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I. United States

1. DPRK-Japan Talks

Agence France Presse ("PROTESTS AS JAPAN, NORTH KOREA RESUME DIPLOMATIC TALKS," Tokyo, 8/22/00) and the Associated Press (Joji Sakurai, "N. KOREA, JAPAN ARGUE OVER PAST," Tokyo, 8/22/00) reported that Japan and the DRPK on Tuesday resumed talks on establishing diplomatic ties. Japanese right-wing groups and relatives of 10 Japanese nationals allegedly abducted by DPRK spies held vocal protests over the talks. According to a Japanese foreign ministry official, Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono reminded the 16 person DPRK delegation of the kidnapping issue, telling chief DPRK delegate Jong Thae-hwa, "The talks should go ahead by taking into account the feelings of these people. I wish the Korean side for its part will be steadfast in searching for missing people." The official said that Kono met the delegation for about 20 minutes before the two sides held a morning session at the nearby foreign ministry guest house. Jong reaffirmed the DPRK's denial of the abductions and instead reiterated DPRK's demands that Japan

apologize and pay compensation for its occupation of the Korean peninsula. The Japanese ministry official said that Jong told Kono that a "liquidation of the past" was essential before Japan and the DPRK could move forward before they build friendly relations and settle "various issues." Japan's chief delegate Kojiro Takano said that this round of talks was aimed at "creating incentives to allow a next round to bring things forward." The two sides were scheduled to hold three sessions in Tokyo and the nearby city of Kisarazu on August 22 and 24, with a day off on August 23 when the DPRK delegates will visit the Supreme Court and Japan Broadcasting Corporation.

2. ROK View on Japan-DPRK Talks

Reuters ("S.KOREA'S KIM SAYS NORTH KEEN ON JAPAN TIES-PAPER," Tokyo, 8/22/00) reported that the Japanese daily Yomiuri Shimbun reported on Tuesday that ROK President Kim Dae-jung believes that the DPRK is eager to normalize diplomatic ties with Japan. In an interview conducted on August 21, the day before a second round of normalization talks began in Tokyo, Kim also said that he would do what he could to work towards success in the talks. Kim said, "We hope to be able to assist efforts towards improving the relationship between Japan and the North. I believe that North Korea is quite keen on normalizing relations with Japan." The Yomiuri quoted Kim as saying that he had urged Kim Jong-il to improve ties with Japan and the US when the two leaders met in June. Kim stated, "I said that North Korea should have friendly ties with Japan and the United States because their existence is important for national security and economic recovery, two major national interests of North Korea. I believe Kim has understood that." He also said that he had explained that the departure of the US military from Japan and the ROK could set off competition for regional hegemony among Japan, the PRC and Russia, and that Kim Jong-il seemed to understand the necessity of keeping US forces in the area even after Korean unification.

3. Japanese Aid to DPRK

Nikkei ("JAPAN SET TO PROVIDE MORE RICE AID TO N KOREA," Tokyo, 8/22/00) reported that Japanese government sources said on Monday that the Japanese government is planning to ship 200,000-300,000 tons of rice to the DPRK as humanitarian aid. Following an appeal by the World Food Program, the Japanese government plans to start discussions on the shipments as early as the end of August. The Nihon Keizai Shimbun said on Tuesday that it hopes to reach an official decision by the end of September after negotiating with ruling coalition parties. However, sources said that the Japanese government feared that bringing up rice aid as an official topic at diplomatic normalization talks on Tuesday would place undue pressure on the DPRK, so it will separate the issue from those discussions.

4. DPRK Famine

The Associated Press ("UN OFFICIAL: NORTH KOREAN AUTUMN HARVEST TO FALL," Beijing, 8/22/00) reported that UNESCO Director-General Koichiro Matsuura said on Tuesday that a summer drought will lower the DPRK's autumn harvest below last year's level. Matsuura said after a three-day visit to the DPRK, "They have definitely come out of the worst period, even though they continue to have food shortages." Matsuura said that UN experts project that the reduced rice and corn crops will leave the DPRK dependent on outside help for a sixth straight year. Despite the forecast, Matsuura said that the DPRK economy appears to be recovering, helped by new policies meant to attract foreign trade and investment, especially from the ROK. He said that ROK investment is already bringing money and jobs into the DPRK, improving people's lives and making it difficult for the government to isolate the country again should it want to.

5. Japan-PRC Relations

Reuters ("JAPAN TO DISCUSS CHINESE NAVAL ACTIVITY CONCERNS," Tokyo, 8/22/00) reported that Japan's Kyodo News Agency reported on August 21 that Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono will discuss Japan's concerns over PRC naval incursions when he meets PRC leaders during his trip to Beijing next week. Earlier this month, Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party refused to endorse special loans to the PRC, accusing it of sending warships and research ships into Japan's territorial waters. Kono, during his four-day visit from August 28, will meet PRC President Jiang Zemin, Premier Zhu Rongji, Vice-Premier Qian Qichen, and Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan.

