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I. United States

1. EU-DPRK Missile Talks

Reuters (Peter Starck, "NORTH KOREA INVITES EU TO DIALOGUE ON MISSILES," Stockholm, 03/22/01) reported that DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister Choi Su-hon said that he presented new ideas to Swedish Prime Minister Goran Persson for a dialogue between the DPRK and the European Union (EU) on the DPRK missile program on Thursday. Choi, on a two-day visit to Stockholm, stated, "As regards the suggestions raised by European Union countries, I informed Sweden as the presidency of the European Union ... that we are willing to have a dialogue on the missile issue with the European Union, too." He argued, "During the visit of [former US Secretary of State Madeleine] Albright, much progress had been achieved in missile talks. At that time, we had proposed very reasonable ideas." He added, "We made it clear that we are quite willing to solve the missile issue through this process. But the new administration in the United States, they are trying to avoid discussions on this matter." Choi said that while the US has stalled, "many countries from the European Union expressed new interest to have a dialogue." Choi said that the DPRK's missiles are "to defend our national dignity and national independence. There are so many missiles and nuclear weapons deployed around the Korean peninsula which are targeted against our republic. We have prepared to counter any kind of attacks." He added, "In 1998, we launched a satellite with our own technology. We have prepared to launch satellites, something like a telecommunications satellite, a weather observation satellite, and we have the satellites and the carrying means for these satellites."

2. US Policy toward DPRK

Reuters (Carol Giacomo, "EXPERTS WARN BUSH ON NEED TO ENGAGE N. KOREA," 03/23/01) and the Associated Press (Barry Schweid, "BUSH URGED TO REOPEN N. KOREA TALKS," Washington, 03/23/01) reported that Robert Gallucci, a former State Department official who is now dean of the Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, said on Friday that US President George W. Bush's administration was right to consider possible changes in the 1994 Agreed Framework. Gallucci stated, "The benefits could be substantial to all." He stressed, however, that the US would have to first consult closely with the ROK and Japan, and that the US should make clear to the DPRK that it is not seeking to abandon the accord but rather to look at substitute technologies. Gallucci said that although it would have been better from the start to give the DPRK fossil-fuel technology, the DPRK would not have agreed. Spurgeon Keeney, President of the Arms Control Association, warned that reopening negotiations with the DPRK could be "disastrous" if the US ended up losing both the Agreed Framework and its progress on missile talks. Morton Halperin, who held senior White House and State Department positions under former President Bill Clinton, said that "the risk here is very simple" because the DPRK has long demonstrated that it thinks the way to get US attention is by doing something "provocative." He warned that if Bush does not soon engage the DPRK, "at some point the North Koreans will decide the only way to get the attention of the administration is to fire another missile." He added that such a move would almost certainly prompt negative reactions from Republicans in the administration and Congress who do not believe any deal with the DPRK is possible.

3. DPRK Nuclear Capabilities

The Associated Press ("NKOREA MIGHT HAVE NUKE BOMB SKILLS," Seoul, 03/23/01) reported that the Education Center of Unification, a think tank affiliated with the ROK Unification Ministry, said Friday that the DPRK is believed to be capable of making one or two nuclear bombs. The center stated, "Verification on whether the North has fully given up its suspected nuclear weapons program should be pushed." It added that the DPRK began training nuclear specialists in the Soviet Union and the PRC in the 1960s, and their number is now believed to reach 3,000.

4. ROK Position on Missile Defense

Reuters ("S.KOREA SAYS U.S. ASKED FOR SUPPORT ON MISSILE SHIELD," Seoul, 03/23/01) reported that ROK Foreign Minister Lee Joung-binn said on Friday that, during the recent US-ROK summit, the US asked for ROK support for the US plan to promote the National Missile Defense (NMD) system. Lee stated, "We disagreed, however, and the White House later announced it had not made any request or that South Korea had expressed it support." The deputy spokesman for the foreign press at the ROK foreign ministry, Kim Euy-taek, said that Lee did not intend to convey any opposition to the missile shield plan. Kim stated, "Our position is that it's inappropriate to discuss it at this time."

