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I. United States

1. DPRK Economic Situation

The Associated Press (Sang-Hun Choe, "CHURCH LEADERS URGE AID FOR N. KOREA," Seoul, 04/22/99) reported that Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the Geneva-based World Council of Churches (WCC) said Thursday that the Western world must help stabilize the DPRK's economy before the DPRK can engage in serious peace talks. Raiser just completed a three-day trip to the DPRK where he met with church and government leaders, including chairman of the Supreme People's Assembly Standing Committee Kim Yong Nam. He stated, "As long as its economic problems continue, North Korea believes it is impossible to engage in any political talks as an equal partner." He added that he saw signs of the DPRK opening up and urged the US, Japan and other countries to reciprocate by lifting economic sanctions. He argued, "North Korea's closed-door policy is ... an expression of weakness and embarrassment of not being able to stand up as an equal partner." Park Kyong-seo, a church official who accompanied Raiser on his trip to the DPRK, stated, "That the food situation is improving in North Korea is a lie. After one and a half years of surviving on 'substitute food' made of herbs, cornstalk and little flour, many people suffer chronic ulcers and diarrhea, but there is little medicine to treat them." The WCC promised the DPRK US\$8.5 million in food, fertilizer, medicine and other humanitarian aid this year.

2. Russian Airplane Development

The Associated Press ("RUSSIA TO START TESTING NEW AMPHIBIOUS PLANE," Moscow, 04/22/99) reported that the ITAR-Tass news agency said Thursday that Russia will begin testing the new BE-200 civilian amphibious plane this month. The report said that the plane can land on water or on the ground and can carry up to 70 people or a large cargo, and can be used for maritime search-and-rescue missions or to fight forest fires. The report added that the ROK has ordered one of the planes for use by its coast guard.

3. Alleged PRC Nuclear Spying

The Associated Press (John Diamond, "CIA: CHINA STOLE US WEAPONS SECRETS," Washington, 04/22/99), Reuters (Tabassum Zakaria, "CHINA SPYING TO IMPACT FUTURE WEAPONS-U.S. REPORT," Washington, 04/22/99), the New York Times (Jeff Gerth, "REPORT WARNS OF BIG GAINS TO CHINESE FROM SPYING," Washington, 04/22/99), the Wall Street Journal (John J. Fialka, "U.S. COMMISSION FINDS CHINESE SPIES MAY HAVE STOLEN SECRET WEAPONS DATA," Washington, 04/22/99), and the LA Times (Bob Drogen, "STUDY FINDS CHINA PILFERED U.S. NUCLEAR SECRETS ESPIONAGE," Washington, 04/22/99) reported that a US intelligence damage assessment of alleged PRC espionage released on Wednesday said that the PRC is a few years away from deploying improved nuclear weapons with the help of classified information gained by spying on the US. The report stated, "China obtained at least basic design information on several modern U.S. re-entry vehicles. Significant deficiencies remain in the Chinese weapons program. The Chinese almost certainly are using aggressive collection efforts to address deficiencies." The report added, "Having obtained more modern U.S. nuclear technology, the Chinese might be less concerned about sharing their older technology [with other countries]." It concluded, however, "To date, the aggressive Chinese collection effort has not resulted in any apparent modernization of their deployed strategic force or any new nuclear weapons deployment." An anonymous senior intelligence official said that the assessment team predicted in the classified version of its report that the PRC would field improved weapons within a few years, adding, "future Chinese weapons will look more like ours." The multi-agency assessment team led Robert Walpole, the CIA official in charge of strategic and nuclear issues, was overseen by an outside panel of experts headed by retired Admiral David Jeremiah. Robert S. Norris, author of a book on the PRC's nuclear arsenal, said that the panel appears to have made a "realistic assessment of China's nuclear weapons development. It has been very slow, and there is no indication that there will be a dramatic increase in the size of their arsenal in the near future." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for April 22.]

US President Bill Clinton ("CLINTON STATEMENT ON CHINA NUCLEAR INTELLIGENCE REPORT," Washington, USIA Text, 04/21/99) issued the following statement on Wednesday: "I welcome the Intelligence Community's Damage Assessment on the 'Implications of China's Acquisition of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Information and the Development of Future Chinese Weapons' and the review of the damage assessment by a panel of independent experts led by Admiral Jeremiah, as requested by the House Select Committee, chaired by Congressmen [Christopher] Cox and [Tom] Dicks. I appreciate the careful analysis by the intelligence community and the independent panel, as well as their efforts to make as much information as possible available to the public on this crucial issue. The findings of the damage assessment underscore the need to implement fully the Presidential Decision Directive I issued in February 1998 to strengthen security and protections at the U.S. nuclear weapons laboratories. I commend [US Energy] Secretary [Bill] Richardson for his efforts in this regard and look forward to the review of lab security I requested by the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, chaired by Senator Warren Rudman. Measures to protect sensitive nuclear weapons information must be constantly scrutinized, whether this

information is at the National Laboratories or at other U.S. Government institutions. Therefore, I am asking the National Counterintelligence Policy Board to assess potential vulnerabilities at other institutions associated with nuclear weapons besides the National Laboratories and to propose any concrete steps that may be appropriate to strengthen protections against efforts by China and other countries to acquire sensitive nuclear weapons information. I have also asked DCI [Director of Central Intelligence] George Tenet to review the recommendations made by Admiral Jeremiah on intelligence collection and resources and to act promptly on these recommendations."

