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I. United States

1. US-DPRK Talks

Reuters ("U.S., NORTH KOREA CONTINUE TALKS IN BERLIN," Berlin, 1/24/00) reported that US and DPRK diplomats continued negotiations at the DPRK consulate in Berlin on Monday aimed at setting up the first high-level DPRK visit to the US. Officials did not comment before the meeting. US and DPRK officials met in the US embassy on January 23. A US embassy spokesman said, "North Korea is hosting the talks today." The spokesman said he had no further details except that the US delegation is led by special envoy for the Korean peace talks, Charles Kartman. He also said there

was no fixed schedule for the talks and that it was uncertain how long they would last. DPRK Vice Foreign Minister, Kim Kye-gwan, is leading the DPRK delegation.

2. DPRK Missile Tests

Agence France Presse ("N KOREA RECONSIDERS MISSILE TEST MORATORIUM AFTER US FIRINGS," Seoul, 1/23/00) reported that the DPRK Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) monitored in the ROK said on January 22 that the DPRK is reconsidering its declared moratorium on missile testing after this week's US missile interceptor tests in the Pacific. KCNA reported that a spokesman for the foreign ministry said, "the US behavior has compelled the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) to take our moratorium into serious consideration. We will make an appropriate decision. What matters is the US assertion that such a (testing) drive is intended to cope with a non-existent 'missile threat' from the DPRK and other countries." The spokesman noted that the DPRK and the US had begun "negotiating a solution to the issues of common concern, including the missile issue" and said the DPRK created a "favorable atmosphere" by declaring the test moratorium at their first talks in Berlin last September. The spokesman continued, "however, the US conducted the test of a missile interceptor this time. It is one more grave challenge to the magnanimity and good faith shown by the DPRK in its efforts to settle outstanding issues through negotiations."

3. US-PRC Military Exchanges

The Washington Times (Bill Gertz, " PENTAGON, PLA TO RESUME MILITARY EXCHANGES TODAY," 1/24/00), the Associated Press (Robert Burns, "CHINESE GENERAL MEETS U.S. OFFICIALS," Washington, 1/24/00) and Agence France Presse ("US, CHINA TAKE UP MILITARY RELATIONS IN PENTAGON TALKS," Washington, 1/23/00) reported that PRC People's Liberation Army (PLA) Lieutenant General Xiong Guankai, deputy chief of staff for intelligence, arrived in Washington on Monday to begin three days of meetings in the first military exchanges since NATO's bombing of the PRC Embassy in Belgrade last May. According to defense officials, Xiong is scheduled to meet US Defense Department Secretary William S. Cohen and other senior Pentagon officials. A senior US administration official said that the talks are not expected to produce dramatic progress in military relations. Xiong is expected to criticize US plans to sell advanced weaponry to Taiwan and also oppose US missile defense efforts. US Undersecretary of Defense Walter Slocombe will lead the "defense consultative talks." Some US Defense Department officials hope that the talks will open up the PRC military to a visit by Cohen later this year. US Defense Department spokesman Kenneth Bacon told reporters, "this is part of an effort, obviously, to rebuild our relationship after the mistaken attack. It is an effort to rebuild contacts and discussions between the U.S. and the Chinese militaries." Bacon said, "discussions will cover a wide range of areas. We will compare our strategic assessments of the 21st century. We will talk about the geopolitical conditions in the Asia-Pacific, about military modernization programs in the two countries, what sort of military relationship we should have during the year 2000." [Ed. note: The Washington Times article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for January 24, 2000.]

