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I. United States

1. ROK on DPRK-Libya Uranium Connection

Reuters ("SOUTH KOREA MUM ON NORTH'S LINK TO LIBYAN NUKES," Seoul, 05/25/04) reported that the ROK refused to comment on Monday on a report that neighboring DPRK may have provided nearly two tons of uranium to Libya for its now-scrapped nuclear weapons program. The revelations stoked concern that the DPRK may have secretly cooperated with other nations to distribute fuel, components or the knowledge needed to build nuclear bombs. The ROK's Foreign Ministry, which is involved in six-nation talks aimed at dismantling the DPRK's nuclear weapons program, would not comment on the alleged clandestine network. A high-ranking ministry official said on condition of anonymity that the government could not talk about intelligence issues. He also declined to say how

the news might affect the next round of six-nation talks.

2. US-Russia Missile Defense

The Associated Press (Anneli Nerman, "WELDON SPEAKS OF BOOSTING MISSILE DEFENSE COOPERATION WITH MOSCOW," Moscow, 05/25/04) reported that a US congressmen on Tuesday spoke in favor of expanding technical cooperation with Russia in the development of an anti-missile system the US is determined to build. US Representative Curt Weldon, R-Pa., praised the decade-old Russian-American Observation Satellite program, or RAMOS a joint effort to permit early detection of missile launches but said follow-up projects are needed to engage Russia in missile defense activities. Projects ranging "from the use of Russian radar systems to the potential involvement of Russia in targeting and other aspects of missile defense" are being considered, said Weldon, who is heading a congressional delegation to Moscow and was accompanied by four senior leaders from the US missile defense agency.

3. UN on DPRK Six-Way Talks

Bloomberg ("JAPAN, NORTH KOREA SUMMIT IS `ENCOURAGING STEP,' ANNAN SAYS," 05/25/04) reported that the summit between Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and the DPRK's leader Kim Jong-il was an "encouraging step" toward normalizing relations, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan said. The meeting last weekend in the DPRK capital, Pyongyang, "helped to resolve some difficult issues," Fred Eckhard, a spokesman for Annan said, according to a statement on the UN's Web site. Koizumi, making his second visit to the DPRK within 20 months pressed Kim to end the DPRK's efforts to produce nuclear weapons. "The secretary general is pleased to note the commitment of the two leaders to continue to resolve the nuclear issue within the Beijing process," Eckhard said. Annan last week sent his special envoy Maurice Strong to the DPRKto try to make progress on the nuclear issue.

4. DPRK-PRC Refugee Situation

Agence France-Presse ("EAST ASIAN REFUGEE SITUATION WORSENING: US GROUP," 05/25/04) reported that East Asia's refugee crisis worsened as the PRC stepped up its forced return of DPRK asylum-seekers and as people fled Myanmar's dictatorship to nearby nations, a US humanitarian group said. "There are no real signs of improvement and the situation continues to worsen in East Asia," said Veronika Martin, policy analyst with the US Committee for Refugees (USCR), which carried out a study on global refugees in 2003. The World Refugee Survey 2004 said the number of refugees in East Asia rose to 955,000 last year from 875,000 in 2002. The number of persons displaced within their own countries rose to 2.25 million from 2.1 million. "What is telling, besides the figures, is that most countries are violating the rights of refugees, without regard to the UN Refugee Convention," Martin stated, citing increasing incidents of forcible return of refugees. She highlighted the PRC's forced repatriation of DPRK asylum-seekers and its "persecution" of Muslim minority and Tibetans for expression of religious and political views. The PRC forcibly returned an average of 150 DPRKs per week last year, despite an undertaking that it would no longer deport DPRKs unless they had committed crimes in the PRC, the USCR said. The PRC regards unauthorized departure of its citizens as an act of opposition and treats it as a criminal offense, punishable by imprisonment or, in some cases, death. An estimated 100,000 DPRK asylum-seekers reside in the PRC, mostly in hiding.

