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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. Napsnet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

BBC ("N KOREA 'PUTS BACK REACTOR SEALS'", Washington, 2008/10/17) reported that US State department spokesman Sean McCormack said that the DPRK had put back seals on its nuclear equipment and reinstalled surveillance devices. "In addition to that, they have removed more rods from the reactor," McCormack stated.

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2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

The Associated Press (Jae-Soon Chang, "SKOREAN ENVOY URGES NKOREA TO STICK TO DISARMAMENT", Seoul, 2008/10/16) reported that the ROK's chief nuclear negotiator urged the DPRK to stick to its pledge to give up its atomic ambitions. "North Korea, which has been accused of repeatedly backing out of promises or demanding more than what it should get, can prove its

denuclearization commitment only with actions, not with words," envoy Kim Sook said in an article in the Chosun Ilbo.

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3. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Yomiuri Shimbun (Satoshi Ogawa, "U.S. TO SEEK 300 MIL. DOLLARS FOR DPRK WORK", Washington, 2008/10/17) reported that the U.S. government is expected to seek about 300 million dollars from Congress to support the DPRK's disarmament process for a year. According to a source close to the U.S. Congress, the money is expected to fund inspection procedures of the nuclear disablement process, including the dismantling the Yongbyon nuclear complex and the transport of spent fuel rods from the DPRK. Moving of fuel rods out of the reclusive state will be the most expensive procedure, the source said.

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4. Japanese Energy Aid to DPRK

Asahi Shimbun (Satoshi Ukai, "HILL ACCEPTS TOKYO'S STANCE ON N. KOREA", Honolulu, 2008/10/20) reported that while expressing understanding for Japan's refusal to extend energy assistance to the DPRK until the abduction issue is resolved, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill said on Friday that he hoped the Japanese would also realize that the denuclearization of the DPRK was in their interests. He also indicated that talks were being held on how to make up for the 200,000 tons of heavy fuel oil that should have been provided by Japan under the six-party talks agreement. "I am not prepared at this point to say which countries will provide additional fuel oil," Hill said. "There have been indications that we could get additional fuel oil from elsewhere."

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5. DPRK Internal Situation

Korea Times (Michael Ha, "NK DIPLOMATS ON STANDBY FOR 'IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT'", Seoul, 2008/10/19) reported that Japanese newspapers reported over the weekend that diplomats at DPRK embassies abroad have been instructed by Pyongyang to be on standby for an ``important message.'' ``North Korea issued an order to its embassies that their staff must refrain from making business trips so that they can be ready for an important announcement from their homeland,'' according to the Yomiuri Shimbun. ``The order was sent out during the past few days.''

Reuters (Jack Kim, "NO SIGN OF SPECIAL NORTH KOREA BROADCAST: SOUTH", Seoul, 2008/10/20) reported that ROK Unification Ministry spokesman Kim Ho-nyeon told a news briefing on Monday no unusual activity was observed in the DPRK. "We have nothing to confirm regarding chairman Kim Jong-il's health," Kim said. "All of the North's domestic broadcasts, its international events and domestic events are being conducted normally." A source based in Beijing with close ties to the DPRK government termed reports that Kim may have died "nonsense." "All along his health has not been very good. But there's definitely no problem," the source, requesting anonymity, told Reuters.

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6. DPRK Leadership

Yonhap (Yoo Cheong-mo, "PYONGYANG DENIES KIM'S ILLNESS: FORMER AIDE TO LEE", Seoul, 2008/10/20) reported that Choo Boo-kil, a former public information secretary to President Lee Myung-bak, said Monday that he had heard nothing unusual about the health of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il during his visit to the DPRK last week. ""North Korean officials I contacted in Pyongyang vehemently denied any media speculation about Kim's health problems," said Choo.

Donga Ilbo ("'N. KOREAN LEADER COULD BE SEEKING MEDIA ATTENTION'", Washington, 2008/10/20) reported that at a joint news conference with U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates Friday in Washington, ROK Defense Minister Lee Sang-hee has said, “We should not pay too much attention to Kim Jong Il’s health. He might enjoy the heightened attention.” “Excessive attention may spoil Kim,” Lee said. “It’s true that Kim’s health has a big influence on security on the Korean Peninsula. And South Korean and U.S. intelligence are closely following up on it.” “Kim has long before stopped appearing in public, but we believe he still in control of his government.”

