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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks

Yonhap News ("SIX-WAY TALKS ON NK NUKE UNLIKELY THIS MONTH: U.S. NEGOTIATOR", Tokyo, 2008/10/20) reported that Chief US nuclear envoy Christopher Hill said the six-way talks on the DPRK nuclear program are unlikely to be held within the month, a Japanese newspaper reported. In the interview with the Asahi Shimbun, Hill cited troubles in setting a date for the next round of negotiations due to the tight schedules of the U.S. and other related nations.

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2. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Chosun Ilbo ("HILL CONFIDENT ABOUT VERIFYING N.KOREA'S PLUTONIUM LEVEL", 2008/10/20) reported that US chief nuclear envoy Christopher Hill is reportedly confident about verifying the DPRK's plutonium level, which he says is the most important part of the nuclear verification process. In an interview with Japan's Asahi Shimbun, Hill was optimistic that the US will be able to check the exact amount of weapons-grade plutonium the DPRK has produced -- if the verification methods agreed upon between the US and the DPRK earlier this month are used.

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3. US-DPRK Relations

Xinhua ("DRPK'S OFFICAL DAILY URGES U.S. TO BUILD MUTUAL CONFIDENCE", Pyongyang, 2008/10/20) reported that Pyongyang's official newspaper Rodong Sinmun urged the US to drop its hostile policy and build confidence with the DPRK. The Cold War is over and nobody expects an arms race and antagonism, a commentary said, but the US had gone against the trend of disarmament and detente by developing high-tech weapons and beefing up its military force, especially deploying troops around the Korean peninsula. "What is essential for relations between the DPRK and the United States is building bilateral confidence. This is made more urgent by present circumstances," it added.

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4. US on Japan-DPRK Relations

The Financial Times (Demetri Sevastopulo and David Pilling, "US PRESSES FOR N KOREA AND JAPAN TALKS", 2008/10/20) reported that the US is concerned that the DPRK could endanger a recent multilateral deal on denuclearisation by not resolving a long-standing dispute with Tokyo over Japanese citizens abducted by the DPRK. “There is a danger for the North Koreans that [we] could come to the table to codify the bilateral verification and the Japanese threaten to walk,” said one senior US official. The official said Pyongyang should negotiate with Tokyo before the next round of the six-party talks, and give Japan a “real demonstration of goodwill” to Japan over the abductees issue.

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5. US Aid to the DPRK

Yonhap News ("LATEST U.S. GRAIN SHIPMENT TO N.K. DEPARTS", Seoul, 2008/10/19) reported that the latest food aid from the United States to the DPRK, comprised of 25,000 tons of corn and other grains, has made its departure from Virginia, Radio Free Asia reported. The Mary-Ann Hudson, a U.S. cargo vessel carrying 20,000 tons of corn and 5,000 tons of beans, left on Friday and is scheduled to arrive at the DPRK's western port of Nampo on Nov. 18, the report said, citing a spokesperson of World Vision.

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6. DPRK Food Supply

Yonhap News ("N. KOREAN LEADER SUPPLIES FARMING MATERIALS: REPORT", Seoul, 2008/10/20) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has supplied agricultural materials to a fruit farm in the DPRK, Pyongyang's state-run media reported Friday. The materials were delivered in a ceremony held at the farm in Kosan, Gangwon Province, attended by Pyongyang officials, including Kim Il-chol, the Korean Central Broadcasting Station (KCBS) said.

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7. ROK Chemical Weapons Disposal

ENS ("SOUTH KOREA COMPLETES DESTRUCTION OF ITS CHEMICAL WEAPONS STOCKPILE", The Hague, 2008/10/17) reported that in a step towards the global elimination of chemical weapons, the ROK has become the second country to destroy its declared chemical weapons stockpile. The country beat its December 31, 2008 deadline by at least three months. The accomplishment, which took place since June, has not been announced publicly because the ROK has requested full confidentiality under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

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8. ROK Space Program

Dong-A Ilbo ("COUNTDOWN BEGINS FOR KOREA'S SPACE PROGRAM", 2008/10/20) reported that Oinarodo Space Center on the southwestern tip of the Korean Peninsula is the first domestic facility to house a space launching pad. The center is preparing for the launch of the small satellite launcher KSVL-1 slated for the second quarter next year. Staff are busy conducting ground rocket tests and building the launch pad.

