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### I. **United States**

#### 1. **US-ROK Military Talks**

Agence France Presse ("US REAFFIRMS MILITARY ALLIANCE WITH SOUTH KOREA," Seoul, 9/20/00) reported that the US and the ROK reaffirmed their security alliance Wednesday as the two Koreas also started military talks in a bid to ease tensions on the DPRK-ROK border. An ROK military official said, "The two sides reaffirmed their traditional military alliance at their annual security conference which started today here." General Henry Shelton, chairman of the US joint chiefs staff, headed a high-level military delegation to the security conference at the office of his ROK counterpart, Cho Young-Kil. The two countries will have high-level talks on September 21, attended by US Defense Secretary William Cohen and ROK Defense Minister Cho Sung-Tae. An anonymous ROK officer said, "US and South Korean military officials agreed to strengthen their military cooperation and joint defense posture."

Agence France Presse ("US DEPARTURE WOULD CAUSE POWER VACUUM, SAYS SOUTH KOREA PRESIDENT," Seoul, 9/20/00) and the Associated Press (Kyong-Hwa Seok, "US DEFENSE

SECRETARY IN SOUTH KOREA," Seoul, 9/20/00) reported that US Defense Secretary William Cohen said ROK President Kim Dae-jung warned Wednesday of a dangerous power vacuum on the Korean peninsula if US troops left after any formal DPRK-ROK reconciliation. Cohen said Kim "feels that the balance of power would shift in the region and there would be a vacuum created and others would seek to fill the vacuum, creating instability," Cohen told reporters. He said they discussed Kim's views on the historical role of the China, Japan and Russia and "why it is important for the United States to remain a stabilizing force here." Cohen said Kim also "indicated that Kim Jong-il understood and agreed specifically with the need for the United States to maintain a military presence here." Cohen also said that Kim "indicated that we should continue to be vigilant and strong and work in close coordination with each other, The ROK (South Korea) and US forces." Cohen said there was no discussion of any change in the US force size or structure in the future. He added, "It's premature to even think about any alteration of the current structure we have. Much will depend on the security environment in the future, and that's very much in the distant future. So we intend to maintain our current structure."

## **2. Proposal for Joint US-Japan-PRC Military Drills**

Kyodo (Hiroki Sugita, "U.S. DEFENSE SECRETARY PROPOSES JOINT JAPAN, CHINA, U.S. MILITARY DRILLS," Seoul, 9/20/00) reported that US Defense Secretary William Cohen proposed late September 19 that the US, the PRC and Japan hold multilateral military drills as a means to ensure greater stability in the Asia- Pacific region. In an interview with Kyodo News and the "Asahi Shimbun" on a flight to the ROK, Cohen said that while the PRC's participation can be expected, it would not be in the immediate future. Cohen said, "In the future years I think (multilateral military drills are) something that all nations throughout the Asia-Pacific region, including China, should consider at some time. I have had discussions with the Chinese government in the past where we have talked about expanding our military-to- military relationship to the point where we could have... [agency ellipsis] exercises in the future. [However,] It is not in the immediate future, but somewhere down the road. I think (China) have just taken it into consideration... [agency ellipsis] see how we proceed and progress in the coming years." Cohen said multilateral drills in Asia could serve to help build stability in the region, which lacks a solid multilateral security arrangement such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) serving Europe and North America. However, he added, the proposed multilateral drills would be intended for peacekeeping operations and humanitarian aid. He continued, "The greater multilateral activity that we can have, the better it will be in times of dealing with a humanitarian crisis, or a potential peacekeeping mission. The greater the cooperation that can be amongst the nations in peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, the more secure and stable the world is going to be. But I don't know that it is going to result in any kind of a security arrangement for the foreseeable future."

## **3. US Grants PNTR to the PRC**

New York Times (Eric Schmitt "SENATE VOTES TO LIFT CURBS ON U.S. TRADE WITH CHINA," Washington, 9/20/00) reported that the US Senate passed the Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) for the PRC Wednesday with an 83 to 15 vote. Coupled with approval by the US House of Representatives in May, the vote ended the annual Congressional review of PRC's trade status. US President Bill Clinton told said, "This landmark agreement will extend economic prosperity at home and promote economic freedom in China, increasing the prospects for openness in China and a more peaceful future for all of us." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for September 20, 2000.]

