competition because of the protests. They were greeted in Daegu by more than 300 cheering South Koreans, many waving the Unification flag which represents the divided Korean peninsula. Following last year's Asian Games in Busan, this is the second time the DPRK has sent a delegation to an international sporting event hosted by the ROK since the division of Korea in 1948. "Brothers in the South, we are happy to see you," the head of the DPRK delegation, Jon Guk-Man, said at Busan airport, 90 kilometers (60 miles) from Daegu. Some 300 DPRK cheerleaders, most of them women, arrived at Busan afterwards and were also given an enthusiastic welcome by hundreds of South Koreans. The athletes' delegation was accompanied by the DPRK's International Olympic Committee (IOC) member, Jang Ung, who pledged support for a joint ROK-DPRK team at next year's Athens Olympics.

6. US-Asia Economic Growth

Agence France-Presse ("SNOW HEADS TO TOKYO, BEIJING, PHUKET," 08/19/03) reported that US Treasury Secretary John Snow will visit Japan, the PRC, and Thailand next month, seeking to prod Asia to boost growth and to discuss the yuan exchange rate, the government said. "Achieving strong and vibrant global growth is one of the world's most pressing priorities," Snow said in a statement. "We live in an interdependent world economy where our fortunes are inextricably linked. Let me be clear: increased economic growth overseas equals more jobs here." Snow is to visit Tokyo September 1-2, Beijing from September 2-3 and Phuket, Thailand September 4-5 to meet with finance ministers of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum. In Japan, he planned to meet with top government and private policymakers, assessing the prospects for sustained economic growth, an anti-deflation battle and the effort to clean up bad loans in the banks. "Japan's growth is critical not only for its own citizens and for Asia, but also for Americans," Snow said. "Our economy directly benefits when Japan buys more of our goods and that creates jobs for Americans." Snow was expected to meet in Beijing with PRC leaders, top economic officials and business leaders, a Treasury Department statement said. "Secretary Snow will discuss a broad range of issues important to the country's economic relationship with the US, including liberalization and reform of the financial sector, trade, and exchange rate issues."

7. PRC SARS Public Fears

Agence France-Presse ("ONE THIRD OF ALL PRC FEAR RETURN OF SARS AS HEALTH SYSTEM REMAINS WEAK," 08/20/02) reported that one third of all PRC fear SARS will return later this year, amid warnings that the country's health system may not be able to cope with a new onslaught from the dreaded virus, state media said. Less than a week after the PRC's last two SARS patients were discharged from hospital, the China Daily reported that 30 percent of the nation's people fear the epidemic will bounce back, helped by a general drop in vigilance. That is according to a survey of 3,207 respondents in several large cities, conducted by the Horizon Research Group. Many PRC, including experts, have expressed worries that the SARS virus may thrive in relatively cool conditions, meaning it could reappear as winter approaches. Most of the respondents who told

Horizon Research Group they were fearful of the disease said they could not relax as long as there was no vaccine against SARS available. Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) emerged in south China's Guangdong province late last year, and quickly spread to become a global menace. It struck down more than 8,000 people and left more than 800 dead in 32 countries, with some 349 of the fatalities and 5,327 of the infections recorded in China.

8. PRC AIDS Arrest

Agence France-Presse ("PRC HEALTH OFFICIAL ARRESTED FOR LEAKING AIDS SECRETS," 08/20/03) reported that a leading health official in the PRC's AIDS-stricken Henan province has been arrested, allegedly for leaking secret documents on the infection of tens of thousands of villagers through blood transfusions, an AIDS activist revealed. Ma Shiwen, deputy director of the Henan Center for Disease Control (CDC), was arrested for leaking documents on the Henan epidemic to the non-governmental AIDS activist organization Aizhi Action Group, according to the group's director, Wan Yanhai. "According to health officials in Henan, Ma Shiwen was arrested in recent days and is being charged with leaking state secrets," Wan told AFP from the US, where he is a visiting scholar. "It's possible that the secrets leaked concerned official documents that were anonymously sent to Aizhi Action Group on August 24 last year and which revealed the extent of the AIDS outbreak in Henan," Wan said Tuesday. Wan was himself detained and charged with leaking state secrets days after he received the documents and posted them on his group's website. He was released a month later following a huge international outcry and after police confirmed that the documents were anonymously sent to the AIDS group. "As far as I know, Ma Shiwen has not been formally sacked, he is still deputy director of the section, he has just disappeared," a colleague at the Henan CDC told AFP Tuesday. "He may have committed some wrongdoing, or may have some sort of problem, we just don't know where he is," said the colleague who refused to identify himself. The Henan AIDS epidemic has long been a sensitive issue for the government which has worked to cover up the outbreak since it first came to light in the mid-1990s. Entire villages, including tens of thousands of poor villagers, contracted HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, from the mid-1980s because of unsanitary blood collections. The PRC's health ministry announced in August 2002 that about a million PRC were estimated to be carrying the HIV virus with a significant percentage in Henan, and warned that the figure could rise tenfold before the end of the decade.

