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I. United States

1. US-PRC Talks

The Washington Post (Steven Mufson, "CRITICISM GREETS CHINA OFFICIAL," 3/22/01) reported that PRC Vice Premier Qian Qichen arrived in Washington on March 21 for talks with President Bush and Secretary of State Colin L. Powell. Members of the US Congress spoke out against the PRC bid for the 2008 Olympics, human rights groups attacked the PRC rights record, US State Department spokesman Richard A. Boucher called for the release of an American University scholar jailed in the PRC, and another US senior State Department official said comments Qian made this week about US-Taiwan relations were "unnecessarily provocative." Qian met last night with Powell for dinner and talks on issues including Iraqi sanctions, PRC and DPRK missile proliferation, PRC opposition to US missile defense plans and delays in PRC fulfillment of an agreement to open its markets before joining the World Trade Organization. Regarding the talks, Boucher said, "In some of these areas, we cooperate quite well with China. In other areas, we have differences. We will communicate a strong desire to expand the common ground, but we won't shrink from discussing the differences candidly and on the basis of mutual respect." Another senior US State Department official said, "Qian Qichen is trying to gauge the administration's attitudes toward China and wants to generally

find a good, workmanlike relationship with the United States. He made it harder by speaking out so roundly against certain weapons sales to Taiwan, which, after all, are part of our obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act." In general, Qian can expect greater candor from the US because key administration officials including Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage and Vice President Cheney's chief of staff, I. Lewis Libby have advocated a more "straightforward" approach to the PRC and more open support for democratic Taiwan. An administration official said, "We recognize [China is] a great country, and maybe sometime in the future a great power. We have no desire to thwart that, but we have some reservations about how she treats her own people and resolves international problems." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 22, 2001.]

Christian Science Monitor (Robert Marquand, "WARSHIPS AND TAIWAN'S DELICATE POSITION," Hsinchu, 3/22/01) and USA Today (Bill Nichols, "TAIWAN OPTIONS COLOR U.S.-CHINA TALKS," Washington, 3/22/01) reported that there is tension in the talks between PRC Vice Premier Qian Qichen and US President George W. Bush this week because of the US decision next month on whether to sell advanced weaponry to Taiwan. Qian, who had dinner with US Secretary of State Colin Powell on Wednesday, stressed the PRC's opposition to the sale in a speech in New York earlier in the day. Qian called differences over Taiwan "the most important and sensitive issue in China-US relations." Bush has not indicated where he will come out on the sale, but some administration officials have been advocating a tougher line toward the PRC. The PRC has offered the administration some points in recent weeks to encourage Bush to oppose the sale. It ratified a UN human rights treaty that safeguards basic civil liberties, and it indicated for the first time that it is willing to discuss US plans for a national missile defense. US congressional and administration sources say there is one option under consideration that would avoid a clash with the PRC: Bush approves the sale of the Aegis-equipped destroyers - but not this year. Under this compromise, Bush would tell the PRC that he plans to sell the destroyers to Taiwan next year unless the PRC slows down its military buildup. Bush also might insist that the PRC freeze, or reduce, the number of missiles it has aimed at Taiwan. Derek Mitchell, a special assistant on Asian- Pacific affairs at the US Defense Department during the Clinton administration said the split-the-difference approach appeals to Bush's foreign policy team because "they don't want to have a crisis early on in the administration." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 22, 2001.]

Agence France Presse ("BUSH HOPES FOR GOOD CHINA RELATIONS BUT STANDS FIRM ON TAIWAN, RELIGION," Washington, 3/22/01) reported that US President George W. Bush told PRC Vice Premier Qian Qichen on Thursday and told him he wanted good relations with the PRC. Bush told Qian that he would be "firm" but "respectful" in outlining differences with the PRC on issues like Taiwan, human rights and religious freedom, but that he believed the two sides could find common ground. A senior US administration official quoted Bush as telling Qian, "I am going to look you in the eye and tell you we can have good relations with China. Nothing we do is a threat to you, and I want you to tell that to your leadership." Before the talks, which lasted 55 minutes, Bush told Qian in remarks delivered before reporters, "We have obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act ... We will honor those obligations, no decision has been made yet as to the sale of weapons to Taiwan." US officials said arms sales were addressed during the talks, but the Aegis system was not specifically brought up in the meeting, also attended by National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, White House chief of staff Andrew Card and PRC officials.

2. US-DPRK Relations

Agence France Presse ("NORTH KOREA SAYS IT WILL NOT ATTACK US," Seoul, 3/22/01) reported that the DPRK said Thursday on its official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) station that the

DPRK did not want a confrontation with the US. In a broadcast monitored in the ROK's Yonhap news agency, the commentator said: "We have no intention of making preemptive attacks against the United States, and we hope the two nations will end their confrontation and improve relations." The commentary highlighted dialogue started under former US president Bill Clinton and how the DPRK had agreed to suspend its missile tests in September 1999. KCNA said, "The US has no will to put an end to the hostile relations of confrontation with the DPRK (North Korea) and it is keen to strain the situation on the Korean peninsula and stifle Pyongyang by force of arms." KCNA said the US is "obsessed by the ambition to keep South Korea under its permanent military occupation and retain firm hold on the Korean peninsula as a strategic vantage-point to establish hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region. However, the US is well advised to clearly understand that its aggressive ambition can never come true. The US had better bear deep in mind that our repeated warnings are not empty words."