5. US Role in Japan-DPRK Abduction

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN TO URGE US NOT TO PROSECUTE HUSBAND OF N.KOREA KIDNAP VICTIM," 05/25/04) reported that Japan will urge the US not to prosecute an alleged US army deserter so he can rejoin his Japanese wife kidnapped by the DPRK in the 1970s and repatriated in 2002, a senior official said. Charles Robert Jenkins, 64, a former US Army sergeant, has refused to leave the DPRK for a reunion with his wife, Hitomi Soga, 45, for fear of being handed over to the US under an extradition treaty for a possible court martial. The couple's two daughters remain with him. Jenkins' refusal to come home dampened Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's second summit with DPRK leader Kim Jong-Il at the weekend. "So many years have passed and he has been married to Mrs Soga," Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda told a news conference, adding the Soga family wanted to live peacefully together in Japan. "It is a task for us to persuade them (the US)" out of prosecuting Jenkins, he said.

6. ROK-DPRK Relations

New York Times (James Brooke, "SOUTH KOREA STAKES ITS FUTURE ON KEEPING PEACE WITH NORTH," Seoul, 05/25/04) reported that news that the DPRK may have joined an international nuclear black market, selling uranium hexafluoride to Libya, was a Page 2 article on Monday for the ROK's five most influential newspapers. Instead, journalistic excitement here is vibrating around a meeting on Wednesday between a DPRK general and a ROK general, the first such meeting since the Korean War, half a century ago. Once again, the ROK and US are separated by a deep panic gap. While the US struggles to ascertain whether the DPRK is crossing an invisible line concerning its nuclear activities, the ROK struggles to keep the peace on the peninsula. "Our economic and security circumstances offer us no other choice but to pursue a dual policy of peace-keeping and peace building," Jeong Se Hyun, the ROK's unification minister, said at a recent conference for foreign investors sponsored here by The Asia Society. That means subsidizing trade and investment in the DPRK. With few voices critical of the DPRK heard on television, radio or in schools in recent years, young South Koreans increasingly tell pollsters that they do not see the DPRK and its nuclear arms program as threats.

7. PRC Dissident Trial

Agence France-Presse ("PROMINENT PRC DISSIDENT YANG REFUSES TO APPEAL SENTENCE," 05/25/04) reported that prominent US-based dissident Yang Jianli has refused to appeal his five-year jail sentence for espionage, saying the PRC's judicial system was arbitrary and manipulated, his lawyer and wife said. Yang was sentenced on May 13 on charges of spying for Taiwan and illegal entry despite concerns by the US and United Nations over the case. "Yang Jianli has decided not to appeal his case," lawyer Mo Shaoping stated. "I've spoken with him two times since he was sentenced and he believes that the verdict is unjust and illegal and he does not want to participate in this kind of procedure anymore." Tuesday was the final day to lodge an appeal. Since his arrest in April 2002, the Harvard University research fellow has been one of the most high-profile dissidents in PRC custody. US Vice President Dick Cheney raised his case during an April visit and the UN Human Rights Commission cited a lack of due process in his arrest and trial. "The family wanted him to appeal, but he refused. He said that he had totally lost confidence in the system and that he felt like the whole procedure was a sham," Christine Fu Xiang, Yang's wife, stated.

8. ROK DPRK Summit Scandal

Reuters ("SOUTH KOREA TO PARDON "CASH-FOR-SUMMIT" SCANDAL FIGURES," Seoul, 05/25/04) reported that the ROK's former spy chief and five others convicted of illegally sending

cash to the DPRK to ensure a landmark summit will be pardoned under an annual scheme to mark Buddha's birthday, the government said on Tuesday. The five former government officials and a businessman involved in the "cash for summit" scandal are among 1,137 convicts and prisoners due to receive the amnesty on Wednesday's holiday, according to a list published by the justice ministry. The six received suspended jail sentences last year after being found guilty of secretly sending $500 million to the DPRK -- including at least $100 million to induce the DPRK to take part in the landmark North-South summit of June 2000. Former president Kim Dae-jung won the Nobel Peace Prize later that year for his efforts to reconcile the two Koreas, but the scandal cast a cloud over the award. Lim Dong-won, who headed the National Intelligence Service and was later Kim's top DPRK adviser, was the most senior figure convicted of violating foreign exchange rules. Lee Ki-ho, who was Kim's top economic adviser, and Lee Keun-young, who headed the state-run Korea Development Bank, also received suspended three-year sentences. Kim Yoon-kyu, the president of Hyundai Asan Co which runs tours to the DPRK, received a lighter sentence, also suspended.

