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I. United States

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1. Four-Party Talks

The Associated Press ("U.S. AIDE SEES POSSIBLE ACCORD WITH N. KOREA," Geneva, 10/22/98) reported that an unnamed US official said after morning and afternoon sessions of the four-party peace talks on Thursday that there is a possibility of a "significant procedural" agreement on organizing the talks by the time the current round ends, tentatively scheduled for Sunday. Officials said that discussions on Thursday focused on the proposal by the ROK to form two subcommittees, one to discuss replacing the armistice agreement while the other formulates confidence-building measures. US officials said that the DPRK delegates participated actively with the other sides in the talks Thursday even though they stuck to their demand that the parties agree on an agenda before they decide how to discuss it. US Ambassador-at-Large Charles Kartman stated, "We've made quite a bit of progress in narrowing the differences, but the North Korean position remains quite firm." PRC Ambassador Qian Yong-nian said the four sides would continue "probing." ROK delegation head Park Kun-woo stated, "We had a constructive meeting, and I underline the word 'constructive.'" DPRK Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye-gwan declined to comment.

The United States Information Agency (Wendy Lubetkin, "KOREA FOUR PARTY TALKS RESUME," Geneva, 10/21/98) reported that US Ambassador Charles Kartman expressed optimism at the end of the first day of the four-party peace talks. Kartman stated, "We are still working, and I think we are making progress." Earlier, following an October 20 bilateral meeting with the DPRK, Kartman said he believed the DPRK delegation had come to Geneva "with a serious purpose." He said that the meeting "went a little longer than I expected because we had a good deal of ground to cover, and we covered some of our expectations for the Four-Party meetings and some of the bilateral issues that are still pending between us." He added, "The atmosphere was quite good and serious." In his keynote speech at the beginning of the talks, ROK Ambassador Park Kun-woo stated, "I earnestly hope that all the four parties will demonstrate the spirit of cooperation and accommodation in this round, so that we could overcome our differences which surfaced in the first and second plenaries and attain some tangible and substantial progress in the talks." He proposed that the talks be convened "at regular intervals, for example every three months." He added, "Considering that we all wish to establish peace and reduce tension on the Korean Peninsula as soon as possible, we believe that the present state, where we cannot even predict the dates of the next round of the Four-Party plenary meeting, should not go on indefinitely."

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2. US-ROK Military Exercises

The Associated Press (Alexander G. Higgins, "FOUR-PARTY TALKS ON KOREA RESUME," Geneva, 10/22/98) reported that the DPRK's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) on Thursday criticized US-ROK joint military exercises scheduled to begin on Monday. KCNA stated, "The war exercises are patent proof that the United States and the South Korean authorities have no interest in discussing" ensuring peace on the Korean peninsula.

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3. DPRK Rocket Launch

Reuters (Paul Taylor, "NORTH KOREAN MISSILE THREATENS US-JAPAN ALLIANCE, IISS SAYS," London, 10/22/98) reported that the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) said on Thursday that the DPRK's three-stage rocket launch poses a potential threat to the US-Japanese strategic alliance and the stability of East Asia. IISS Asia expert Gerald Segal said that if the DPRK were able to threaten the basis of the US-Japan security treaty, "then the whole basis of stability in East Asia is put in question." IISS assistant director Colonel Terence Taylor estimated that the DPRK was now capable of delivering a missile accurately at a range of at least 2,000 km (1,300 miles). IISS

