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I. United States

1. DPRK Response to ROK-US Presidential Summit

The Associated Press (Soo-Leong Lee, "NORTH KOREA WARNS SOUTH OF 'DISASTER,'" Seoul, 05/20/03) and BBC News ("NORTH KOREA THREATENS 'DISASTER,'" 05/20/03) reported that the DPRK has threatened the ROK with "unspeakable disaster" if the ROK backs the US hardline approach to the nuclear crisis. The comments were made by the chief DPRK delegate at inter-Korean economic talks which opened in Pyongyang on Tuesday, and were publicized by the Korean Central News Agency. They are the first official response to last week's summit between the ROK President Roh Moo-hyun and US President George W Bush in Washington last week, which saw an apparent hardening of ROK policy towards the DPRK. The US and the ROK threatened to take "further steps" against the DPRK, if it continued to escalate tensions on the peninsula. It was not clear what those "further steps" were, but they could include the adoption of sanctions, or even military action. "The South side will sustain an unspeakable disaster if it turns to confrontation," Pak Chang-ryon, the DPRK's chief negotiator at the inter-Korean economic talks warned on Tuesday. "Should the South take the path of confrontation, talking about the so-called nuclear issue or 'further steps'... North-South ties would come to naught," he said.

2. ROK DPRK Aid Warning

Reuters (Paul Eckert, "SOUTH KOREA TELLS NORTH IT RISKS AID IN NUCLEAR CRISIS," Seoul, 05/20/03) reported that the DPRK is putting aid from main benefactor the ROK at risk by failing to resolve the crisis over its nuclear weapons programs, ROK officials told the DPRK in Pyongyang on Tuesday. The ROK was committed to helping its impoverished neighbor but the DPRK must resolve the nuclear crisis and improve monitoring food aid, ROK Vice Finance Minister Kim Gwang-lim said at the start of economic talks in the DPRK capital. "For economic cooperation to proceed without a hitch, we cannot avoid discussing the nuclear issue," Kim said, according to ROK media pool reports from Pyongyang. "The funds for South-North economic projects come from the South's taxpayers," he said. "If the nuclear issue is not properly solved, the South will have economic difficulties and aid to the North will meet public opposition." In a sign of hardening ROK public opinion, a poll of 1,000 people published on Tuesday by Seoul's official Korea Information Service said 88.5 percent backed linking economic aid to the DPRK nuclear impasse.

3. DPRK on Japan Surveillance

The Korean Central News Agency of DPRK ("JAPANESE SPY SATELLITES BEING WATCHED," Pyongyang, 05/20/03)

Spy satellites launched by Japan for espionage on the DPRK are being watched by astronomy amateurs of different countries and becoming an object of public ridicule. The British newspaper The Times on May 5 reported that after Japan launched two spy satellites some astronomy amateurs spotted them and photographed their movements and are trying to open to the public their orbit through internet. According to a news report, the two spy satellites were launched in March and are chiefly aimed to spy on the military movements of Korea. but they are being observed by astronomy amateurs of different countries. Finnish astronomy amateurs were the first to photograph the Japanese spy satellites and then an astronomy amateur of Canada located their movements. According to them, the spy satellites can be seen in the sky in a sunny day. The Hong Kong newspaper Ming Pao Daily News on May 6 carried the report of the British newspaper The Times that the Japanese spy satellites with a mission to watch other countries are being watched by people on the contrary.