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9. Russo-Japanese Energy Cooperation

Kyodo News ("SHIPMENTS OF SAKHALIN LNG DUE TO REACH JAPAN EARLY NEXT YEAR", Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, 2008/10/20) reported that after a long delay, shipments of liquefied natural gas from Sakhalin to Japan are scheduled to begin early next year under the Sakhalin-2 project. According to Sakhalin Energy Investment Company Ltd., the project is up to speed now that a new plant is almost complete near a warm water port in the southernmost part of the Russian island. More than 60 percent of the output will go to Japanese utilities, including Tokyo Electric Power Co. and Tokyo Gas Co., accounting for 7.5 percent of Japan's total natural gas imports. The remainder will be sold to the US and the ROK.

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10. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Refueling Mission

Kyodo ("LOWER HOUSE PASSES BILL TO EXTEND JAPAN'S REFUELING MISSION", Tokyo, 2008/10/21) reported that a bill to continue Japan's refueling mission through to next year passed the House of Representatives Tuesday, with the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan shying away from using tactics to delay a vote to resist the bill. The opposition-controlled House of Councillors is likely to swiftly vote down the bill, leading the lower house, controlled by the ruling parties, to hold an overriding second vote for final Diet approval of the bill at the end of the month.

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11. Japan-Australia Non-Proliferation Efforts

Agence France-Presse ("AUSTRALIA SAYS TIMING RIGHT FOR NEW NUCLEAR TALKS", Sydney, 2008/10/20) reported that Australia hosted the first meeting of International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament starting Monday, with Foreign Minister Stephen Smith saying he was hopeful of progress on disarmament. Smith said the Australian government would give 3.8 million dollars (2.66 million US) to the body, which was proposed by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in June following a visit to the Japanese city of Hiroshima.

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12. Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Kyodo News ("48 LAWMAKERS PAY YASUKUNI VISIT", 2008/10/19) reported that three senior vice ministers, two parliamentary secretaries and one special adviser to Prime Minister Taro Aso were among 48 lawmakers who paid a group visit Friday to the war-linked Yasukuni Shrine to attend its autumn festival. No Cabinet ministers visited the shrine. However, proxies for 93 members of both houses of the Diet also visited the Shinto shrine Friday, the first day of the four-day annual rite.

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13. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN GROUP PROTESTS AGAINST CHINESE GOVERNMENT VISIT", Taipei , 2008/10/20) reported that dozens of Taiwan pro-independence activists demonstrated on Monday against a visit by Zhang Mingqing, vice president of the PRC's Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait, who arrived on Sunday amid tight security. He gave a speech at a seminar on Monday at a university in the southern Tainan county, a stronghold of the pro-independence opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP).

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14. Sino-US Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA WANTS STABLE TIES WITH US AFTER ELECTION", Beijing, 2008/10/20) reported that the PRC is watching the US presidential election closely, and whether the winner is Democrat Barack Obama or Republican John McCain, the priority for Beijing is to maintain stable ties with Washington. As in the West, it is the "phenomenon" Obama who makes the difference and the PRC are particularly intrigued by the idea that a black person could move into the Oval Office for the first time. But no matter who comes wins the election on November 4, the PRC wants a stable relationship with the United States in order to create an environment allowing it to pursue its overall goal of economic and social development.

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15. Sino-Indian Territorial Dispute

IANS ("INDIA-CHINA BORDER TALKS MAKING "CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS"", New Delhi, 2008/10/20) reported that ahead of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to the PRC, India today said both sides have made "considerable progress" in finding a solution to the "complex" boundary issue. "We are satisfied with the progress achieved. We are making progress," Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon told reporters on the eve of Singh's two-nation visit to Japan and the PRC.

