NAPSNet Daily Report 20 May, 2004

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 20 May, 2004", NAPSNet Daily Report, May 20, 2004, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-20-may-2004/

CONTENTS

I. United States

1. US-DPRK Relations
2. DPRK Light Water Reactor Project
3. US DPRK Relief Aid Delivery
4. ROK DPRK Relief Aid
5. Japan DPRK Relief Aid
6. US ROK Troop Relocation
7. Inter-Korean Red Cross Meetings
8. Russia-US on DPRK Nuclear Issue
9. Japan-DPRK Abduction Issue
10. Taiwan-PRC Relations
11. Hong Kong Democratization
12. Taiwan Presidential Election
13. Taiwan Presidential Oath

I. United States

1. US-DPRK Relations

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA CANNOT AFFORD ATOMIC TEST: US ENVOY," Seoul, 05/20/04) reported that the DPRK cannot afford to test nuclear weapons as long as multinational dialogue aimed at dismantling The DPRK's atomic arms programmes continues, a former US special envoy for the DPRK said on Thursday. But Charles Pritchard said the 18-month nuclear standoff had produced little beyond a "de facto nuclear North Korea" and there was little likelihood of Pyongyang working for meaningful progress before the US presidential election in November. "Other than talks for the sake of talks, (the six-party talks) produced an environment in which North Korea, in my opinion, will not, cannot, test a nuclear weapon," Pritchard, now a visiting scholar at the Brookings Institute, told a private conference of financial investors in Seoul. Testing a bomb or missiles would upset

what the North sees as a favourable situation in six-party talks. He said the DPRK may have as many as eight nuclear weapon! s, using the stalemate to add to what Western intelligence experts estimate is an arsenal of two or three.

2. DPRK Light Water Reactor Project

Agence France-Presse ("KEDO HOLDS BOARD MEETING ON SUSPENSION OF N KOREA NUCLEAR PROJECT," 05/21/04) reported that the international consortium in charge of a frozen plan to build two nuclear power plants for the DPRK held an executive board meeting, one day after Washington said the project had no future. The Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation (KEDO) board, which groups the US, European Union, the ROK and Japan, discussed the management of the project's suspension, as well as financial issues, spokesman Roland Tricot told reporters. "The organisation continues to implement suspension measures, and is conducting preservation and maintenance activities" at the construction site in North Korea, Tricot said. He also said the board did not enjoy the unanimity required to resume construction of the reactors when the one-year suspension expires on December 1.

Washington Times (Bill Gertz, "STATE SAYS US WILL NOT CONSIDER N. KOREA REQUEST," 05/20/04) reported that the US State Department yesterday said the US would not consider a DPRK request during closed-door talks in Beijing last week for a light-water nuclear reactor. State Department spokesman Adam Ereli confirmed a report in yesterday's editions of The Washington Times that DPRK negotiators "did raise the reactor issue" with a US negotiator in the context of limits on The DPRK's uranium-enrichment program. "But it's not something that we entertained," he said. "As a matter of policy ... we do not see a future for the light-water reactor project." Ereli said the US will not agree to provide reactors to the DPRK until it first agrees to abandon its nuclear arms programs -- a more comprehensive move than limiting the DPRK's enrichment of uranium. The Times story, citing anonymous US officials, set off a debate within the US government over whether chief negotiator Joseph DeTra! ni had exceeded his instructions, which limited discussion of light-water reactors. It also prompted three lawmakers to urge the Bush administration not to resurrect any reactor deal with Pyongyang. Ereli said the US goal in the six-party talks, which ended Friday, was to build a consensus for the DPRK to agree to "complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement." "We're not prepared to provide inducements to the DPRK for compliance with its international obligations," Ereli said. "Talking about one aspect of North Korea's nuclear program or another aspect of the nuclear program is not where we're at."

3. US DPRK Relief Aid Delivery

Yonhap ("US OFFICIAL DELIVERS RELIEF AID TO NORTH KOREA FOR FIRST TIME," Seoul, 05/20/04) reported that an official from the US visited the site of last month's devastating train explosion in the DPRK for the first time on Monday (17 May) and delivered relief supplies, the ROK Ministry of Unification said Thursday. An official from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) visited the DPRK city of Ryongchon via Dandong, PRC, to deliver medical and other supplies, according to the ministry. It was the first visit by a US government official to the DPRK city since two trains collided and exploded in Ryongchon on 22 April, killing some 160 people and injuring more than 1,300 others. The US official delivered first aid for treating 20,000 patients for three months and 1,000 bed sheets, according to the ministry. The supplies were directly handed over to DPRK officials, and the officials issued a receipt while promising to report on the distribution of the supplies.