director John Chipman stated, "North Korea clearly wishes to demonstrate a capacity to put U.S. soldiers, even those stationed in Japan, at risk and to indicate that it has the capacity to transfer such technology to third states." He said that recent events "reaffirmed the need both for engagement with North Korea and a strong deterrent against its potential use of force against the south, or South Korea's allies." Chipman, recently returned from talks in Pyongyang, said that the DPRK military appeared to be taking an increasing role in power amid persistent doubts about the capacity of Kim Jong-il to govern. He stated, "The leadership transition is not quite complete ... from the cult of personality (of Kim Il-sung) to a kind of military dictatorship." He argued that, with the DPRK economy in crisis, there was a risk that the military might attack the ROK in desperation. He added, however, that deterrence might be more effective against a military-dominated regime because armed forces chiefs had a better sense of the balance of power. IISS deputy director Gordon Adams said that the DPRK rocket test had prompted Japan and the US to conclude an agreement on a more active joint ballistic missile defense program, which might in time require Japan to revise its constitution to enable space-based assets to be used for military surveillance.

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4. Hyundai Founder's Visit to DPRK

The Associated Press ("HYUNDAI CHIEF TO VISIT NORTH KOREA WITH 501 CATTLE," Seoul, 10/22/98) reported that Hyundai officials said Thursday that company founder Chung Ju-yung plans to visit the DPRK again next week with a gift of 501 cattle. On Thursday, the ROK Unification Minister Kang In-duk said that the DPRK sent a letter to Hyundai last week that said, "the misunderstanding with the southern authorities on the issue of the dead cattle is cleared." Kang said the letter "cleared a stumbling block for Hyundai's additional cattle donation."

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5. US-Japan Theater Missile Defense

The Associated Press ("CHINA, RUSSIA CRITICIZE U.S., JAPAN OVER MISSILE DEFENSE SYS," Beijing, 10/22/98) reported that the PRC's official Xinhua News Agency said that PRC Defense Minister Chi Haotian and his visiting Russian counterpart, Igor Sergeev, on Thursday criticized a US-Japanese plan to develop an anti-missile defense system. The defense ministers were quoted as saying that "certain countries' plans to develop a theater missile defense system will arouse a new arms race and threaten world and regional peace and stability." Xinhua said that the two also discussed other international and regional security issues during their meeting.

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6. US South Asian Sanctions

The Associated Press ("SPENDING BILL LETS CLINTON WAIVE INDIA, PAKISTAN SANCTIONS," Washington, 10/22/98) reported that the US Congress granted US President Bill Clinton the power to waive sanctions against farm exports to India and Pakistan in the omnibus spending bill that Clinton signed on Thursday. There was no immediate word from the White House on whether Clinton would use the waiver. "The India-Pakistan Relief Act" requires that Clinton consult with Congress each time he uses the waiver.

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7. Nuclear False Alarm

The British Broadcasting Corporation (Allan Little, "HOW I STOPPED NUCLEAR WAR," Moscow, 10/21/98) reported that a Russian army officer may have prevented nuclear war fifteen years ago by disobeying procedure when he detected an incoming missile strike. Stanislav Petrov, a former Russian army software engineer, said that on the night of September 26, 1983, his computer at a surveillance center near Moscow showed that the US had launched a nuclear strike against the Soviet Union. Petrov stated, "I knew the system could be at fault, so I reported this as a false alarm." In doing so, Petrov disobeyed orders to pass the information up the chain of command, to then-General Secretary Yuri Andropov. He stated, "The thought crossed my mind that maybe someone had really launched a strike against us. That made it even harder to lift the receiver and say it was just a false alarm."

II. Republic of Korea

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1. Four-Party Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("TWO KOREAS CLASH AT 4-PARTY TALKS," Seoul, 10/22/98) reported that the four-party talks on peace for the Korean peninsula entered the second day of their main session in Geneva on Thursday. However, no substantial progress has been made as the two Koreas failed to agree on opposing conditions. The DPRK is insisting that the topics for the talks, including the withdrawal of the US forces stationed in ROK, be chosen before continuing. The ROK, on the other hand, has recommended that the three other nations proceed without the DPRK and that the US and the PRC join the ROK in forming subcommittees to move ahead with the talks.

