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I. United States

1. US-ROK Military Exercise

The Associated Press ("SKOREA, U.S. TO HAVE FIELD EXERCISE," Seoul, 10/20/97) reported that

the US command in Seoul said Monday that the US and the ROK will conduct a two-week field training exercise from October 27 through November 8. The annual drill will involve most of the ROK's 650,000-strong military and the 37,000 US troops stationed in the ROK, making it the largest joint training exercise this year. Most training sites are located well south of Seoul, although some training will occur near the border with the DPRK, the command said. The USS Independence, an aircraft carrier, will also participate in an amphibious landing operation on the ROK's east coast.

2. DPRK Abduction of ROK Citizens

The Associated Press ("N. KOREA HOLDING SEIZED FARMERS," Seoul, 10/18/97) reported that the UN Command in the ROK tried on Saturday to win the release of two ROK farmers seized by DPRK border guards, but a dispute over whether the farmers violated the border complicated negotiations. "The command is trying to recover the two farmers through dialogue with the Korean People's Army," said spokesman Jim Coles. "The dialogue channel remains open."

3. US Food Aid for DPRK

The Associated Press ("U.S. TO PROBE NKOREA FOOD NEEDS," Washington, 10/20/97) reported that US State Department spokesman James P. Rubin on Monday said that US officials will go to the DPRK this week to investigate food needs there and also to tighten procedures to ensure that aid goes only to children and others in dire need. Rubin said that even before the scheduled arrival of US officials on Saturday, some bureaucratic hurdles have been cleared to make monitoring more pervasive, but he stressed "we have always regarded monitoring to be crucial." The US group going to Pyongyang is the first from the US to assess the DPRK's food needs. It is due to remain in the DPRK until Nov. 4.

J. Brian Atwood, Administrator for the US Agency for International Development ("ATWOOD ON U.S. FOREIGN POLICY, HUMAN RIGHTS, ASSISTANCE," USIA Text, Washington, 10/17/97), in a speech at American University, said that because the DPRK "is far from a transition to open government and an open market" the US "must maintain a guarded diplomatic posture and a vigilant military presence on the peninsula." However, he said that the US government has "been careful to maintain a strict separation between our response to an immediate humanitarian crisis and our diplomatic efforts to explore opportunities for a more peaceful co-existence." He argued, "North Korea offers a vivid example of why totalitarian regimes and centrally planned economies have always been vulnerable to food shortages. The only hope for reversing this decline lies with meaningful reform."

4. DPRK Famine

The Washington Post (Keith B. Richburg, "NORTH KOREA ON BRINK OF NEW CRISIS," Pyongyang, 10/18/97, A01) reported that DPRK government officials and foreign relief workers said that the DPRK is facing another bleak harvest season of disappointing crop yields, and will need continued food aid from donor countries to avoid widespread starvation. US Representative Tony P. Hall, recently returned from a fact-finding mission to the DPRK, said that conditions in rural areas appeared to have worsened since he last visited the DPRK in April. Preliminary estimates from DPRK government officials and relief workers are that the DPRK may produce only about half of what it needs to feed its people this year, and that in some hard-hit areas of the mountainous north as much as 70 percent of the corn crop may be lost.

The Washington Post's Keith B. Richburg ("BEYOND A WALL OF SECRECY, DEVASTATION," Hamhung, DPRK, 10/19/97, A01), who recently visited the DPRK in the company of US Representative Tony Hall, reported that the visit provided "a rare glimpse of the country's near-total economic collapse." The article quoted Dr. Lee Huyn Myung, director of the local hospital in

