NAPSNet Daily Report 22 January, 2004

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 22 January, 2004", NAPSNet Daily Report, January 22, 2004,
https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-22-january-2004/

CONTENTS

I. United States

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Arms Talks
2. DPRK Nuclear Capabilities
3. International Atomic Energy Agency on DPRK Nuclear Proliferation
4. Japan on US State of the Union
5. Japan U.N. Contribution Reduction?
6. Pentagon on US Missile Defense
7. Japan-Russia Kuril Islands Dispute
8. Korean Unification

I. United States

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Arms Talks

Reuters ("US UPBEAT NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR ARMS TALKS TO RESUME," 01/22/04) reported that US point man on the DPRK said on Thursday he was "very hopeful" six-nation talks on dismantling the DPRK's suspected nuclear arms programs could resume soon. Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly's upbeat comments came after the US and other negotiating nations recognized this month the DPRK's "positive" move in offering to freeze all nuclear activities. "We are very hopeful that we will soon have the continuation of the six-party talks," Kelly said after meeting Japanese and ROK officials about the negotiations. "But we don't have any date at this time." Kelly, who led the US team in August, urged the DPRK to return to the six-nation negotiations and not confuse those talks with an unofficial US group, which two weeks ago made an unprecedented visit to nuclear facilities at the DPRK's invitation. "We hope the DPRK (North Korea) doesn't misjudge the private delegation," Kelly said. "We hope it doesn't distract or delay the process" of dismantling Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program.

Agence France-Presse ("POWELL HOPEFUL AS US, JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA CONFER ON

NORTH KOREA," Washington, 01/22/04) reported that US Secretary of State Colin Powell voiced hope the DPRK would eventually be convinced to give up its nuclear weapons programs as the US, Japan and the ROK opened two days of talks on the latest diplomatic moves to end the crisis. "We're not looking for a conflict," Powell said. "We want denuclearization of the Peninsula. So do our neighbors and friends in the region, North Korea's neighbors. And I think we'll get it and I think the North Koreans will be better off when they have irreversibly and permanently eliminated this capability," he said in an interview with an Atlanta radio station.

2. DPRK Nuclear Capabilities

The Associated Press (George Gedda, "EXPERT UNCONVINCED ON NORTH KOREA NUKES," Washington, 01/21/04) reported that an American nuclear expert who recently visited the DPRK's main nuclear facility said Wednesday he was not allowed to see enough to make a judgment on the country's nuclear weapons capability. Siegfried Hecker, a former director of the Los Alamos, N.M., nuclear research laboratory, said the DPRK "most likely" have the ability at the Yongbyon nuclear site to make plutonium metal. But, he said, he saw no convincing evidence that the DPRK could use that metal to build a nuclear device. And even if they had that capability, he said he saw no proof the DPRK could convert such a device into a nuclear weapon. Hecker added that he was also unable to substantiate a DPRK claim that 8,000 fuel rods were reprocessed last year to extract plutonium metal - an essential step in nuclear weapons development. In testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Hecker said the DPRK apparently wanted to show the delegation their main nuclear site "to verify that they had taken significant actions since December 2002 and to impress us with their nuclear capabilities." Hecker said his hosts seemed disappointed when he reported to them that he had not seen enough to draw definitive conclusions about the facility.

3. International Atomic Energy Agency on DPRK Nuclear Proliferation

Reuters ("N.KOREA MAY HAVE NUCLEAR WEAPONS, UN AGENCY SAYS," London, 01/22/04) reported that the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog said on Thursday that the DPRK may already have developed nuclear weapons and that the DPRK represented "the most serious threat to non-proliferation" in the world today. Mohamed ElBaradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), told BBC television that a recent US delegation's unofficial visit to the country "confirmed that North Korea possibly have nuclear weapons already developed, not only the capability, but nuclear weapons." A prominent scientist who visited the DPRK as part of the unofficial US delegation two weeks ago said on Wednesday that Pyongyang could probably make plutonium metal, a prerequisite for nuclear weapons, and that its nuclear program was of great concern. "Add to that that North Korea feels very insecure, feels that they need to use nuclear blackmail to achieve their strategic objectives," ElBaradei said in the BBC interview in Davos, Switzerland at the World Economic Forum. "Put all that together and that makes North Korea the most serious threat to non-proliferation as we know it today."

4. Japan on US State of the Union

Agence France-Presse ("JAPANESE PRESS CALL ON US TO WORK WITH GLOBAL COMMUNITY AFTER BUSH SPEECH," 01/22/04) reported that Whether Japanese newspapers either supported or opposed US President George W. Bush over the Iraq war they are united in urging him to strengthen ties with the rest of the world to fight terrorism and rebuild Iraq and Afghanistan following his State of the Union address. Although Bush emphasized in his speech that the US-led operations in Iraq and Afghanistan enjoyed cooperation from "a coalition of many nations," Washington has yet to

receive adequate support from the global community as a whole, said top-selling newspaper Yomiuri Shimbun. "We hope the US will exercise diplomatic leadership to strengthen international cooperation" to fight terrorism, the Yomiuri said. "The reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan will measure the degree of US commitment" to working with the rest of the world, it said. The liberal Asahi Shimbun criticized Bush, saying the newspaper was not persuaded by the words of a president who rushed to war without clear support from the UN Security Council. The newspaper has publicly opposed the war and Japan's decision to send troops to southern Iraq on a non-combat mission. "(Bush) emphasized international cooperation, but the speech appeared to reflect his insecurity over the reconstruction of Iraq with the existing small framework of international cooperation," the Asahi said. Bush reiterated his aim of spreading democracy to the Arab nations, but "forcing democracy, as defined by the US values and interests, to the Arab world might destabilize the Middle East as a whole," the Asahi said. "We want Mr. Bush to temper his zeal and humbly pay attention to the rest of the world," the Asahi said.