9. Japan Al-Qaeda Operatives Search

Blooomberg ("JAPAN TO SEARCH FOR POSSIBLE AL-QAEDA OPERATIVESm" Kyodo, 05/25/04) reported that Japan police are planning 10 raids today in Tokyo, Kanagawa, Gunma and Saitama to search for alleged terrorists linked to the al-Qaeda network, Kyodo News reported. Police will search houses and used car shops managed by foreign Muslims and others suspected of having ties to Lionel Dumont, a French citizen and alleged member of al-Qaeda who stayed in Japan, Kyodo said. Dumont was arrested in Germany in December. Dumont's phone records showed he called 13 people in Japan in the three months after he left the country, Kyodo said, citing records seized by German officials. Some of the suspects may be arrested for violating Japan's immigration laws, Kyodo said. (Kyodo 5-25)

10. US-PRC Trade Relations

Agence France-Presse ("SENIOR US TRADE OFFICIAL ON CHINA TRIP TO PRESS FOR TRADE REFORMS," Washington, 05/25/04) reported that Deputy US Trade Representative Josette Shiner led a high-level trade enforcement team to Beijing to press for swift implementation of recent trade reform commitments by the PRC. Shiner's three-day visit was a follow-up to PRC Vice Premier Wu Yi's trip here last month when she pledged commitments on intellectual property rights, industrial policies, services and agriculture at a meeting of the US-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade (JCCT). The JCCT is chaired by Wu Yi, US Commerce Secretary Don Evans and US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick. "At this years JCCT, we achieved concrete results on key US trade concerns and China is beginning to follow through," Shiner said in a statement. "We will continue to hold China to its word on JCCT commitments and explore opportunities for further progress in these areas and across the trade agenda," she said. "Our goal remains to ensure a level playing field for US manufacturers, service providers, farmers and workers and to ensure US-China trade is a two-way street," she added.

II. Japan

1. Koizumi DPRK Visit

The Asahi Shimbun ("RICE AID EYED IF NORTH RESPONDS," 05/18/04) reported that the Japanese government will provide the DPRK with much-needed food assistance if Prime Minister Junichiro

Koizumi's visit to Pyongyang brings results in the abduction issue, sources said. However, some officials say the pending offer of 250,000 tons of rice could be seen as "a reward" for bad behaviour. Some government and ruling coalition officials are concerned about the offer, saying it runs counter to the government's stance of not making deals with the DPRK. But the aid, which the government says will be made in response to a UN request for assistance, won the conditional approval of LDP Secretary-General Shinzo Abe on May 17. Abe, known for his tough stance against the DPRK, confirmed that the rice aid could be extended if circumstances surrounding the abductee issue improve as a result of Koizumi's visit. If that happens, the shipment will be Japan's largest to the North since 500,000 tons of rice were donated in 2000.

The Japan Times (Kanako Takahara, "NUKES, ABDUCTIONS PROGRESS KEY," 05/18/04) reported that Japan will not resume normalization talks with the DPRK unless there is progress on the abduction issue as well as the DPRK's suspected nuclear weapons program, the top government spokesman said on May 17. The fact that "a nation this near possesses a nuclear weapon and is preparing to launch missiles is a great threat to the safety of our people," Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda said at a news conference. "If that question is not resolved, (Japan) will not go to the next step." Vice Foreign Minister Yukio Takeuchi said it is possible Prime Minister Koizumi might decide to provide humanitarian aid considering the outcome of Saturday's summit. "I will not rule that out," he said.

