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I. NAPSNet

1. US-ROK Joint Military Exercise

Korea Times ("U.S. NUCLEAR SUBMARINE ARRIVES IN BUSAN FOR DRILL", 2008/02/20) reported that a US nuclear-powered submarine arrived in the southeastern port city of Busan for a weeklong South Korea-U.S. exercise set to begin here early next month, the U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) said in a press release. The statement said the vessel "is taking part in a routine port visit in conjunction with the Key Resolve/Foal Eagle Exercise 2008," an annual joint drill of ROK and U.S. forces. The USS Nimitz, a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier, is also due in Busan with 5,000-crew members aboard later this month to take part in the joint exercise that will last for six days until March 7, according to USFK officials.

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2. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Joongang Ilbo ("HILL: NORTH STILL DENYING ENRICHMENT OF URANIUM", 2008/02/20) reported that despite long-held suspicions by the US, the DPRK has again denied running a clandestine program to enrich uranium for weapons, a top U.S. nuclear envoy said. Assistant US Secretary of State Christopher Hill spoke to reporters after pressing DPRK nuclear envoy Kim Gye-gwan to meet his country's side of the international agreement to own up to all its nuclear weapons programs. "They continue to take what they call a principled position that they have not engaged in any uranium enrichment activity," Hill told reporters in Seoul. "We have a situation where they have purchased some equipment and have been trying to show to us that this equipment is not being used for uranium enrichment," Hill said. "We cannot pretend that activities don't exist when we know that the activities have existed."

Korea Herald (Lee Joo-hee, "U.S. SENDS POSITIVE MESSAGE TO N.K.", 2008/02/20) reported that the US reaffirmed to the DPRK that it remains committed to fulfilling its obligation to remove sanctions, and that Pyongyang will not face an "infinite" number of questions regarding its declaration list, top US nuclear negotiator Christopher Hill said yesterday. "We made clear that we

are committed to following through on our obligations and that they should know that, as they do their obligations, we will do ours," Hill told reporters in Seoul. Adding that he believes the DPRK understand the U.S. position, he added that neither Kim nor he himself would describe the current situation as a "stalemate."

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3. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Associated Press (Tini Tran, "NKOREA SAYS DELAY IN TALKS 'TECHNICAL'", Beijing, 2008/02/21) reported that insists stalled progress in dismantling its nuclear programs is due to "technical issues" and not a lack of political willingness, ROK envoy Chun Yung-woo said Thursday. "North Korea said it will do what it has to do, and that this is not because they don't have the willingness, nor do they call it a deadlocked situation," Chun told reporters after talks with his DPRK counterpart, Kim Kye Gwan. "We discussed about what to do next in the meeting. North Korea said they are ready to participate in (a new round of) the six-party talks if the date is set," he said.

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4. ROK Policy Toward the DPRK

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "UNIFICATION MINISTER-NOMINEE HARDLINER ON N. KOREA", 2008/02/20) reported that progressive civic groups criticized President-elect Lee Myung-bak's nomination of Professor Nam Joo-hong as unification minister, calling him a ``neocon warmonger." They expressed concern that Nam's hard-line DPRK policy would mar relations with the DPRK, which has warmed to an extent because of the engagement policy toward Pyongyang under the liberal governments of the past 10 years. Conservatives, however, hailed the nomination which they say reflects Lee's intention to take a ``pragmatic" approach toward DPRK affairs. In his book, titled ``There Is No Unification," published in 2006, Nam asserted the June 15 inter-Korean declaration issued at the end of the first-ever summit between former President Kim Dae-jung and DPRK leader Kim Jong-il in Pyongyang would only support the DPRK's tactics to topple the ROK.

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5. ASEAN-DPRK Relations

Yonhap (Anna Fifield, "ASEAN TO URGE N. KOREA TO ACCEDE TO ITS NON-AGGRESSION TREATY ", Singapore, 2008/02/21) reported that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations plans to urge the DPRK to accede to its non-aggression treaty, Singapore Foreign Minister George Yeo said. Yeo told a news conference after an ASEAN foreign ministers' retreat that he will make the suggestion when he visits the DPRK in May as chair of ASEAN. The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation has already been acceded to by the PRC, Japan, Russia and France.