4. ROK DPRK Relief Aid

Korea Herald (Andrew Petty, "THURSDAY AID OFFERS CAPITALISM IN N. KOREA," 05/20/04) reported that ROK products being rushed across the border into North Korea to aid victims of a recent train explosion may be educating locals about the economy next door. On previous occasions when aid was sent from the ROK, the situation was not as urgent so the DPRK's censors had time to store the goods and remove the brand names. But residents of Ryongcheon, receiving aid rushed to them after their city was ripped apart by the huge April 22 explosion, are sampling and reading the labels on ROK ramyeon noodles, mineral water and school supplies, as well as construction equipment. "It's impossible to remove all of these brand names due to the quantity and diversity of the items," said Prof. Paik Hak-soon, a researcher at the Sejong Institute who studies the DPRKand has conducted numerous interviews with defectors. "It's a form of North Korea opening up," said Kim Sung-han, a professor at th! e Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security affiliated with the Foreign Ministry. The shipments for Ryongcheon alone may not mean an immediate change for North Koreans but can spark thoughts that would affect their social and political consciousness in future, he added. The DPRK government strips off brand names and labels to prevent citizens from learning about the ROK's economy and culture. They are particularly careful in removing "Made in South Korea" labels. An official at the Red Cross said he is not sure if the DPRK government removed any labels in the first shipment of aid to Ryongcheon earlier this month. "I'm positive that in the first shipment Red Cross officials did not take off the labels," said Red Cross spokesperson Jeremy Kwan.

5. Japan DPRK Relief Aid

Asia Pulse ("N KOREAN FERRY LEAVES JAPAN WITH RELIEF GOODS FOR BLAST VICTIMS," Seoul, 05/21/04) reported that a DPRK ferry left the Japanese port of Niigata Thursday morning for Wonsan, a DPRK port, with relief goods for the victims of the April 22 train explosion in the DPRK, a Japanese broadcaster said. The Mangyongbong-92 was loaded with up to 80 tons of cargo, including such relief goods as food and clothes, according to broadcaster NHK. About 200 passengers were also aboard the ship. The only passenger shuttle between Japan and the DPRK, which have no diplomatic ties, made its fourth call at the Japanese port so far this year, and is scheduled to return to Niigata on June 2. The ferry has been suspected of being used for trafficking drugs, counterfeit money and other contraband goods.

6. US ROK Troop Relocation

The Associated Press ("S KOREA SEEKS TO EASE CONCERNS OVER US PLAN ON TROOPS," Seoul, 05/20/04) reported that the ROK government Thursday sought to ease concerns over a controversial US plan to move some of the 37,000 US troops stationed in South Korea to Iraq. Shin Eon-sang, assistant minister for unification policy, said he didn't think the pullout would lead to a fundamental change in the alliance between the ROK and the US, the country's biggest ally, or undermine defenses against the DPRK. "There will virtually be no impact on security," Shin told reporters. Meanwhile, President Roh Moo-hyun held a meeting of security ministers and ordered them to "explain in detail" to the Korean people that the ROK is making preparations to bolster its defenses in the wake of the US plan to shift some 3,600 troops to Iraq.

Bloomberg ("US MAY USE UNMANNED PLANES IN SOUTH KOREA, JAPAN, PAPER SAYS," 05/20/04) reported that the US is considering using the ROK or Japan to deploy unmanned aircraft that will make up for the reduction of its forces in the ROK. The unmanned aerial vehicles, or UAVs, were deployed during the war last year in Iraq. They will be separate from the $11 billion US

military forces in South Korea plan to spend until 2006, the paper said, citing an unidentified ROK government official. The US deployed the Predator and the Global Hawk unmanned planes in Iraq. The Shadow 200 Tactical UAV was deployed by the US in the ROK last year. The US is planning to send up to 3,800 soldiers from its 37,000 troops stationed in the ROK to Iraq. The ROK is preparing for talks with the US on a possible reduction in the troops, the Foreign Ministry said yesterday.