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK POWs in DPRK

The Korea Herald (Kang Seok-jae, "VETERANS CALL FOR RETURN OF POWS," Seoul, 08/22/00) reported that stressing the need for reciprocity in inter-Korean exchanges, Korean War and Vietnam War veterans on August 21 called on the government to push for the early repatriation of ROK prisoners of war (POWs) held in the DPRK. At a rally, more than 100 representatives of the ROK Veterans' Association called on the government to take positive, sincere action to address the pains of the POWs' families. The release said, "It is also regrettable that the government has not worked out any concrete measures to solve the South Korean POW repatriation issue, which counters the principle of reciprocity in inter-Korean affairs," emphasizing that a resolution to this matter is one of the nation's basic duties.

2. DPRK Environment

The Korea Herald (Chang Jae-soon, "BID TO DUMP WASTE IN N.K. PROTESTED," Seoul, 08/22/00) reported that ROK environmentalists staged a rally on August 21 to call on the Taiwan government to revoke an agreement to dump its nuclear waste in the DPRK for cash. An activist at the Korean Federation for the Environmental Movement (KFEM), said, "The proposed burial of the harmful waste in the North would be an immoral, inhumane and irresponsible act that must not take place. Otherwise, it will not only cause an environmental disaster on the Korean Peninsula, but threaten peace in Asia." The activists said they would make a protest visit to Taiwan if it pushes ahead with the agreement. After the rally, held in front of the Taiwanese Representative Office in downtown Seoul, the activists delivered a letter to the office calling for a complete revocation of the agreement.

3. ROK-DPRK Relations

The Korea Herald (Chon Shi-yong, "KIM CAUTIONS AGAINST EUPHORIA, IMPATIENCE IN DEALING WITH N.K.," Seoul, 08/22/00) and The Korea Times ("KIM EXPECTS KOREA-US MILITARY EXERCISE NOT TO DAMAGE S-N TIES," Seoul, 08/21/00) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung said on August 21 that last week's reunions of separated families marked a milestone in inter-Korean relations, but that the ROK citizens must exercise self-restraint in dealing with the DPRK. In his weekly cabinet meeting, Kim also stressed that the annual ROK-US Ulchi Focus Lens war simulation, which started on August 21, must not impede the thaw being formed between the two Koreas. Kim said, "We need to maintain solid security to ensure peace. But the military drill should be conducted in such a way as not to damage the atmosphere of reconciliation and cooperation now being formed after such a long time." A senior ROK administration said the ROK regards DPRK's reaction to the exercise as "routine rhetoric" that would not affect the current state

of inter-Korean relations.

4. DPRK Leader's Visit to ROK

Chosun Ilbo (Kim Min-bai, "KIM JONG-IL LIKELY TO VISIT SEOUL IN NOVEMBER," Seoul, 08/21/00) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il is likely to visit Seoul before the end of the year according to a high-ranking government source. He said that Kim Yong-soon, head of DPRK's Asia Pacific Committee, is expected to finalize a schedule when Kim Jong-il will visit and it will most likely be in November. The source added that there would be simultaneous groundbreaking ceremonies for the restoration of the Seoul-Shinuiju railway line on September 15.

5. ROK-US Joint Military Exercise

Chosun Ilbo (Yoo Yong-won, "REDUCED ULCHI FOCUS LENS COMMENCES," Seoul, 08/21/00) reported that annually, a total of 70,000 military personnel have participated in the joint US-ROK military exercise. Among them, ROK soldiers accounted for some 50,000 to 60,000 while US soldiers numbered 13,000. However, this year, the total number of participants was reduced to nearly one third. Most of the military exercises, such as protecting airfields, connecting severed railroads and bridges, and crossing the Han River are done on the map rather than on the ground and even the scale of the drill has been greatly reduced.

6. Korean War Massacre

The Korea Herald (Kang Seok-jae, "DEFENSE MINISTRY DENIES REPORT ON CONCLUSION OF NOGUN-RI INVESTIGATION,"8/21/00) reported that that the ROK Defense Ministry said that ROK investigators have not reached any official conclusion on the alleged massacre of ROK civilians by US soldiers in the early days of the Korean War. The ROK ministry's official denial came two days after the Associated Press (AP) reported on August 17 that ROK investigators had determined for the first time that US soldiers massacred a large number of ROK refugees at No Gun Ri. The ROK Defense ministry said in a release, "No official determination has been made in the Nogun-ri case by South Korean and U.S. investigators, and the two sides are now conducting separate probes of the incident." A ministry spokesman said that the ministry's June 22 report to the National Assembly only confirmed that a mass killing incident did take place, but did not assign responsibility. Meanwhile, an ROK civilian committee to deal with the No Gun Ri incident sent a letter of recommendation last week along with the signatures of 60 No Gun Ri survivors and relatives to both ROK President Kim Dae-jung and US President Bill Clinton, calling for an early conclusion of the No Gun Ri case. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for August 21, 2000.]

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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