Yonhap ("N. KOREA DENOUNCES PLANNED MILITARY DRILL", Seoul, 2008/02/20) reported that the DPRK media on denounced a planned military maneuver involving ROK and US forces next month, claiming it is a preparation for an invasion. The Korean Central Broadcasting Station, monitored here, said Pyongyang will not stand by idly while the Key Resolve/Foal Eagle Exercise 2008 takes place. The exercise, to be held March 2-7 in the ROK, replaces the annual Reception,

Staging, Onward Movement and Integration joint exercise. It will be the first joint exercise to test Seoul's war-waging capabilities under a scenario in which the ROK has retaken operational control of its troops from the US.

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6. US-DPRK Artistic Exchange

Yonhap ("NY PHIL DIRECTOR LINKS NK CONCERT TO ETHICS, HOPE", Washington, 2008/02/20) reported that as the New York Philharmonic prepares for its first-ever performance in Pyongyang next week, the orchestra's music director, Lorin Maazel, said Wednesday the controversial decision to play in the DPRK was based on artistic ethics and hope for transformation. "If all goes well, the presence of the New York Philharmonic in Pyongyang might gently influence the perception of our country there," he said. "If we are gradually to improve U.S.-Korean relations, such events have the potential to nudge open a door that has been closed too long."

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7. US-ROK Trade Relations

Joongang Ilbo (Limb Jae-un, "ASSEMBLY UNLIKELY TO ACT ON FTA", 2008/02/20) reported that with the National Assembly in recess and lawmakers anxious to avoid controversy, it is doubtful that the free trade agreement between the ROK and the US can be ratified before the Assembly session ends next Tuesday. Lawmakers fear losing support from voters ahead of elections on April 9, and it is unclear when the measure will be reintroduced. "The outlook for ratification this month is murky," Lee Hye-min, director general for trade at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said in a radio interview yesterday.

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8. ROK-Japan Relations

Kyodo ("FUKUDA TO VISIT S. KOREA FROM SUNDAY TO MEET LEE, ENHANCE TIES", Tokyo, 2008/02/20) reported that Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda will attend the inauguration of ROK President-elect Lee Myung Bak in Seoul on Monday and hold his first summit with the new president to enhance their ties and discuss ways to address the DPRK nuclear issue, Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura said. Leaving on Sunday for the ROK, Fukuda is expected to agree with Lee during their talks on the resumption of reciprocal visits between the top leaders of the two countries, underscoring the improvement of bilateral ties that became strained under their predecessors over historical and territorial issues.

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9. ROK, Japan Defense Programs

Bloomberg (James Gunsalus and Kyunghee Park, "LOCKHEED, BOEING IN TALKS WITH JAPAN FOR JET-FIGHTER ORDER", 2008/02/20) reported that Lockheed Martin Corp. and Boeing Co., the

world's two largest defense companies, are in talks to sell fighter jets to Japan as U.S. military spending slows. Lockheed is promoting its planned F-35 Lightning II as the Japanese government considers inviting bids, George Standridge, a vice president for the F-35 program, said. Boeing will offer its F-15 and F/A-18 Super Hornet when the Request For Proposal is issued, Joe Song, a vice-president for the Asia-Pacific region, said. Boeing is also negotiating with the ROK's government to sell 20 F-15K fighter jets worth about 2.3 trillion won (\$2.4 billion), Song said. The government, which ordered 40 F-15Ks from Boeing in 2002, may call bids for as many as 60 more aircraft to boost its forces, Song said.

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10. Sino-Japanese Territorial Dispute

The Asahi Shimbun (Daisuke Nishimura, "CHINA CUSTOMS WITHHOLDS GEOGRAPHY BOOKS", Shanghai, 2008/02/20) reported that PRC customs officials have seized eight geography books heading for a Japanese school here, likely because the texts refer to the Senkaku Islands as Japan's sovereign territory, sources said. The islands, called Diaoyutai in the PRC, are located in the East China Sea. They are claimed by both Japan and the PRC. PRC customs officials have yet to explain why the eight books have not been cleared, saying only that the books need "re-examination."

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11. Sino-Indian Trade Relations

Business Standard (Rayana Pandey, "INDIA, CHINA TO DISCUSS FTA IN APRIL", New Delhi, 2008/02/20) reported that a joint economic group comprising commerce ministers of India and the PRC is scheduled to meet in the first week of April to discuss the proposed India-PRC Free Trade Agreement (FTA), a commerce ministry official said today. "There are certain outstanding issues concerning negotiations on the proposed FTA which may be resolved in April when the joint economic group meets," the official added. A Joint Task Force (JTF) set up by both the countries had recommended an FTA as a mechanism to boost bilateral trade ties.