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7. Inter-Korea Relations

Associated Press (Jae-soon Chang, "S. KOREA SEEKS TO CALM N. KOREA FOLLOWING THREAT", Seoul, 2008/10/17) reported that the ROK on Friday said it does not want confrontation with Pyongyang and dialogue is the best way to resolve problems. Kim Ho-nyeon, spokesman for Seoul's Unification Ministry, stated, "Our position remains unchanged that we want to resolve all problems through dialogue between the South and the North." Kim said the ROK "respects the spirit" of all agreements between the two sides and called for dialogue to discuss how to carry them out. He also called for talks with the DPRK to discuss investigating the July tourist killing so that the Mt. Kumgang tour project can resume.

Yonhap (Shim Sun-ah, "CIVIC GROUPS TO CONTINUE SENDING PROPAGANDA LEAFLETS DESPITE N.K. THREATS", Seoul, 2008/10/17) reported that two groups representing DPRK defectors and families of kidnapped ROK citizens said Friday they will continue to spread leaflets into the DPRK despite threats from Pyongyang. "We're going to float balloons carrying some 300,000 leaflets bearing the names of South Korean citizens and prisoners of war held in the North on three separate occasions this month from eastern waters off Gojin, Goseong," said Park Sang-hak, a DPRK defector. "We're going to give North Korean residents tips on how to send information on kidnapped South Korean civilians and prisoners of war to the South in the leaflets," Park said.

Korea Herald ("N. KOREA BLASTS SEOUL AMID REPORTS OF 'IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT'", Seoul, 2008/10/20) reported that the DPRK blasted the ROK government Sunday. "The Lee Myung-bak group's reckless suppression of the pro-reunification democratic forces is a frontal challenge to the South Korean people who desire new politics and new life, and a crime against the nation and reunification," the Rodong Sinmun said in a commentary carried by the country's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). "It is as clear as noonday that if the (Lee Myung-bak) group is allowed to commit the crime of mercilessly suppressing the just patriotic activities for reunification of the South

Korean people by linking them with the North, all the democratic forces for reunification will be destroyed and the fascist dictatorship revive in South Korea," the commentary said.

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8. ROK Aid for DPRK

Yonhap (Lee Chi-dong, "LACK OF INTER-KOREAN DIALOGUE OBSTRUCTS AID: MINISTER", Seoul, 2008/10/20) reported that ROK Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan said Monday that his government is prepared to provide the DPRK with "comprehensive assistance," but such aid is obstructed by the slow progress in denuclearization efforts and Pyongyang's boycott of dialogue with Seoul. "We will continue to exercise patience in our steady diplomatic efforts to engage North Korea to help it become a responsible member of the international community," Yu said in a speech to mark the 63rd Anniversary of United Nations Day.

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9. US-ROK Relations

BBC ("US EXTENDS VISA WAIVER PROGRAMME", Washington, 2008/10/17) reported that US President George W Bush has announced that the United States is to cancel visa requirements for citizens of six European countries and the ROK.

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10. US-ROK Security Alliance

Korea Times (Michael Ha, "US TO DEPLOY 690,000 TO KOREA IN EMERGENCY", Seoul, 2008/10/19) reported that U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates affirmed that the United States remains committed to defending the ROK and that its armed forces would respond ``quickly with appropriate military power'' in case of military emergency. A joint communique issued following the annual Korea-U.S. Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) with Defense Minister Lee Sang-hee, held in Washington Friday stated, ``Secretary Gates assured Minister Lee of a firm U.S. commitment and immediate support toward the Republic of Korea, including continuation of the extended deterrence offered by the U.S. nuclear umbrella, consistent with the ROK-U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty.''

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11. ROK Military Procurements

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. MAY SELL GLOBAL HAWK SPY PLANE TO KOREA", Seoul, 2008/10/20) reported that U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Friday that the US is "sympathetic" to the ROK's interest in purchasing the global hawk, the long-range high-altitude unmanned aerial vehicle. It is the first time the U.S. has officially revealed it may sell the surveillance aircraft to the Korean government, although Washington is thought to have been leaning toward the sale since the beginning of this year.

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12. Remains of US Soldiers from Korean War

Agence France-Presse ("SKOREA, US TO SEARCH DMZ FOR KOREAN WAR MISSING", Seoul, 2008/10/20) reported that ROK and US officials will for the first time search the Demilitarized Zone for the remains of soldiers killed during the Korean War, Seoul's defence ministry said Monday. It said more than 13,000 ROK and some 2,000 US troops are believed buried inside the DMZ. "The joint search... will be conducted to help provide valuable experience for future excavation projects inside the DMZ, and it will mark the first search ever inside the DMZ," the ministry said in a statement.

