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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Agence France-Presse ("SKOREAN ENVOY EYES NKOREA DISARMAMENT ACTION SOON", Tokyo, 2008/08/19) reported that the ROK's chief envoy on the nuclear disarmament of the DPRK called for patience with the DPRK, hoping for "concrete" action in the coming months. "We hope that North Korea gives us concrete results by the fall," Kim Sook told reporters after talks with his Japanese counterpart Akitaka Saiki. "While there has not been sufficient progress regarding North Korea, we both agreed we should have patience and need to maintain close discussions with the other five parties," Kim said.

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2. Inter-Korean Relations

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA MAY HAVE ATTENDED LEE'S INAUGURATION IF GIVEN 'SPECIAL INVITATION': LAWMAKER", Seoul, 2008/08/19) reported that a "special invitation" may have induced the DPRK to attend the ROK leader's inauguration ceremony, a ruling party lawmaker said Tuesday, as Seoul's six-month-old government continues to grapple with chilling inter-Korean ties. "North Korea said it would not attend the ceremony if Seoul sent an ordinary invitation that would also go to other countries," Lim Tae-hee, chief policymaker of the governing Grand National Party, told a forum on inter-Korean cooperation. "After a lengthy discussion on what North Korea meant by a 'special invitation,' we sent an ordinary invitation. It did not send a delegation, just as it had said."

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3. DPRK Economy

IFES NK Brief ("KIM JONG IL VISITS PIG, GOAT FARMS", 2008/08/18) reported that the Korean Central News Agency reported on August 8 that leader Kim Jong Il had recently conducted site visits in North Hamkyung Province at the Hamju Pig Farm and the large, 24-branch Hamju Phyongphungdok Goat Farm. These two site visits brought the number of economic-related on-location ‘guidance sessions’ for the year to 18, or 26 percent of the 68 visits he has made to date this year. The DPRK has proscribed this year as the ‘turn-around year’ on it’s quest to establish a strong and prosperous nation by 2012, and based on this, the government is stressing a ‘decisive turn-around’ of the lives of the people.

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4. DPRK Mass Games

The Associated Press (Burt Herman, "PROPAGANDA ON A MASS SCALE AT NORTH KOREAN `GAMES' ", Pyongyang, 2008/08/19) reported that hundreds of performers executing synchronized martial arts punches and kicks. A giant globe signifying unity as a grand finale. This isn't the opening ceremony at the Beijing Olympics. It's the grandiose DPRK spectacle of propaganda known as the mass games, and it's one of the few things the impoverished country can claim to do on an unmatched scale. By the numbers, the DPRK has the PRC beat: The Pyongyang show has 100,000 performers, including 20,000 schoolchildren who form an animated mosaic on the entire back wall of May Day Stadium by flipping colored pages of large books.

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5. DPRK Military

Yonhap News (Hwang Doo-hyong, "N. KOREA BOUGHT STINGER MISSILES FROM MUJAHIDEEN IN 1990S: REPORT ", Washington, 2008/08/19) reported that the DPRK purchased an undetermined number of US-made portable anti-aircraft missiles from Afghanistan in the early 1990s when the Soviet Union-backed Najibullah regime collapsed, according to a US congressional report. The Congressional Research Service (CRS) report, dated August 8, referenced articles from the New York Times and the Washington Post.

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6. DPRK on US-ROK Joint Military Exercise

Yonhap News (Kim Bo-ram, "N. KOREA CRITICIZES SEOUL LEADER OVER WAR DRILL ", Seoul, 2008/08/19) reported that the DPRK on Tuesday unleashed criticism against ROK President Lee Myung-bak, accusing him of talking about peace while simultaneously preparing for war amid Seoul's large-scale joint military drill with the US. President Lee's speech calling for the resumption of dialogue and progress in economic cooperation with the DPRK was followed by the beginning of the joint drill called Ulchi Freedom Guardian three days later, said the Minju Joson, the organ of the DPRK's Cabinet, "This tells what Lee means by 'dialogue' and 'peace,'" the newspaper said, calling the annual drill "a criminal act aggravating ties" between the two Koreas.

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7. US-ROK Security Alliance

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "S. KOREA, US TO RESUME TALKS ON DEFENSE COST-SHARING NEXT WEEK", 2008/08/19) reported that ROK and U.S. defense officials will meet in Seoul next week to discuss how to share joint defense costs for maintaining 28,000 American forces stationed on the Korean Peninsula, officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said. The two sides are expected to engage in tug-of-war negotiations again following the first round of talks July 21 in Washington, D.C. During the Washington meeting, the U.S. reportedly called on the ROK to pay more to reach the 50-50 level in tune with Seoul's growing economy and increased responsibility for national defense.