7. Inter-Korean Red Cross Meetings

Yonhap ("INTER-KOREAN RED CROSS MEETING TO DISCUSS FURTHER FAMILY REUNIONS," Seoul, 05/20/04) reported that the Red Cross officials of the ROK and DPRK will meet early next week to discuss issues including reunions of separated families, the ROK's Red Cross said Thursday (20 May). The officials said they have agreed through telephone messages to hold the talks on Monday to discuss the date for the next round of temporary reunions of families separated by the Korean War. The ROK and DPRK tentatively agreed to hold the next round of the reunions around 15 June during inter-Korean talks held in Pyongyang in early May. The Red Cross officials said on 13 May that they would propose to the North to hold the reunion from 19-24 June. Three Red Cross officials from the ROK, including senior official Lee Byung-woong, will participate in the meeting. From the DPRK side, senior official Choe Sun-ik will attend. "We will decide on the date for the reunions and other issues, including pr! oviding medical aid to the North," the ROK Red Cross official said. The upcoming reunions will be the 10th since the historic inter-Korean summit in 2000 touched off a wave of reconciliation projects between the divided Koreas. ROK Red Cross officials had previously said that if the North agrees to the date they proposed, the ROK will select 300 candidates by a computer lottery from among tens of thousands of applicants, mostly in their 70s and 80s. The list will be shortened first to 200 and then 100, giving priority to the aged and those with immediate relatives in the North.

8. Russia-US on DPRK Nuclear Issue

The Interfax ("RUSSIAN-US TALKS IN MOSCOW FOCUS ON NUCLEAR POTENTIAL OF IRAN, NORTH KOREA," Moscow, 05/20/04) reported that the US and Russia have checked their approaches to the problems of Iran and the DPRK during Russian-American consultations in the Russian Foreign Ministry on Thursday (20 May) on issues connected with the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Sergey Kislyak, Russian deputy foreign minister, reported this in an interview to Interfax news agency after the talks ended. He headed the Russian interdepartmental delegation at the consultations. His American counterpart at the talks was John Bolton, senior US undersecretary of state (for arms control and international security). "Problems revolving around Russia's cooperation with Iran in the area of peaceful use of nuclear energy were discussed (during the consultations - Interfax). At the moment we (Russian Federation and the USA - Interfax) are waiting for the next report from the IAEA director-gene! ral, Muhammad al-Baradi'i, on the issue of implementing the resolution of the council managing that international agency on ensuring greater transparency in Iran's nuclear programme," the top Russian diplomat said. According to Interfax's information from a diplomatic source, al-Baradi'i is expected to present this report at IAEA headquarters at the end of May. Apart from that, Sergey Kislyak noted, the DPRK nuclear problem "was discussed briefly" during his consultations with John Bolton. "We agreed that the six-sided format of the talks process should remain the instrument to resolve this problem," Sergey Kislyak said.

9. Japan-DPRK Abduction Issue

The Associated Press (Mari Yamaguchi, "JAPANESE LEADER REFUSES PRE-SUMMIT MEETING WITH DPRK ABDUCTEES," Tokyo, 05/20/04) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi refused to meet the families of citizens kidnapped by North Korea before he goes to Pyongyang for a summit, but will brief them on the talks when he returns, the government said Thursday. The former abductees, who returned to Japan in 2002, are pressing for the release of eight family members left behind in the DPRK and more information on other Japanese who were kidnapped by DPRK agents. The families had wanted to meet with Koizumi ahead of his Saturday summit with DPRK leader Kim Jong Il, but the prime minister said he would talk with them afterward instead. "When I return, I would like to meet with the (abductees) and give them a report of the outcome of our talks," he said. Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda said the government hopes to arrange the meeting in the hours after Koizumi retu! rns from Pyongyang. He leaves Saturday morning and will return to Japan the same day. "We'll do everything that has to be done by the end of Saturday," Hosoda said.