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2. Creation of Northeast Asia Security Forum

Korea Herald ("CREATION OF REGIONAL SECURITY FORUM TO TOP PRESIDENT KIM DAE-JUNG'S AGENDA ON PRC VISIT," Seoul, 10/23/98) reported that President Kim Dae-jung's proposal to create multilateral security and cooperation mechanism in Northeast Asia will be a major topic of discussion during his visit to the PRC next month. "The time has come for the ROK to make earnest discussions about security cooperation with the PRC," said Lim Dong-won, senior presidential secretary for foreign affairs and national security. Lim's comments are seen as an indication that President Kim will push PRC President Jiang Zemin and other PRC leaders on the idea of creating a regional forum, in which the PRC has shown little interest thus far. President Kim advocates the arrangement of a regional security forum in Northeast Asia, which he hopes will embrace at least six nations--the two Koreas, the US, Japan, Russia, and the PRC. He said that if necessary, Mongolia could participate in the multilateral security process. As recently as Wednesday, Kim said that Northeast Asia is the only region in the world that has no mechanism for promoting regional security and development. Kim said that the proposed mechanism in Northeast Asia could be modeled on the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Kim discussed the so-called "six-party" talks with Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi during his visit to Japan earlier this month.

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3. Hyundai Founder's Visit to DPRK

Korea Times ("OBSTACLES CLEARED FOR CHUNG'S VISIT TO DPRK," Seoul, 10/22/98) reported that ROK Unification Minister Kang In-duk on Wednesday said that ROK and DPRK authorities have

cleared almost all obstacles for Hyundai founder Chung Ju-young's second visit to the DPRK in four months. Chung plans to bring along 501 head of cattle. If Chung's visit, tentatively set for October 27, is realized, it will also brighten the prospects for Hyundai's Mt. Kumgang development and ferry service project, which has been delayed since September 25. So far, the ROK government has expressed dismay over the DPRK's allegations that ROK authorities forced the first batch of 500 head of cattle, delivered in June, to swallow rope, thus leading to the death of several cattle. However, Hyundai officials, who met DPRK officials in Beijing, showed them that the same rope was also found in the stomachs of other cattle at Hyundai's Sosan farm, thus proving that the ROK was not implicated in force-feeding. "The Hyundai cattle are believed to have eaten rope used at the seaweed farm that once stood where now lies Sosan farm," Minister Kang said. Upon hearing Hyundai's explanations, DPRK officials also expressed their understanding and sent a message on October 16 that all misunderstanding between authorities had been cleared, Kang said. The minister said that the main cause of the cattle's death is "shipping fever," resulting from their long journey aboard trucks, not the rope found in their stomachs. Kang said that Chung is expected to meet senior DPRK officials during the forthcoming visit. However, he said that he had no knowledge as to whether he will meet DPRK leader Kim Jong-il.

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4. ROK Economic Crisis

JoongAng Ilbo ("KOTRA TO CLOSE 11 OVERSEAS OFFICES," Seoul, 10/22/98) reported that the Korea Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) decided on October 22 that it would shut down 11 overseas offices beginning November 1. The 11 offices which will close include 4 offices in the US, including Denver and Boston; the office in Mumbai, India; Hanover, Germany; Surabaya, Indonesia; Santodomingo, Dominican Republic; and Uhan, PRC. Accordingly, KOTRA will lay off 45 employees by year-end and 87 people (13.4 percent of its total workforce) by the year 2000.

JoongAng Ilbo ("CHAEBOLS AND GOVERNMENT HOLD RESTRUCTURING TALKS," Seoul, 10/22/98) reported that the government and the business sector held a joint meeting on October 22 to review the restructuring plan which big companies are currently attempting to fulfill. In the meeting in which ministers related to economic affairs and the chairmen of the five biggest Chaebols participated, the government asked the business sector to shut down their subsidiaries with bad operating records and to actively solicit foreign capital by selling assets. The government also required the business sector to make a final and concrete restructuring plan to improve their financial state by December 15. Responding to these requirements by the government, the business sector insisted that it is first necessary to make a unified law for restructuring, because now a great deal of confusion has been created as so many related laws are dispensed with and created for the restructuring process. So far, the government has refused to accept the suggestions made by the business sector.