4. Hu Russia, France Visit

The Associated Press ("CHINA'S HU TO VISIT RUSSIA, FRANCE," Beijing, 05/20/03) reported that President Hu Jintao will leave next week on his first foreign trip as the PRC's leader, meeting with heads of the G-8 group and visiting Russia, France, Kazakhstan and Mongolia, the Foreign Ministry announced Tuesday. Hu, relatively unknown among world leaders, will engage in "broad contact with foreign leaders and figures from all circles," ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said. The visits will "further enhance the friendly relationship between the PRC and the relevant countries as well as promote regional and international cooperation," Zhang said. Zhang said Hu plans to depart March 26 for Moscow, where he is to attend the annual meeting of leaders of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a Chinese-sponsored grouping of central Asian nations. He is to travel to St. Petersburg for celebrations of the 300th anniversary of the founding of Russian President Vladimir Putin's hometown. In France, Hu is to attend a development conference on the first day of the Group of Eight meeting of leaders of major democracies that starts June 1 in the Alpine town of Evian. Hu is to meet unofficially with G-8 leaders but won't take part in their meeting, she said. Zhang gave no details of Hu's schedule for Kazakstan or Mongolia, both of which are friendly neighbors and trading partners with the PRC.

5. Taiwan SARS Outbreak

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN SARS CRISIS GETTING WORSE, CHINA SAYS UNDER CONTROL," Taipei, 05/20/03) and BBC News ("TAIWAN FEARS WORSE SARS OUTBREAK," 05/20/03) reported that Taiwan has announced 12 new deaths from the SARS virus, and a top health official warned there was worse to come. Taiwan's death toll now stands at 52. Officials also announced 39 new cases, a new daily record which takes the number of probable cases to 383. Almost a quarter of the island's cases have been recorded since Sunday. The latest outbreak, in Taiwan's southern city of Kaohsiung, could cause more infections, warned Lee Ming-liang, head of the SARS Control Committee. "The new wave has yet to peak," he said. However, officials said the big jump in cases announced was partly because they did not release any new figures on Monday, which came after a holiday on Sunday. Hospital workers in Taiwan have been particularly affected. Two doctors and four nurses have died from the virus while an estimated 500 staff from various hospitals have been placed under quarantine. Doctors and nurses have complained that the authorities have failed to provide them with adequate protective clothing and safeguards.

6. WHO Taiwan Bid Rejection

CNN News ("WHO REBUFFS TAIWAN," Geneva, Switzerland, 05/20/03) reported that the World Health Organization has rebuffed Taiwan's seventh bid to join the global health group. Demonstrators outside U. N. headquarters in Geneva, where the WHO was holding its annual assembly, demanded Taiwan be given observer status. But the assembly on Monday accepted without a vote a recommendation by its general committee that Taiwan not be admitted as an observer. Over the past few weeks, officials in Taiwan have said that exclusion from the WHO is making it harder for them to fight the SARS crisis. The flu-like virus has infected 344 people and killed 40 in Taiwan, the third-highest toll in the world behind the PRC and Hong Kong. "The whole world recognizes that if Taiwan is not part of the WHO or part of the international medical community, then Taiwan is going to be a serious loophole in containing the SARS disease," according to Joseph Wu, Taiwan Presidential Advisor. Taiwan has been seeking WHO entry, or at least observer status, long before SARS. But the SARS crisis prompted them to apply for observer status at the WHO as a "health entity" instead of a country. They were supported in their bid by the US. "Taiwan, as a province of China, is not entitled to join the WTO or participate as an observer," says Zhang Qiyue, PRC Foreign Ministry spokeswoman. "We are strongly opposed to the attempt of Taiwan to join the WTO in any capacity."

7. PRC SARS Developments

The New York Times (Elisabeth Rosenthal, "THE SHELTERED CHILDREN OF BEIJING," Beijing, 05/20/03) reported that SARS has certainly changed the face of street life here, where masks are now worn as often as caps, and bicycles, once a disappearing mode of transportation, have increased as Beijingers shy away from buses and subways. But there is one sight that has almost completely vanished, giving the city a particularly forlorn feel: Beijing's millions of children are missing. With schools closed for nearly a month, the majority of Beijing's precious only children are virtual prisoners at home, kept in iron-clad parental lock down to protect them from SARS. The children spend their days moving from TV to computers and back again, most forbidden even to play with their friends. Their only diversion is an occasional walk outside, according to conversations with some of them on their brief forays into a city where parents see germs lurking everywhere. This week the Beijing city government announced that it would begin to reopen schools starting with high schools on Thursday. But elementary students will have to wait nearly another month, until June 14, to get back to class. They are miserable and antsy. "I'm lonely," said Zhang Hanxiong, a skinny, tousled 9-year-old. "I want to go back to school. There is nobody to play with me." His big sad eyes peered over the elaborate plastic and gauze mask that his mother had fitted on him. After his pleading, she agreed to take him for a walk to a pharmacy to buy vitamins E and C to protect against SARS. "I know he's bored, but it's safer staying at home," said his mother, Xia Sixin, who works for a construction company and was not wearing a mask. "It's just too risky to let him play with his friends."

