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I. United States

1. ROK-DPRK-US on DPRK Multilateral Talks

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN, US, SKOREA SOFTEN STANCE FOR SAKE OF 6-WAY TALKS," 12/21/03) reported that Japan, the US and the ROK have agreed to abandon drawing up an advance draft joint statement that would clarify the DPRK's obligation to end its nuclear weapons program, it has been reported. The three countries arrived at the agreement in their efforts to facilitate the holding of the second round of six-way talks in mid-January, said the Daily Yomiuri, the English version of the Yomiuri Shimbun. The six-way talks, which also draw officials from the DPRK, the PRC, and Russia, had been expected to take place in Beijing in mid-December following its first round in August to resolve the standoff over Pyongyang's nuclear program. But the talks have been delayed until next year because Japan, the ROK and the US failed to reach an agreement with the DPRK over arrangements for a joint statement proposal under the PRC's mediation.

2. PRC-US on Taiwan and the DPRK

Reuters ("BUSH AND HU DISCUSS TAIWAN, NORTH," Washington, 12/22/03) reported that US President George W. Bush swapped views with the PRC's President Hu Jintao on ending the DPRK nuclear crisis, in a telephone call which also touched on mainland tensions over Taiwan, the White

House said. Bush also eased the path for his Iraq debt envoy James Baker who arrives in Beijing on December 30, after visits to the ROK and Japan, Bush spokesman Scott McClellan said. Hu and Bush "discussed steps on the six-party talks on the DPRK's weapons program," McClellan said. The PRC has been striving to convene six-party talks on easing the DPRK showdown, but a planned meeting in December was put off until next year, reportedly over differences between Washington and Pyongyang. Bush and Hu also discussed Taiwan, McClellan said. "The president reiterated that there should be no unilateral action taken by either side of the Taiwan Strait to change the status quo." Bush and Hu spoke less than two weeks after the PRC's Premier Wen Jiabao visited him at the White House. The PRC's official Xinhua news agency said Sunday that Hu thanked Bush for his recent comments on Taiwan. "On the Taiwan question, the Chinese government is willing to achieve the reunification peacefully with its utmost sincerity and greatest efforts, but Taiwan independence cannot be tolerated definitely," Hu was quoted as telling Bush.

3. Japan-US Security Ties

The Associated Press ("JAPAN BOOSTS SECURITY TIES WITH US, FEARING NORTH KOREA THREAT," 12/21/03) reported that Japan has strengthened its security ties with the US as it faces up to the DPRK nuclear threat with a double decision to buy its ally's missile defense system and send troops to Iraq, analysts say. The PRC has warned that both steps announced on Friday could lead a Japanese military revival and disrupt the world's strategic balance. Despite widely-criticized flaws in the missile defense system, designed to shoot down ballistic missiles from the DPRK or elsewhere, it is seen as a major step forward for Japan to protect itself in the long-term. The PRC's Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan has told his Japanese counterpart Shigeru Ishiba that the MD disrupts the strategic balance in the world and "might promote an arms race." The official Chinese news agency Xinhua has claimed that the planned troop dispatch will show that "Japan is a major nation that has not only economic power but also military capabilities." Takashi Inoguchi, a professor of international politics at Tokyo University, admitted that the MD has yet to be proven effective. "But it demonstrates Japan's will to have a full deterrence in place," he said. The missile shield was also defended by Akio Watanabe, director of Tokyo's Research Institute for Peace and Security.

