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I. United States

1. Inter-Korean Talks

Agence France-Presse ("SEOUL REJECTS PYONGYANG'S CALL TO SHIFT MINISTERIAL TALKS," Seoul, 10/23/01) reported that the ROK insisted on October 22 that the DPRK be the venue for resuming inter-Korean ministerial talks, rejecting DPRK's proposal to hold them at the Mount Kumgang resort. ROK Unification Minister Hong Soon-young said in a message to his DPRK counterpart Kim Ryong-song that the talks must open in the DPRK capital on October 28 as agreed. Hong said, "I regret [previous] agreements have not been smoothly implemented, with the North cancelling family reunions and sticking to Mount Kumgang as the venue for talks." Rhee Bong-jo, a senior ministry official in charge of the unification policy said: "We expect a positive response." The DPRK demanded last week that the venue be moved to Mount Kumgang and the venue for separate inter-Korean talks on boosting tourism and economic co-operation be moved from the ROK to Mount Kumgang.

2. PRC Missile Purchases

Reuters ("CHINA DENIES REPORT IT BOUGHT DUD US MISSILES," Beijing, 10/23/01) reported that the PRC denied on Tuesday its citizens had bought unexploded US cruise missiles from the

Taliban after the US fired them into Afghanistan in 1998. PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Sun Yuxi said, "The report that China has obtained US-made cruise missiles from Afghanistan, I can tell you, is totally groundless. There have been people spreading all kinds of rumors trying to ruin China's image since the September 11 incidents. These people entertain ulterior motives and their political schemes will achieve no end." The Washington Post said PRC nationals visited "terrorist camps" in Afghanistan and paid to study and remove unexploded missiles launched in retaliation for the truck bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The article quoted from Italian police recordings of a conversation between two men suspected of being veterans of the Afghan camps.

3. Japanese Sanctions Against Pakistan and India

Reuters ("JAPAN MAY LIFT SANCTIONS ON PAKISTAN AND INDIA," Tokyo, 10/23/01) reported that a Japanese Foreign Ministry official said Japan is considering lifting or suspending economic sanctions against Pakistan and India, mainly as a way to show support for Islamabad during US military strikes on Afghanistan. The sanctions were imposed after the two countries carried out nuclear tests in 1998. Japanese media reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's cabinet would officially approve a decision to lift sanctions against both countries on October 26. Government sources said, however, Japan may want to characterize the lifting of the sanctions as a suspension, taking into account the cautious views of some lawmakers. Some politicians in the Liberal Democratic Party are opposed to lifting the sanctions, saying this would run counter to Japan's policy of seeking nuclear non-proliferation.

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK-Japan Talk

The Korea Herald (Hwang Jang-jin, "KOREA, JAPAN TO LAUNCH TALKS TO FOLLOW UP ON SUMMIT," Seoul, 10/23/01) reported that ROK officials said on October 22 that the ROK and Japan will hold a series of talks to resolve fishing, textbook and other pending issues in a follow-up on an agreement made by their leaders on October 20. The two nations will hold a high-level meeting on October 25-26 to seek solutions to the ongoing fisheries dispute involving Korean fishing rights in the waters near the Southern Kuril Islands, officials said. The meeting will be attended by deputy ministers or higher-level officials from the foreign and fisheries ministers. The two sides plan to meet every week in their capitals alternatively.

2. Inter-Korean Talk

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "KOREA PROPOSES MINISTERIAL TALKS IN PYONGYANG," Seoul, 10/23/01) reported that the ROK proposed to the DPRK on October 22 that the two sides reopen ministerial talks in Pyongyang on October 28 as scheduled, rejecting DPRK's demand that the meeting take place in its Mount Kumgang area. In a telephone message sent to the DPRK, ROK Unification Minister Hong Soon-young also said the talks should focus on arranging further reunions of long-separated families. Hong proposed that the two sides reschedule the timetable for the two rounds of negotiations during the cabinet-level talks.

3. DPRK-EU Talk

The Korea Herald ("NORTH KOREA, EU TO DISCUSS TIES," Seoul, 10/23/01) reported that an ROK

Foreign Ministry official said on October 22 that officials from the DPRK and the European Union will hold talks on security, human rights and other bilateral issues in Pyongyang from October 27-30. Patrick Van Haute, director general of Asia and Pacific affairs at the Belgian Foreign Ministry, will lead the European delegation to the fourth round of DPRK-EU political dialogue. The two sides will discuss the developments in their bilateral ties since they established diplomatic relations May 14.

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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International Policy Studies Institute Seoul, Republic of Korea
Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China
International Peace Research Institute (PRIME),
Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan
Monash Asia Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Gee Gee Wong: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Kim Hee-sun: khs688@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hibiki Yamaguchi: hibikiy@dh.mbn.or.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Rumiko Seya: rumiko-seya@geocities.co.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Hiroya Takagi: hiroya_takagi@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@glas.apc.org
Moscow, Russian Federation

Yunxia Cao: yunxiac@yahoo.com
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

John McKay: John.McKay@adm.monash.edu.au
Clayton, Australia

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Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org