4. US Arms Sales to Taiwan

Agence France Presse ("DEBATE ON US-TAIWAN DEFENSE OBLIGATIONS UNDERSCORES LACK OF CHINA POLICY," Washington, 1/21/00) reported that Stephen Yates, senior policy analyst at the Washington-based Heritage Foundation, said on January 21 that a heated debate in Washington on US military sales to Taiwan underscores the US administration's lack of a clear PRC policy. Yates stated, "there are people within the State Department and National Security Council who think this

kind of hardware is more offensive and therefore provocative. And there are people within the Defense Department who view this as deterrence and clearly within the parameters of US obligations to Taiwan under the Taiwan Relations Act." Taiwan's Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Washington declined to speak about the report. A US State Department official also refused to talk on the specific procurement issue, but said "the administration remains firmly committed to fulfilling the security and arms sales provisions of the Taiwan Relations Act." Former US ambassador to the PRC James Lilley said, "the fact that arms sales have suddenly become very important indicates that you don't have a China policy. [Further,] Chinese overreaction, Taiwan provocation and US bungling is a formula for trouble." The State Department official responded, "the administration conducts a careful interagency review to determine what systems Taiwan needs for its defense, but we don't discuss those deliberations." Yates also said, "Taiwan feels increasing needs to protect its own security and the mainland is clearly hostile at the idea of Taiwan being able to defend itself.... And that's what's being mirrored within our government. And that underlying problem is not going to go away in the near future. It's a debate that an incoming administration, no matter which party wins, is going to have to deal with."

5. Alleged PRC Espionage in Canada

Reuters ("CHINA STOLE CANADA NUCLEAR SECRETS, NEWSPAPER SAYS," Ottawa, 1/24/00) reported that the Canadian Globe and Mail newspaper, quoting security sources, said on Monday that Chinese spies sent in the late 1960s stole Canadian nuclear secrets over a 20-year period to build an illegal copy of a research reactor that the PRC is now marketing around the world. The newspaper said that the PRC sent its best spies to Canada to cultivate contacts among nuclear laboratory workers developing the so-called Slowpoke reactor. The newspaper quoted a security officer as saying, "the Chinese pretty much picked the place clean." The Globe and Mail said that it was not until a University of Toronto scientist saw a virtual carbon copy of the Slowpoke reactor near Beijing in 1985 that Canadian security officials realized how successful the spying operation had been.

6. Spratly Islands Dispute

Agence France Presse ("CHINESE AIRCRAFT SEEN OVER SOUTH CHINA SEA SHOAL," 1/24/00) reported that a Philippines military official said January 23 that a PRC military aircraft was spotted hovering over a disputed South China Sea outcrop. The anonymous official said that the aircraft was seen flying over Scarborough Shoal, which lies north of the Spratlys islands but is within the Philippines 200-mile exclusive economic zone. The official said, "not only are they encroaching on our territorial waters but in our airspace as well. We are closely watching all these developments at Scarborough Shoal." He declined to give specific dates and could not say what type of aircraft were spotted, only that they appeared to be for military use.

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-US Talks

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "N.K., U.S. RESUME TALKS AMID PYONGYANG'S THREAT TO RECONSIDER MISSILE TEST MORATORIUM," Seoul, 01/24/00), The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "N. KOREA, U.S. RESUME TALKS TODAY AMID PROSPECTS FOR BREAKTHROUGH," Seoul, 01/22/00) and The Korea Times ("NORTH KOREA THREATENS TO RECONSIDER MISSILE

MORATORIUM," Seoul, 01/24/00) reported that the US and the DPRK opened another round talks in Berlin on Saturday on improving bilateral ties amid a renewed threat by the DPRK to reconsider its decision to suspend the test-firing of long-range missiles. On the first day of the talks, the DPRK pressed the US to respond to its call for action on creating a favorable atmosphere for opening high-level talks, ROK officials said on Sunday. "The North demanded that the United States soon reveal its position on its (the DPRK's) matters of concern," said an official at the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, on condition of anonymity. He refused to elaborate on what measures the DPRK wanted the US to take. "The U.S. side did not give a clear-cut response to the North's request during the Berlin meeting," the ministry official said.