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12. PRC African Diplomacy

BBC News ("CHINA 'NOT US RIVAL' IN AFRICA", 2008/02/20) reported that US President George W Bush has said he does not see the PRC as a "fierce competitor" with US interests in Africa. Speaking in Ghana, Mr Bush said it was possible for both countries to pursue their own agendas on the continent. Speaking at a joint news conference with Ghanaian President John Kufuor, Mr Bush said he did not see Africa as a "zero sum" for the US and the PRC.

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13. PRC Olympics

Washington Post (Maureen Fan, "CHINA DEFENDS RELOCATION POLICY", Beijing, 2008/02/20)

reported that Beijing officials defended their relocation of nearly 15,000 people as part of the massive construction projects that have transformed the capital into a 31-venue showcase for this summer's Olympic Games. More than 6,000 households have voluntarily relocated from the venue sites over the past several years and all have been fairly compensated, Zhang Jiaming, vice chair of the Beijing Municipal Construction Committee, told reporters, outlining a policy that has been the focus of petition campaigns and protests, which the Communist Party has tried to suppress. "The relocation project went very smoothly, so no one was forced out of their homes at any of the venues," Zhang said.

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14. PRC Environment

The New York Times (Keith Bradsher, "CHINA: WATER QUALITY WORSENS NEAR THREE GORGES DAM", 2008/02/20) reported that the Environmental Protection Administration said water quality was barely improving in the main body of water behind the Three Gorges Dam and in the upper reaches of the Yangtze, although the water does meet national standards for drinking, fisheries and swimming. Water quality is worsening in several branches of the Yangtze that drain into the main reservoir, the agency said in a water management plan, echoing previous government documents. The dam has slowed the flow of the Yangtze, and that reduces the ability of the river and its tributaries to flush out polluted areas.

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15. PRC Energy Supply

China Daily (Hu Meidong and Wan Zhihong, "", 2008/02/20) reported that construction of the Ningde nuclear power station began in Fujian province. The 51.2-billion-yuan (\$7.1 billion) plant is being built on three islands in the village of Beiwan in Fuding, 143 km north of Fuzhou. The first phase of the project comprises the construction of four nuclear reactors, each with a capacity of 1,000 megawatts (MW). The plant will use the same technology as the existing nuclear facility in Ling Ao, the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) said Monday. The first reactor is expected to be put into commercial use at the end of 2012. Once completed, the four reactors will generate 30 billion kWh of electricity a year, the NDRC said.

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II. ROK Report

16. ROK Policy Toward DPRK

Saegae Ilbo (Gil jae Ryu (Professor, Kyungnam University, Graduate School of North Korean Studies), "NEW REGIME SHOULD GET RID OF ANXIETY OVER RELATION WITH DPRK", 2008/02/21) wrote that although many are worried about the possible downturn in relations with the DRPK due to the change to a conservative regime in the ROK, it seems hasty to say so even before the inauguration. The new regime has the experience to measure the effects and negative

byproducts of the engagement policy toward the DPRK in the past. This is a great fortune. In this aspect, perhaps, it might be preferable for new regime not to hastily establish policies toward the DPRK at such an early stage. For the time being, the academic society, public, and government should cooperate and open-mindedly evaluate the engagement policy, then suggest the direction of future policies toward DPRK.

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17. US, PRC Views of DPRK Engagement

Yonhap News ("EXPECTATIONS OF US AND CHINA ON NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC PERFORMANCE IN PYONGYANG", 2008/02/21) reported that the US hopes that the New York Philharmonic's performance in Pyongyang will act as the motivation for reinforcement of confidence between the US and the DPRK and sees achieving confidence between two countries through such non-political exchanges essential. It is observed that US will continue with non-political exchanges independent of the DPRK nuclear compromises. The PRC not only hopes this opportunity to be the turning point of the six party talk currently in deadlock, but also hopes it to be the first step to a US-DPRK treaty.

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18. ROK Foreign Policy

People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy ("EVALUATION ON PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION COMMITTEE ACTIVITY AND POLICY PROPOSAL", 2008/02/21) wrote that the diplomacy and national security policies of Lee Myung-bak regime are based not on pragmatism but on moral realism and include no policy for construction of a peace structure for the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia. There needs to be democratization of the US-ROK alliance and policy toward the DPRK for peace and prosperity of the Korean Peninsula. "Military Reform Plan 2020 supplement drive" can rather intensify the security dilemma between the ROK and DPRK. In order to contribute more to international society, overseas development aid must be put before peacekeeping operations. Diplomacy and national security policy must be democratized.

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