8. Japan Domestic Economy

Dow Jones (Hiroshi Inoue and Asako Tanabe, "BANK OF JAPAN EASES POLICY IN EFFORT TO STABILIZE MARKETS," Tokyo, 05/20/03) reported that the Bank of Japan on Tuesday said it will ease monetary policy further to calm unstable stock and foreign-exchange markets, after the government's announcement of a bailout of Japan's fifth-largest bank revived financial-sector concerns. The central bank said it will increase its liquidity target, measured by the account balance, to a range of 27 trillion yen ($230.1 billion) to 30 trillion yen. The target previously was 22 trillion yen to 27 trillion yen. "Economic activity in Japan remains flat but uncertainties about future prospects have recently been increasing," the BOJ said in a statement. "In addition to uncertainties arising from the prospect of a recovery in the US and European economies as well as the impact of SARS on East Asian economies, unstable stock and foreign-exchange markets overshadow future prospects."

II. Republic of Korea

1. Inter Korean Economic Talks

Joongang Ilbo (Lee Young-jong, "TALKS ON ECONOMIC AID OPEN IN NORTH TODAY," Seoul, 05/19/03) reported that the fifth DPRK-ROK economic exchange talks will take place from Monday through Thursday in Pyongyang. The talks will cover such issues as the building of the industrial complex in Gaeseong, the railroad that connects the Koreas and ROK's economic aid to DPRK. There had been concern that the talks might be either canceled or postponed as a sign of DPRK's displeasure with President Roh Moo-hyun's firmer stance against it during his visit to US last week. Its failure to do so, analysts said, indicated the desperation of its economic situation. Mr. Roh and US President George W. Bush in a joint statement last week said that the increased threats to peace and stability on the peninsula arising from DPRK's nuclear arms could require consideration of

further steps. Mr. Roh, furthermore, told reporters Friday, "In any circumstance, we cannot always be led around by North Korea." But observers say DPRK decided to go through with the talks as planned because it is experiencing serious economic problems. On March 17 it asked ROK to send rice and fertilizer as humanitarian aid. Ten days later it issued a second request. The observers said the economic situation in DPRK appears to be so straitened that even at a time of tension over its nuclear weapons program, it cannot postpone arranging for more assistance from ROK. Other analysts, however, said that DPRK may use the talks to criticize the changed position of ROK government. It may demand an explanation from ROK about Mr. Roh's remarks during his visit to US, they said.

2. Hwang Jang-yop's Visit to US

Joongang Ilbo ("DEFECTOR BUILDS OFFICE TO STUDY NORTH ISSUES," Seoul, 05/19/03) reported that Hwang Jang-yop, a senior DPRK aide who defected ROK in 1997, has completed construction of an office building in Gangnam district, southern Seoul. He used 300 million won ($250,000) donated by ROK government and royalties on his books. Mr. Hwang said he and five other researchers from the Unification Research Institute at the National Intelligence Service will concentrate on researching human-rights issues in DPRK. The US based Defense Forum Foundation said it would invite Mr. Hwang to its annual conference on June 20. Mr. Hwang was barred last year from accepting an invitation in Washington. "The government has not yet issued Mr. Hwang a passport, but the Roh Moo-hyun administration is positive about his visiting," said Nam Shin-woo, a rights activist and North Korean defector.

