NAPSNet Daily Report 21 December, 2000

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 21 December, 2000", NAPSNet Daily Report, December 21, 2000, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-21-december-2000/

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I. United States

1. Light-Water Reactor Project

Nucleonics Week (Mark Hibbs, "KEY FIGURES IN BUSH TRANSITION TEAM FAVOR STOPPING DPRK REACTOR DEAL," Bonn, 12/21/00) reported that sources in the Republican party said that US National Security Advisor-designate Condoleeza Rice, former US Ambassador to the PRC James Lilley, and Paul Wolfowitz are highly critical of the 1994 Agreed Framework between the US and the DPRK. Lilley is reportedly under consideration for head of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Wolfowitz may be named either CIA chief or Secretary of Defense. They said that Wolfowitz and Rice would prefer to "get into a transition to provide non-nuclear energy sources" to the DPRK. Another source said that both were aware that such a substitution would require "renegotiation" of the Agreed Framework. The sources added, however, that the new appointees would take action solely according regarding US policy and would not attempt to force the ROK to abandon its "sunshine" policy. One source stated, "No one is talking about pulling the plug and alienating the ROK. But the nuclear scope of this project isn't working and has to be changed."

2. DPRK Missile Program

The New York Times (Jane Perlez, "CLINTON TRIP TO NORTH KOREA IS MIRED IN TRANSITION POLITICS," Washington, 12/20/00) reported that the US Bill Clinton administration is deciding whether to push ahead toward an agreement with the DPRK that would shut down its missile program. US officials said that Clinton briefed President-elect George W. Bush on the negotiations during a two-hour meeting on December 19 at the White House, most of which was spent discussing foreign policy. Before their meeting, Clinton said he "may have a chance to put an end" to the DPRK missile threat. While Bush officials have privately said that the decision to move ahead was up to Clinton, privately Bush foreign policy advisers have reportedly been scathing about the notion of Clinton going to the DPRK, calling such a trip grandstanding and unnecessary. A senior Clinton administration official said on December 19 that enough progress had been made with the DPRK to make a deal close, but acknowledged significant "gaps" in the negotiations. At issue for Clinton is whether he believes he can put a framework on a deal that the Bush administration would be left to fill in with details or whether Bush would choose to repudiate any deal signed by Clinton. A senior Clinton administration official said that the decision to push ahead with talks would be based on whether an agreement could "advance the process of serious missile restraint or whether it would be best left for the next administration." The official said that because of the significance of the deal, the national security adviser, Samuel R. Berger, wants the new administration to support Clinton's efforts in the DPRK.

3. Clinton's Trip to DPRK

The New York Times published an editorial ("NEGOTIATING WITH NORTH KOREA," 12/21/00) which said if US President Bill Clinton's decided to make a trip to the DPRK, it would be justified only if he can return with a firm, verifiable agreement committing the DPRK to end the production and export of its missiles in exchange for international help in launching DPRK satellites for civilian uses. The editor wrote that the US still has only "sketchy" notions of the inner workings of the DPRK government, therefore, verification mechanisms must be a crucial part of any missile agreement. It continued, "Establishing at least the basic principles of a strict monitoring system should be a precondition for a Clinton trip. Much of this monitoring can be done by satellite. But some provision for on-site observation should be included as well." It went on to say that the terms on which other countries agree to launch DPRK satellites must also be carefully defined and all launchings must take place outside the DPRK, with strict safeguards to prevent leakage of sensitive technologies. Only if these terms can be agreed upon, it went on to say, would Clinton serve US interests by sealing a preliminary deal. It added that President-elect George W. Bush and his aides are reasonably reserving public judgment on the issue, "but a sound framework agreement would give the new administration a chance to work out the details and timetable to its own satisfaction, or to walk away from the table if North Korea proves insincere." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 21, 2000.]

