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I. United States

1. ROK-DPRK Summit Talks

The Associated Press (Christopher Torchia, "FLAP OVER SUMMIT DIVIDES KOREAS," Seoul, 4/24/00) reported that a controversy over the wording of the agreement to hold an inter-Korean summit in June has underscored the cultural divide between the DPRK and the ROK. Some ROK observers noted the arguably ambiguous phrasing of the April 8 agreement to hold the summit, which reads: "During the Pyongyang visit, there will be a historic meeting between President Kim Dae-jung and Chairman of the National Defense Commission Kim Jong-il and subsequently the highest-level talks will take place." Some wondered whether that meant the meeting and the talks are separate. ROK media speculated that Kim Jong-il would attend the opening ceremony of the talks and then let Kim Yong-nam, the DPRK's ceremonial head of state, deal with the task of seeking economic aid. The ROK president's office and the ROK Unification Ministry insisted that the meeting and the talks were the same. However, ROK Unification Ministry spokesman Chung Jun-hui stated, "there is room for different interpretation but if the two meetings are separate, we cannot accept it."

A DPRK negotiator appeared to clear up the uncertainty at a border meeting on April 22 to discuss the summit agenda. The unidentified official said, "North Korean citizens believe there is only one Great Leader. Therefore there can be no different opinion about the talks between Chairman Kim and President Kim."

Agence France Presse ("KIM WINS CONDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM OPPOSITION FOR INTER-KOREAN SUMMIT," Seoul, 4/24/00) and The Associated Press (Paul Shin, "S.KOREAN PRESIDENT DISCUSSES SUMMIT," Seoul, 4/24/00) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung secured conditional support from the main opposition Grand National Party (GNP) Monday for a summit with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il in June. A joint statement by Kim and GNP leader Lee Hoi-Chang said, "both (ruling and opposition) parties will do active efforts to get pan-national and suprapartisan support for the inter- Korean summit. The inter-Korean summit is required to firmly secure South Korea's national security and identity. (The ROK government) must be reciprocal in its economic cooperation (with the DPRK) and get an approval from the parliament in case of matters that require the people's burden." The conditions reflected what the GNP has demanded since an accord on the summit was announced early this month.

2. DPRK-Japan Talks

Reuters ("N. KOREA SAYS JAPAN STANCE ON PAST THREATENS TALKS," Tokyo, 4/24/00) reported that a commentary in the DPRK's official Rodong Shimbun said on Monday that talks with Japan on normalizing diplomatic relations could be threatened if Japan does not meet the DPRK's demands for compensation for its colonial rule of Korea. The newspaper said in an editorial, "there is growing opinion in the DPRK that if Japan is not ready to properly solve the issue of Japan's liquidation of its past there is no need to have talks with it. The DPRK's stand on developing the good neighborly relations with Japan on the basis of the redress of its past is entirely just and its stand and will to do so will never change." It added that the DPRK should, if necessary, turn to "other methods," but gave no details.

3. DPRK Defectors

The New York Times (Calvin Sims, "LIFE IN SOUTH HARD FOR NORTH KOREANS," Seoul, 4/22/00) reported that human rights groups estimated that tens of thousands of DPRK refugees have fled the DPRK but are now living under almost equally harsh conditions in the PRC, with little or no hope of reaching the ROK. However, even for those who reach the ROK, the life of a DPRK refugee is not as they imagined. Kim Eun-chol, a DPRK defector, said, "I am living in a country where the people look like me and speak the same language, but their lifestyle and mentality are so vastly different that I feel like an alien." Kim's experience is typical of the 900 DPRK refugees who have defected to the ROK over the past 20 years. ROK government officials and experts on asylum said that despite generous financial aid, job training and other assistance from civic and religious groups here, most DPRK defectors have failed to adapt to life in the ROK. Lee Sang-man, a political science professor at Chungang University, who is an expert on DPRK defectors said, "this is a dress rehearsal for reunification. This shows that we can't just tear down a wall like in Germany and let our Northern brethren come streaming across the border. We are not prepared to receive them, and they are not prepared for what they will find on the other side." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for April 24, 2000.]

4. Cross-Straits Relations

Agence France Presse ("TAIWAN PRESIDENT-ELECT DEFIES BEIJING; SNUBS 'ONE CHINA'," Taipei, 4/24/00) reported that Taiwan president-elect Chen Shui-bian met on Monday with a four-member US delegation led by Winston Lord, former US Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. Chen insisted that Taiwan must not accept the PRC's "One China principle" or it would be relegated to the status of a local government. Chen said, "do you think the saying that Taiwan is part of the PRC would be acceptable after Chen got elected as the Republic of China's 10th president?" Chen said that the root problem with the stalemate lay in the shortage of mutual trust. He said, "past records indicate they can randomly scrap the agreements. At the core of the difficulty is a lack of mutual trust, and mainland China must be responsible for this." The US group will end their three-day visit on April 25 and fly to the PRC where they are expected to meet with PRC leaders. After a meeting Monday with Yu Keli, deputy director of the Institute of Taiwan Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, a top Kuomintang (KMT) official said that Yu remained adamant. Chang Jung-kung, director of the KMT Mainland Affairs Department said, "during our meeting he repeated the 'One China principle.' He also rejected the proposal for 'One China' whose definition is open to interpretation." Taiwanese negotiators said that they and their PRC counterparts had reached a "tacit understanding" that both sides recognized "One China," but the "verbal understanding" has never been confirmed by the PRC.

