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Contents in this Issue:

- I. NAPSNet
 - [1. DPRK Nuclear Program](#)
 - [2. DPRK on US Terror List Status](#)
 - [3. US, PRC on DPRK Nuclear Issue](#)
 - [4. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation](#)
 - [5. DPRK Leadership](#)
 - [6. DPRK-Japan Relations](#)
 - [7. DPRK Economy](#)
 - [8. DPRK Population](#)
 - [9. DPRK Human Rights](#)
 - [10. US-ROK Security Alliance](#)
 - [11. ROK Role in Iraq](#)
 - [12. Japan-US Missile Defense Cooperation](#)
 - [13. Japan Submarine Incursion](#)
 - [14. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Mission](#)

- [15. Japan SDF Nepal Dispatch](#)
- [16. Japan SDF](#)
- [17. Cross Strait Relations](#)
- [18. Sino-Indian Trade Relations](#)
- [19. PRC on UNSC Reform](#)
- [20. Sino-US Space Security](#)
- [21. PRC Space Program](#)
- [22. PRC Environment](#)
- [23. PRC Protests](#)
- [24. PRC Nuclear Power](#)
- II. PRC Report
 - [25. PRC Environment](#)
 - [26. PRC Government Oversight](#)
- III. ROK Report
 - [27. ROK Policy toward DPRK](#)
 - [28. Inter-Korea Relations](#)
 - [29. DPRK Nuclear Issue](#)

[Preceding NAPSNet Report](#)

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Chosun Ilbo ("N.KOREA 'PRODUCED PLUTONIUM FOR SIX BOMBS'", 2008/09/22) reported that CIA Director Michael Hayden reiterated allegations that DPRK and Syria have been cooperating in the nuclear field since the late 1990s. "The depth of that relationship was revealed in the spring of last year," he said. "North Korea conducted a nuclear test two years ago, and the Intelligence community judges their program produced enough plutonium for at least a half-dozen weapons," Hayden recalled. It "poses a broad and complex challenge to global arms control."

[\(return to top\)](#)

2. DPRK on US Terror List Status

The New York Times (Choe Sang-Hun, "NORTH KOREA SAYS IT SEEKS TO REMAIN ON TERROR LIST ", Seoul, 2008/09/22) reported that the DPRK said that it no longer wished to be removed from the United States' terrorism blacklist, signaling that it is hardening its stance amid reports that its leader, Kim Jong-il, may be seriously ill. "We neither wish nor expect to be delisted as a 'state sponsor of terrorism,' " the DPRK's state-run news agency, KCNA, quoted a ministry spokesman as saying. "We can go our own way."

[\(return to top\)](#)

3. US, PRC on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Agence France-Presse ("BUSH TELLS HU OF 'CONCERN' OVER NORTH KOREA: WHITE HOUSE", New York, 2008/09/22) reported that US President George W. Bush and PRC President Hu Jintao agreed to "work hard" to convince the DPRK to follow a landmark June agreement to give up its nuclear programs, the White House said. And "the two presidents agreed that they would work hard to convince the North to continue down the path established in the six-party talks toward denuclearization," said Johndroe.

[\(return to top\)](#)

4. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Yonhap News (Yoo Cheong-mo, "N. KOREA BLASTS LEE FOR OPPOSING DORMITORY CONSTRUCTION IN KAESONG", Seoul, 2008/09/21) reported that the Rodong Sinmun, the organ of the DPRK's Workers' Party, lambasted ROK President Lee Myung-bak for opposing a plan by ROK companies to build a dormitory for DPRK workers at an inter-Korean industrial complex in the DPRK's border town of Kaesong. Lee, while meeting with a group of ROK businessmen early this month, expressed concern about possible negative effects from the consolidation of DPRK workers in one dormitory on the corporate activities of ROK investors. He cited labor-management conflicts and even an inter-Korean conflict among the potential negative effects.

Chosun Ilbo ("INTER-KOREAN PROJECTS 'TO COST W14 TRILLION'", 2008/09/21) reported that it will cost about W14.3 trillion (US\$1=W1,153) to implement the projects agreed by former president Roh Moo-hyun and DPRK leader Kim Jong-il during the second inter-Korean summit in Pyongyang in 2007, the Unification Ministry said. The estimate comes from data submitted to Grand National Party lawmaker Yoon Sang-hyun, a member of the National Assembly's Unification, Foreign Affairs and Trade Committee, and combines government and private funds.