5. DPRK Intranet

Reuters ("CHINA REPORT HIGHLIGHTS N.KOREA'S HOMEGROWN WEB," Beijing, 03/23/01) reported that the PRC's official Xinhua news agency said Friday that the DPRK has built a national Intranet network used by more than 1,000 people each day. The report said that the "Kuang Myong" network boasts "every feature of a well-established network -- a search engine, an electronic information system, a homepage search engine and a data transmission system." It quoted Li Hyok of the Korean Central Science and Technology Information Agency as saying, "Kuang Myong Net will become part of our daily life, just as the way America Online does to the Americans." Li said that the network is accessible only inside the DPRK and content is mostly limited to science and technology. It links scientific research institutes, universities, factories and some individuals as well as central and local government departments. Li said that his agency had posted more than 30 million scientific documents on the network, which also provides television program guides and an on-line system that translates English, French, German, Chinese, Japanese and Russian into Korean. He added that while it was "too early" for e-commerce in the DPRK, the network had already started a commercial and trading information service. Li said that 50 DPRK technicians began building the system in 1996 and developed the software for the system without outside help. Foreign diplomats with experience in Pyongyang said that they were aware of such a Network but had not actually seen it. One diplomat said that the users were "very selective -- the inner circle only" and that accessing the Internet from Pyongyang required costly overseas calls or other arrangements. The Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF) in its annual "Enemies of the Internet" report issued this month stated, "North Korea has decided: no servers, no connections. President [sic] Kim Jong-il's country is the only one in the world where the Internet does not exist." RSF added that a few DPRK elites with rare access to international telephone lines could log on to the Internet.

6. DPRK Refugees

The Los Angeles Times (K. Connie Kang, "L.A. GROUP HELPS NORTH KOREANS HIDING IN ASIA REACH FREEDOM," 03/22/01) reported that Los Angeles-based Pastor Douglas Shin, working with human rights and Christian groups, is offering guidance, shelter, and food for DPRK refugees. The report said that Shin's contacts help some refugees make their way from the PRC to Mongolia, where some then secure permission to fly to the ROK. Shin uses the Internet and the telephone to keep in daily touch with contacts throughout Asia. Representatives of a Seoul- based commission will submit petitions with 10 million signatures to the UN secretary general this month demanding that the UN grant refugee status to DPRK citizens in exile.

7. ROK Food Aid for DPRK

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREA SENDS FOOD AID TO NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 03/23/01) reported that the ROK Red Cross said in a news release that a cargo ship left for the DPRK Friday with 3,000 metric tons of potatoes, apples and pears. The release stated, "We hope the donation will be distributed evenly around the nation, and also to children and the elderly." It added that the ROK Red Cross will send another 9,000 tons of potatoes, apples and pears within the month. The food, valued at US$11 million, was donated by the state-controlled National Agricultural Cooperative Federation.

8. Death of Hyundai Founder

The Associated Press ("N KOREA KIM SENDS CONDOLENCES TO HYUNDAI FOUNDER'S FAMILY," Seoul, 03/23/01) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il sent a telegram to the family of the late Hyundai Group founder Chung Ju-yung on Friday, expressing his "deep condolences" over Chung's death. The telegram stated, "I express deep condolences over the passing away of Mr. Chung Ju-yung, who has contributed to reconciliation and cooperation between North and South Korea and carried out unification projects." The DPRK also said that it would send a four- member delegation led by Song Ho-kyong, a vice chairman of the Asia Pacific Peace Committee, to attend Chung's funeral on Sunday.

9. Korean War Massacre

The Los Angeles Times (K. Connie Kang, "CIVILIAN SURVIVORS RECALL THE PAIN OF WARTIME IN KOREA," 03/23/01) reported that an ROK delegation of Korean War survivors visited Los Angeles on Thursday as part of a North American tour to bring attention to what they maintain were the intentional killings of civilians by US soldiers during the war. The group has called the US Army's official report on the alleged massacre at Nogunri a cover-up and has located what they contend are 160 other sites of atrocities during the war. The delegation's trip will culminate in New York on June 23 at the Korean War Crimes Tribunal, an independent inquiry by a panel of jurists from around the world.