9. PRC-Japan Mustard Gas

The Associated Press (Elaine Kurtenbacj, "WAR GHOSTS HAUNT CHINA-JAPAN DIPLOMACY," Shanghai, 08/20/03) reported that they surfaced without warning just days before the anniversary of Tokyo's World War II surrender: mustard-gas canisters abandoned by Japanese troops six decades ago, deadly time capsules from an ugly past that refuses to go away. The photos of PRC workers blistered and poisoned by nerve gas in the northern PRC city of Qiqihar this month fueled Beijing's annual criticism over Japan's wartime atrocities - something the PRC's communist government, which took power four years after the war ended, often invokes. Yet behind the invective, diplomacy continued, possibly even better than usual. PRC Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing went ahead with an earlier scheduled visit to Tokyo, announcing plans to relax visa restrictions for Japanese tourists. Meanwhile, unconfirmed Japanese media reports said the two sides were considering mutual warship visits. Though Beijing and Tokyo have yet to put generations-long war-related acrimony to rest, the PRC is looking to Japan more than ever for economic cooperation, technical aid and regional stability. "China knows it needs a good relationship with Japan," said Wu Guoguang, a political scientist at the PRC University of Hong Kong.

10. Japan-DPRK Abduction Issue

The Associated Press (Yuri Kageyama, "JAPAN STICKS TO ABDUCTIONS IN NUKE TALKS

Wed Aug 20, 2:31 PM ET

By YURI KAGEYAMA, Associated Press Writer TOKYO - Crucial talks between six nations next week in Beijing aim to focus on the DPRK's suspected nuclear weapons program. But Japan is unique in bringing another, highly emotional agenda to the table: the abduction of its citizens by DPRK spies in the 1970s and 1980s. Japan's chief negotiator said Wednesday that Tokyo wants the talks to press the DPRK on this issue, but the DPRK says bringing up the kidnappings would disrupt sensitive negotiations that took intense diplomatic pressure by the US to cobble together. At home, the Tokyo government faces a Japanese public demanding that the fate of the kidnapped and their families not be shoved aside amid the international drive to halt the North's alleged plans to develop nuclear weapons. While acknowledging the seriousness of the DPRK's potential nuclear threat, the Japanese Foreign Ministry official in charge of the negotiations said the concerns about nuclear weapons, missile development and abductions must be solved together in a "comprehensive" manner. "We are talking about comprehensive resolutions," Mitoji Yabunaka said in an interview with The Associated Press. "It is our policy." Earlier this month, Koizumi said the issue of the abductions was just as important to Tokyo as the nuclear standoff.

11. DPRK Japanese Abductees' Children Return

Reuters ("N.Korea May Return Japan Abductees' Children," Tokyo, 08/20/03) reported that the DPRK has offered to return the children of five Japanese it abducted decades ago if Tokyo provides food aid and agrees that the abduction issue is closed, the regional daily Tokyo Shimbun said on Wednesday. Japan is pushing for the unconditional return of the offspring, who are now in their teens and twenties, the paper said, citing diplomatic sources. The DPRK admitted in September to the abduction of 13 Japanese in the 1970s and 1980s to help train spies. Five of the abductees returned to Japan last year after about a quarter of a century in the communist state, leaving behind seven children. North Korea said the remaining eight abductees were dead. The Nihon Keizai Shimbun reported on Tuesday that Pyongyang wanted Tokyo to pay one billion yen (\$8.44 million) for the return of each child. Tokyo is unlikely to accept the conditions, partly because it wants an investigation into other suspected abduction cases. Abductee support groups say more than 100 people may have been abducted by North Korea over the past 40 years or so.

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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