Agence France Presse ("CHINA-US TIES STILL SENSITIVE DESPITE PNTR APPROVAL," Beijing,

9/20/00) reported that analysts warned that the approval of permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) for the PRC would not necessarily herald the beginning of a new era of harmony in Sino-US ties. Brian Bridges, a political scientist at Lingnan College in Hong Kong, said, "While the China-US relationship is not completely back on track, it is in much better shape than it was last summer. But there are still outstanding issues left. I expect Taiwan to be an issue next year, when China has got a better idea of what Chen is up to." Other issues include the US' decision on national missile defense (NMD), the issue of human rights, and PRC's entrance into the World Trade Organization(WTO). Bridges said, "There will be occasions, mainly for political point scorings, when US politicians will try to see if China lives up to the bargain. Joseph Chen, a PRC expert at the City University of Hong Kong said, "As China opens up more and more to the outside world and becomes an active participant in world politics, it will become more concerned about its image in the world." Bridges predicted, "Opening up will help the free flow of technology and of ideas, and improve greater exchanges with the outside world. China will be exposed to more outside technologies, more outside values and more outsiders who come to invest and set up companies."

## **II. Republic of Korea**

### **1. ROK-DPRK Red Cross Talks**

The Korea Herald ("SEOUL PROPOSES REUNION CENTER IN DMZ," Seoul, 09/20/00) reported that Red Cross officials from the ROK and the DPRK started three days of negotiations in Mount Kumgang on Wednesday. The ROK's Red Cross team is led by Park Ki-ryun, secretary-general of the Korea National Red Cross, while Choe Sung-chol will head the DPRK's group. ROK officials said on September 19 that the ROK will propose talks to build a public park within the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to use as a permanent reunion center for separated families. ROK's Park said, "We should promote the permanent reunion station at the midpoint of the Kyongui Railway that will be reconnected." The DPRK is said not to favor Panmunjom mainly because it is controlled by the US-led United Nations Command. The minister said the two sides would discuss other ways to help divided families, such as confirming the whereabouts of long-lost kin and allowing them to correspond across the border.

### **2. DPRK Turns Down Invitations from IMF-IBRD**

Chosun Ilbo (Song Eui-dal, "NK TURNS DOWN INVITE TO IMF-IBRD ANNUAL MEETING," Seoul, 09/19/00) reported that despite being invited to attend as a special guest, the DPRK has decided not to participate in the annual general meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). The head of the International Finance Bureau of ROK's Ministry of Finance and Economy Kim Young-duk said on September 19 that he understood that DPRK Ambassador to the UN Li Hyong-chol had notified the IMF and IBRD that it would not be able to participate in the conference due to a lack of adequate preparation time. The IMF had issued letters of invitation to participate in the annual meeting as special guests to the DPRK and East Timor on September 1. Kim added, however, that Lee had indicated that it continues to be interested in the activities of the IMF and the IBRD.

### **3. ROK-US Talks**

The Korea Herald (Kang Seok-jae, "SOUTH KOREA, U.S. SEEN TO SEEK NEW ALLIANCE AT ANNUAL SECURITY MEETING," Seoul, 09/20/00) reported that ROK sources close to the ROK-US

military meeting said on September 18 that reflecting the rapid thaw in inter-Korean relations, the ROK and the US are expected to seek a new military alliance at their forthcoming annual security meeting. An ROK official said the two sides are expected to share the view that the ongoing positive developments in inter-Korean relations will greatly contribute to peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia. The official said, "Both parties are also likely to express their full support for the rapid thaw in inter-Korean ties. This is a departure from the past annual security meetings, in which the two sides issued strong warnings against the North's military threats." An anonymous military expert said the forthcoming talks would be significant in that they would serve as an opportunity for the two allies to open a new chapter in their traditional alliance.