Hamhung, as saying that his hospital has difficulty treating patients due to lack of food and medicine. The article also quoted the special representative in the DPRK for the United Nations Children's Fund, O. Omawale, as saying that such conditions are "pretty widespread." Christian C. Lemaire, the resident representative of the UN Development Program, was quoted as saying that the DPRK is in the midst of "a large economic crisis, but it's not being addressed. All we want to do is talk about the food problem." The article reported that some relief workers in the DPRK claim to see some early, tentative signs of an opening. There are now six foreign relief agencies based in Pyongyang and the outlying provinces, and John Prout, deputy director of the World Food Program in the DPRK, said his group had been to 110 of the country's 209 counties. Farmers in the northern have been told to fend for themselves, allowing them to trade privately with the PRC, relief workers say. With help from the UN Development Program (UNDP), there have been a few scattered experiments with "micro-credit," providing money to individual households to buy chickens or goats and allowing them to sell the eggs or milk on the open market. "Living here you can really see things change," said Lemaire. "But it's not change that's coming from the top. It's coming from the base."

The Washington Post's Keith B. Richburg ("SEEING A DIFFERENT FACE OF FAMINE," *Tongsin, DPRK*, 10/19/97, A23) quoted US Representative Tony P. Hall as saying that the famine in the DPRK is "a different kind of famine than what we've seen in Africa. In Africa, people would leave their homes, and [relief groups] would set up feeding centers, and it was very difficult to get people to go back to their homes and plant. In North Korea, people are urged to stay at home. They plant vegetables around their homes." Relief workers and others in the DPRK are convinced that the distribution system spreads what food there is equitably, the article said. Without large numbers of people dying in one place it is difficult to gauge the exact number of famine victims, the article concluded.

5. PRC Missile Sales

The Associated Press (Deb Riechmann, "U.S. OFFICIALS LEAVE FOR CHINA," Washington, 10/18/97), Reuters ("U.S. SAYS CHINA WILL STOP SELLING MISSILES TO IRAN," Washington, 10/18/97), and the New York Times (Steve Erlanger, "U.S. SAYS CHINESE WILL STOP SENDING MISSILES TO IRAN," Washington, 10/18/97) reported that, in a meeting this month between US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and PRC Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, the PRC promised to halt cruise missile sales to Iran. Robert Einhorn, deputy assistant secretary of state for non-proliferation, and Gary Samore, his National Security Council counterpart, left for Beijing Saturday to work out the details of the agreement, said Jim Steinberg, deputy national security adviser, adding that the officials will "deal with a number of nonproliferation issues." However, administration officials said it was unlikely that PRC President Jiang Zemin would pledge publicly not to transfer nuclear technology to Iran. Meanwhile Robert Kagan of the Carnegie Endowment criticized the US administration's approach to the PRC as backward. "The Chinese want a nuclear cooperation agreement. And the Administration ... wants to give Beijing what is in effect a present which shows the success of engagement, which the Chinese have not yet earned," Kagan said.

6. PRC Dissidents

Reuters (Scott Hillis, "U.S., CHINA DISCUSS RELEASE OF DISSIDENTS," Beijing, 10/20/97) reported that a senior US embassy official in the PRC said on Monday that the US was hopeful it could persuade the PRC to free jailed political dissidents ahead of the Sino-US summit next week. A top PRC official appeared to leave open the possibility of medical parole for imprisoned activists, the anonymous US official said. "The Chinese have taken the position that this is a legal question that has to be resolved by the Ministry of Justice, but they don't foreclose the possibility of certain dissidents being released on medical parole," the diplomat said. However, he added, "China is a sovereign state. Its judiciary is independent. When and on what terms prisoners are released should

be determined according to Chinese laws."

7. US-PRC Summit Meeting

The Washington Post ("JIANG: `THE SUPREME INTEREST OF CHINA IS PEACE AND NATION-BUILDING'," 10/19/97, A22) carried excerpts from an interview in Shanghai on October 17 with PRC President Jiang Zemin, in which he said that he hopes "that through my visit the development of Chinese American relations will be promoted to a new level." Jiang stated that "the supreme interest of China is peace and nation-building. As to all threats to peace and development, no matter where they come from, the Chinese people will join hands with the people of the rest of the world to prevent and eliminate all of them." Jiang said that the PRC is "on very high alert regarding this Japan-U.S. military treaty. And we hope that this treaty is not directed at China." Jiang defended the PRC government's actions in the 1989 Tiananmen Square incident, arguing that "If a country with a population exceeding 1.2 billion doesn't enjoy political and social stability, there can be no reform and opening up such as we are enjoying today." He also maintained that "democracy and human rights are relative concepts and not absolute and general."