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16. PRC Environment

Reuters ("SHANGHAI FOLLOWS BEIJING IN PUTTING BRAKES ON TRAFFIC", Beijing, 2008/10/20) reported that Shanghai is to adopt a watered-down version of the capital's traffic restrictions in a bit to clean the air, clear the roads and save energy, state media said. Starting next month, vehicles belonging to the government or state-owned enterprises will be banned from the roads on one out of five weekdays in a system based on license plate numbers. Different from Beijing's curbs, Shanghai's will not apply to private cars even though "Shanghai's private vehicles are encouraged to follow the restrictions," Xinhua news agency quoted an official as saying.

Reuters ("BEIJING OFFERS CASH TO CURB CAPITAL'S POLLUTION", Beijing, 2008/10/20) reported that the Beijing government will give companies who stop highly polluting production up to 2.3 million yuan ($336,500) as a bonus, state media said Sunday. "The move is to stimulate the replacement of high-pollution industries with environmentally friendly economies," the official Xinhua news agency cited the Finance Bureau of Beijing as saying. "Companies such as small cement and paper producers will be on the top of our list," the department said.

Xinhua ("CHINA TO LAUNCH NATIONWIDE SURVEY OF ENERGY CONSERVATION MEASURES", Beijing, 2008/10/20) reported that the PRC's government is to conduct a nationwide survey of efforts by local governments to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. The government has set a target of reducing energy consumption per unit of GDP by 20 percent and major pollutant emissions by 10 percent from the 2005 levels by 2010, in a bid to protect environment and insure a sustainable development. Four central government departments on Monday launched a special campaign to oversee efforts by local departments to promote energy conservation and reduce discharges of pollutants.

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17. PRC Public Health

The Wall Street Journal (Mei Fong and Jason Leow, "BEIJING PLANS HEALTH CARE FOR EVERYONE", 2008/10/20) reported that the PRC has unveiled an ambitious plan to achieve universal health care. The plan, released for public debate last week, lays out in broad strokes plans to introduce greater health-care funding and control prices. The current system leaves out much of the population and forces the rest to pay heavy out-of-pocket expenses. The overall goal of the plan is to cover 90% of the population within two years and achieve universal health care by 2020.

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18. PRC Security

The New York Times (Edward Wong, "WARY OF ISLAM, CHINA TIGHTENS A VISE OF RULES", 2008/10/20) reported that the grand mosque that draws thousands of Muslims each week in this oasis town has all the usual trappings of piety. But large signs posted by the front door list edicts that are more Communist Party decrees than Koranic doctrines. To be a practicing Muslim in the vast autonomous region of northwestern PRC called Xinjiang is to live under an intricate series of laws and regulations intended to control the spread and practice of Islam, the predominant religion among the Uighurs, a Turkic people uneasy with PRC rule.

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19. PRC Energy Supply

The Los Angeles Times (Mark Magnier, "CHINA KEEPS TIGHT REIN ON OIL PRICE HIKES", 2008/10/20) reported that the PRC remains well insulated from the effects of global oil price fluctuations as part of the government's continued policy of subsidizing, shaping and otherwise "guiding" the market. This is done partly as a way to control the economy, analysts say, and partly to prevent social unrest. Not that the PRC is immune: Prices at the pump went up this summer to about $3.50 a gallon. But companies and the government stepped in to cushion the blow.

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II. PRC Report

20. PRC Civil Society and the Environment

People’s Daily online ("CHINA ENGOS OVER 3700", 2008/10/17) reported that the third annual meeting of China Environmental Civil Organizations for Sustainable Development was held recently in Beijing. At the news conference, vice president of the PRC Environmental Protection Federation Zeng Xiaodong said environmental civil organizations have developed rapidly in recent years. As of 2007, there are over 3,700. For public participation and low-carbon economy implementation, ENGOs will take on the four major responsibilities of publicity, education, supervision and recommendation.