The Japan Times (Kanako Takahara, "KOIZUMI HOPES U.S. WILL PARDON JENKINS," 05/19/04) reported that before Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi visits Pyongyang on May 22, Japan hopes the US will promise to pardon an American in the DPRK wanted for desertion if he is allowed to come to Japan to reunite with his wife, who is one of the five repatriated abductees. The US lists Charles Robert Jenkins, the husband of Hitomi Soga, who returned to Japan in 2002 after being abducted to the DPRK in 1978, as having deserted the US Army in 1965 while serving as a sergeant near the Demilitarized Zone between the DPRK and the ROK. If Jenkins comes to Japan, the US government is expected to ask Japan to hand him over for a court-martial, a senior Japanese government source said. "The situation is severe" with regard to Japan's request for a pardon for Jenkins, said the official, who asked not to be named. The US government is tightening military discipline in the wake of revelations that Iraqi prisoners held at Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad by US forces have been abused, according to Japanese government officials.

The Japan Times ("STATE RELENTS, ALLOWS NTV TO COVER KOIZUMI TRIP," 05/20/04) reported that the Japan's government backtracked Wednesday on its decision to ban Nippon Television Network Corp. (NTV) reporters from joining the press corps for Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit to Pyongyang on Saturday. On Tuesday, the government excluded the private broadcaster's reporters from a list of press corps members distributed to media organizations, with NTV having aired a program on May 16 regarding possible aid to the DPRK. In its program, NTV reported that Koizumi plans to announce the provision of 250,000 tons of rice to the DPRK during his visit. "It was regrettable, as (the report) may have negative effects when our country is negotiating with the North on various bilateral issues," including the abduction of Japanese nationals, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda told a news conference Wednesday. Isao Iijima, a key aide to the prime minister, contacted an NTV official after the program aired and said the report was an attempt to derail the visit, according to NTV. But asked whether it is appropriate for the government to exclude media organizations based on their news reports, Hosoda said such steps should not have been taken.

Mainichi Daily News ("KOIZUMI TO DEMAND PYONGYANG HAND OVER 4 JAPANESE HIJACKERS," 05/19/04) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi is set to demand in his upcoming talks with the DPRK leader Kim Jong Il that four leftist radicals who defected after

hijacking a Japan Airlines (JAL) plane in 1970 be extradited, government sources said Wednesday. The four hijackers -- Takahiro Konishi, 59, Moriaki Wakabayashi, 57, Shiro Akagi, 56, and Kimihiro Uomoto, 56 -- are suspected of involvement in the abduction of Japanese nationals by the DPRK agents. "We'll consider the matter as a group of families of abduction victims have demanded that the four be handed over," a high-ranking official of the Foreign Ministry, who spoke on condition anonymity, said Wednesday morning. Japanese law enforcers have deemed it indispensable to question the four in a bid to clarify the whereabouts of 10 missing abduction victims, some of whom the DPRK claims have died, according to government sources.

2. Koizumi DPRK Visit

The Japan Times ("HARASSMENT OF KOREAN RESIDENTS MAY COME UP IN KOIZUMI-KIM TALKS," 05/21/04) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi might express concern over the harassment of Korean residents in Japan that followed the DPRK's admission in 2002 that it had abducted Japanese nationals in the 1970s and 1980s, government sources said Thursday. By expressing such concerns during his Saturday meeting with the DPRK leader Kim Jong Il, Koizumi apparently hopes to show that he takes the matter seriously. The pro-DPRK General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (Chongryun) said it received about 300 reports of harassment against students of pro-DPRK schools in the week after the country owned up to the abductions at the 2002 landmark summit between Koizumi and Kim. He might also tell Kim that if the family members of five repatriated abductees are allowed to leave the DPRK for Japan, the government would not invoke an envisioned law that would allow it to ban the port entry of certain ships, particularly those from the DPRK. The bill is apparently aimed at the DPRK ferry Mangyongbong-92, which travels between Japan and the DPRK.