2. US Policy towards DPRK

The Korea Times ("NK WARNED AGAINST DESTROYING COOPERATIVE TRACK," Seoul, 01/24/00) reported that a former US assistant defense secretary Joseph Nye has warned that the DPRK should not destroy the cooperative track of the Perry Report by turning into a crisis what could be an opportunity for it to escape its diplomatic isolation. Nye, dean of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, predicted that the DPRK may be tempted to launch another test missile in an effort to reinforce its bargaining position. "If it did, the U.S. Congress would almost certainly demand that sanctions be reimposed and payments for fuel halted under the nuclear agreement. North Korea might then say it was free to expel the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and reprocess its plutonium. That could lead to a demand for United Nations sanctions and a reinforcement of military forces," he said in a commentary which appeared in the Financial Times. He advised that the US must ask the PRC to convey the following message to the DPRK: "It would be a tragic irony of history if the DPRK citizens, in bargaining too hard and clumsily, were to destroy the cooperative track of the Perry Report and instead turn into a crisis what could be an opportunity to escape."

3. DPRK-Japan Relations

The Korea Times ("IMPROVED NK-JAPAN TIES TO HELP INTER-KOREAN RELATIONS," Seoul, 01/21/00) reported that ROK Foreign Affairs-Trade Minister Lee Joung-binn on Thursday told his Japanese counterpart Yohei Kono that Japan's improved ties with the DPRK will help promote inter-Korean relations and ensure peace and stability on the Korean peninsula. Lee made the remarks during a phone call to Minister Kono. A ministry official said that the two ministers also agreed to realize reciprocal visits before July when the Group of Seven industrialized countries, along with Russia, will meet on the Japanese island of Okinawa. In particular, Kono stressed that the two countries should step up bilateral coordination in dealing with DPRK issues, in addition to three-way coordination between the ROK, and the US and Japan. It is widely expected that Japan will resume diplomatic normalization talks with the DPRK in March.

4. French Diplomat to Visit DPRK

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "FRENCH OFFICIALS TO VISIT N.K. EARLY FEB. TO EXPLORE IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS," Seoul, 01/24/00), The Korea Times ("FRENCH DIPLOMATS TO VISIT NK," Seoul, 01/23/00) and Joongang Ilbo (Lee Chul-hee, "FRENCH DELEGATION HEADED FOR N.KOREA," Seoul, 01/23/00) reported that an ROK officials said on Sunday that a French government delegation will visit the DPRK early next month to discuss ways of improving bilateral relations. "During the talks with North Korean officials, they are expected to focus on human rights condition of North Koreans and provision of food aid to the famine-stricken North," said an official at

the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, speaking on condition of anonymity. The four-member French delegation is composed of three working-level officials at the French Foreign Ministry and one from the French Embassy in the ROK, the ministry official said. "North Korean officials are expected to deliver its hopes to improve relations with France and ask for French food aid to their country," he said. The official, however, expressed skepticism about an imminent breakthrough in relations between France and the DPRK, pointing that the French delegation's mission is to explore overall conditions in the DPRK. In a recent interview, French Ambassador to the ROK Jean-Paul Reau also made it clear that France has no plan to establish diplomatic ties with the DPRK at the current stage. He said that the French government wants the DPRK to address its nuclear and missile threats and to improve human rights conditions of DPRK citizens, particularly political prisoners.

5. Alleged DPRK Bio-Chemical Drills

Chosun Ilbo (Yoo Yong-won, "NK USING REAL BIO-CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN DRILLS," Seoul, 01/24/00) reported that the DPRK is believed to have conducted major nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) warfare drills in Yangdeok-Gun, South Pyongan Province every December since 1990, according to ROK military authorities on Sunday. The DPRK has added attack drills to its previous defense drills in its NBC warfare drills, the sources added. An ROK military official said that the area where the drills are conducted is surrounded by 1,000-1,200 meter-high mountains with a very small number of civilians nearby, which makes it an ideal place for the NBC drills.