10. Alleged PRC Defector to US

Reuters ("CHINESE MILITARY OFFICER DEFECTS TO UNITED STATES," Washington, 03/23/01 and The Washington Post (John Pomfret, "SENIOR CHINESE MILITARY OFFICER DEFECTS TO U.S.," Beijing, 03/23/01, A18) reported that sources confirmed that a senior colonel in the PRC's People's Liberation Army defected to the US while visiting late last year as part of a delegation of PRC officers. One unnamed Chinese source described it as a "grave incident" between the PRC and the US. Chinese sources identified the officer as a member of the foreign affairs department of the army's general staff who was involved in managing the PRC's military relations with the US and disarmament issues. A spokesman at the US Embassy in Beijing stated, "The Chinese government asked us in December for assistance in locating a Chinese military officer who disappeared in New York City. We located this individual, who is in good health, and notified the Chinese government." US Secretary of State Colin Powell made a similar statement. A Chinese source with close ties to the PRC intelligence services said that US officials arranged for the officer's defection before he visited the US and helped him "disappear" once the delegation arrived on the East Coast. The source added that the PRC intelligence community believes that US officials in Beijing arranged at the same time for the man's wife to attend a party at the US Embassy, where she was given travel documents and moved to the United States.

The Associated Press ("CHINA PROBES OFFICER'S DISAPPEARANCE," Beijing, 03/23/01) reported that the PRC Foreign Ministry said Friday that it was investigating the disappearance of an army officer who reportedly defected to the US. The ministry stated, "An officer from the Chinese People's Liberation Army went abroad and did not come back. This affair is being investigated and handled."

11. US Scholar Detained in PRC

The New York Times (Erik Eckholm, "CHINA SAYS U.S. SCHOLAR 'CONFESSED HER CRIMES'," Beijing, 03/23/01) and the Associated Press (George Gedda, "U.S. VISIT BY CHINA LEADER CLOUDED," Washington, 03/23/01) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Sun Yuxi said Friday that Gao Zhan, a US-based sociologist who has been held incommunicado since February 11 for "activities damaging state security," had "openly confessed her crimes." Sun refused, however, to say what she had confessed to. He added that Gao's husband and their 5-year- old son, who were held separately for 26 days without notification of relatives and with no access to a telephone or a lawyer, had been treated in a lawful and "humanitarian" manner. In Washington, PRC Deputy Prime Minister Qian Qichen said that Gao "may have not been aware that she violated our law, and we will check into that."

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-PRC Relations

The Korea Herald ("CHINESE PRESIDENT TO SEND CLOSE AIDE TO N.K.," Tokyo, 03/21/01) reported that PRC President Jiang Zemin's close aide arrived in the DPRK on Tuesday possibly to discuss Jiang's reciprocal visit to Pyongyang, an ROK government official said. "Zeng Qinghong, head of the Organization Department of the Chinese Communist Party, will stay in Pyongyang for five days and meet North Korean leader Kim Jong-il and Kim Yang-gon, chief of the international affairs department of the Workers' Party," the official noted. "Zeng's visit is apparently to deliver a message from Jiang to the North Korean leader, or to coordinate the agenda and itinerary for the expected summit between Kim Jong-il and Jiang in Pyongyang," the official added.

2. DPRK Stance toward US

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "NORTH KOREA ALTERS STANCE TOWARD UNITED STATES," Seoul, 03/21/01) and Chosun Ilbo (Yoon Jong-ho, "NK DAILY CALLS FOR IMPROVED US RELATIONS," Seoul, 03/19/01) reported that ROK analysts said Tuesday that the DPRK is using a dual strategy of threats and appeasement to coax the US into the early resumption of dialogue. On Monday, an editorial of Rodong Sinmun, gazette of the DPRK's ruling Workers' Party, made it clear that the DPRK would not strike its neighbors first but instead advocate rapprochement with them. "We have no intention to strike the United Sates, and what we want is to end confrontation with them and work toward reconciliation," said the official Radio Pyongyang quoting the commentary.