4. Taiwan Early-Warning Missile System

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN DEBATING MISSILE EARLY-WARNING SYSTEM," 12/22/03) reported that Taiwan's defense officials are locked in debate over selecting an early-warning system to guard against a possible missile attack by the PRC, according to a report to be published this week. US defense suppliers Lockheed Martin and Raytheon are slugging it out for the multi-million dollar contract, the authoritative Jane's Missiles and Rockets weekly will say in its Thursday edition. "Both companies are making claims that are not realistic -- squabbling over which radar could see a butterfly flying along in Fujian Province," a US Pentagon official said. "Both companies are saying things like, 'Our radar can do 90 percent of the job for just 10 percent of the costs of the other guy.' It's just ridiculous." The report said Raytheon has put forward its AN/FPS-115 Pave PAWS long-range early-warning radar for the contract, while Lockheed Martin has offered its AN/TPS-59(V)3 theatre missile defense radar. However, some Taiwan officials are pointing out that Taiwan already has a variety of tactical long-range radars and is currently developing a new system which has a range of 1,000 kilometers (600 miles).

5. PRC Aircraft Manufacturing

Agence France-Presse ("LATEST CHINESE BID TO BECOME FORCE IN AIRCRAFT

MANUFACTURING GETS UNDERWAY," 12/22/03) reported that the PRC has begun manufacturing its first civilian turbo jet, marking the country's latest bid to become a force in airplane production. The manufacture of the ARJ21, which is expected to cost some 10 percent less than similar models made by overseas rivals, kicked off simultaneously at factories in Shanghai, Xian, Chengdu and Shenyang on Saturday, the Shanghai Daily reported on Monday. China Aviation Industry Corp, a state-run civilian and military manufacturer, has invested 2.5 billion yuan (304 million dollars) in the project, with government funding matching that amount. Further financing will be needed and the company said that it may look to private or foreign money for investment. The PRC's previous attempts to become a global player in aircraft manufacturing, with the Yun-10 commercial jetliner in the 1970s and a joint venture to build passenger jets with McDonnell Douglas Corp in the 1980s, ended in failure. The company has received 35 orders for the ARJ21 so far and expects to sell about 500 over the next 20 years, with 300 going to Chinese airlines, the report said.

6. Russia Missile Deployment

The Associated Press (Vladimir Isachenkov, "RUSSIA DEPLOYS FRESH BATCH OF MISSILES," Moscow, 12/22/03) reported that Russia has deployed a fresh batch of its top-of-the-line strategic nuclear missiles after a break caused by a funding shortage, and military officials presented ambitious plans Monday for building weapons even more potent. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov inaugurated the new set of Topol-M missiles at the Tatishchevo missile base in the central Saratov region Sunday, describing them as a "21st-century weapon" unrivaled in the world. "This is the most advanced state-of-the-art missile in the world," Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov said in remarks broadcast by Russian television stations Monday. "Only such weapons can ensure and guarantee our sovereignty and security and make any attempts to put military pressure on Russia absolutely senseless." US military analysts equate the missile, known as the SS-27 in the West, with the American Minuteman III, the older of the two land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles in the U.S. inventory. Ivanov on Monday reported the deployment to President Vladimir Putin, saying the military will continue modernizing all components of the nation's nuclear forces. The Interfax-Military News Agency said six Topol-Ms were deployed Sunday. The first 10 such missiles entered duty in December 1998 and two more sets followed in the next two years. The military had planned to continue the deployment in regular annual installments, but got the fourth batch of Topol-Ms out only Sunday. The Topol-M missiles, capable of hitting targets more than 6,000 miles away, have so far been deployed in silos. In Washington, a State Department official said the latest Topol-M deployment is regarded a continuation of the Russian program that started in 1998 and doesn't violate strategic weapons treaties. The new deployment is consistent with what the Russian government had told the U.S. government to expect, the official said. Putin said in October that Russia had several dozen Soviet-built SS-19 missiles that remained factory-fresh because they were stockpiled without fuel. The General Staff officer who spoke to Interfax said these missiles would enter service beginning in 2010 and remain on duty through 2030. Next year, design work will start on a next-generation heavy nuclear missile, which will enter service after 2009, the officer said. The new missile will be capable of carrying 10 nuclear warheads with a total weight of up to 4.4 tons, compared to Topol-M's combat payload of 1.32 tons, 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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