The Japan Times (Kanako Takahara, "KOIZUMI GETS FOUR ABDUCTEES' KIDS," Pyongyang, 05/23/04) reported that five offspring of four repatriated Japanese abductees arrived in Tokyo on Saturday evening and were reunited with their parents after Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi wrapped up his summit with the DPRK leader Kim Jong Il in Pyongyang. The two offspring of freed abductees Kaoru and Yukiko Hasuike and the three children of Yasushi and Fukie Chimura arrived at Haneda airport aboard a Japanese government jet and were welcomed by their parents -- their first reunion since the abductees returned to Japan 19 months ago. However, repatriated abductee Hitomi Soga's husband, Charles Robert Jenkins, and their two daughters refused to come to Japan, citing fears that Jenkins -- an alleged US Army deserter -- could be extradited and court-martialed by the US. Koizumi said Japan will instead arrange for Jenkins, Soga and the two daughters to meet at an early date in a third country -- possibly the PRC. In a news conference following his summit with Kim, Koizumi said the DPRK leader promised a reinvestigation into 10 other Japanese abductees, eight of whom the DPRK government earlier claimed had died and two others the DPRK said never entered the country. Japan will take part in the probe. Kim agreed to launch a "full-scale investigation at the earliest date" and report the outcome to Japan, although he did not give a specific deadline, a senior Japanese official said. As humanitarian aid, Japan will provide 250,000 tons of food to the DPRK through an international organization and $10 million worth of medicinal supplies in the next month or two, the prime minister said. Koizumi further noted that Japan has no intention of invoking economic sanctions against the DPRK as long as the country respects the Pyongyang Declaration, which he and Kim signed in their September 2002 summit. Little progress was made on resolving the DPRK's nuclear arms ambitions, with both leaders agreeing to make efforts to put forward the six-party framework dealing with the issue that includes the DPRK and ROK, the US, Japan, the PRC and the RF. Koizumi urged Kim to abandon the North's nuclear weapons program, accept international inspections and return to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. But Kim did not offer any specific promise. Meanwhile, the DPRK leader promised to

maintain a moratorium on missile test launches, Koizumi said. Koizumi also urged the DPRK to hand over a group of Japanese radicals wanted in the hijacking of a Japan Airlines jetliner to Pyongyang in 1970, according to government officials. Koizumi and Kim were unable to set a date for the next round of bilateral normalization talks -- another key goal of the summit.

The Japan Times (Akemi Nakamura, "PYONGYANG SUMMIT FALLS SHORT FOR KIN OF THOSE STILL MISSING," 05/23/04) reported that family members of Japanese still missing after being abducted by the DPRK expressed indignation Saturday over Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's failure to gain new information regarding their kin. Shigeru Yokota, whose daughter, Megumi, was abducted in 1977 at age 13, heads of a group of relatives of people believed kidnapped by the DPRK agents. He said Koizumi's summit with the DPRK leader Kim Jong Il yielded "the worst imaginable" results and he "feels betrayed." House of Representatives lawmaker Takeo Hiranuma, who heads a group of lawmakers working to resolve the abduction issue, slammed the summit and Koizumi's efforts, after hearing the results. "Given that it was the prime minister who went (to negotiate), it was a shoddy piece of work," the former trade minister told reporters. "Even I could have achieved this much."

The Japan Times ("LDP'S ABE COOL ON SUMMIT, DPJ'S OKADA SLAMS RESULTS," 05/23/04) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's talks Saturday with the DPRK leader Kim Jong Il drew mixed reviews from political parties. The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Secretary General Shinzo Abe said he was "very disappointed" that Charles Robert Jenkins, the American husband of former abductee Hitomi Soga, was unable to join his wife in Japan. As for his overall assessment of the summit, Abe would only say, "At least there was some progress." He added that the party will still focus on swift passage of a bill restricting port calls by suspicious vessels that effectively targets ships from the DPRK. Meanwhile, Katsuya Okada, head of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), criticized the summit's outcome, issuing a statement that called Koizumi's pledge to Kim that Japan would not implement economic sanctions "a major diplomatic blunder." The leader of the largest opposition group added that Koizumi did not hold any substantial negotiations over the DPRK's nuclear program, which he says "critically affects" Japan's national security. "The visit ended up as a mere ceremony," Okada said.