The Washington Times published an opinion editorial by Doug Bereuter, Republican-Nebraska, vice chairman of the House Committee on International Relations and chairman of the subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, ("DON'T GO, MR. PRESIDENT," 12/21/00) which said that a last minute January state visit by US President Bill Clinton would be unwise, perhaps even dangerous. Bereuter wrote, "We in Congress are, at most, only guardedly encouraged that the North Korean leadership is starting to recognize that ties with the rest of the world and the requisite restraint of its nuclear and missile proliferation policies are in its national interests." He argued that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's statements on the possibility of restraining the DPRK missile program are signs that Kim may actually be re-evaluating DPRK isolation, and the continued engagement between the DPRK and the ROK, "It is unambiguously premature to consider a state visit." He continued, "North Korea

repeatedly has demonstrated its proclivity for radically reversing its positions, backpedaling, and engaging in intentionally provocative and confrontational behavior. We should never assume that Mr. Kim has suddenly committed to transforming himself or his country. The North has merely agreed to a moratorium on missile testing - undoubtedly missile development activities continue without restraint. Equally important, we have seen little or no progress with the North Koreans on issues of serious concern to the United States and to our major allies in the region, particularly Japan." He argued that a presidential visit would reward the DPRK without its having made any significant commitments on missile programs. Bereuter also noted that the administration has not shared with the US Congress the nature of the "deal" that the Clinton administration is reportedly trying to achieve. He wrote that it is striking that the US has not established the most basic level of diplomatic ties with the DRPK because of its continued designation as a state sponsor of terrorism and yet a presidential trip is still being considered. Therefore, he concluded, "in the interests of the American people, U.S. allies, and our future president, I call upon Mr. Clinton to reconsider any ill-conceived plans for a last minute state visit to North Korea." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 21, 2000.]

4. Kim Dae-jung's US Visit

Agence France Presse ("SOUTH KOREAN LEADER SEEKS US TRIP TO FINE TUNE PYONGYANG POLICY," Seoul, 12/21/00) reported that ROK Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister Lee Joung-Binn said Thursday that ROK President Kim Dae-jung is hoping for an early summit with US President-elect George W. Bush to fine tune policy towards the DPRK. Lee told the ROK national assembly he would try to arrange high-level contact between Bush and Kim, saying, "I know the incoming Bush administration will call for clear reciprocity in its North Korea policy and approach the isolated communist country from a different angle than the Clinton administration did."

5. Inter-Korean Railway Project

The Associated Press (J.H. Yoon, "KOREAS DISCUSS RAILWAY PROJECT," Panmunjom, 12/21/00) and Reuters ("TWO KOREAS TO START WORK ON DMZ RAIL LINK IN MARCH," Seoul, 12/21/00) reported that DPRK and ROK military officials on Thursday discussed details of work to reconnect a railway and build a four-lane highway across the Demilitarized Zone. ROK officials said that no agreements came out of the 65-minute meeting and the ROK proposed holding the next meeting on December 28, a suggestion that the DPRK will respond to later. At Thursday's meeting, the ROK proposed detailed safeguards to prevent accidental clashes between the two militaries. Among other things, the ROK proposed that a hotline be set up to link the two militaries. The DPRK said that it needed time to study the ROK proposals.

6. Theater Missile Defense

The International Herald Tribune published an article by Robyn Lim, professor of international relations at Nanzan University, Nagoya, ("EAST ASIA NEEDS BALANCE, AND BALANCE MEANS MISSILE DEFENSE," Nagoya, 12/21/00) which said that the incoming US administration needs to concentrate on security problems in East Asia as well as problems in the Middle East. Lim pointed to the "growing collision of strategic interest over Tawian" by the PRC and the US as well as the lack of trust between the PRC and Japan. Lim wrote, "East Asia's future will turn on whether Japan and China continue to believe that the United States will guarantee Japan's security." Lim said that the coming Bush administration's priority should be to develop Theater Missile Defenses (TMD) to protect Japan and US forces based there from the growing threat of PRC and DPRK missiles. At

stake, Lim wrote, "is nothing less than America's ability to remain an Asia-Pacific power." Lim wrote that the PRC's exploitation of regional security venues to criticize missile defense and its buildup of increasingly accurate missiles pointed at Japan could undermine Japan's confidence in US strategic protection. Lim also wrote that the PRC missile buildup opposite Taiwan not only threatens the military balance in the Taiwan Strait but it also threatens Japan's security and is "one reason why the US should help preserve Taiwan's de facto independence." Lim also believed that the US needed to continue to sell Taiwan weapons to defend itself and that the Bush administration should build on US President Bill Clinton's support for the PRC's entry into the World Trade Organization. Lim also said that the US cannot allow a potentially hostile great power like the PRC to dominate Eurasia or any of its critical parts. Lim wrote that Japan must be prepared to provide at least rear area support for the US in a Taiwan or Korean crisis. Finally, Lim wrote, "The Bush administration should not lose sight of the importance of theater missile defense for East Asia even as it pursues the wider objective of national missile defense at home. National missile defense is costly, technically difficult and controversial with allies. It must not be allowed to detract attention from the need for theater missile defense to redress the dangerous force imbalances in East Asia that are a legacy of the Clinton years. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for December 21, 2000.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK-DPRK Energy Cooperation

