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I. United States

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1. DPRK Rocket Launch

The Associated Press ("N. KOREA THREATENS MILITARY LAUNCH," Seoul, 09/25/98) reported that a commentary in the DPRK Workers' Party's Rodong Sinmun on Friday accused the US of slandering the DPRK over its recent rocket launch. The commentary said, "For the U.S. to talk about 'threats' by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is the height of impudence." It added, "Whether the DPRK's launch of artificial satellite is used for military purposes or not entirely depends on the attitude of the U.S. and other hostile forces."

The Associated Press (Laura Myers, "REP. HAMILTON SLAMS CIA ON N. KOREA," Washington, 09/24/98) reported that Representative Lee Hamilton, D-Ind., the top-ranking Democrat on the House International Relations Committee, on Thursday criticized US intelligence for botching its initial assessment of the nature of the DPRK's August 31 rocket launch. Hamilton stated, "A miscall like that has a lot of consequences." Kurt Campbell, deputy assistant defense secretary for the Asia-Pacific region, agreed with Hamilton that the political consequences were serious, but added, "Everyone who deals with intelligence understands that sometimes early assessments are modified subsequently." Campbell said that it is difficult using satellite photographs and other techniques to figure out the situation in the DPRK. He stated, "I will tell you I think that the intelligence community ... [was] surprised. I think some of them are kicking themselves that after looking at the preparations for this test for literally weeks, that we were not in a position to be able to ... predict what kind of test this was."

The Washington Post (Bradley Graham, "N. KOREAN MISSILE THREAT IS REASSESSED," 09/25/98, A31) reported that Robert D. Walpole, the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)'s senior intelligence officer for strategic programs said in a speech to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace last week that US intelligence experts failed to anticipate the DPRK's ability to launch a three-stage rocket last month. Walpole stated, "Although the launch of the Taepo Dong I as a missile was expected for some time, its use as a space launch vehicle with a third stage was not." He described the DPRK as having the most advanced missile development program among states hostile to the US, significantly ahead of Iran and Iraq. He added that analysts are still trying to figure out why the DPRK launch failed and its implications for US security. He stated, "In particular, the community is assessing how small a payload would have to be for this system to fly to something on the order of an ICBM range." Walpole said that intelligence agencies could provide "five years' warning" of any indigenous long-range missile development by a potentially hostile power, but he acknowledged there might be little warning if the missiles were bought or if they were adapted for launch from sea. Donald Rumsfeld, former US defense secretary, said, "I think [the DPRK launch] reinforces the point that we cannot expect that we're going to know everything that's going on in the world."

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2. US-ROK-Japan Policy toward DPRK

The US Department of State ("U.S., JAPAN, ROK JOINT STATEMENT ON NORTH KOREA ISSUES," New York, USIA Text, 09/25/98) on Thursday issued a "Joint Statement on North Korea Issues," following a meeting in New York between Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs Masahiko Komura, ROK Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Hong Soon-young, and US Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright. The statement said that the three Ministers confirmed the importance of maintaining the 1994 Agreed Framework "as the most realistic and effective mechanisms for preventing North Korea from advancing its nuclear program." It added, "Ministers Komura and Hong reaffirmed their support for the Agreed Framework and all three Ministers reiterated their commitment to KEDO." The three Ministers also deplored the DPRK's recent missile launch, saying, "They agreed that North Korea's missile development, if unchecked, would adversely affect the peace and security of Japan, the Republic of Korea and the entire Northeast Asia region, and that it raised serious concerns about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems." They also reviewed the results of recent talks between the US and the DPRK in New York. The statement added, "Secretary Albright expressed the determination of the United States Government to seek through [upcoming US-DPRK missile] talks the cessation of North Korean flight-testing, production, deployment, and export of missiles and related material and technology. Ministers Komura and Hong expressed their support for these U.S. efforts and stressed the importance of North Korea's committing to tangible steps in the missile talks." The three Ministers also "reaffirmed the importance of close consultation

concerning policies toward North Korea."

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3. ROK-Japan Fisheries Agreement

The Associated Press ("JAPAN CONFIRMS AGREEMENT WITH S. KOREA IN FISHERIES DISPUTE," Tokyo, 09/24/98) reported that Isao Koya, a spokesman for Japan's fisheries ministry, said that Japan and the ROK reached a basic agreement Friday on a new treaty to determine fishing boundaries and quotas around disputed islands. Koya said that the countries agreed to establish a joint fishing zone around the islets at 64 kms from the shores of the two countries. The two sides also agreed to reduce their fishing catches in each other's waters. Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi, who attended the talks, stated, "I think fishing people on both sides...may feel some dissatisfaction, but I ask their understanding for the sake of long-term friendship."

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4. Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

The New York Times (Barbara Crossette, "NEW DELHI PLEDGES TO SIGN WORLD BAN ON NUCLEAR TESTS," United Nations, 09/25/98) reported that Republican senators Jesse Helms of North Carolina, Trent Lott of Mississippi, and Jon Kyl of Arizona sent a letter to US President Bill Clinton last week saying that they opposed lifting sanctions on India and Pakistan in exchange for adherence to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). The letter stated, "As the recent Indian nuclear tests demonstrated, the CTBT is not adequately verifiable." They added that they also opposed the export of high-technology goods to India and the sharing of scientific information that can be used in nuclear programs.

