

NAPSNet Daily Report 23 April, 1999

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 23 April, 1999", NAPSNet Daily Report, April 23, 1999,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-23-april-1999/>

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I. United States

1. DPRK Agricultural Development Project

The US Agency for International Development ("AGREEMENT REACHED ON BILATERAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT FOR NORTH KOREA," Washington, USIA Text, 04/22/99) issued the following press release: "A team of officials from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the State Department, and Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) reached an agreement with North Korean officials on April 17, 1999 on the details of a potato production project in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).... The potato project responds to the continuing humanitarian need for food in North Korea. Based on a range of analyses, the United States believes the shortfall in food production in North Korea this crop year is approximately 1.5 million metric tons below minimum food needs. To increase potato production, the project will import 1,000 tons of seed potatoes of several varieties for planting and 100,000 tons of commodity food assistance to be used for food-for-work projects to support potato production. A consortium of U.S. PVOs will provide expertise, design and manage the project, and purchase the potato inputs. These PVOs include: Adventist Development and Relief, Amigos Internacionales, the Carter Center, CARE, Catholic Relief Services, Church World Service, Korean American Sharing Movement and Mercy Corps International. The U.S. government will provide the food assistance. This will be the first U.S.

government-donated food channeled directly through U.S. PVOs rather than through the World Food Program (WFP). The U.S. PVOs will monitor the distribution of food under this program, and will contract with WFP for logistical support. As with all food assistance from the United States, the commodities will be carefully monitored to assure they reach the civilian population for whom they are intended. Specific provisions of the project agreement include an enhanced monitoring regime for food-for-work projects, a substantial distribution of food in the needy northeastern part of the DPRK, and a direct working relationship with North Korean agricultural experts. Seed potatoes from China will be planted in Kangwon province in the southeast, and variety trials with U.S. seed potatoes will be conducted in the northeast and western provinces. The PVO consortium is currently in the process of procuring and shipping seed potatoes, and will have staff on the ground in the DPRK shortly to manage the program once the seeds arrive. The first shipment of US assistance for food-for-work projects, which will include corn and rice, is expected to arrive in the DPRK in late May. Additional food shipments will continue through March of next year."

2. DPRK Human Rights

The Associated Press (George Gedda, "N. KOREAN DEFECTORS TELL OF ABUSES," Washington, 04/23/99) reported that three DPRK defectors testified Thursday before a US Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on the DPRK's prison camp system. The defectors included two former prisoners, Kang Chul-hwan and Lee Soon-ok, and a former prison guard, Ahn Myong-chul, who said he was taught to treat prisoners ruthlessly and to shoot any who tried to escape. Kang said that DPRK citizens live in "horror and anxiety that someone else will pass on information against them, leading to their arrest." Lee said that she was tortured for 14 months after being arrested in 1986 on what she called false charges. Subcommittee chairman Craig Thomas, R-Wyoming, said that despite considerable attention to the DPRK military, there has been very little discussion in the US of the DPRK's "atrocious human rights record." Thomas noted that, as far as he knew, the hearing was the first ever by a congressional panel on the subject.

3. Russian Nuclear Deployment

Russia's Itar-Tass News Agency ("RUSSIA TO KEEP NUKES IN FAR EAST UNTIL 2005 COMMANDER," Petropavlovsk Kamchatsky, 04/23/99) reported that Russian Navy Commander Admiral Vladimir Kuroyedov said that Russia would keep its naval nuclear forces in the Far Eastern peninsula of Kamchatka until 2005. He added that all ships stationed there must be kept in combat readiness.

4. Russian Ratification of START II

RFE/RL Newsline ("START-II TREATY DECLARED DEAD," 04/21/99) reported that Duma deputy Aleksei Arbatov said on Wednesday that the NATO attacks on Yugoslavia have ruined the chance for the ratification of the START-II treaty by the Russian State Duma. Arbatov added that while he hopes that Russia and the US resume negotiations on the problem of strategic weapons, it is difficult "to imagine how the Duma would return to a discussion of the treaty."

5. Russian Detection of Nuclear Tests

The Los Angeles Times ("NUKE TEST DETECTOR DEVELOPED," Moscow, 04/22/99) reported that Vladimir Matveichuk of the Siberian Institute of Metrology said Thursday that Russian scientists have developed a new, highly- accurate system to detect nuclear tests. Matveichuk said the

equipment, developed under state order, monitors fluctuations in the earth's magnetic field from space.

II. Republic of Korea

1. US Policy toward DPRK

Joongang Ilbo ("TALK WITH FORMER AMBASSADOR LANEY," Seoul, 04/22/99) carried a dialogue between former US Ambassador to the ROK James Laney and World Vision Korea's President Oh Jae-shik. Laney predicted that former US Defense Secretary William Perry's report, which is expected to be announced at the end of May, will push US DPRK policy to be more constructive and open, and offer more incentives to the DPRK. He also predicted that in addition to the unfreezing of DPRK-held assets in the US, Perry's report would propose other measures designed to ease economic sanctions and thus stimulate the opening of the DPRK, such as allowing foreign investment and the provision of long-term loans. He added, "I think that once Perry's report is announced, his policy will receive Republican support." Laney said that there is a need for six-party talks including Russia and Japan to replace the current four-party talks, and predicted that the US would push for six-party talks right away if Perry's report calls for them. He added, "As the second largest economic power in the world, Japan cannot be content with its current status in the realms of political and foreign relations. There needs to be joint research to discuss ways for Japan to play a greater role in promoting stability in Northeast Asia." Laney also stated, "I see [ROK] President Kim [Dae-jung]'s Sunshine Policy as an innovative idea, breaking the old mold of South-North relations." He warned, however, "if North Korea continues developing weapons of mass destruction while ignoring the new overtures in our policies, further difficulties will certainly arise." Laney maintained, "It's obvious ... that this American policy is one that also guarantees the sovereignty of the North Korean state." He denied that there was any similarity between the Balkan situation and that on the Korean Peninsula. He pointed out, "North Korea still maintains a huge stockpile of conventional firepower, and any military action would bring with it enormous casualties. The United States has already denied several times that it is considering carrying out any kind of military offensive against North Korea. The important things right now are to respect North Korea's right to survive, and to help it normalize its relations with the outside world."

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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