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21. PRC Energy

Xinhua Net (Ren Huibin, "INNER MONGOLIA BECOMES CHINA'S MAJOR MANUFACTURING BASE OF WIND POWER EQUIPMENT", 2008/10/20) reported that according to the Development and Reform Commission of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, as of the end of September 2008 Inner Mongolia has 16 windpower equipment manufacturers, of which 5 have completed

construction and started production. The total investment of related enterprises reaches over 2.7 billion yuan. At present, the annual production capacity has reached 4.56 million kilowatts.

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22. PRC AIDS Issue

People's Daily online (Wang Junping, "CHINA'S FEMALE AIDS-INFECTED PATIENTS INCREASED 5 TIMES IN 10 YEARS", 2008/10/20) reported that according to the Tsinghua University AIDS Conference, the percentage of females among the PRC's AIDS-infected patients has risen from 7.1% to 35%, an increase of 5 times over 10 years. Among them, nearly 90% are women of child-bearing age. The AIDS Research Center of Tsinghua University came to this conclusion by analyzing 3.2 million blood tests and cooperating with Yunnan Disease Control Center. The report was also published in October's Nature magazine.

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III. ROK Report

23. DPRK Internal Situation

Yonhap News ("ROK CONSERVATIVE PRESS RELEASE FALSIFIED REPORT 'KIM JONG-IL PASS AWAY'", 2008/10/20) reported that Cho Sung-ryul, researcher of National Security Strategy Institute, said that the DPRK's pending announcement reported in Japanese newspapers could be about certain actions they will take against the ROK, such as to suspend ROK corporations' business and to open them to overseas capital. Others also analyze that it could be something related to their domestic political state of affairs.

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24. Inter-Korea Relations

Yoon Sung-hyo ("92.9% UNIV. STUDENTS, 'UNSATISFIED WITH MB'S DPRK POLICY'", 2008/10/20) reported that according to a survey held on October 15-18 among 690 university students in Busan, 92.9% of the responders said that they are highly unsatisfied with ROK President Lee Myug-bak's DPRK policy. Concerning the list of state sponsors of terrorism, 51.5% said that nations on the list may not actually support terrorism since it is just a list of anti-U.S. nations. 54.8% said that they welcome removal of the DPRK since it will contribute to peaceful unification of the peninsula. 52.2% responded that normalization of the DPRK-U.S. relationship will help establish a peace regime on the peninsula. About the U.S. army stationed in the ROK, 44.5% said there is no more need if the relationship between the DPRK and the U.S. is improved, while 30% said they are still needed to maintain balance. Also, 79.1% said the ROK government should strengthen economic collaboration with the DPRK and should pursue policies that can break the ice on the peninsula more actively.

Yonhap News ("DPRK REMOVAL FROM TERRORISM BLACKLISS, NO HELP ON INTER-KOREAN

RELATIONSHIP", 2008/10/20) wrote that despite some expectations that the inter-Korean relationship can be improved after the DPRK was removed from the terrorism blacklist, the relationship became even worse. Government officials said most of them said they would rather wait until the DPRK changes their attitude and shows their willingness to improve the relationship. If the conflict between the two Koreas is worsened, the Gaesong Complex may not be safe. Under such circumstance, the government should pursue a consistent DPRK policy while trying not to provoke the DPRK.

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IV. Invitation

25. WMD and Disarmament Survey

EastWest Institute ("INVITATION TO HELP FORGE A NEW EAST WEST CONSENSUS ON WMD", 2008/10/20) The EastWest Institute would like to invite you to participate virtually in our lead-up to our Friday event at UN headquarters. Please visit the link below to provide your ONLINE COMMENTS aimed at breakthrough measures on WMD and disarmament . Your comments are important reference points to be employed for Friday's consultation. For a current agenda, please click: http://docs.ewi.info/ConferenceAgenda.pdf This event kicks off the EastWest Institute's *WMD Action Network* , aimed at linking experts, transforming knowledge and forging collective action for real policy solutions.

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