3. Bashing against Released Japanese Hostages

The Asahi Shimbun ("NGOS, JOURNALISTS HAVE OWN 'RESPONSIBILITIES'," 05/12/04) reported an analytical article by Toshimaru Ogura, a professor of economics at Toyama University, on the recent bashing against released Japanese hostages in Iraq and the notion of "self-responsibility." Following is an excerpt: "Although the Japanese hostages in Iraq were set free, the situation gave rise to a problem I cannot overlook as someone who works for a nongovernmental organization (NGO). It is the way government officials and some media organizations are addressing the hostages' 'self-responsibility' for causing a serious crisis and the growing trend to bash them and their families. [...] Referring to NGO activities, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Yukio Takeuchi said, 'We urge workers to acknowledge the principle of self-responsibility and think once again about being responsible for their own safety.' This argument of 'self-responsibility' may sound rational and easy to understand. Actually, however, by making the remark, Takeuchi virtually said the government would not be responsible for the safety of people who work for NGOs. The statement amounts to saying the government would not take responsibility even if hostages are killed. [...] Moreover, we need to recognize the fact that the Japanese government is party to the Iraq war. Under such circumstances, it is difficult to make a fair assessment of NGOs acting independently of their government. Can the Self-Defense Forces or the government look into the damage caused by depleted uranium bombs or provide aid to poor children at this juncture? I don't think so. In Fallujah, a large number of children and civilians became victims of indiscriminate bombings by US

forces. If there were no journalists there, such facts might have remained hidden. The Japanese government seems to want to ban people from going to Iraq but such a decision would contribute to turning Iraq into a black box. [...] NGOs and journalists must always maintain a tense relationship with their governments to a certain extent. The responsibility of governments in relation to NGOs is being debated in industrialized countries across the world. How far should a government support the activities of an NGO, which does not endorse its policy? This is a yardstick that shows the maturity of politics and democracy of that country. What is the case with Japan?"

4. US on Japan's Nuclearization

Kyodo ("JAPAN COULD HAVE GONE FULLY NUCLEAR IN '70S: U.S. REPORT," Washington, 05/12/04) reported that the US estimated in the 1960s that Japan could produce up to 30 atomic weapons annually and deploy 100 nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles in the 1970s, according to a declassified US government report made available to Kyodo News. William Foster, chief of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency under the administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson, submitted the 45-page report to the secretaries of state and defense and the national security adviser in June 1965. The report is among documents declassified by the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum in Austin, Texas. Kosuke Yoshitsugu, an assistant professor of diplomatic history at Okinawa International University, obtained a copy of the report and provided it to Kyodo News. "It could test its first nuclear device as early as 1971 without violating existing reactor safeguard provisions, thereafter producing an estimated 10 to 30 weapons annually," said the report titled "Japan's Prospects in the Nuclear Weapons Field." Given its relatively sophisticated space program, Japan is further capable of producing as many as 100 nuclear-tipped intercontinental and intermediate range ballistic missiles by 1975, the report said. Japan could build the estimated nuclear force at a cost of $1.3 billion to $2.5 billion, it said. The report also said Japan is technologically and economically capable of becoming a nuclear power but that it is strongly committed to its non-nuclear role. "Its Constitution prohibits the maintenance of any 'war potential' and the Japanese public is overwhelmingly opposed to the presence of nuclear weapons, foreign or domestic, on Japanese soil," it said. An annex of the report, however, noted that in December 1964, Prime Minister Eisaku Sato told US Ambassador Edwin Reischauer that it is only natural for Japan to have its own nuclear arsenal if other countries did. The Japanese public is not ready for this, but would have to be educated... Nuclear weapons are less costly than is generally assumed, and the Japanese scientific and industrial level is fully up to producing them," Sato was quoted as saying.

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