8. PRC-Taiwan Relations

The Washington Post carried an opinion article (Don Oberdorfer, "FOR THE CHINESE, THE MAIN ISSUE IS ALWAYS TAIWAN," 10/19/97, C06) arguing that, compared to Taiwan, "No other problem in Asia or elsewhere has as much potential to touch off a confrontation that could lead to war between the United States and another major power." The article stated that Taiwanese officials "are preparing to continue and perhaps intensify their drive to expand their international acceptance." While Taiwanese officials are unlikely to declare formal independence, "they appear ready to push their cause right up to that final red line, counting on the United States to back them up if the worst happens," the article said. The author argued that the increased democratization of Taiwan has led to the predominance of native-born Taiwanese with fewer historical or emotional ties to the mainland. "Thus, there is little interest on the island in 'one China,' which is the consistent and ardent objective of the authorities in Beijing and which has long been formally accepted by the United States." He said that "the issue of Taiwan ... continues to be the bedrock problem in Sino-American relations." The article pointed out that the opposition Democratic Progressive Party, which US diplomats expect to become the dominant party by the presidential election of 2000, hopes to "establish a new and independent Republic of Taiwan." However, the article warned that "the more that Taiwan strives for recognition of its separateness and sovereignty, the more the mainland is likely to react politically and, eventually, militarily."

9. Nuclear Disarmament

The San Francisco Examiner (Keay Davidson, "PULLING BACK FROM BRINK OF ANNIHILATION," San Francisco, 10/19/97) reported that Admiral Stansfield Turner, former chief of the US Central Intelligence Agency, has proposed a step-by-step scheme for reducing the threat of nuclear war. Turner's "strategic escrow" plan, outlined in his new book, "Caging the Nuclear Genie," would place most warheads at least 200 miles from their missiles so they could not be suddenly launched. Joseph Cirincione of the Henry L. Stimson Center in Washington, DC, described the plan as "an eminently practical first step" toward eventual total nuclear disarmament. Turner asserts in his book, "We have had thousands of false alarms of impending missile attacks on the United States, and a few could have spun out of control." Turner calls for reducing the nuclear arsenals of the US and Russia to perhaps a few hundred weapons each. He also proposes allowing officials from each country to observe the other's removal process to guard against cheating. The plan also calls for both sides to agree to "no first use" of nuclear weapons and to end the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty to allow both nations to build anti-missile defenses, to protect against accidental or small-scale nuclear attacks.

While many anti-nuclear activists support Turner's "strategic escrow" plan, not all agree with his position on the anti-ballistic missiles.

II. Republic of Korea

1. Light-Water Reactor Construction Project

A site survey team of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) will visit the DPRK Tuesday via Beijing. With the survey team will be a separate team of 28 officials and engineers of KEDO and the Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO), the main contractor for the reactor consortium project. The joint KEDO-KEPCO team will discuss the progress of the ground-leveling work on the construction site with ROK civil engineers and workers who are already engaged in work on reactor construction in the Kumho district of Sinpo, a port city on the eastern coast of the DPRK. (Korea Times, "KEDO TEAMS TO VISIT N. KOREA," 10/19/97)

2. ROK Aid to DPRK

An unnamed ROK government official said that the government is planning to change the aid sent to the DPRK to specialized items such as children's goods and farming equipment instead of general purpose food aid, due to suspicions that food aid to the DPRK has been diverted to the military. The official said that such suspicions were raised when a label from canned goods sent by a US organization were found in the submarine that infiltrated the ROK last year. The official added that the government must assure that food rations sent to the DPRK cannot be used by the military. According to this policy the government is planning to allocate \$US10 million in medical equipment and food for children from next month at the earliest. (Chosun Ilbo, "GOVERNMENT TO CHANGE NORTH AID SYSTEM FOR CHILDREN," 10/20/97)