II. Republic of Korea

1. US Position on DPRK

The Korea Herald ("U.S. PACIFIC MILITARY COMMANDER LABELS NORTH KOREA NO. 1 ENEMY," Seoul, 03/22/01) reported that despite recent thaws with the ROK, the DPRK is still Washington's No. 1 enemy in the Pacific region and has to prove otherwise with its actions, high-ranking American officials said. "I define North Korea the No.1 enemy state when I look across my area of responsibility," Adm. Dennis Blair, the US Pacific military commander, told ROK journalists in an informal meeting Tuesday. "However, chances of a conflict with North Korea are very low. Our (the United States and South Korea) combined military capability and strength of our countries would be victorious in any conflict. And I think North Korea knows that," Blair said. Evans Revere, American charge d'affaires to Seoul, who attended the meeting, added the DPRK has to prove otherwise by taking necessary steps. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 22, 2001.]

2. DPRK Stance toward US

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "PYONGYANG CALLS FOR UNITY IN REMOVING U.S. SOLDIERS FROM KOREAN PENINSULA," Seoul, 03/22/01) and Chosun Ilbo (Kim In-goo, "NK Calls US Its "Target," Seoul, 03/21/01) reported that intensifying its attack on Washington, the DPRK has stressed that both Koreas should cooperate to drive US soldiers off the Korean Peninsula. In a commentary Tuesday, the (North) Korean Central Broadcasting Station said US imperialists were attempting to throw cold water on the growing amicable atmosphere for the reunification of the divided Koreas. Calling US soldiers stationed in the ROK "cannibals," the commentary, monitored here, said that "now is the time when Koreans, whether they are in the south or in the north of the Korean Peninsula, should join hands in removing the U.S. imperialists from South Korea." In the commentary, the broadcasting station maintained that the "shameless" US imperialists were desperately struggling to suppress the rapidly growing mood for inter-Korean reunification. "The new U.S. administration's harsh policy toward us speaks well of its scheme," it said. Washington has labeled North Korea as a "state of concern." In addition, DPRK's Central Radio said Tuesday that the US was the DPRK's target. In the DPRK, "target" has a similar meaning as "main enemy." In a report, the radio station announced that North Korea's target has not changed even in the new century and that guns of its army and people are aimed at the US. It added that the more belligerent the US becomes, "the stronger will its commitment to root out American imperialism from the earth and fight against the Americans become."

3. Inter-Korean Railway Project

The Korea Herald (, "N. KOREA FAILS TO SEND SIGNED PACT ON DMZ PROJECT," Seoul, 03/22/01) reported that the ROK Defense Ministry said Wednesday that DPRK's promised delivery of a signed copy of the agreement on the rules and regulations for the inter-Korean joint governance of the demilitarized zone (DMZ) has been delayed by more than a month. The DPRK had earlier agreed to send the document to the ROK on Feb. 12, after it was signed by its People's Armed Forces Minister, Kim Il-chol. But on Feb. 11, the DPRK unilaterally notified the ROK that it had no choice but to delay the conveyance of the agreement due to "administrative problems." "The North has yet to inform us of a new delivery date," a ministry official said. As a result, the project to reconstruct an inter-Korean railway and road through a 4-kilometer swath of the DMZ will have to be postponed, the official said.

4. ROK, US, Japan Talks on DPRK

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "S. KOREA, U.S., JAPAN TO RESUME: CONSULTATIONS OVER NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 03/22/01) reported that the DPRK will hold high-level talks with the US and Japan in Seoul next Monday to coordinate their policies on the DPRK since President George W. Bush took office, ROK officials said Wednesday. At the talks, tentatively named "Trilateral Consultation Meeting," Seoul will be able to observe how Washington is formulating its policy toward Pyongyang, which will likely become tougher than that of the Clinton administration as most analysts here agree. The three-nation meeting will also evaluate this month's separate summits with President Kim Dae-jung and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, in which the leaders discussed issues regarding the DPRK, he added. "The talks will carry a symbolic meaning as showing that the alliance among the three governments still works under the Bush administration," he said.

5. US Senators to Visit DPRK

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "4 U.S. SENATORS TO VISIT SEOUL, PYONGYANG," Seoul, 03/22/01) reported that an ROK government official said here Wednesday that four US senators will visit the ROK and the DPRK next month to learn about the progress made in inter-Korean relations. The Republican senators, Phil Gram (Texas), Bob Benett (Utah), Michael Crapo (Idaho) and Jim Bunning (Kentucky), will visit Seoul for three days from April 10 to 12, then fly to Pyongyang where they will stay until April 14," the official said. During their visit to Seoul, the U.S. senators are expected to meet Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister Lee Joung-binn and exchange opinions on the progress of inter-Korean relations and the future direction of Washington-Pyongyang relations. While in Pyongyang, they will reportedly meet with a number of high- ranking DPRK officials, including Kim Yong-nam, leader of the DPRK's Supreme People's Assembly standing committee, to discuss US-DPRK relations in general and witness DPRK's food and energy shortages firsthand. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 22, 2001.]

6. DPRK-PRC Relations

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "ZENG HOPEFUL OF FURTHER IMPROVING TIES BETWEEN CHINA, NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 03/22/01) reported that Zeng Qinghong, head of the PRC Communist Party's Organization Department, emphasized Tuesday the need to continue to build upon the friendly relations between the PRC and the DPRK. Zeng, a close aide to Chinese President Jiang Zemin, flew to the DPRK capital earlier in the day for a five-day visit, possibly to plan Jiang's reciprocal visit to Pyongyang. "Relations between the communist parties and between the two

nations have entered a new phase of development, and the friendly relations will see a brighter future in the new millennium as well," he said at a banquet hosted by the DPRK's Workers' Party at Mansudae Assembly Hall.

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