ASIA COMMENT 2000 published an interview by Tom Plate, Contributing Editor to the Los Angeles Times and Director and Founder of the Asia Pacific Media Network ("THE CHINA NOBODY KNOWS," 4/24/00) with William H. Overholt, a modern-day China watcher and the executive director and head of Asia Macro Research for Nomura International Limited. Speaking of Taiwan, Overholt said that the incoming Democratic People's Party (DPP) has always stood for faster integration with the PRC and the story that they advocate independence is four years out of date. Overholt noted, "(independence) is a nonstarter with the Taiwan electorate, and when they moved off it, they doubled their poll ratings. It was one of the two secrets of their victory. The other secret was their line of attack on the corruption of the KMT [Kuomintang]. Outgoing President Lee Teng-hui's state to state declaration was an effort to divert focus from China's corruption attack. So the real story is the guy who was hard-line about the mainland issue has been replaced by the guy who's softer." He also said that the last thing the PRC wants now is a military confrontation with Taiwan because "if they have a big confrontation right now with Taiwan, the economic reform (in the PRC) is over. And everybody in the leadership knows that. So, the fundamentals are in place for a pretty good relationship with Taiwan. The problem is Lee Teng-hui's legacy remains. So, it's a long way before they're out of the woods. Maybe there's only a 1 percent chance of conflict, but that 1 percent changes the world."

5. Japan-Russia Maritime Dispute

The New York Times (Howard W. French, "RUSSIA SEIZES JAPANESE VESSEL IN MARITIME BOUNDARY DISPUTE," Tokyo, 4/22/00) reported that according to Japanese and Russian officials, the Russian Coast Guard fired on and seized a Japanese fishing boat on April 21 near Japan's northernmost main island of Hokkaido. According to Russian officials, the fishing vessel disobeyed a Russian patrol vessel's orders to stop for inspection in international waters between the countries. Japanese officials said that none of the 20 crewmembers were injured. The Russian authorities said the ship, the Daitoku Maru, was operating with its name and identification numbers concealed and tried to escape after having been summoned. However, Japanese authorities said that the vessel was operating in Japanese waters near what Japan calls its Northern Territories and Russia calls the Kuril Islands. The Japanese Coast Guard sent three aircraft and four patrol boats to the scene. Officials said the Japanese Coast Guard withdrew after the fishing vessel was taken, under escort, into Russian waters.

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-ROK Summit

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "SUMMIT NEGOTIATORS EXCHANGE BASIC POSITIONS AT PANMUNJOM," Seoul, 04/24/00) and Chosun Ilbo (Lee In-ku, "PRELIMINARY CONTACTS WITH NK AT PANMUNJOM," Seoul, 04/22/00) reported that ROK and DPRK officials met at Panmunjom on April 22 to prepare for the summit by their top leaders. They departed without an agreement, however, except to meet again on April 27. Prior to the closed-door session, ROK chief delegate Yang Young-shik said that the two Koreas should prosper together through economic cooperation, while placing top priority on reuniting separated families, hinting at two urgent items on the ROK's agenda. In response to Yang's suggestion, his DPRK counterpart, Kim Ryong-song, said, "the North and South should first resolve 'basic' problems to smoothly settle many other pending issues. We presented our positions (on the summit), including its agenda and other procedural matters. And the North promised to deliver its own stance at the second talks after fully examining ours. The talks proceeded in a very amicable atmosphere, with the North Korean side appearing more practical and realistic than ever."

The Korea Herald ("NORTH KOREA TO STATE ITS POSITION AT NEXT ROUND OF PREPARATORY TALKS," Seoul, 4/24/00), Chosun Ilbo ("SOUTH-NORTH AGREE TO MEET AGAIN ON THURSDAY," Seoul, 04/22/00), and Joongang Ilbo (Lee Young-jong, "SOUTH AND NORTH KOREA'S SECOND PRE-SUMMIT TALK TO BE HELD ON APRIL 27," Seoul, 4/23/00) reported that ROK chief delegate Yang Young-shik said that the DPRK will present its position regarding the ROK proposals made at a Panmunjom at its April 27 preparatory meeting. Yang said that the DPRK delegates were mild-mannered and flexible - different from their "hawkish" predecessors in the past Cold War inter-Korean talks in that they appeared to be in a position to bring about something fruitful. Yang said the DPRK did not make any demands, but added that he felt the April 27 meeting would be important. He said, "since the North Korean delegates went home with our questions, they may bring us their own questions in the next meeting."