III. People's Republic of China

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1. Four-Party Talks

China Daily ("US TROOP WITHDRAWAL IS KEY TO PEACE TALKS," Seoul, 10/19/98, A11) reported that the DPRK has urged the US not to raise "any preconditions" at crucial peace talks this week, calling the issue of US troop withdrawal a prerequisite for peace on the Korean peninsula. The warning, seen in the ROK as the DPRK's typical brinkmanship in talks with the US, came ahead of a

new round of four-way peace talks. The DPRK's Disarmament and Peace Institute (DPI) accused the US of expanding joint military exercises with the ROK "at a time when (the DPRK) has mobilized most of its armed forces in peaceful construction and farming." This is the DPRK's first open acknowledgment that many of its 1.2 million-strong armed force were mobilized this year for the rehabilitation of its tattered industry and agriculture. In a separate dispatch, the DPRK's official newspaper Rodong Sinmun demanded that the US end "unreasonable pressure" over the DPRK's missile development.

People's Daily ("NEW ROUND OF KOREAN PEACE TALKS BEGINNING," Geneva, 10/22/98, A6) reported that the third round of four-party talks on the Korean issue was opened in Geneva on October 21. Making a keynote speech at the opening session, PRC Ambassador Qian Yongnian said that the four-party meeting is in a crucial period now. All parties should face reality and make efforts to create conditions to overcome difficulties. The PRC will keep close consultations and cooperation with all parties and continue its sincere contributions to the progress of the talks and the establishment of a peace mechanism on the Korean Peninsula.

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2. ROK Imports of Japanese Culture

China Daily ("S. KOREA LIFTS IMPORT BAN ON JAPANESE MEDIA WARES," Seoul, 10/21/98, A11) reported that the ROK lifted a ban on the import of selected Japanese movies, videos, and cartoons on October 20. The decision was the first step in fulfilling President Kim Dae-jung's promise during a visit to Japan earlier this month that he would speed the opening of the ROK to Japanese culture. The ROK has banned Japanese music, movies, theatrical, and cultural performances since the country was liberated from Japanese occupation in 1945 at the end of World War II. However, many younger ROK citizens, especially teenagers, are already familiar with a broad range of Japanese culture through smuggled films, books, magazines, recordings, and international satellite TV channels. ROK officials said detailed procedures for imports would be worked out before the end of the year by a committee to be formed with government and civilian cultural representatives of both countries.

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3. PRC-US Military Relations

People's Daily ("SINO-US DEFENSE CONSULTATIONS END," Beijing, 10/21/98, A4) reported that the second defense consultations between the PRC and the US ended in Beijing on October 20. The two sides exchanged in-depth views on international and regional security issues of common concern, discussed bilateral military contacts for next year, and found consensus on annual high-level exchanges of visits and on promoting exchanges in all areas and at all level to enhance mutual understanding and trust. PRC Defense Minister Chi Haotian affirmed the defense consultations and gave a positive evaluation to the mechanism of defense consultations. He hopes that the mechanism will continue to contribute to the development of bilateral relations.

Jie Fang Daily ("DEFENSE CONSULTATIONS PUSH FORWARD DEVELOPMENT OF MILITARY RELATIONSHIP," Beijing, 10/21/98, P3) carried a commentary saying that the defense consultations between the PRC and the US mark the preliminary establishment of mutual understanding and trust between the two countries. According to the newspaper, through the consultations, the PRC showed its responsible attitude towards regional security.