10. Taiwan-PRC Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN OFFERS OLIVE BRANCH TO CHINA, SAYS INDEPENDENCE OFF AGENDA," 05/21/04) reported that Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian struck a conciliatory tone with the PRC as he was sworn in for a second term by vowing not to push for independence, but his olive branch was instantly dismissed by Beijing. Unveiling proposals for constitutional reforms he plans to introduce in 2008, Chen ruled out any change to the status of Taiwan, which China regards as part of its territory to be re-unified by force if necessary. "I am fully aware that consensus has yet to be reached on issues related to national sovereignty, territory and the subject of reunification and independence," the 53-year-old said. "Such issues will not be included in the scope of constitutional reforms," he told a crowd of 200,000 people who had gathered in heavy rain on the capital's presidential square for the inauguration ceremony. Chen further conceded that "any form of future relationship betw! een the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China (Taiwan) should not be ruled out," including reunification. The Taiwan leader also renewed his vows at the inauguration four years ago that he would not seek independence during his tenure. But an unimpressed PRC reacted by branding Chen's policies the "greatest threat to peace and stability" in the region. "Chen Shui-bian's provocative pro-independence activities form the biggest current threat to peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

11. Hong Kong Democratization

Agence France-Presse ("CLIMATE OF POLITICAL FEAR DESCENDS UPON HK," 05/20/04) reported that the resignation of a third talkshow host famous for expressing anti-Beijing views deepened fears across Hong Kong that cherished freedoms are under attack. Allen Lee's decision to quit came soon after fellow broadcasters Albert Cheng and Wong Yuk-man stepped down saying they had received death threats over their criticism of the PRC. It coincided with reports that at least one pro-democracy legislator had also been threatened and that another's office had been vandalised with excrement. With suspicions growing that the PRC's communist rulers are orchestrating a campaign of intimidation aimed at derailing democratic hopes in upcoming legislative elections, observers fear the long term casualties will be freedom of speech and freedom of the press. "Tensions are high," said Sonny Lo, a political analyst at Hong Kong University. "We are facing a more extreme political scenario, which is u! nprecedented in Hong Kong." Less than seven years after the PRC took control of the former British colony with the promise that its open way of life would be protected, many believe the PRC is becoming increasingly interventionist. "There has been a definite change in China's policy," said PRC University professor of journalism Clement So. "Before, it tried hard to stay out of Hong Kong's way, but in recent months it has begun tampering in its politics. It's very, very

worrying."

12. Taiwan Presidential Election

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN'S PRESIDENT SWORN IN FOR SECOND TERM UNDER PRESSURE FROM CHINA," 05/20/04) reported that Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian was sworn in for a second term despite a bitter dispute over his razor-thin election victory and warnings from the PRC that it would crush any move towards independence. Chen and Vice President Annette Lu took the oath of office in a ceremony at the presidential office witnessed by top-ranking government officials and the heads of 16 states which have diplomatic relations with Taipei. The leaders of the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) pledged to serve another four-year term raising their right hands and facing the flag of the Republic of China, Taiwan's official name. Chen and Lu were later to take their oaths publicly in a ceremony at the presidential square to be attended by around 200,000 foreign and local guests. Chen, 53, and Lu, 59, will appear behind a wall of bullet-proof glass amid tight security a! fter the pair survived an election-eve shooting with only minor injuries while campaigning on an open-topped jeep on March 19. The opposition Kuomintang (KMT), which lost the bitterly contested March 20 poll by fewer than 30,000 votes, or 0.22 percent, claims the shooting and irregularities swayed the poll result and demanded a recount. The High Court is yet to rule on some 40,000 questionable ballots discovered in the nine-day vote recount.

13. Taiwan Presidential Oath

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN'S PRESIDENT SWORN IN FOR SECOND TERM UNDER PRESSURE FROM CHINA," 05/20/04) reported that Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian was sworn in for a second term despite a bitter dispute over his razor-thin election victory and warnings from the PRC that it would crush any move towards independence. Chen and Vice President Annette Lu took the oath of office in a ceremony at the presidential office witnessed by top-ranking government officials and the heads of 16 states which have diplomatic relations with Taipei. The leaders of the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) pledged to serve another four-year term raising their right hands and facing the flag of the Republic of China. Chen and Lu were later to take their oaths publicly in a ceremony at the presidential square to be attended by around 200,000 foreign and local guests. Chen, 53, and Lu, 59, will appear behind a wall of bullet-proof glass amid tight security after the pair survived a! n election-eve shooting with only minor injuries while campaigning on an open-topped jeep on March 19. The opposition Kuomintang (KMT), which lost the bitterly contested March 20 poll by fewer than 30,000 votes, or 0.22 percent, claims the shooting and irregularities swayed the poll result and demanded a recount. The High Court is yet to rule on some 40,000 questionable ballots discovered in the nine-day vote recount.

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.

Produced by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development in partnership with:

Ilmin Internationl Relations Institute
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@online.ru
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

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report--0-may-2004/

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