3. ROK Lawmakers Letter to US

The Korea Herald (Chon Shi-yong, "S.K. POLITICIANS URGE U.S. TO CHANGE N.K. STANCE," Seoul, 03/21/01) reported that ROK lawmakers sent an open letter to US President George W. Bush and the US Congress on Monday calling for the US to work toward improving ties with the DPRK, an ROK ruling party lawmaker said. Representative Chang Young-dal of the Millennium Democratic

Party said that the letter would be delivered to Washington through the US Embassy in Seoul. In the letter, 36 lawmakers from the ROK's ruling and opposition parties said, "We strongly recommend that the United States resume dialogue with North Korea at the earliest time and pursue its North Korean policy through close consultation with the South." Expressing concerns that the US government is reevaluating the 1994 Agreed Framework, the letter said, "The reevaluation of the Geneva Treaty, we feel, could give the North Koreans an excuse to resume their development of nuclear weapons and long-distance missiles." It went on to say that if the DPRK did resume its development of such weapons, the Korean Peninsula would be threatened and the world would be thrown back into an arms race.

4. OSCE Conference

The Korea Times (Son Key-young, "TIME RIPE FOR SECURITY MECHANISM IN N-E ASIA," Seoul, 03/20/01) reported that ROK Foreign Affairs-Trade Minister Lee Joung-binn, speaking at the opening ceremony of the Korea- OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Conference 2001, said Tuesday that the time is ripe for the establishment of a mechanism for regional security dialogue in Northeast Asia. Lee also stressed the need for the two Koreas to set aside hostilities and learn to trust one another.

III. Japan

1. DPRK Atomic Bomb Victims

The Daily Yomiuri ("928 OF 1,252 A-BOMB VICTIMS SAID STILL SURVIVING IN NORTH KOREA," 03/18/2001) reported that the Japanese government's fact-finding team on DPRK atomic bomb victims said on March 18 that an alleged 1,353 people in the DPRK were victims of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, and that 928 of them are still alive. The mission team, headed by Shigekazu Sato, deputy director general of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's Asia-Pacific Affairs Bureau, told reporters in Beijing that the survivors are demanding compensation from the Japanese government. The team visited the DPRK from March 13-18 to investigate reports of people in the DPRK who were victimized by the atomic bombs in Japan, and the study was the first such official attempt by the Japanese government. The team met with Choe Chang-sik, vice minister of the DPRK's Public Health Ministry, as well as with five representatives of the atomic bomb victims, said the report. The report added that the team recognized the number of victims as 1,353 as of the end of 2000, but that the figure could increase in the future.

2. ROK Military Policy

The Asahi Shimbun ("ROK KIM DAE-JUNG STRESSES DEVELOPING AIR POWER," 03/21/2001) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung emphasized at the graduation and commencement ceremony of the ROK Air Force Academy on March 20 the development of air power, including the introduction of state-of-the art fighter planes. Kim stated, "Toward the realization of the new vision, we need both macro and micro preparations suited for the next 100 years. Air power is a mixture of science, technology and economic power. In the future, I will not hesitate to support the future-oriented development of air force." Kim also stated at the graduation and commencement ceremony of the ROK Navy Academy on March 19, "In the near future, the ROK Navy will protect the ROK's national interest in the five great seas.... We already began building Aegis ships." The report added that the ROK is shifting from the DPRK- oriented defense posture to the one that can deal with

threats from other neighboring countries.

3. Japanese Stance on NMD

The Yomiuri Shimbun (Gaku Shibata, "PRIME MINISTER SHOWS UNDERSTANDING TO NMD FOR FIRST TIME," Washington, 03/20/2001) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori stated at the Japanese-US summit meeting on March 19, "We share with the US the recognition that the proliferation of ballistic missiles is becoming a serious threat. We understand the US (need for) discussion of national missile defense."