4. PRC Naval Modernization

The Associated Press ("CHINESE NAVY BUILDING NEW LINE OF WARSHIPS, WEAPONS," Beijing, 04/22/99) reported that the PRC's official Xinhua News Agency on Wednesday quoted PRC Navy Commander Shi Yunsheng as saying that the PRC is modernizing its navy, but has much ground to cover to catch up with the US. Shi said the new generation of ships and weapons will allow the PRC to intercept invaders in the open ocean, rather than close to shore as in the past. Shi said the navy also is developing more modern warships, missiles and torpedoes to narrow the gap with other powers. In a separate report, Xinhua quoted another navy officer as saying that all the PRC's technology was indigenous.

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-Japan Relations

Korea Times ("JAPAN TO BROADEN CONTACTS WITH NK," Tokyo, 04/22/99) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura, said that Japan is seeking to broaden channels of communication with the DPRK. Komura made the remarks when he met a group of ROK journalists visiting here on an exchange program. "It is true that there have been some contacts (between Japan and the DPRK). The most undesirable situation is, I think, when the two countries don't know what the other is thinking. Therefore, we plan to broaden the channels within the permissible range," he said. However, the minister refused to reveal the number and level of contacts between the two countries, noting that there have been behind-the-scene contacts between Foreign Ministry officials. "In case we want to deliver a message of protest to North Korea regarding the intrusion of unidentified vessels, it is not desirable if there is no channel of contact to deliver this message," he said. When asked about former Japanese prime minister Yasuhiro Nakasone's recent remarks that Japan should work out and implement its own policies towards the DPRK instead of following ROK President Kim Dae-jung's "Sunshine Policy," the minister said that his remarks are still compatible with the Japan government's policy towards the DPRK. He noted that Japan definitely supports President Kim's "Sunshine Policy." However, Komura stressed that this support does not mean that the steps taken by the ROK and Japan are identical.

2. Light-Water Reactor Construction

JoongAng Ilbo ("GOVERNMENT PREPARING FOR THE PASSAGE OF NK LIGHT-WATER BILL," Seoul, 04/22/99) reported that the ROK government is preparing for the National Assembly's formal approval on the 3,500 billion won (US\$3.22 billion) allotment in the DPRK light-water reactor project, which is under the direction of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO). The Light-water planning team leader, Jang Sun-sup, said, after a compromise was reached in negotiations on the loan amount with KEDO in New York, "We plan to sign the agreement and

have it pass through the Cabinet council and the president's sanction. We can submit the motion to congress in two or three weeks, at the earliest." According to the schedule, the main construction will be started in June. The main contract between KEDO and Korea Electric Power Corp.(KEPCO) that has been delayed due to financially-related obstacles among KEDO council members, is now getting on track, Jang announced. Jang added, "Along with the agreement on the loan offer, we will clearly establish a plan for raising financial resources at party- government discussions. Whether to add three percent on electricity charges or to issue national bonds has not yet been decided."

3. ROK Fertilizer Aid to DPRK

JoongAng Ilbo ("FIRST LADY URGES JOINING FERTILIZER DRIVE TO NK," Seoul, 04/22/99) reported that ROK First Lady Lee Hee-ho appealed to ROK citizens to join in the drive to provide fertilizer to the DPRK. Her remarks are regarded as support for ROK President Kim Dae-jung's engagement policy towards the DPRK. In a special message aired through the Far East Broadcasting System on Wednesday, she said, "We cannot sit idly by when people in the North are suffering from malnutrition and starvation." She added, "Although we are still experiencing economic hardship, even our modest help will be of great help to our brothers and sisters in NK." She noted that one of the best ways to fight the food shortage in the DPRK is to provide fertilizer rather than foodstuff, so that the DPRK can improve its agricultural productivity. The ROK Red Cross has been implementing its campaign to collect money for fertilizer bound for the DPRK.

4. ROK Idle Equipment Aid to DPRK

Korea Herald ("SEOUL'S PLAN TO SHIP IDLE EQUIPMENT TO NORTH KOREA HITS SNAG," Seoul, 04/23/99) reported that the ROK government's plan to ship idle industrial equipment to the DPRK has hit a snag due to the lukewarm response of its intended beneficiary, according to a government official. ROK President Kim Dae-jung made the proposal in late March to further inter-Korean economic cooperation, while helping small-and medium-sized businesses. At an interagency meeting on making Kim's proposal a reality, officials put forth various measures, but to little avail, they said. Also taking part in the meeting were private economic organizations and think tanks. "North Korea has so far given our proposal the cold shoulder, probably thinking that 'idle equipment' means worn-out equipment which South Koreans do not use anymore," said an official at the ROK Unification Ministry. "In fact, the word 'idle' in this case should be interpreted as 'surplus.'" He also cited a lack of inter-ministerial cooperation concerning the proposed loan for small-and medium-sized enterprises. Despite President Kim's offer for financial incentives for smaller firms positively cooperating for the transfer of surplus equipment, officials at related agencies responded in a lackluster way, he added.

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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