3. ROK-DPRK Fishery Project

Taeyong Fisheries and Parawoo Fisheries received licenses from the ROK Ministry of National Unification on Saturday to invest in a joint project with the DPRK. Taeyong Fisheries is investing US\$2 million to grow scallops in Wonsan and Rajin-Sonbong in the DPRK with plans to export to Taiwan and Japan. This is the first time the ROK and the DPRK have cooperated in the fishing industry. (Chosun Ilbo, "FIRST SOUTH NORTH JOINT FISHERY PROJECT TO START," 10/20/97)

III. People's Republic of China

1. PRC-US-Japan Relations In an article published by the quarterly International Survey ("AN ANALYSIS ON THE OPERATING MECHANISMS OF TRIANGULAR RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHINA, THE US AND JAPAN," No. 4, 1997, pp. 15-17), author Deng Changxiong analyzed the framework of the PRC-US-Japan triangular relationship. This relationship, according to the author, is the main pillar of international relations in the Asia-Pacific area after the cold war. Since the multilateral regimes in the Asia-Pacific region, such as ASEAN, are not yet mature and need further institutionalization, the operating mechanisms of the relationship between the PRC, the US and Japan are still composed of three groups of bilateral relations. With the rise of multiple power centers in the Asia-Pacific area, however, the development of multilateral cooperation mechanisms is inevitable. The author argued that the manageability of US-PRC-Japanese relations will increase, although the three nations will continue to experience intense competition in political, economic and security fields. The improvement of relations among the three countries probably will bring about more coordination and cooperation among them. However, some uncertainties which may restrict the multilateralization of PRC-US-Japan relations should not be ignored, according to the author. These elements include anti-PRC cooperation between the US and Japan, the development of Japan's

military, and even nuclear, forces, and the abandonment by the US and Japanese governments of their commitments on Taiwan issues.

2. ROK Defense Strategy

An article in the semi-monthly World Outlook ("SITUATION IN NORTHEASTERN ASIA AND THE REORIENTATION OF ROK DEFENSE STRATEGY," Chen Yineng, No. 18, 1997, pp. 5-6) said that in the 1990s the ROK has been changing its national defense strategy from dependence on the US to greater self-reliance. While there are several reasons for the ROK to adjust its defense strategy—including the rapid increase of the ROK's economic and technological strength, the reduction of the US military presence in the ROK, and the US desire to have the ROK bear more of the expenses of US troops in the ROK—the author especially emphasized the effect of the expansion of Japanese military power. According to the author, ROK strategists believe that Japan will be the main threat to the Korean Peninsula from a long-term perspective. As the current US-ROK security cooperation is principally directed against the DPRK rather than Japan, the ROK has to prepare to counter the threat from Japan by moving away from its dependence on its military alliance with the US. In the post-cold war situation, the ROK has taken some measures to re-orient its national defense. Firstly, the ROK is adjusting the military cooperation mechanism with the US to improve the capability of ROK forces. Secondly, the ROK is continuously increasing its defense budget and seeking balanced development of its army, navy and air force. Thirdly, the ROK is trying to multilateralize its exchange and cooperation with other countries and engage in UN peacekeeping activities. However, realization of self-reliance in the ROK's defense will not be easy. The US will maintain its military presence in the Korean Peninsula in the foreseeable future, not only because of US strategic and economic interests, but also because the ROK still believes that the presence of the US force will be beneficial for maintaining the balance of power in Northeastern Asia, which is threatened by the DPRK's conventional forces and potential development of weapons of mass destruction.