3. Changed ROK's Policy toward DPRK

Joongang Ilbo (Choi Hoon, "POLICY TOWARD THE NORTH HARDENS," Seoul, 05/19/03) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-hyun hasn't divulged any specifics about his DPRK policy since returning from his Washington meeting with US President George Bush, but there's no denying that his comments portend a significant shift. In an interview with the US Public Broadcasting System, Mr. Roh said, "I think North Korea is insisting on an obsolete regime and the values that it pursues are not in the interests of its people." He continued, "I don't think North Korea is a partner to be trusted, and I don't agree with its regime." In meeting with the Blue House press corps as he flew out of Washington, he said, "We have to show in our future dealings with North Korea that we have cards to play. President Bush, unlike his stance on the North Korean regime, is sympathetic to the North Korean people." ROK high-ranking government official said, "There is no change in the bigger frame of strategy of peacefully resolving the North Korean nuclear standoff or pursuing reconciliation and cooperation, but we will see a drastic change in negotiating tactics with the North." In effect, ROK president's shift with regard to DPRK is already reflected in government policy. "North Korea, through various channels, has made unbelievable proposals," a top Blue House official said. "But the president just brushes them aside and says 'Forget it.' " President Roh has also said that he sees no real gain in meeting with the North Korean leader, Kim Jong-il.

4. DPRK in International Olympic Committee

Chosun Ilbo (Seong Jin-hyeok, "NORTH MAKES OLYMPIC COMMITTEE AN OFFER," Seoul, 05/19/03) reported that DPRK's representative to the International Olympic Committee said that if DPRK wins its bid for the 2010 Winter Olympics he would try to arrange a joint entrance for Korean athletes, and possibly a single team, at next year's Olympic Games in Athens. Chang Woong made the statement in Madrid, where he is attending an IOC executive committee meeting, at a joint press

conference with his ROK counterpart Kim Woon-yong. The IOC will choose the city to host the 2010 games on July 2. The North Korean official had voiced his support for Pyeongchang's bid last month at the 10th inter-Korean minister-level talks. He said that bringing the Winter Olympics to ROK would provide a special chance to execute the June 15 Joint Declaration for a permanent peace on the peninsula. On the question of a single team, Chang said that could be for all the athletes or for specific sports.

III. People's Republic of China

1. ROK-US Relations

People's Daily (Xu Baokang, "ROK, US RELEASE JOINT STATEMENT", Seoul, 05/16/03, P3) reported that US President George W. Bush and visiting ROK President Roh Moo-Hyun on May 14 held summit at the White House, releasing a joint statement after discussing issues of ROK-US alliances, the US Army resided in ROK, the DPRK nuclear issue, and establishing the "Entire Partnership" between two countries. The statement consisted of four parts. On the DPRK nuclear issue, the two sides decided to reinforce negotiations and strive to resolve the issue peacefully, while stressing the principle of multi-lateral channels. Both sides agreed that the "Beijing Talk" channel should be continued. The statement stressed that ROK and Japan are indispensable roles in resolving the nuclear issue, and PRC and Russia should play a constructive role. The statement forbids DPRK from developing nuclear weapons. On issue of DPRK-ROK communications and co-operations, the statement said they will adjust measures according to the development of the DPRK nuclear issue.

2. PRC's Commentary on ROK-US Summit

China Daily ("ROH AIMS TO BOOST TIES WITH US", Seoul, 05/13/03, P4) carried a commentary article analyzing the ROK President's US visit, saying that the most conspicuous highlight of the new president's schedule during his US visit is a meeting with President George W. Bush, after which they will release a joint statement. Roh has three main tasks: to settle the DPRK nuclear issue, readjust the ROK-US military alliance and enhance bilateral economic co-operation, the article said. His visit to the US comes as concerned countries are stepping up diplomatic efforts to defuse the tension over the nuclear issue. Roh and Bush will exchange views on their further responses to the trilateral meeting, which was the first of its kind since the nuclear stand-off surfaced late last year. According to Roh's foreign policy advisor Ban Ki-moon, the two leaders will, in their joint statement, reiterate their wish to maintain close bilateral co-operation to seek a peaceful end to the nuclear row, while insisting that Pyongyang abandon its nuclear weapons program. However, the statement will probably be a "framework" guiding subsequent policy consultations between US and ROK on the nuclear issue, said Ban. Roh was also planning to seek Bush's support for Roh's policy of "peace and prosperity" towards DPRK, which is widely regarded to be the same as former President Kim Dae-jung's "sunshine policy". Laying the foundations for more mature and equal relations with the US is the second task of Roh's current trip. In his meeting with Bush, Roh will drive home the ROK's position that relocation of the US troops closest to the military demarcation line that divides the two parts of Korea must be dealt with cautiously, taking into consideration the security situation on the Korean Peninsula, especially before the nuclear issue is resolved. The last goal of Roh's US visit is to promote bilateral economic co-operation, said the article.