2. ROK Proposes DPRK Rural Development Plan

The Korea Herald ("KIM HOPES TO BRING 'SAEMAUL' RURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE TO N. KOREA," Seoul, 04/24/00), Chosun Ilbo (Kim Min-bai, "PRESIDENT SUGGESTS SAEMAUL FOR NK," Seoul, 04/22/00) and Joongang Ilbo (Kim Jin-kook, "SAEMAEUL UNDONG TO DEVELOP NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 04/23/00) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung said on April 22 that he hoped to introduce the ROK's "Saemaul Undong" (New Village Movement), a rural development initiative, to the DPRK to help it resurrect its agricultural sector. Kim said in a ceremony marking the 30th anniversary of the movement, "I hope that the Saemaul Movement will participate in efforts to reconstruct North Korean farm villages." Approximately 3,400 people, including Saemaul head Kang Moon-kyu and Government Administration and Home Affairs Minister Choi In-ki, attended the ceremony, which took place at the movement's headquarters in Tungchon-dong, western Seoul. Kim continued, "I expect that the experience and passion of the Saemaul Movement, which enlivened our farm villages and built up the national economy in the 1970s, will inject fresh vitality into North Korean agricultural villages." He also noted that the Saemaul Movement has been recognized as a successful case of community development by the international community since its start 30 years ago. ROK officials said that Kim's statement indicates that he will focus on the Saemaul Movement in anticipated inter-Korean cooperation in the agricultural sector.

3. Russia-DPRK Relations

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Suk-hwan, "PUTIN MAY VISIT NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 04/23/00) reported that Russian president-elect Vladimir Putin is seriously considering a visit to the DPRK after his inauguration. In an April 22 interview with Kyoto News, the Russian Vice-minister of Foreign Affairs said that "no concrete plans have yet been made but Putin will be the first Russian [i.e. non-Soviet: Ed.] president to visit North Korea." On April 21, the Vice-minister held a conference with Supreme People's Assembly chairman Kim Yeong-nam and DPRK Minister of Foreign Affairs Baik Nam-soon, who briefly visited Russia after a trip to Cuba. According to one source, the Russian Vice-minister also said, "Putin was very pleased to hear that tension between the two Koreas is beginning to abate and that summit talks will be held in June. Russia is ready to help relieve the strain between the two countries in any way possible."

4. DPRK Participation in ARF

Chosun Ilbo (Kwon Dae-yul, "NK EXPECTED TO ATTEND ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM," Tokyo, 04/22/00) reported that Japan's Mainichi Newspaper cited a Japanese government official as saying that the DPRK is expected to participate as an observer in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to be held in Bangkok, Thailand this coming July. The DPRK will also attend the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting which starts on July 24. The DPRK was not willing to participate in prior ARF meetings for fear of the criticism about its long-range missiles and nuclear facilities. Regarding this report, an ROK government officer added, "all participants expect North Korea to participate, and it is true that the North has been invited again. However, there has been no official notification of it participating. It has great meaning in itself if North Korea appears at an international conference related to security problems."

5. DPRK-ROK Economic Cooperation

Joongang Ilbo (Koh Yun-hee, "SOUTH KOREA AND NORTH KOREA TO CREATE INTERNET TV BROADCASTING COMPANY," Seoul, 04/23/00) reported that the ROK and the DPRK are engaged in a joint project to establish an Internet TV broadcasting company aimed at supporting economic cooperation between the two countries. Three venture companies that specialized in Internet communications received the required approval of the government for their discussions with DPRK authorities. They are planning to discuss the business proposal in the PRC on April 25. A well-informed businessman said, "several issues that are separate from the planned preparations for the summit meeting are being discussed between South and North Korea. The Internet TV broadcasting company is the main topic being discussed with regards to economic cooperation." It is likely that ROK venture companies will provide communication facilities along with data and editing services as the DPRK takes control of overall operation for the Internet TV broadcasting company. The DPRK is planning to make use of Internet TV in order to build Internet shopping malls that will sell DPRK products. The TV will also introduce famous sights in the DPRK. The authorities from the ROK and the DPRK are also expected to broadcast the reunion of separated families live on the Internet.

Joongang Ilbo ("KOTRA ESTABLISHES CENTER FOR NORTH KOREAN TRADE," Seoul, 04/20/00) reported that the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) commemorated the opening of a new service center for Commission-based Processing Trade with the DPRK (CPT) with a plaque-unveiling ceremony at the KOTRA building. The center will facilitate business projects in the DPRK from the North Korea Economic Information Center. A KOTRA official said, "North Korea is important for commission-based trade, with its productive workforce and relatively low production costs."

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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