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8. DPRK-Myanmar Trade Relations

Xinhua ("MYANMAR TO EXPORT RUBBER TO DPRK ", Yangon, 2008/08/19) reported that Myanmar has planned to export rubber to the DPRK as part of the two countries' bilateral economic cooperation program following the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the two nations in April last year. According to this week's Myanmar Times issue, which quoted the Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers' Association, the export will begin within two months and the export tonnage in the first year will be 10,000 tons under an agreement between the DPRK and the association signed last week.

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9. DPRK Population Relocation

Joongang Ilbo (Park Sun-young , "SHORT PEOPLE SHIPPED OUT OF PYONGYANG IN 1989: DEFECTOR", 2008/08/19) reported that in preparation for the 1989 World Festival of Youth and Students in Pyongyang, Kim Il Sung’s DPRK regime purged the capital of disabled and short people, sending them to remote villages and islands, according to a high-profile defector who used to tutor the DPRK’s current head, Kim Jong-il, in Russian. Kim Hyun-sik, a former professor at the Pyongyang University of Education and now a research professor at George Mason University, made the assertion in the latest issue of U.S. magazine Foreign Policy.

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10. USFJ Base Relocation

Kyodo News ("DEFENSE CHIEF, OKINAWA GOVERNOR REMAIN APART OVER FUTEMMA RELOCATION", Naha, 2008/08/19) reported that Defense Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi and Okinawa Gov. Hirokazu Nakaima remained apart over the contentious plan to relocate the U.S. Marine Corps' Futemma Air Station within the prefecture as they held a meeting in Naha, the first since Hayashi assumed the post earlier this month. Nakaima demanded that the central government meet Okinawa's request that the planned relocation site be moved "as far offshore as possible" from Nago

but Hayashi reiterated it would be hard to change the construction plan without "reasonable grounds."

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11. Japan SDF Anti-Piracy Operations

Yomiuri Shimbun (Hidemichi Katsumata, "JAPAN SHOULD PLAY ITS PART IN INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO COMBAT PIRACY", 2008/08/19) reported that Liberal Democratic Party Secretary General Taro Aso and other party executives have broached the idea of having Maritime Self-Defense Force vessels escort Japanese tankers shipping oil from the Middle East to this country. The proposal by the LDP leaders was framed as an alternative to Japan's refueling activities in the Indian Ocean for the militaries of the US and other countries engaged in antiterrorism operations in Afghanistan.

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12. Japan on US-India Nuclear Deal

Agence France-Presse (Kyoko Hasegawa , "JAPAN SIGNALS APPROVAL OF INDIA-US NUCLEAR DEAL ", Tokyo, 2008/08/19) reported that Japan signaled it would approve a nuclear energy deal between India and the United States, raising the chances that the controversial pact will come into force. Japan, the only nation to have suffered atomic attack, had been a major holdout as it pressed for India to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). But Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura said: "It may be biased to view the deal as going against nuclear non-proliferation efforts." "It is important that India proceeds with nuclear power generation as clean energy."

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13. PRC on US-India Nuclear Deal

The Economic Times ("CHINA NOT CONCERNED ABOUT INDIA-US NUKE DEAL: AMBASSADOR", 2008/08/19) reported that the PRC has no concern over the Indo-US civil nuclear deal so long as New Delhi fulfilled relevant international obligations, according to the PRC Ambassador to India Zhang Yan. "India can enjoy right to peaceful nuclear energy provided it fulfils international obligations, provided it does not undermine international nuclear non-proliferation regime", he said. "If the concerns of the international community are taken care of, then, I think you can achieve your objective", Zhang Yan, who was on a visit to Kerala, said.

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14. PRC Protest

The Associated Press ("CHINA DETAINS US ARTIST PREPARING TIBET PROTEST", Beijing, 2008/08/19) reported that an American artist who planned to use laser beams to flash "free Tibet" on buildings in downtown Beijing was detained Tuesday, according to a colleague and a pro-Tibet group. James Powderly, co-founder of Graffiti Research Lab in New York, was detained before dawn

as he prepared to use a handheld green laser to project messages on prominent structures in Beijing, according to Students for a Free Tibet.