3. Russia-US Arms Reduction Treaty

People's Daily (Lv Yansong, "RUSSIA'S LOWER HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT APPROVES ARMS REDUCTION TREATY WITH US", 05/16/03, P3) reported that Russia's State Duma, or lower house of parliament, ratified on May 11 the Russian-US Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reduction. After a closed-door debate, the Duma voted 294 in favor of the treaty while 134 voted against it.

4. DPRK-US Relations

People's Daily (Ji Xinlong, "US NOT THROWING ANTI-DPRK POLICY MEANS MORE: DPRK", Pyongyang, 05/14/03, P3) reported that the US's not throwing its anti-DPRK policy means more to the DPRK, and the reason lies in the facts that it wishes to make the situation even tenser, thus maintaining its influences in this region, said a commentary in a DPRK newspaper on May 13. The commentary said that the US deep-rooted hostile policy toward the DPRK is, in essence, aimed to "destroy the DPRK by force," "The DPRK was, therefore, compelled to build up a deterrent force for self-defense to cope with it," the commentary said. The international community hope for a peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue, however, US doesn't want to throw away its anti-Korean policy, aiming at intensifying the situation, thus pulling Japan and ROK into its partnership, and maintaining its own influences in the region. The commentary said at last that due to the US's intervention, DPRK relations with ROK and Japan met a deadlock after a short-term progress.

5. Japan's Defense Bills

China Daily ("ENACTMENT OF JAPANESE DEFENSE BILLS DRAWS NEAR", Tokyo, 05/16/03, P12) reported that controversial bills aimed at boosting Japan's ability to defend itself took a big step towards enactment on May 15, despite lingering concerns that the laws fail to provide enough protection for civil rights. Parliament's powerful Lower House passed the three bills - known collectively as crisis legislation - virtually ensuring their enactment before parliament ends its session in June. The legislation would empower the prime minister with authority over government ministries and local governments in the event of an attack, and would put limits on individual rights to allow for smoother military operations. But the bills, first studied by the government a quarter of a century ago, and drawn up to deal with an invasion by foreign troops, do not specifically address modern day threats such as infiltration by special units or ballistic missile attacks. Opponents of the bills also said there was danger that the legislation will lead to violations of civil rights and the media being put under state control. The legislation obliges the media to undertake "necessary measures" in case of a crisis. Critics with memories of Japan's wartime regime are also concerned that the legislation will further fray the pacifist constitution and ties with Asian neighbors, said the report.

6. International Forum on SARS

China Daily ("FORUM ON SARS", 05/16/03, P1) reported that an international symposium on SARS will be held from June 3 to 4 in Beijing to implement the follow-up measures proposed by the Bangkok special summit on SARS in April, PRC foreign ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said on May 15. PRC, Japan, the ROK and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations will attend the event whose theme is to exchange information and experience on the prevention and control of SARS. Scholars and experts from other countries and regions will also attend the event, said the report.