[\(return to top\)](#)

5. DPRK Leadership

Yonhap News (Kim Boram, "EXPERTS URGE CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR COLLAPSE OF NORTH KOREA", Seoul, 2008/09/22) reported that experts on the DPRK said Monday that the ROK should be prepared for a sudden change in the DPRK, whose leader Kim Jong-il is reportedly ill. "The collapse of North Korea's regime can be triggered by Kim's death or a coup d'etat, and chances are high that it will lead to unification through South Korea's absorption (of North Korea)," said Prof. Huh Nam-sung of the Korea National Defense University at a parliamentary forum on crisis management. "We

need to start the preparations right away."

[\(return to top\)](#)

6. DPRK-Japan Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("JAPAN IN FRESH PLANS FOR CONTINGENCIES IN N.KOREA", 2008/09/21) reported that after a five-year hiatus, the Japanese government is reviewing its crisis management plans in preparation for contingencies on the Korean Peninsula, which include evacuating Japanese from the ROK and accommodating refugees from the DPRK, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun reported. "To prepare for contingencies in North Korea in the wake of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il's ill health, Japan plans to re-examine the process of evacuating the Japanese (from South Korea) and an emergency alert system," the daily said. "Due to the difficulty of sending Self-Defense Forces to Korea, the Japanese government has worked out a plan to use Japanese civilian aircraft and rely on the U.S. military for the evacuation of the rest."

[\(return to top\)](#)

7. DPRK Economy

Xinhua ("PYONGYANG AUTUMN INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR OPENS", 2008/09/22) reported that the fourth Pyongyang Autumn International Trade Fair opened here at the Three Revolution Exhibition of Pyongyang. More than 150 companies from 15 countries and regions took part in the four-day fair, which is scheduled to close on Thursday. Over 70 PRC companies, mainly from the PRC's northeastern Liaoning province, attended the event.

[\(return to top\)](#)

8. DPRK Population

Korea Times ("UN TO ASSESS NORTH KOREAN POPULATION", 2008/09/20) reported that the United Nations will carry out a month-long final haul in the DPRK ahead of a population census there, scheduled for October 1 to 15. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) said it has conducted data-collecting education to the DPRK and has been inspecting regional-level education for a population census in which as many as 35,200 field researchers and 7,500 inspectors will be dispatched, VOA reported, quoting a UNFPA spokesman, William Ryan.

[\(return to top\)](#)

9. DPRK Human Rights

Agence France-Presse ("EXPERTS ASK UN TO CONDUCT RIGHTS PROBE IN NKOREA", 2008/09/22) reported that the United Nations should set up a panel to investigate "severe" violations of human rights in nuclear-armed DPRK, an expert group said in a report. The report commissioned by former Czech president Vaclav Havel, ex-Norwegian prime minister Kjell Bondevik and US Nobel Peace Prize laureate Elie Wiesel said the UN General Assembly should "strengthen" its annual resolution on the DPRK by including the establishment of the expert probe panel.

[\(return to top\)](#)

10. US-ROK Security Alliance

JoongAng Ilbo (Shin Chang-woon, "SUPPORT RISES FOR U.S. TROOP PRESENCE: POLL", 2008/09/22) reported that the DPRK's nuclear brinkmanship seems to be having an effect on the ROK's mindset. Fewer South Koreans want American forces to withdraw from the peninsula this year than last, according to the latest JoongAng Ilbo survey. The annual survey also showed that optimism for Korean unification is down. Around 6 percent of the respondents said U.S. troops should completely withdraw from the ROK, while another 45 percent said they should leave gradually. The combined figure, 51 percent, rose steadily from 39 percent in 2003 to a peak of 62 percent last year. About 34 percent said they want US troops to stay for a significant period, while another 15 percent said they wanted continuous US presence.

Stars and Stripes (Ashley Rowland, "PYEONGTAEK MOVE COULD BE DELAYED ", Seoul, 2008/09/22) reported that a US Forces Korea spokesman said Friday that the command has not completed or released an updated timeline or costs for moving US troops to Pyeongtaek as part of a massive transformation project. A ROK newspaper, the Kyunghyang Shinmun, reported this week that a U.S. Congressional Research Service report said the move could be delayed to 2016. All US bases in and north of Seoul are scheduled to move to Pyeongtaek by 2012.