4. Japanese-US Summit Meeting

The Japan Times ("CHALLENGES FOR JAPAN-US TIES," 03/23/2001) carried a commentary on March 23 on the recent Japanese-US summit meeting written by Keizo Nabeshima, former chief editorial writer for Kyodo News. Noting that the joint statement issued in Washington on March 19 by Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori and US President George W. Bush is the first political declaration issued by Japan and a Republican administration in the US in eight years, Nabeshima said that the statement marked a starting point for redefining terms of the Japan-US security alliance that will be valid at least for the next four years. Nabeshima pointed out that the summit meeting was clouded by Mori's being lame-duck and his lack of leadership, the simultaneous plunges in stock prices in Japan and the US, and the sinking of the Japanese fisheries training ship Ehime Maru by a US nuclear submarine. He also said that unless these problems are solved, Japan and the US will be unable to open a new chapter in their security alliance. However, Nabeshima said that it was highly significant that Mori and Bush agreed on the importance of a strategic dialogue between the two countries on diplomacy and security policies. Nabeshima said, "The world, including the Asia-Pacific region, has yet to establish a new order after the end of the Cold War." As for the PRC, Nabeshima warned that since changes in US-PRC relations will affect the Asian situation as a whole, Japan should develop firm policies toward the PRC. Nabeshima also said that tension could develop on the Korean Peninsula in connection with the Bush administration's policy changes. Nabeshima stressed that as friction continues between the US and the ROK, the three- way cooperation system among Japan, the US and the ROK should be strengthened. Regarding the US base issue in Okinawa, Nabeshima pointed out that protests are mounting against the US military presence in Okinawa, especially against crimes committed by servicemen against Japanese civilians and noise created by US military aircraft. Nabeshima suggested that Japan should make bold proposals for removing some US military installations in Okinawa to Guam and reducing the overall US military presence in Japan. Nabeshima concluded that if the government takes the Japan-US security system for granted, the bilateral alliance would lose the support of the Japanese public.

5. Contingency Legislation

The Nihon Keizai Shimbun ("PRIME MINISTER IS POSITIVE ABOUT CONTINGENCY LEGISLATION," 03/18/2001) and the Yomiuri Shimbun ("PRIME MINISTER IS EAGER ABOUT CONTINGENCY LEGISLATION," 03/18/2001) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori said during the graduation ceremony at the Defense Academy on March 18, "(Contingency legislation) is something that should be well-arranged in peacetime.... We, as the Government, will strive to discuss whatever necessary to contingency legislation."

6. Japanese-Russian Territorial Issue

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("IDEA OF SETTING NEW DEADLINE IS CANCELED," 03/23/2001) reported that the joint statement to be announced by Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori and Russian President Vladimir Putin on March 25 would clarify that the future negotiations for the territorial issue should be based on the 1956 Japanese-Soviet Joint Statement, which states that two of the four islands be returned to Japan after concluding a peace treay, but would not clarify any specific deadline for the conclusion of the treaty. The report said that Japan insisted on setting the date for concluding a peace treaty, but Russia rejected the idea. Both sides only agreed to "find a solution acceptable to both sides" in future negotiations, said the report. A Japanese Foreign Ministry source said, "(The joint statement) signifies that (Russia) agreed to return the Habomai Islands and Sikotan Island to Japan for the first time in 40 years."

7. Japanese History Textbook

The Asahi Shimbun ("PRC PRESIDENT JIANG ZEMIN ASKED JAPANESE AMBASSADOR TO SHOW CONSIDERATION TO PRC CONCERN ABOUT TEXTBOOK ISSUE," 03/21/2001) reported that PRC President Jiang Zemin asked new Japanese Ambassador to Beijing Koreshige Anan to show consideration to the PRC people's concern about the Japanese history textbook on March 20. Jiang said to Anan, "Chinese people are concerned about the Japanese history textbook. I believe that Japan considers this issue without failing, and I don't anticipate strong opposition (to Japan) among our people." Anan stated in response, "The Japanese government's stance on history is clear, and I believe the textbook screening is conducted by considering Asian people's concern."

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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