#### **4. DPRK Leaflets**

The Korea Herald (Yonhap, "SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF N.K. LEAFLETS BEWILDERS S. KOREANS," Seoul, 09/20/00) reported that amid the celebrations over recent reconciliatory inter-Korean exchanges, ROK citizens in Seoul, have been perplexed by the sudden discovery of hundreds of propaganda leaflets allegedly made by the DPRK. The handouts, which have been discovered throughout the Seoul area since September 12, are chiefly of two kinds - one severely berating opposition Grand National Party President Lee Hoi-chang and another calling for the withdrawal of US troops from the Korean Peninsula. Some 300 flyers were even discovered at the Shilla Hotel in downtown Seoul on September 14 where the DPRK delegation stayed. One police officer, after consulting with an expert on printing techniques, said that the leaflets were almost certainly of DPRK origin, considering the quality of the paper and the printing methods used. A citizen said, "I don't know how to interpret the fact that the North is distributing handouts slandering the South while insisting it wants reconciliation."

#### **5. Reunion of Separated Families**

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "RED CROSS SETS AGE LIMIT FOR REUNIONS," Seoul, 09/20/00) reported that the Korean National Red Cross (KNRC) said three hundred candidates for reunions with their family members in the DPRK tentatively set for next month will be initially selected from some 52,000 applicants aged 70 or over. The age limit, which puts priority on those aged 80 or more, is necessary in view of the fact that many elderly applicants cannot afford to wait any longer, KNRC officials said. The KNRC will conduct medical checkups of the 300 selected applicants to determine if they are fit to travel to the DPRK, as was the case in the previous family reunions.

#### **6. ROK-DPRK to Cooperate on UN Resolution**

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "KOREAS TO COOPERATE ON U.N. RESOLUTION; N.K. CHIEF OF MISSION ATTENDS SOUTH KOREA-HOSTED EVENT FOR FIRST TIME," Seoul, 09/20/00) and The Korea Times (Son Key-young, "FOREIGN MINISTER LEE MEETS NK ENVOY IN NEW YORK," Seoul, 09/19/00) reported that ROK Foreign Ministry officials said on September 19 that the ROK and the DPRK have agreed to closely cooperate to promote the adoption of a UN resolution supporting the ongoing inter-Korean peace process. The agreement came when ROK Foreign Minister Lee Joungh-binn met with DPRK Ambassador to the United Nations Li Hyung-chol during a luncheon Lee hosted for UN ambassadors of Asian countries in New York on September 18. Ministry official said it was the first time that a DPRK chief of mission had attended a diplomatic event organized by an ROK foreign minister.

#### **7. Inter-Korean Railway**

The Korea Herald ("KIM JONG-IL RESPONDS FAVORABLY TO RECONNECTION OF KYONGWON RAILWAY," Seoul, 09/20/00) reported that Russian Ambassador Evgeny Afanasiev said on September 19 that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il responded favorably to the proposal by Russian President Vladimir Putin that it begin work on reconnecting the Kyongwon Railway, linking Seoul and its eastern port city Wonsan. Afanasiev said that Russia has an interest in building a railway linking Seoul, Wonsan, Vladivostok and Siberia and that the Russian government wants to take part in the railway project. He said ROK President Kim Dae-jung and Putin discussed the issue in New York in early September and evaluated the project favorably. Afanasiev said Russia welcomed improvements in ties between the DPRK and the US and Japan as a way to further enhance inter-Korean relations.

## **8. DPRK-New Zealand Normalization Talks**

The Korea Herald ("N.K. TO HOLD TALKS WITH N.Z. ON NORMALIZATION THIS WEEK," Seoul, 09/20/00) reported that an ROK government source said on September 19 that the DPRK will hold working-level negotiations with New Zealand to establish diplomatic ties in Pyongyang this week. A source said, "A delegation from New Zealand's Foreign Affairs and Trade Ministry headed by Director-General Tony Brown will visit the North's capital this week to that end." Brown will meet with his counterpart, Ma Chol-su, to discuss conditions for rapprochement and other matters.

## **9. DPRK-Japan Relations**

Joongang Ilbo (Oh Young-hwan, "JAPAN SEEKS TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA SOON: PREMIER MORI," Seoul, 09/19/00) reported that Japan is expected to recognize the DPRK as a state soon. Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori said on September 19 that the move is expected to speed up talks aimed at normalizing relations between the two countries. Mori said, "Currently, Japan-North Korea relations are abnormal because Japan has not recognized the North as a state. We plan to make an effort soon to correct this." Touching on the recent cancellation of talks with DPRK's nominal head of state, Kim Yong-nam, Mori said that the Japanese government would seek effective ways to communicate with the DPRK's top leaders.

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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