6. DPRK Nationals in PRC

The Korea Herald ("UNHCR BEIJING REPRESENTATIVE TO CONSULT WITH CHINA ON DEFECTORS," Seoul, 01/24/00) reported that the PRC representative of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) is soon expected to consult with the PRC on issues related to its recent forced repatriation of seven DPRK defectors. An ROK government official said on Sunday that Colin Mitchell of the UNHCR office in Beijing arrived on Tuesday and is expected to hold talks with PRC government officials on ways to secure the safety of the defectors. "Mitchell will likely deal with key issues like the seven defectors' safety, recognition of refugees in China, and support and protection of refugees there," the official said.

The Korea Herald ("PYONGYANG ACCUSES SEOUL OF 'KIDNAPPING' NORTH KOREANS," Seoul, 01/24/00) reported that the DPRK accused the ROK of trying to kidnap its citizens in its first acknowledgement that seven people were forcibly sent back to the DPRK from the PRC. The DPRK's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said over the weekend that the ROK is "putting on a clownish game to gloss over its failed attempt to abduct North Koreans." It further accused the ROK of interfering in an issue it has no business in and said that the ROK is the "real place where basic political freedom and human rights are trampled on."

7. DPRK Defectors to ROK

The Korea Herald ("FORMER N.K. KINDERGARTEN NURSE DEFECTS TO SOUTH KOREA," Seoul, 01/24/00) reported that the ROK National Intelligence Service said that a former DPRK kindergarten nurse smuggled herself into the ROK over the weekend and sought political refuge. Intelligence officials are questioning her about why she defected from the DPRK and how she found her way to the ROK. Born in Uiju, North Pyongan Province, the woman, 29, using the pseudonym of An Suk-hui, had worked as kindergarten nurse until January 1996, when she fled from the DPRK to a third

country where she had been staying until her arrival in the ROK.

8. ROK-DPRK Agricultural Cooperation

The Korea Times ("CORN DOCTOR, KIM SOON-KWON TO VISIT N. KOREA TOMORROW," Seoul, 01/24/00) reported that the International Corn Foundation (ICF) said on Sunday that its co-representative, Kim Soon-kwon, better known as the "corn doctor," will make a week-long visit to the DPRK from Tuesday. "Kim will leave Seoul Monday for Beijing with three Catholic priests in the Taegu Diocese to enter the famine-stricken country on the next day," an ICF official said. The delegation was invited by the DPRK's Academy of Agricultural Sciences. During his stay, Kim will discuss with academy officials the DPRK's plan on how to better plant corn seeds this year.

9. DPRK in International Organizations

The Korea Herald ("P'YANG TO SEEK ENTRY INTO GLOBAL FINANCE," Seoul, 01/23/00) and The Korea Times ("REPORT: N.KOREA WANTS TO JOIN INTERNATIONAL FUND GROUPS," Seoul, 01/24/00) reported that the ROK Unification Ministry said on Friday that the DPRK will push ahead with joining global financial institutions while striving to normalize its ties with the US and Japan this year. In its report on the prospects of DPRK's economic policy in 2000, the ministry said that the DPRK will strive to join the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the Agency for International Development. To tap international support and inter-Korean economic cooperation for economic recovery, the DPRK will assume a positive attitude in galvanizing tie-ups with ROK businesses and inducing foreign investment, it said.

10. DPRK Computer Development

Joongang Ilbo ("NK SEEKS TO SET UP 12 PROVINCIAL COMPUTER CENTERS," Seoul, 01/21/00) reported that according to the Yonhap News Agency, the Chosun Computer Center in the DPRK will reportedly set up a total of 12 regional computer centers equipped with 100 researchers in the country's 12 provinces by October this year. At the invitation of the DPRK's Chosun International Trade Promotion Commission, a delegation from the Study for East Asia Trade in Japan made a visit to the DPRK in November last year. According to an article that the delegation wrote in a Japanese monthly magazine, "Information on East Asian Economies," the Chosun Computer Center has made deals with foreign companies in the PRC, Japan, India, Iran, and Pakistan. It added that the center has been developing software to be used in handling long-term loans for small- and medium-sized firms, by the order of Japanese financial companies. The center will reportedly carry out computer software development business in Beijing with the ROK's Samsung Electronics.

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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