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "MINISTER DENIES 'BACKSTAGE ACCORD' ON POWER SUPPLY TO NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 12/21/00) reported that ROK Unification Minister Park Jae-kyu Thursday flatly denied the allegation that the ROK made a "behind-the-scenes" agreement with the DPRK to supply electricity to the DPRK at last week's high-level talks. "At the talks, North Korea demanded electricity aid as a prerequisite (of dialogues), but we clarified our stance that it was not an issue to be decided at the meeting," Park told a meeting of the National Assembly's Unification, Foreign Affairs and Trade Committee. ROK officials have maintained that the ROK had not made any definite commitment, fearing such a promise might trigger further criticism of unilateral aid to the DPRK. Opposition lawmakers, however, raised the possibility that the two sides might have drawn up a secret agreement.

2. Clinton's Visit to DPRK

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "CHANCES OF A CLINTON VISIT TO N.K. GROWING," Seoul, 12/21/00) reported that contrary to recent predictions, chances appear to be growing the outgoing US President Bill Clinton will make a historic visit to the DPRK next month as President-elect George Bush reportedly is not opposed to it. "The possibility of Clinton's visit to the North is very high as Bush seems to be tacitly agreeing on his Pyongyang trip," said an ROK Foreign Ministry official. He said that if Clinton decides to visit the DPRK, he will most likely go during the second week of January. Park Young-ho, an analyst at the Korea Institute for National Unification, an ROK government think tank, said that Clinton removed the stumbling block to his visit to the DPRK by getting Bush to agree with the trip. Other experts said that Bush might have worried that his opposition to Clinton's visit to the DPRK may invite criticism that the US missed a crucial opportunity to make significant progress in the non-proliferation of DPRK weapons of mass destruction.

3. DPRK Refugees in PRC

Chosun Ilbo (Kim In-ku, "NORTH KOREANS SUBMIT REFUGEE STATUS APPLICATIONS EN MASSE," Seoul, 12/21/00) reported that Kim Sang-cheol, the head of the "UN Petition Campaign Center for the Protection of North Korean Refugees," is known to have submitted refugee status application forms of some 83 DPRK refugees who are in the PRC to the Tokyo office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on December 2. This is the first time that DPRK refugees have submitted such forms to the UNHCR collectively. Personnel from the center said on Thursday that they had been able to discuss granting refugee status to DPRK refugees with UNHCR Commissioner Sadako Ogata when she came to Seoul last October to receive the Seoul Peace Prize.

4. Inter-Korean Military Talks

Chosun Ilbo (Yoo Yong-won, "NORTH AND SOUTH MILITARY TALKS HELD AS SCHEDULED," Seoul, 12/21/00) reported that ROK and DPRK delegations met Thursday morning at the DPRK side of Panmunjom and held the third round of working level military talks. The two sides discussed "DMZ Joint Guidelines" which regulate the activities of the two sides within the demilitarized zone (DMZ) in carrying out the construction to connect the railroad between Seoul and Shinuiju, and to build roads in that area. The DPRK expressed dissatisfaction about being designated as the ROK's major enemy in its White Paper, the second time it has raised this point after the fourth ministerial meeting that was held recently. It claimed that under the current situation where the two sides are moving towards dialogue and cooperation, the fact that the ROK still has the DPRK designated as it enemy is a movement towards confrontation rather than reconciliation. The ROK answered that "major enemy" status will easily be dissolved once the confidence building blossoms and the tension between the two sides is fully eased. The ROK delivered its revised version of the agreement that had been proposed by the DPRK at the second round of talks, and is waiting for the DPRK's reply. Also, the ROK asked the DPRK to strengthen regulation on its ships to stop them from crossing the Northern Limitation Line (NLL). The ROK suggested holding the fourth round of working level military talks at the Southern side of Panmunjom on December 28.

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:
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