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15. PRC Energy Supply

The Wall Street Journal (Shai Oster, "CHINA ACTS TO ADDRESS POWER SHORTAGE", Beijing, 2008/08/19) reported that the PRC has set up a high-level task force to cope with its worst power shortage in four years, and a top energy official pledged that big cities such as Beijing and Shanghai won't be affected even as other regions struggle with blackouts and electricity rationing. The task force would look for ways to increase coal output, to improve coal transportation and to encourage greater energy conservation by end users, especially among government institutions, said Zhang Guobao, head of the National Energy Administration, at a news conference Monday.

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II. PRC Report

16. PRC Energy

Jinghua Times (Zhang Yan, "COKE EXPERT TAX UP 40%", 2008/08/19) reported that yesterday, learning from PRC Minmetals & Chemicals Import and Export Chamber of Commerce, starting from Aug.20, the tempoary coke expert tax will be raised from 25% to 40%. The expert tax of coking coal and other coals will also be raised on the same day. Experts said the raise aimed to compress the expert of coke and other coal resources products of our country, to balance the domestic intense relationship of supply and demand. The coke downstream industry will benefit from it.

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17. PRC Environment

Xinhua Net (Yue Deliang, "ZHEJIANG TO CHARGE FEES OF GARBAGE TREATMENT", Hangzhou, 2008/08/18) reported that according to the Zhejiang Bureau of Price Administration recently, the fee system for garbage treatment will be implemented in an all-around way. Price levers will be positively used in promoting environmental protection and optimizing human habitat. The steps will start from towns to villages, from enterprises and institutions to residents, from partial compensation to full compensation. The fees for sewage treatment will also be increased to protect water resources.

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18. PRC Energy Supply

China Daily (Pan Xiaotian, Yin Xiaoyu, "CHINA BECOMES THE SECOND LARGEST ENERGY

PRODUCER",) reported that since 2000, the PRC's energy supply capacity has been increasing significantly. The PRC has become the second largest energy producer. The gross energy output of 2007 is 1.8 times that of 2000. The annual increase rate over the past 7 years is 7.1%. In addition, in 2007, the PRC's gross energy consumption reached 26.5 tons of standard coal, making it the second largest energy consumer. But because of the large population of the PRC, the per capita energy consumption is only 62% of the world's average level.

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III. ROK Report

19. ROK-U.S. Relations

Pressian (Suh Joo-suk, Korea Institute for Defense Analysis researcher, "NECESSITY OF ADJUSTING ROK-U.S. ALLIANCE", 2008/08/20) said in a column that what has been discussed during the ROK-U.S. summit talks is to strengthen the overall alliance between the two nations, which has been limited to a military alliance so far, so that they can develop their relationship further. Both countries agreed to work on creating a collaborative partnership that can contribute to establishing peace in the region and the whole world. In this sense, it was overly dogmatic for some nations to define the alliance merely as a military alliance, which had existed during the cold war, and to disparage it as an old relic of the past. In order to confront several difficulties of our security environment, such as radical change in the inter-Korean relationship, the ROK should put much effort on explaining the necessity of strengthening the ROK-U.S. alliance, so that the U.S. can be agreeable to support our nation in case of any possible crisis.

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20. DPRK Nuclear Issue

Yonhap News ("BUSH'S DIPLOMACY, CHALLENGED AT THE END OF TERM", 2008/08/20) reported that despite recent efforts, the DPRK nuclear problem is going through another hardship. It is partially because the DPRK refused to sign the verification protocol and keeps on insisting that the U.S. delist them from the terrorist list first. Even though the State Department keeps pressuring the DPRK to sign the nuclear verification protocol in order to be delisted, the DPRK protests that U.S. has to act first. The worst is since Bush Administration is going to end shortly, they do not have such strong motivation to solve the problem.

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21. ROK Policy toward DPRK

Seoul Shinmun ("MB, NOT ABLE TO FIND DPRK SOLUTION, OR NOT WILLING TO?", 2008/08/20) reported that ROK President Lee Myung-bak's administration is having it rough finding ways to ease the tension on the Korean Peninsula. Since the government has been maintaining a firm attitude toward the DPRK, they are not in a hurry to break the ice. Others analyze that the government's firm attitude has something to do with the ROK's current political situation. Due to Lee's nose-diving

approval rating, the conservatives started acting even more visibly. In this situation, there is no need to take hasty actions to appease the DPRK, which will only result in ruining the atmosphere. On the other hand, the government predicts the tension will be eased sooner or later as some subtle changes show.

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