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I. United States

1. DPRK Military Threat

United Press International ("OFFICIALS TELL OF WAR SCENARIO," Washington, 10/21/97) and the Associated Press (Robert Burns, "NKOREA DOUBTS US MILITARY STRENGTH," Washington, 10/21/97) reported that DPRK defector Colonel Choi Ju-hwal told the international security subcommittee of the US Senate Governmental Affairs Committee that "If a war breaks out on the Korean Peninsula, the North's main target will be the U.S. forces based in the South and in Japan." Choi said that "Kim Jong Il believes that if North Korea creates more than 20,000 American casualties in the region, the U.S. would roll back and North Korea will win the war," adding, "That is the reason that the North has been working furiously on its missile programs." Ko Young-Hwan, a former DPRK Foreign Ministry official who defected in 1991, told the subcommittee that the DPRK's missile program dates to 1965 when Kim Il-sung declared it "imperative" to have missiles that could reach Japan. Ko said his brother, Ko Bang-nam, was a missile engine designer who shared sensitive information with him before he lost contact when he defected. Ko said his brother had told him that the DPRK managed to obtain French-made Exocet anti-ship missiles and American Stinger air defense missiles, which it then reverse-engineered to produce copies. He said he did not know who sold the missiles to the DPRK. Choi said that the DPRK has developed surface-to-surface missiles with a range of 1,000 kilometers and is in the "final stage" of developing a missile, dubbed the Taepodong, with a range of 5,000 kilometers. Subcommittee Chairman Thad Cochran (R-Miss.) said,

"To me, this is more than a wake up call, it's a call to quarters."

2. DPRK Abduction of ROK Citizens

The Washington Post (Mary Jordan, RELEASE OF TWO SEIZED IN DMZ EASES TENSIONS BETWEEN KOREAS," Tokyo, 10/22/97, A26) reported that the agreement to return two ROK farmers seized by DPRK soldiers Friday has eased tensions that had arisen over what was assumed to be the first kidnapping of civilians along the border in 20 years. The two ROK farmers said Tuesday that they had accidentally crossed into land inside the Demilitarized Zone controlled by the DPRK. The DPRK state-run Korean Central News Agency said that allegations that the farmers had been kidnapped were a deliberate attempt by the ROK to "aggravate inter-Korean relations."

3. DPRK Famine

The Associated Press (Joe McDonald, "NKOREA CONTINUES TO NEED FOOD AID," Beijing, 10/21/97) and Reuters (Andrew Browne, " CARITAS WARNS FAMINE IN N.KOREA FAR FROM OVER," Beijing, 10/22/97) reported that Kathi Zellweger, Hong Kong director of Caritas, the charity arm of the Roman Catholic church, said Tuesday that DPRK agriculture has been hurt so severely by drought and lack of fertilizer that the country could require massive food aid for at least another year. "Next year will not be any better. I rather think it's going to be worse," said Zellweger, who returned Tuesday from her thirteenth trip to the DPRK. Hundreds of thousands of tons of donated food has averted widespread starvation, but the danger of disease in the hunger-weakened population remains high, Zellweger warned. She stated that pregnant women, nursing mothers, the elderly, and 2.6 million children under six are most at risk. "It's the same, more or less, all over" the DPRK, she said, although she added that there were small pockets of extreme deprivation.

4. US MIAs from Korean War

USA Today (Barbara Slavin, "MIA MISSION MAY UNEARTH DIPLOMACY," Unsan County, DPRK, 10/22/97) reported that efforts to recover the remains of US servicemen from the Korean War have become a key piece of the slowly expanding contacts between the DPRK and the US. Captain Fred Godfrey, deputy leader of the recovery mission, was quoted as saying, "We're the door" into the DPRK. Godfrey thinks that the recovery mission could open the way to diplomatic relations between the two countries, as happened in Vietnam. Likewise, Lieutenant Colonel Gregory Man of the US POW/MIA office said that the search for MIAs has "become a major diplomatic tool. And both sides realize it." During the mission, the US office of POW-MIA affairs was allowed to photograph the identification cards of eight Americans, three of them MIAs, that were on display in a DPRK museum, but it is still seeking access to DPRK army unit histories, records of U.S. planes shot down, and other archival material. In a meeting with the US delegation, Kim Byong-hong, the DPRK Foreign Ministry official in charge of the MIA issue, suggested that the US pay US\$22.5 million for next year's operations, 200 times this year's amount.

5. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute

The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("S.KOREA NEAR FINISHING WHARF ON ISLETS ALSO CLAIMED BY JAPAN," Seoul, 10/22/97) reported that officials at the ROK Ocean and Fisheries Agency said Wednesday that the ROK has almost finished building a wharf among a cluster of islets over which both the ROK and Japan claim sovereignty, which will enable ROK ships of up to 500 tons to dock at the islets. The ROK began building the 80-meter concrete wharf in late 1995 in a gesture aimed at bolstering its claim to the islets, called Tokdo in the ROK and Takeshima in Japan.

6. US Nuclear Weapons Safety

USA Today (Peter Eisler, "NUCLEAR ARMS STOCKPILES VULNERABLE," Washington, 10/22/97) reported that a recent confidential Pentagon review said that security lapses at some federal labs and plants run by the US Department of Energy (DOE) that house nuclear weapons have left them increasingly vulnerable to theft and sabotage. The review follows up an August report by a DOE security task force that urged immediate action "to meet the developing crisis in special nuclear materials protection." While DOE officials acknowledge many of the problems, they say that nuclear stocks remain well-protected and that they are addressing the shortcomings, the article stated. Joseph Mahaley, head of DOE security, was quoted as saying, "I don't think we're in crisis. If we do nothing, we'll be in crisis. We have to make adjustments and we are." The DOE is beefing up guard forces and replacing security equipment, Mahaley said. No known incident of theft or sabotage has occurred, the article stated.

7. Taiwanese Satellite Development

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN ADMITS ITS SATELLITE COULD HAVE MILITARY USES," Taipei, 10/22/97) reported that, according to Taiwan's United Evening News, Liu Chao-shiuan, chairman of the Taiwan National Science Council, admitted on Wednesday that lightweight satellites being developed by the island could have military uses. However he ruled out the possibility that Taiwan would launch satellites on its own, and told the Taiwan parliament that the international trend is to develop small satellites rather than large ones. Taiwan originally planned to have three satellites in orbit by 2006 for scientific and communications purposes under a US\$516 million project, but the launch of the first satellite has been delayed repeatedly and the satellite and its ground support facility are undergoing dynamics testing in Taiwan.

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](#).

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