[\(return to top\)](#)

11. ROK Role in Iraq

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "SEOUL TO PULL OUT ALL TROOPS FROM IRAQ", 2008/09/22) reported that all ROK troops stationed in Iraq and Kuwait will return home by the year-end, ending four years of humanitarian and rehabilitation missions there, the Ministry of National Defense announced. Their one-year troop deployment, endorsed by the National Assembly last November, is to expire in December. But speculations have arisen that the conservative Lee Myung-bak government would seek an extension to the troop deployment to help the U.S.-led stabilization operation in Iraq.

[\(return to top\)](#)

12. Japan-US Missile Defense Cooperation

Kyodo News ("JAPAN TO CONDUCT MISSILE INTERCEPTOR TEST OVER HAWAII IN NOVEMBER ", Tokyo, 2008/09/22) reported that Japan's Self-Defense Forces will test the capabilities of an anti-ballistic missile interceptor in space over Hawaii in the week starting Nov. 17, Defense Ministry officials said. The planned test of a Standard Missile-3 interceptor to be launched from the Aegis destroyer Choukai will follow the country's first test of the capabilities of the US-developed missile in December last year, they said.

[\(return to top\)](#)

13. Japan Submarine Incursion

Kyodo News ("INVADING SUB MAY HAVE BEEN WHALE", 2008/09/22) reported that an unidentified object thought to have been a foreign submarine that invaded Japan's territorial waters a week ago may actually have been a whale, informed sources said. The Defense Ministry announced on Sept. 14 that the Maritime Self-Defense Force destroyer Atago had detected "a periscopelike object" at a point south of the Bungo Strait off Cape Ashizuri in Kochi Prefecture. But the ministry now suspects the vessel's crew misjudged the object and that it was probably a whale, the sources said.

[\(return to top\)](#)

14. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Mission

The Asahi Shimbun ("CABINET ENDORSES MSDF EXTENSION BILL", 2008/09/22) reported that in its last working session, outgoing Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda's Cabinet approved a bill Friday to extend the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean. The bill commits Japan to the US-led fight against terrorism in Afghanistan for a year beyond the Jan. 15, 2009, deadline.

[\(return to top\)](#)

15. Japan SDF Nepal Dispatch

Yomiuri Shimbun ("GOVERNMENT TO EXTEND SDF MISSION IN NEPAL", 2008/09/20) reported that the government has decided to extend by six months the deployment of unarmed Self-Defense Forces personnel attached to the U.N. Mission in Nepal, to support the peace process in the South Asian country. The dispatch, made in accordance with the U.N. Peacekeeping Activities Cooperation Law, is to be extended past the original Sept. 30 expiration date to March 31 next year.

[\(return to top\)](#)

16. Japan SDF

Japan Times (Kakumi Kobayashi, "MILITARY BEDEVILED BY HIGH SUICIDE RATE", 2008/09/22) reported that the Self-Defense Forces are struggling to curb suicides in its ranks, a serious problem that has haunted the military's 240,000 members for years. A total of 83 members of the SDF killed themselves between fiscal 2007 and March 2008, and the suicide ratio stands at 34.4 per 100,000 people. Experts and some Defense Ministry officials warn that the circumstances surrounding SDF suicides are serious, given the fact that public servants enjoy stable employment and pay conditions.

[\(return to top\)](#)

17. Cross Strait Relations

Reuters ("EYED BY CHINA, TAIWAN BEGINS LOW-KEY MILITARY DRILL", Taipei , 2008/09/22)

reported that Taiwan launched a week of low-key military drills on Monday, axing a live-fire display as the island seeks better ties with the PRC. "Basically the priority is to keep Han Kuang as low-key as possible to smooth cross-strait relations," said Andrew Yang, secretary-general of the Taiwan think-tank China Council of Advanced Policy Studies. "They don't want a wrong interpretation."