7. PRC-US Relations on Taiwan Issue

China daily ("NATION OPPOSES BILL ON TAIWAN", 05/16/03, P1) reported that PRC strongly

opposed the US Congress' passage of a bill to support Taiwan's participation in the World Health Assembly (WHA) as an observer and has already protested to the US side, PRC foreign ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said on May 15. Taiwan, as a province of China, is neither eligible to participate in the World Health Organization (WHO), an organization open only to sovereign countries, nor is it eligible to attend the WHA as an observer, Zhang said. The central government supports the WHO's sending of an expert group to Taiwan for inspection of its SARS situation, Zhang added. Taiwan authorities are playing "political tricks" taking advantage of SARS, trying to create "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan," Zhang said. The US Government should recognize the political motive of the Taiwan authorities and stick to its commitments in the three Sino-US joint communiques, Zhang said in the report.

8. PRC Relations with Japan and ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

China Daily (Hu Xiao, "TAIWAN-INVITE TO WHO OPPOSED", 05/14/03, P2) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue stated on May 13 that China was firmly opposed to the request by a senior Japanese official to invite Taiwan to attend the World Health Organization (WHO) as an observer. "No country or individual has the right to invite Taiwan to participate in the WHO as an observer," said Zhang. The spokeswoman also revealed that Vice-Foreign Minister Wang Yi, who has returned from a trip to Japan and the ROK, has stated the position of the PRC Government to Japanese leaders. Wang called on Japan to adhere to the one-China policy and preserve the political basis for Sino-Japanese relations. Wang held discussions with Japan and the ROK over the weekend on the nuclear standoff of the DPRK. PRC wants a dialogue-led resolution of the nuclear issue and maintains the "Beijing talks" should be continued, Zhang said. Zhang said both Japan and the ROK considered the "Beijing talks" to be useful and should be continued. "All parties (PRC, the ROK and Japan) agreed to pursue a peaceful resolution to the issue," Zhang said in the report.

9. US-Russia Relations

China Daily ("POWELL IN BID TO SWAY MOSCOW ON IRAQ", Moscow, 05/15/03, P11) reported that US Secretary of State Colin Powell met Russian leaders on May 14 in a final push to secure support for an end to sanctions against Iraq amid a scramble for the country's vast oil riches. "Not only does it reduce our nuclear weapons but it shows how the US and Russia can work together on issues important to the world," Powell said at the start of talks with his Russian counterpart Igor Ivanov. Powell, who flew into Moscow late on May 13, was expected to discuss a US draft resolution due to be debated by the UN Security Council on May 15 that would see the lifting of sanctions on Iraq. Moscow remains skeptical about the draft US resolution, and is anxious to secure UN involvement in Iraq to prevent the US from enjoying complete control over Baghdad's oil riches until it hands over power to an Iraqi administration. But recent signals from Moscow, which has a permanent seat on the UN Security Council with veto power, have been more accommodating. "Despite our differences, including over the Iraqi crisis, Russia's foreign policy is oriented towards building a long-term partnership and relations with the United States," Ivanov told Powell.

10. PRC's Commentary on US-Russian Ties

China Daily ("POWELL TRIES TO WARM UP STRAINED RUSSIAN-US TIES", Moscow, 05/17-18/03, P4) carried a commentary article on Russian-US ties, saying that the US Secretary of State Colin Powell's latest visit to Moscow displays the two countries' efforts to overcome the rift caused by Iraq War and to push forward their constructive partnership. Powell's working visit is seen as a step

toward easing tension and normalizing relations, said the article. Both Moscow and Washington hope to narrow their differences and improve the strained relations, taking into account the fact that they share common interests in various post-war issue, including maintaining global strategic stability, counter-terrorism and economic and trade cooperation. Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov said on May 14 that, despite differences that have arisen or may arise, "the foreign policy of the Russian Federation is focused on forging a long-term, predictable partnership with the US". In response, Powell said that bilateral dialogue will develop dynamically, illustrating the solid nature and depth of bilateral relations. The article said that during his visit to Moscow, Powell displayed a mild attitude to a series of issues that used to be the cause of disagreements with Russia. Russian leaders implied that Moscow is pursuing "a generally acceptable draft resolution on Iraq" rather than explicitly opposing the US proposal. It will take time for Russian-US relations to improve completely, since disagreements between the two over rebuilding Iraq will continue for some time, said the article.

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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