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I. United States

1. US-DPRK Talks

Agence France Presse ("US, NKOREA TALKS IN ROME TO FOCUS ON MISSILE QUESTION, HIGH-LEVEL VISIT," Washington, 5/23/00) reported that US State Department spokesman Phil Reeker said on Tuesday that the US is set to push the DPRK for progress on the DPRK's missile program and on an expected top-level visit to the US of a DPRK official during this week's Rome talks being May 24. Reeker said, "the United States will use this meeting to begin talks on Agreed Framework implementation. We will also continue to discuss the full range of issues of common concern, including missiles as we seek to improve relations with the DPRK government." He added that the US-DRPK delegations would also "continue discussions in Rome on the visit of the high-level DPRK official to Washington."

2. ROK-DPRK Summit

The Associated Press (Kyong-hwa Seok, "NKOREA DEFECTORS DOUBTFUL ON SUMMIT," Seoul, 5/23/00) reported that reunions of families separated between the DPRK and the ROK are likely to

be a prominent topic at the upcoming inter-Korean summit. The report said that the DPRK may agree to reunions, but it is doubtful that it would grant such a favor to DPRK defectors. Regarding June's inter-Korean summit, Kim Ok-ran, a DPRK defector, said, "it's a show directed by Kim Jong Il. If you have lived in the North, you would know." Chang Chung-nam, a student of mass media at a Seoul university, added, "South Koreans are just too excited about the whole thing. They just don't understand how things work in North Korea. Its policy has not changed, only the tactics." However, not all DPRK defectors are negative about the summit. Another DPRK defector said, "although it might not immediately benefit us defectors, I, for one, have great expectations for the summit."

3. Korean War Massacre

The Associated Press (Kyong-hwa Seok, "S. KOREA SURVIVORS WANT SPEEDY PROBE," Seoul, 5/23/00) reported that ROK survivors of an alleged mass killing by US soldiers at No Gun Ri urged the US on Tuesday to conduct a speedy investigation. Some 30 survivors staged an hour-long demonstration in central Seoul, demanding that the US Army finish its investigation by the original target of June 25, the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the 1950-53 Korean War. US officials said that the target date is unlikely to be met in the interest of a thorough investigation. The survivors also complained that they have been kept in the dark about the investigation and demanded that the US Army include civilian experts and human rights activists in its probe. The US Army has indicated that it probably will not issue its final report until this fall, citing discrepancies in accounts provided by US veterans and Korean survivors.

4. Cross-Straits Relations

The Washington Post (Ted Plafker, "BEIJING SOFTENS RHETORIC ON TAIWAN," Beijing, 5/23/00) reported that the PRC did not modify its most basic demand that Taiwan accept the "one China" principle, but presented a marked shift in tone. PRC officials repeatedly stressed their "pragmatic attitude" and said that they are prepared to give Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian "a long time" to make progress on reunification, and played down threats of a military attack. The PRC officials and influential academics expressed understanding of the internal political pressures that Chen faces as he formulates his approach to dealing with the PRC, adding that the PRC much preferred dealing with Chen than with his predecessor, Lee Teng-hui. One of two anonymous officials who briefed foreign reporters said, "we hope that Chen Shui-bian will make efforts to continue toward the goal of accepting the one China principle. It doesn't matter if it takes a long time or a short time ... though we think the shorter the time the better. But Chen has to make the choice, and only by so doing can relations across the Taiwan Straits be kept stable." According to Yang Lixian of the Taiwan Research Center, an official PRC think tank, the PRC is aware of the political factors constraining Chen and is willing to wait for him to overcome them. According to a Western diplomat in Beijing, the PRC's softer line marked no change in its basic policy, but does represent an effort to leave the island some more room to maneuver. He said, "in a lot of their recent statements, they were closing down space for compromise, and it now looks like they are trying to leave some room for development. They want to keep things open so they can move forward." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 23, 2000.]

5. US Trade Bill on PRC

The Washington Times published an opinion article by a Chinese human rights activist and former political prisoner (Harry Wu, "DON'T KOWTOW TO CHINA," 5/23/00) which said that hard currency obtained from foreign investment and trade is allowing the PRC government to upgrade its military.

The author disputed US President Bill Clinton's claim that a negative vote on Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) for the PRC would cause the PRC to become more belligerent. He stated, "Beijing's actions with respect to Taiwan, as well as in respect to its espionage activities in the United States and its continued sale of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and missiles to nations such as Iran and Pakistan, occur independently of the prospect of PNTR. Any attempts to link rejection of PNTR with the potential for increased instability in China are misguided at best and politically calculated at worst." He added, "History has proven that consistent pressure, rather than constant kowtowing, is the way to achieve results with the Chinese leadership. If China receives Permanent Normal Trade Relations, the Chinese Communist leadership will be emboldened to flout international standards further." He concluded, "The international community must tell China clearly: We expect to see a peaceful, prosperous, free and democratic China, not a prosperous and stable Communist China. Peace and prosperity are possible only when human rights, democracy and freedom are respected." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 23, 2000.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. Inter-Korean Summit

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "SEOUL-PYONGYANG HOT LINES TO REOPEN TO ALLOW SUMMIT TEAMS TELEPHONE ACCESS," Seoul, 05/23/00) and Joongang Ilbo (Lee Yong-yong, "SEOUL-PYONGYANG DIRECT PHONE LINKS TO RESUME ON MAY 31," Seoul, 05/22/00) reported that ROK officials said on Monday that the ROK and the DPRK will reopen the telephone hot lines between their capitals next week for further talks on preparatory matters for the June inter- Korean summit, including the dispatch of an advance contingent. A 30- member ROK advance team is scheduled to visit Pyongyang on May 31 to wrap up consultations with DPRK officials on the remaining procedural details for the summit. "As the advance team should be able to communicate with Seoul at all times, the inter-Korean direct phone lines will be reactivated," said Unification Ministry spokesman Lee Kwan-se. "Through the lines, the advance party will report to the government the results of its on-site inspection of Pyongyang and proceedings in the negotiations with the North Korean side," Lee said.

2. ROK Public Opinion on Summit

The Korea Herald ("UNIFICATION MINISTRY LAUNCHES CYBER HEARING ON INTER- KOREAN SUMMIT," Seoul, 05/23/00) reported that the ROK Unification Ministry on Monday launched a cyber-hearing to collect opinions from the public on the June inter-Korean summit, a ministry official said. Issues such as the personal meaning of the summit, messages that people hope to deliver to the DPRK, and prospects for the summit will be addressed. The hearing will end June 10. On June 9, the ministry will also operate a cyber-room for real-time discussion on the meaning and the outlook for the summit.

3. Websites on DPRK

Joongang Ilbo (Shin Yong-ho, "NORTH-RELATED INTERNET SITES GAINING POPULARITY," Seoul, 05/22/00) reported that Internet sites concerning the DPRK are fast becoming a popular destination for surfers, with a rise in the hit rates for many DPRK-related sites. The news of the ROK-DPRK summit has also sparked interest in the official web sites of ROK government organizations,

including the Ministry of Unification and the National Intelligence Service. Other Korean sites, like Joins.com, are enjoying newfound popularity. The Ministry of Unification website (unikorea.go.kr) is visited by more than 2,000 a day.

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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