

# NAPSNet Daily Report 22 August, 1997

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## **I. United States**

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Reuters ("S. KOREA PLANS MORE FOOD AID FOR NORTH," Seoul, 8/22/97) reported that a senior ROK National Unification Ministry official, who asked not to be identified, said Friday that the ROK plans to send millions of dollars worth of new food aid to the DPRK. "The government has decided to provide additional food aid to North Korea after considering various factors, including the food situation in the North, South-North relations and the international community's aid activities," the ministry official said. "We are now talking to international aid organizations for new aid to North Korea in addition to US\$16 million we have promised so far this year," the official said. Asked about a local media report that the new amount would be US\$10 million, the official replied: "No exact amount has yet been decided but the aid will be worth at least several million dollars." The ROK has provided US\$257 million worth of food to the DPRK since 1995, when devastating floods aggravated food shortages. However, the ROK has ruled out large-scale assistance until the DPRK agrees to discuss measures to reduce long-standing tensions on the Korean peninsula. In reference to the groundbreaking for the KEDO nuclear reactor project earlier in the week, the official said, "I would not say the fresh food aid is directly related to the nuclear project or four-nation talks but we hope this will help contribute to building up better relations with the North." Lee Hoi-chang, chairman of the ruling New Korea Party, told reporters on Friday, "The ground-breaking ceremony for the

construction of light-water nuclear reactors ... demonstrates the possibilities for inter-Korean cooperation." "For a truly successful strategy of diplomatic engagement with the North, we must continue to work with the United States and other countries surrounding Korea to forge a common understanding of our policy and principle," said Lee, who will run in presidential elections in December.

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Reuters ("BREAKTHROUGH SEEN IN JAPAN-N.KOREA TALKS-REPORT," Tokyo, 8/22/97) reported that the Kyodo news agency reported that Japanese and DPRK negotiators reached agreement in two key areas in talks Friday in Beijing aimed at reviving the long-stalled process of normalizing diplomatic relations. The two sides agreed to upgrade normalization talks to ambassadorial level, and the DPRK agreed that between 10-20 Japanese women living in the DPRK would be allowed to make home visits next month, Kyodo quoted unnamed officials as saying. Foreign Ministry officials in Tokyo refused to comment on the report or say whether such an announcement would be made.

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### **2. DPRK-Japan Relations**

Japan and the DPRK began talks Thursday aimed at establishing diplomatic relations, a move that could lead to Japanese aid for the hunger-stricken DPRK. Tokyo and Pyongyang, whose last talks on relations ended in failure five years ago, are divided by highly emotional issues, including Korean anger at former colonial domination by Japan and the status of Japanese women living in the DPRK. Japanese and DPRK diplomats did not talk to reporters but let them watch the start of their meeting at the DPRK Embassy. Japan wants formal ties to ease the potential military threat from the DPRK, which is believed to have missiles that can reach Japanese cities and is suspected of trying to build nuclear weapons. The delegations were led by deputy director-general Kunihiko Makita of the Asian bureau of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, and Kim Yon-gil, his counterpart in the DPRK Foreign Ministry. The DPRK is particularly wary of Japan for its colonization of the Korean Peninsula from 1910 to 1945, its support of the US during the 1950-53 Korean War and its close relations with rival ROK. Tokyo has accused the DPRK of kidnapping Japanese citizens and is demanding that Pyongyang allow Japanese wives of DPRK men to visit Japan. Tokyo often cites these disputes as the reason it refuses to donate food to avert a looming famine in the DPRK, which has received aid from the PRC, the US and the ROK. Japan provided US\$5.2 million in food aid last year but has refused to promise any more this year. The DPRK has said it is ready to let the Japanese women leave and merely needs to discuss details. Japan says about 1,800 women emigrated to the DPRK between 1959 and 1982 after marrying Koreans. Previous talks have ended in failure, most recently in 1992, when DPRK negotiators walked out after Japan demanded information on a Japanese teenager believed to have been kidnapped to the DPRK. Tokyo wants information on about a dozen Japanese citizens believed to have been taken to the DPRK in the last 20 years. (Korea Times, "TOKYO, P'YANG RESUME TALKS ON TIES," 08/22/97)

### **3. UN Calls for DPRK Human Rights**

The UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities was set Thursday to adopt a resolution urging the DPRK to improve human rights for its people. In its resolution, the UN sub-commission called on the DPRK to fully respect Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both of which relate to the right of everyone to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country. Adoption of the resolution, a copy of which was made available earlier at the ROK Foreign Ministry, would mark the first time a UN organization has adopted a formal document asking for human rights improvement in the hard-line Communist state. In its resolution, the sub-commission expressed concern over persistent allegations that grave violations of human rights are being committed in the DPRK, including recourse to mass internment in administrative detention centers. The sub-commission requested that the DPRK government fulfill its obligations and no

longer delay submission of its first report to the Commission on Human Rights. It also urged the DPRK to extend its cooperation with procedures and services established by the UN with the aim of ensuring promotion and protection of human rights. The resolution invited the international community to pay greater attention to the human rights situation in the DPRK and thus assist the population of that country in emerging from its isolation. The resolution, drafted by Louis Joinet, a French member of the 26-member sub-commission, also invited the international community to provide increased assistance to the DPRK in order to help it overcome food shortages. Some non-governmental organizations, including Amnesty International and Freedom House, have also released reports on human rights abuse in the DPRK. (Korea Herald, "UN CALLS FOR IMPROVED HUMAN RIGHTS IN DPRK," 08/22/97)

#### **4. Japan's Stance on Potential Taiwan-PRC Conflict**

Japan on Wednesday threw its support behind a top government official who hinted that Japan was prepared to assist US forces in case of conflict between the PRC and Taiwan, drawing renewed anger from the PRC. Japanese Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Kaoru Yosano said the remarks by Chief Cabinet Secretary Seiroku Kajiyama earlier this week about Japan's possible logistic support in a Taiwan Strait conflict was in line with the government view. "Chief Cabinet Secretary Kajiyama's remarks are based on the government stance," Yosano told a news conference. "Emergencies in surrounding areas, under the guidelines, are defined in accordance with the nature of the occurrences, not geographical concepts," he said. The remarks of Kajiyama, who is serving as top spokesman for the administration of Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, have cast a shadow over Hashimoto's planned visit to the PRC next month to mark the 25th anniversary of normalized ties between the two countries. Beijing reacted strongly to Yosano's remarks defending Kajiyama, with a spokesman accusing the Japanese officials of "seriously interfering in PRC's internal affairs." "Taiwan is an inalienable part of the PRC territory, and the Taiwan question is purely PRC's internal affair," the PRC foreign affairs spokesman Shen Guofang said during a television broadcast Wednesday evening. In a television talk show on Sunday, Kajiyama said it was inevitable for Japan under its security arrangements with the US to provide logistic support to US forces in coping with an armed clash in the Taiwan Strait. On Tuesday, he reiterated the position, saying expanding defense ties with the US would commit the two countries "in principle" to jointly deal with a conflict in the Taiwan Strait. Tokyo and Washington agreed last year to review their 1978 guidelines on defense cooperation to expand its scope to "areas surrounding Japan" in the event of an emergency which threatens security in this country. But Japan's role will be limited to non-combat and logistic support as its post-World War II pacifist constitution bans the country from using force in settling international disputes. (Korea Times, "JAPAN DEFENDS TOP OFFICIAL'S TAIWAN REMARKS," 08/22/97) [Ed. note: See also "Japan's Defense Area" in the Japan section of the August 21 Daily Report.]

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We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

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