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13. ROK Space Program

Korea Times (Kim Tong-hyung, "HOME-MADE SATELLITE TO BE PUT INTO ORBIT NEXT YEAR", Goheung, 2008/10/19) reported that ROK scientists unveiled the mock-up of a rocket designed to send a domestically produced research satellite into orbit next year from the country's spaceport in Goheung, South Jeolla Province. The 33-meter, 140-ton ground test vehicle (GTV) revealed by the Korea Aerospace Research Institute (KARI) is virtually identical to the Korea Space Launch Vehicle (KSLV-1) rocket that will be launched sometime during the second quarter of next year. The KSLV-1, a carrier rocket designed for transporting satellites, is a joint project with Russia's Khrunichev State Space Science and Production Center, which is providing the technology for the project and designing the 25.8-meter-long lower assembly that contains the liquid-fueled propulsion system.

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14. ROK Biofuel Development

Chosun Ilbo ("IDLE FARMLAND TO BE USED FOR BIOFUEL", Seoul, 2008/10/20) reported that the ROK government plans to raise fast-growing plants on idle farmland and near the four major rivers for use as fuel for power plants. “In the mountains, trees that do not grow any more such as pitch pines will be cut and replaced by fast-growing trees under the Bio-Fuel Forest project,” the Ministry for Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries said Sunday. “We have agreed with to create 400 sq. km of bio-fuel forest by 2020.” The ministry will buy 1,000 sq. km of riverside lots and plant fast-growing trees there to create bio-fuel complexes by 2020.

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15. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Refueling Mission

Kyodo ("ASO AT SDF REVIEW PLEDGES TO CONTINUE REFUELING MISSION", Omitama, 2008/10/19) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso reiterated Sunday that he is resolved to continue the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean next year. ''It is impossible for Japan to choose to withdraw from the mission as a member of the international community,'' Aso told some 5,000 Self-Defense Forces personnel at an annual review held at Air

Self-Defense Force Hyakuri Base in Omitama, Ibaraki Prefecture, northeast of Tokyo. ''It is necessary for us to engage in international peace-fostering activities such as the fight against terrorism in an active manner in the future, too,'' said Aso.

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16. Japan SDF Role in Afghanistan

Yomiuri Shimbun ("U.S. WANTS JAPAN TO SEND SDF COPTERS TO AFGHANISTAN", Tokyo, 2008/10/20) reported that the United States has sounded out Japan on the possibility of dispatching Self-Defense Forces transport helicopters to aid reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, it was learned over the weekend. Washington asked Tokyo whether it would be able to send CH-47 transport helicopters for domestic transportation, C-130 transport aircraft to fly goods and personnel from overseas to key airports in Afghanistan and to contribute personnel to provincial reconstruction teams.

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17. Japanese Anti-Piracy Measures

Kyodo News ("ASO SUPPORTS STUDYING PROPOSAL TO SEND ANTI-PIRACY SHIPS TO SOMALIA", Tokyo, 2008/10/17) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso expressed a positive view Friday on the possibility of sending Maritime Self-Defense Force vessels to guard commercial freighters and other ships from possible attacks by pirates in waters off Somalia. At a House of Representatives committee session, opposition lawmaker Akihisa Nagashima stated, ''Escorts by SDF ships would be very effective. The dispatch would not be for the purpose of the use of arms.'' Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura told a press conference Friday, ''If we need a new law, we must consider it.''

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18. Japanese Role in UN

BBC ("IRAN SECURITY COUNCIL BID FAILS", New York, 2008/10/17) reported that Japan has been elected as a temporary member of the UN Security Council, defeating Iran for the Asian seat. Japan received 158 votes and Iran received 32.

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19. Japanese Politics

Kyodo ("APPROVAL RATE FOR ASO'S CABINET SLIPS 6.1 POINTS TO 42.5%; KYODO POLL", Tokyo, 2008/10/20) reported that the approval rating for Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso's Cabinet stood at 42.5 percent in a telephone poll conducted by Kyodo News on Saturday and Sunday, down 6.1 points from the previous poll in September, while disapproval grew by the same margin to 39 percent. Asked which political party they would vote for in the proportional representation block if a general election is called, 35.9 percent cited the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan,

outpacing Aso's Liberal Democratic Party, which scored 32.7 percent.