3. Japan-DPRK Relations

Cui Zhiying said in the monthly Contemporary International Relations, a major Chinese journal on international relations, that despite efforts by Japan and the DPRK to improve their relations in the 1990s, progress has been limited. The article said that the normalization of Japan-DPRK relations will benefit both countries. For Japan, the DPRK is not only an important potential market but also a political arena for augmenting the Japanese position in the world. From a geopolitical standpoint, the peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula is also beneficial to Japanese security. To the DPRK, the establishment of normal relations with Japan will help the DPRK extricate itself from diplomatic isolation and economic difficulty. However, the author argued, the DPRK's relations with the US and ROK will play an important role in the improvement of its relations with Japan. As cooperation with the US is the cornerstone of Japan's foreign policy, Japan will be in keeping with the US on its policy toward the DPRK. Japan will not clash with the ROK on DPRK issues either, because Japan attaches great importance to the improvement of security and economic relations with the ROK. In addition, the implementation of the US-DPRK nuclear framework agreement, the issue of Japanese compensation to the DPRK, and Japan's attitude towards its imperial history will all influence the normalization of relations between Japan and the DPRK. On the whole, the author said, the improvement of Japan-DPRK relations will continue, but it will largely depend on the progress of US-DPRK relations, which is the decisive element influencing the future of the Korean Peninsula and Northeastern Asia. (Contemporary International Relations, "REVIEW AND PROSPECT OF JAPAN-DPRK RELATIONS", NO. 9, 1997, pp. 21-25)

4. Russian Diplomacy in Asia

People's Daily ("RUSSIA PAYS MORE ATTENTION TO RELATIONS WITH ASIA- PACIFIC

COUNTRIES," 10/15/97, A6) said that in recent years, Russia comprehensively resumed and developed its good-neighborly relations with countries in the Asia-Pacific area. It not only consolidated its economic cooperation with Asia-Pacific countries, but also carried out security dialogues with Asia-Pacific countries with the aim of establishing a new security regime in the area. The reorientation of Russia's foreign policy has global strategic, economic and security considerations. Russia's diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region has achieved some successes, the article said, but it still needs more economic backing and the resolution of historical disputes with Asia-Pacific countries.

5. PRC-US Military Exchanges

Jie Fang Daily ("SINO-US MILITARY EXCHANGES INCREASING," 10/14/97, A4) said that friendly exchanges between the armed forces of the PRC and the US have been increasing as Sino-US relations have progressed since the meeting between presidents Jiang Zemin and Bill Clinton in Manila last November. After the visit to the US last December by Chi Haotian, Vice-Chairman of the PRC Central Military Commission, there was a marked improvement in bilateral military links. High-level exchanges have increased mutual understanding, friendship and trust and have provided channels for the two sides to discuss issues of common concern, the article said. The People's Liberation Army is ready to have more exchanges with its US counterparts in various fields and at various levels, the article concluded.

6. PRC-Taiwan Relations

The October issue of Beijing's Cross-Straits Relations Monthly called for early political negotiations between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits. An article in the magazine said that the only way to solve differences and develop cross-straits relations and to promote peaceful reunification of the motherland is through political negotiations. Negotiations should come in different stages, starting with an end to long-lasting hostilities. The article said that whether cross-straits political negotiations can be held or not is a question of sincerity rather than rhetoric. First and foremost, the "one China" principle must be adhered to, the article argued. The mainland has, from the very beginning, made it clear that negotiations between the Communist Party of China and the Kuomintang are negotiations between equal parties, and PRC President Jiang Zemin, in his Eight Point Proposals, said that the location and methods of political negotiations could be settled through talks. This shows that the mainland has never meant to have a "center-to-province" attitude, according to the article. The journal reaffirmed that no foreign forces can interfere in political negotiations between the two sides because the reunification of the two is an internal affair of China and should be resolved by the people of the two sides. Jie Fang Daily ("STARTING EARLY POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS TO PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS-STRAITS RELATIONS," 10/14/97, A9)

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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](#).

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