5. Japan U.N. Contribution Reduction?

The Associated Press (Nick Wadhams, "JAPAN SEEKS TO CUT U.N. CONTRIBUTION," United Nations, 01/22/04) reported that Japan, the world's second-biggest financier of the United Nations, wants to cut its contributions to the world body, a Japanese U.N. official said Thursday. Japan is expected to spend about $1.24 billion on the United Nations during its next fiscal year, which begins in April. The sum accounts for nearly one-fifth of the U.N. budget. The US is the only country that contributes more to the United Nations than Japan. Jun Yamazaki, the Japanese U.N. mission's minister for budgets, said he didn't know numbers but confirmed a Japanese media report that Tokyo wants to pay less. "... I think there is an overall sense in Japan that Japan would like to see its rate of assessments going lower," Yamazaki said. A senior Japanese Finance Ministry official told the Kyodo News agency Wednesday that the reduction, which could amount to millions of dollars, reflects Tokyo's fiscal austerity as the economic slowdown shrinks tax revenues and investments. Kyodo didn't identify the official. The report said Japan plans to cut its contributions to the global organization beginning in 2006, when the United Nations is set to reassess country contributions. The United Nations has not received official word that Japan wants to lower its dues, U.N. spokesman Farhan Haq said.

6. Pentagon on US Missile Defense Agence France-Presse ("PENTAGON REPORT WARNS LACK OF TESTING LIMITS CONFIDENCE IN MISSILE DEFENSE," Washington, 01/22/04) reported that a Pentagon report warned Wednesday that existing testing data gives only limited confidence in a missile defense system that the US is intent on deploying beginning this year. The Pentagon's director of operational test and evaluation, Thomas Christie said in an annual report very little testing of the system was performed in 2003 "due to immature BMDS (ballistic missile defense system) components." The Missile Defense Agency will therefore depend on two flight tests scheduled this year to validate its mid-course missile defense system, which is designed to intercept long-range missiles in space, according to the report. "Even with successful intercepts in both of these attempts, the small number of tests would limit confidence in the integrated interceptor performance," the report said. President George W. Bushhas directed the Pentagon to begin deploying the system this year even though it is still in development. Senator Jack Reed, a Democrat of Rhode Island, said the report "makes it clear that in a rush to win an ideological victory, President Bush risks prematurely deploying a missile defense system by 2004 that is technologically unproven and will drain resources from other essential priorities."

7. Japan-Russia Kuril Islands Dispute

Agence France-Presse ("JAPANESE PM MULLS VISITING RUSSIAN-HELD DISPUTED ISLANDS: REPORT," 01/22/04) reported that the Japanese government is considering a visit by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to the Russian-held southern Kuril islands claimed by Tokyo, according to a news report. A visit would be the first by a serving Japanese prime minister to the islands, which lie at the centre of a long-standing territorial dispute between the two nations, preventing Tokyo from signing a post-World War II peace treaty with Moscow, the Tokyo Shimbun newspaper said. A visit would demonstrate to Russia and the rest of the world Japan's determination to claim the return of the islands, which were annexed by Soviet troops in the closing days of World War II, the newspaper said. The visit would also be aimed at boosting Koizumi's domestic popularity ahead of a legislative upper house election due in July, the newspaper said. Officials at the Japanese foreign ministry and the prime minister's official residence declined to comment on the report.

8. Korean Unification

Korean Central News Agency ("DPRK NEWS REPORTS FOR REUNIFICATION APPEALS," Pyongyang, 01/22/04) reported that papers here today carried commentaries in support of the appeal of the joint meeting of the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) government, political parties and organizations. The appeal to the 70 million fellow countrymen, which was adopted at the meeting on 19 January, set the slogan "Let us pave a wide avenue for independent reunification through national cooperation under the banner of our nation-first spirit!" as the slogan for the country's reunification to be held high by the Korean nation; and put forward (a) five-point task to implement it. Nodong Sinmun in a signed commentary says that the appeal is being supported and welcomed at home and abroad as it reflects the ardent desire and will of all the fellow countrymen to smash the aggression and war moves of the US imperialists, defend the peace of the country and give impetus to the process of reconciliation and reunification. The commentary notes: The main issue discussed at the joint meeting is that the whole Korean nation should take practical actions to cope with the nation's confrontation with the US under the banner of the Korean nation-first spirit. The time has come to settle a final account with the US trying to bring disasters of nuclear war to the Korean Peninsula.

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.

Produced by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development in partnership with:

Ilmin Internationl Relations Institute
BK21 The Education and Research Corps for East Asian Studies
Department of Political Science, Korea University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

International Peace Research Institute (PRIME),
Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan

Monash Asia Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Brandon Yu: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Kim Young-soo: yskim328@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hibiki Yamaguchi: hibikiy84@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Saiko Iwata: saiko@akira.ne.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Hiroya Takagi: hiroya_takagi@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@online.ru
Moscow, Russian Federation

Wu Chunsi: cswu@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

John McKay: John.McKay@adm.monash.edu.au
Clayton, Australia

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-22-january-2004/

Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org