[\(return to top\)](#)

18. Sino-Indian Trade Relations

UNI ("INDIA-CHINA TRADE VOLUME TO TOUCH USD 57 BILLION BY 2010", Bangalore, 2008/09/22) reported that the bilateral trade agreement between India and the PRC, which stood at only USD 18 billion in 2005 would leap frog to 57 billion dollars by 2010 when over 150 Indian companies, including IT giant Infosys, Tatas and others, begin their new operations in the neighbouring nation. Speaking at a seminar Federation of Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FKCCI) senior Vice President J Crasta said the PRC has emerged as the largest trading partner in India.

[\(return to top\)](#)

19. PRC on UNSC Reform

Xinhua ("CHINA SAYS UN SECURITY COUNCIL REFORM SHOULD HAVE BROAD, DEMOCRATIC DISCUSSION", 2008/09/22) reported that the PRC supports the necessary and appropriate reform to the UN Security Council (UNSC), however, all plans should undergo broad and democratic discussions, said the Foreign Ministry. Vice Foreign Minister He Yafei said the PRC supported the necessary and appropriate reform to the Security Council, which aims to enhance its authority and efficiency. The reform should give priority to the African countries, which are under-represented on the Council. The reform should also tackle the easy problems first, before moving on to the hard ones, he added.

[\(return to top\)](#)

20. Sino-US Space Security

Reuters ("U.S., CHINA URGED TO WORK OUT SPACE SECURITY REGIME", Washington, 2008/09/21) reported that the PRC's demonstrated anti-satellite capability makes it critical for Washington to work with Beijing to avoid an arms race in space, a leading US think tank said on Thursday. The Council on Foreign Relations report, "China, Space Weapons, and U.S. Security," urges the next US administration to update policy for "an era where space is a potentially far more contested domain than in the past, with few rules." "The risks inherent in space conflict, where vital U.S. interests are at stake, suggest that preventing space conflict should be a major U.S. security objective," said the report.

[\(return to top\)](#)

21. PRC Space Program

The Associated Press (Christopher Bodeen, "CHINA'S THIRD MANNED MISSION TO INCLUDE SPACEWALK", Beijing, 2008/09/22) reported that the PRC this week launches its most ambitious space mission yet, a sign of rising confidence as Beijing cements its status as a space power and potential future competitor to the US. The Shenzhou 7 mission, to launch as early as Thursday, will be the first to carry a full complement of three astronauts, one of whom will perform the PRC's first space walk, or EVA for "extra-vehicular activity." The maneuver will help the PRC master docking techniques needed for the construction of a space station, likely to be achieved initially by joining one Shenzhou orbiter to another.

[\(return to top\)](#)

22. PRC Environment

Telegraph (Richard Spencer, "BEIJING SMOG RETURNS AFTER OLYMPICS", Beijing, 2008/09/22) reported that two months after being imposed, the restrictions came to an end without fanfare or formal government announcement, just over three days after the Paralympics finished. Yesterday hundreds of heavily polluting factories that had to cut or stop production for the two months were also allowed to resume normal work. Many pledged to increase output to make up for losses caused by the shutdown. The Ministry of Environment protection website recorded Beijing's air pollution index as having risen to 88.

[\(return to top\)](#)

23. PRC Protests

The Guardian ("CHINA'S SLOW CIVIL AWAKENING", 2008/09/22) reported that ninety thousand protests in a single year reflect a growing disaffection with official cover-ups and corruption. Behind the calamities, there are signs of change in Beijing. Though they hold one-party power, the country's leaders know that they have to respond to popular concerns in ways that were not the case in the first decades of rule. The protests are single-issue affairs, and do not represent organised opposition to communist rule. Still, for a regime that puts great store in stability, such grassroots sentiment cannot be ignored, particularly when it is prompted by anger against local officials or when it spills over into attacks on government and party offices.

[\(return to top\)](#)

24. PRC Nuclear Power

Donga Ilbo ("` CHINA COVERED UP NUKE PLANT FIRE LAST MONTH `", 2008/09/22) reported that a big fire broke out last month in the PRC's biggest nuclear power plant in Lianyungang, Jiangsu Province, and though a radiation leak was suspected, the PRC media did not report the accident, the Hong Kong daily Ming Pao said yesterday. The daily said the fire occurred Aug. 26 after a transformer at the Tianwan nuclear plant exploded.