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4. PRC-Japan Relations

People's Daily published an article written by Huang Hua, former Vice Premier and Foreign Minister of China, on October 22 ("ACTIVELY DEVELOP NEW CENTURY-ORIENTATED SINO-JAPANESE RELATIONS," 10/22/98, A6). The article emphasizes the great significance of the Sino-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship, saying that it is important for Japan to draw lessons from history. It said that the strengthening of military alliances and military activities are undesirable. Those activities go against the aim of the Sino-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship and are not conducive to regional security, stability and peace. The Taiwan issue is completely an internal affair of China. Any country keeping a diplomatic relationship with the PRC must abide by the "one China" principle. They should not support Taiwan's independence, not support "one China, one Taiwan" or "two Chinas," and not support Taiwan's entrance into the UN or other international organizations composed of sovereign states. In the coming century, the article said, developing Sino-Japanese friendship is the best choice for both countries. The two governments should play a leading role on the development of Chinese-Japanese friendship. Besides, unofficial diplomacy is a characteristic in the Sino-Japanese relationship. The two countries should continue their efforts in this area.

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5. PRC-Taiwan Relations

China Daily ("KOO ENDS MAINLAND TRIP, BACK TO TAIWAN," 10/20/98, A1) reported that Koo Chen-fu, chairman of the Taipei-based Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF), wound up his mainland tour and left for Taiwan on October 19. Koo met President of the Association for Relations across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) Wang Daohan several times, and the two reached a consensus on four points. During his stay in Beijing, Koo met Jiang Zemin, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (CPC), Qian Qichen, member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, and Chen Yunlin, director of the Taiwan Affairs Office of the CPC Central Committee. Jiang acknowledged Koo's efforts to develop relations across the Taiwan Straits and expressed his appreciation for the four-point consensus. At a get-together on the evening of October 18 with Chinese and foreign journalists, Koo said he was gratified at the four-point consensus and expressed his gratitude to ARATS for the fine reception he had been given.

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6. US-Japan Theater Missile Defense

People's Liberation Army Daily ("US AND JAPAN ENHANCE COOPERATION ON TMD SYSTEM," 10/19/98, P5) published a commentary saying that the US and Japan have other reasons for enhancing the development of a Theater Missile Defense (TMD) system than their excuse of the DPRK's rocket launch. For the US, the build-up of TMD is an important means to maintain its superiority in East Asia. Without Japan's financial support, however, the US cannot reach that goal. For Japan, its military development has always been restrained after World War II. It is worth spending money on TMD cooperation with the US, because the cooperation can not only help Japan to increase its military strength, but also reduce many unnecessary troubles brought about by its independent development of a TMD system. US-Japan cooperation on TMD will have a negative influence on East Asian peace and stability, the article said. It also could cause a new arms race in outer space. What is worse is that the US is trying to include Taiwan into the scope of the TMD system. That is a severe interference in China's internal affairs and is unacceptable.

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7. PRC Position on Disarmament

China Daily ("CHINA KEEPS PLEDGE ON PEACE, STABILITY," United Nations, 10/17/98, A4) reported that the PRC reiterated its commitment to international peace and stability at the UN on October 14. PRC Ambassador for Disarmament Affairs Li Changhe said that the PRC is in favor of imposing proper and reasonable control on landmines to protect innocent civilians from injury. He recalled that PRC President Jiang Zemin declared during his visit to Canada last November that the PRC would actively participate in international mine clearance efforts. He told the First Committee of the 53rd Session of the General Assembly of the UN that the PRC ratified the amended Landmine Protocol and the newly annexed Protocol on Blinding Laser Weapons to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons on August 29. Li said that the Conference on Disarmament should work toward negotiating a treaty on the prevention of weapons in outer space. The development and testing of outer space weapons systems have intensified in recent years. According to Li, the PRC has improved its export control system through new regulations. The PRC has faithfully honored its obligations and imposed strict controls on the export of sensitive items and their production technologies and equipment. Moreover, the PRC has applied strict controls to the transfer of conventional military equipment and related technology, Li said.

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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