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20. PRC Territorial Disputes

BBC (Shirong Chen, "CHINA ACTS IN DISPUTED WATER ROW", Beijing, 2008/10/17) reported that has banned its fishing fleet from working in waters disputed with neighbouring countries. According to reports, more than 2,000 Chinese fishing boats and 20,000 fishermen have been detained by ROK maritime police in the past four years.

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21. PRC-Pakistan Nuclear Cooperation

Associated Press (Stephen Graham, "CHINA TO HELP BUILD 2 PAKISTAN NUCLEAR PLANTS", Islamabad, 2008/10/18) reported that Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said Saturday that the PRC will help build two more nuclear power plants in the country. PRC leaders "do recognize Pakistan's need, and China is one country that at international forums has clearly spoken against the discriminatory nature" of the U.S.-India nuclear pact, Qureshi said at a news conference. Qureshi did not discuss if there are any measures in place to prevent nuclear materials from the new plants from being diverted to Pakistan's atomic weapons program.

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22. PRC Nuclear Power

Caijing (Li Qiyan, "NUCLEAR POWER EXTENDS TO CHINA'S INTERIOR", Beijing, 2008/10/17) reported that nuclear power development in the PRC's inland region is ready for takeoff now that the PRC has officially adopted AP1000 nuclear power technology -- a standard for plants designed by U.S.-based Westinghouse -- as the basis for inland nuclear projects. Han Xiaoping, executive vice president of the Web site China5e.com, stated, “China has been waiting for the safer, third-generation nuclear power technology.”

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23. PRC Food Safety

Associated Press (Audra Ang, "CHINA'S GOVERNMENT ADMITS FAILINGS IN MILK SCANDAL", Beijing, 2008/10/18) reported that PRC Premier Wen Jiabao said the government is partly responsible for the tainted milk scandal. The government feels "great sorrow" over the crisis, Wen said in an interview published in this week's Science Magazine. "We will handle the incident sincerely and seriously, and draw deep lessons from it," said Wen.

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24. PRC Media Control

BBC ("CHINA'S PRESS FREEDOMS EXTENDED", Beijing, 2008/10/18) reported that the PRC has extended some of the rules that gave foreign reporters greater freedom during the Beijing Olympics. It means journalists can continue to conduct interviews without applying to the authorities for permission. "If properly implemented, we believe this will mark a step forward in the opening of China's media environment," said Jonathan Watts, president of the Foreign Correspondents' Club of China.

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II. PRC Report

25. PRC Environment

China Environment News (Zhang Nan, "ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT CHINA FORUM TO BE HELD IN BEIJING", 2008/10/17) reported that the 4 th Environment and Development China Forum will be held on Oct.18-19, in Beijing. The Forum is co-sponsored by Ministry of Environment and China Academy of Social Sciences. The theme of the Forum is to “focus on climate change, promote energy saving, control air pollution, and strengthen international cooperation”. Representatives of United Nations Environment Program and United Nations Development Program, as well as ambassadors of the European Union, France, Canada, and dozens of other countries will participate in the forum.

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26. PRC Civil Society and Earthquake Aid

Xinhua Net (Sun Haoran , "CHINA FOUNDATION FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION HELPS SPONSOR 300 ORPHANS FROM NANJIANG COUNTY", 2008/10/16) reported that the first batch of 300 orphans from Nanjiang county have received their allowance support from the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation. Nanjiang County is one of the 51 harder-hit counties of the Wenchuan Earthquake. Each one of the 300 orphans will receive 1200 yuan per year, and the fund support will last for 3 years.

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27. PRC Civil Society

South Daily (Sun Xiaosu, "GUANGDONG VOLUNTEERS ORGANIZATIONS GET 5 MILLION YUAN FINANCIAL SUPPORT", 2008/10/16) reported that Guangdong province has set up a special fund for volunteers’ service. After three months’ inspection, 420 volunteers’ organizations have received a total of 2.65 million yuan from the government. Yesterday, the funded organizations signed the letter of commitment to guarantee maximizing the fund’s social benefits. The network of Guangdong Volunteers’ Federation was open yesterday, in order to attract public participation.

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III. Announcements

28. Global Nuclear Futures Briefing Book

("",) New sections have been added to the Global Nuclear Futures Briefing Book, the Nautilus Institute's online source for information on nuclear energy and nuclear proliferation. The new sections include Nuclear Proliferation, Nuclear Reactor Safety, and a section on United States' nuclear policy. Additional content has also been added to the existing China section. Please visit http://www.globalcollab.org/Nautilus/programs/energy-security/nuclear-briefing-book/

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