[\(return to top\)](#)

II. PRC Report

25. PRC Environment

China Quality News ("ASIA-PACIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCE CALLS FOR PROTECTING BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY", 2008/09/19) reported that the 16th Asia-Pacific Environmental Conference was closed on September 14th in Nagoya, a central city of Japan. The meeting adopted a presidential statement, calling for the set up of a new international biological diversity conservation goal, to replace the existing one, which requires the rate of extinction to drop sharply in 2010 comparing with the rate in 2002. In addition, the presidential statement also called for establishing an Aisa Area Foundation for aiding developing countries on biological diversity protection.

[\(return to top\)](#)

26. PRC Government Oversight

China Youth online ("CHINA SUFFERS BLACK WEEKEND WITH 3 CATASTROPHIC ACCIDENTS", 2008/09/22) reported that this is a black weekend for the PRCa. At 3:30 on September 20, a fire accident was taken place in a coal mine of Hegang City, Heilongjiang Province, which had killed 12 miners, with 19 still missing. At 10:49 p.m. on September 20, a dance club fire in Longgang District, Shenzhen City had killed 43 people and injured 59. The next day, at 1:10, 37 people were killed by a coal and gas outburst accident in Dengfeng City, Henan Province. 3 Catastrophic accidents in two days reflected that the government's supervision and inspection had been loose and law enforcement inefficient.

[\(return to top\)](#)

III. ROK Report

27. ROK Policy toward DPRK

Tongil News ("MB ADMINISTRATION SHOULD CHANGE DPRK POLICY AMID TENSION ON PENINSULA", 2008/09/23) reported that Kim Yeon-chul, the representative of Hankyure Peace Institute pointed that Lee Myung-bak administration's DPRK policy is focusing too much on merely differentiating itself from what it was like for the past ten years. The break-off of the inter-Korean relationship would not have happened if the government had put as much effort into deciding which tasks they need to focus attention on and adjust the process wisely.

[\(return to top\)](#)

28. Inter-Korea Relations

Kyunghyang Shinmun ("FORMER ROK UNIFICATION MINISTER CRITICIZES RESUMING OPLAN 5029", 2008/09/23) reported that Lee Jong-suk, the former ROK Unification Minister who suspended further development of OPLAN 5029, which refers to a joint contingency plan with the US when

working under the former administration's National Security Council, said the contingency plan should not be dealt publicly. He also pointed that the ROK will be able to take more advantage if they are preferable to the DPRK people in case of contingency. That is why improving inter-Korean relationship is the most urgent task at the moment, he added.

[\(return to top\)](#)

29. DPRK Nuclear Issue

Munhwa Ilbo (Koo Bon-hak, "DPRK SHOULD DENUCLEARIZE AND OPEN DOOR TO GET AID", 2008/09/23) said in a column that the major reason why the DPRK is driving the peninsula into nuclear crisis is because they are not willing to abandon their nuclear program. Second, they are also waiting for the talks with the next U.S. administration, so that they can produce additional plutonium and nuclear weapons, which will gradually bring them more profit. Third, concerning inter-Korean relations, they are aiming to take the upper position by confusing ROK's DPRK policy. Fourth, it seems that DPRK's military hard-liners are trying to repeal the nuke agreement on behalf of Kim Jong-il, who is known to be ill. The DPRK suggested that the two Koreas should hold economy-energy talks and required the ROK to fulfill what was agreed during the six-party talks. In this situation, economic support toward the DPRK who suspended the disabling process is totally meaningless.

OhmyNews (Chung Wook-sik, The PeaceNetwork Representatives, "MB ADMINISTRATION HAS NO WILL TO RESOLVE NUCLEAR PROBLEM", 2008/09/23) reported that Lee Myung-bak administration's DPRK policy has always been firmer than Bush administration's. Many government officials say that they do not know what the DPRK intends to get by suspending the disabling process and starting rebuilding the facilities. However, DPRK's intention has rather been clear from the beginning. They are forcing the U.S. either to remove them from the list of state sponsors of terrorism, or to accept DPRK's possession of nuclear weapons. Therefore, what is important at the moment is to finish the conflict over verification mechanism, so that the U.S. can eliminate them from 'the list'. The first step of the verification mechanism has been agreed mostly during July's six-party head-representative talks. Further processes can be completed effectively based on what is agreed during the talks.

[\(return to top\)](#)

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