White House Press Secretary Mike McCurry ("WHITE HOUSE REPORT, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1998," 09/24/98) on Thursday urged the US Senate to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). He also said that it is the US's "strong hope that India and Pakistan will eventually join that list" of signatories to the treaty. McCurry stated, "Obviously, we are very pleased by the statement that the government of Pakistan has now made with respect to the CTBT." He added, "It's something that clearly will advance our interests in moving towards the test ban regime that needs to be implemented, it will lend momentum to the effort to ratify the treaty that is going on around the world." Regarding whether US President Bill Clinton will visit India and Pakistan this year as originally planned, McCurry said, "we are still assessing the President's travel schedule."

The United States Information Agency (Judy Aita, "U.S. PRAISES STEPS BY INDIA, PAKISTAN TOWARD SIGNING CTBT," United Nations, 09/24/98) reported that US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright praised Pakistan and India for stating that they intend to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) within the year. However, she said that "more steps need to be taken" before the US can lift sanctions. Albright stated, "We have to look at how this all progresses. I don't want to overstate what has happened here. They are important steps but ... there are many steps that still need to be taken. We are not prepared to make a judgment." Albright said that the US interpreted the remarks to the UN by the Indian and Pakistani prime ministers as indications that the two countries are "moving towards adherence to the CTBT." She also noted that the two "removed their obstacles to the fissile material cut-off treaty negotiations in Geneva and they have promised to strengthen controls on the export of nuclear material and technology" and agreed to pursue talks on Kashmir. She added, "Obviously much remains to be done: actually signing and ratifying the CTBT, finding a formula for a moratorium on producing fissile material while negotiations are under way, structuring a restraint regime on nuclear weapons and their means of delivery to demonstrate their

intent to avoid a nuclear arms race, and actually strengthening their export control regime." A senior Administration official said that a decision on President Bill Clinton's planned trip to South Asia may be made as early as the first week in October. The official also said that the US Congress is watching developments "very closely and they will be ready to respond at the appropriate time" on sanctions.

The Los Angeles Times (Bob Drogin, "LIKE PAKISTAN, INDIA MAY OK TEST-BAN TREATY," Washington, 09/25/98) reported that experts in South Asian affairs were divided as to how much real progress on South Asian adherence to the CTBT occurred at the UN. Michael Krepon, president of the Henry L. Stimson Center, stated, "Both public postures are indirect and convoluted. But they lead to the same place--a public commitment to formally join the test-ban treaty by the fall of 1999. That's positive." South Asian expert Paula Newberg said that the vagueness of India's statement, "gives Mr. Vajpayee a way to deny any particular interpretation." Morton H. Halperin, senior vice president of the Century Foundation in Washington, said, "I think both India and Pakistan are saying they want to move, but they are looking for something from us. If they sign the test-ban treaty tomorrow, the president still can't lift the sanctions."

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5. Indian Fissile Material

The Los Angeles Times (Bob Drogin, "LIKE PAKISTAN, INDIA MAY OK TEST-BAN TREATY," Washington, 09/25/98) reported that Jane's Intelligence Review said this week that if India used reactor-grade as well as weapons-grade plutonium, it potentially had enough fissile material to build 455 atomic bombs. The journal also estimated that Pakistan could build up to 100 bombs, four times more than previously believed.

II. Republic of Korea

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1. US-ROK-Japan Policy toward DPRK

The US, Japan, and the ROK on Thursday vowed their continued commitment to a nuclear reactor project for the DPRK despite its recent launch of a rocket which overflew Japan, officials said. US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura, and ROK Foreign Affairs-Trade Minister Hong Soon-Young held three-way security talks on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. "The three ministers deplored the DPRK's recent missile launch," the three said in a joint statement. They agreed, however, that the international project to provide nuclear reactors for the DPRK was "the most realistic and effective mechanism" for preventing the DPRK from advancing its nuclear weapons development. "All the three ministers reiterated their commitment to KEDO (the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization)," it said. Japan however, still angry at the stunning launch, failed to announce an immediate resumption of its contribution to the KEDO aimed at providing the DPRK with safe nuclear reactors in return for a freeze on its suspect nuclear program. (Korea Times, "SOUTH KOREA, US, JAPAN VOW TO BACK NUCLEAR REACTOR PROJECT FOR NK," 09/26/98)

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2. DPRK Rocket Launch

The top US Democrat on the House International Relations Committee criticized US intelligence for

botching its initial assessment of the nature of the DPRK's August 31 rocket launch. At first, US intelligence agencies told lawmakers in private briefings that the DPRK fired a three- stage ballistic missile, which flew across Japan. The analysts later concluded that the rocket was a failed satellite launch, as the DPRK reported. The technology is the same, but a missile launch is viewed as much more threatening, Representative Lee Hamilton noted Thursday to three Clinton administration officials at a hearing. "A miscall like that has a lot of consequences," said Hamilton, who like most Democrats and some Republicans in Congress wants the fuel oil money restored to keep the nuclear freeze deal from falling apart. The deal promised fuel deliveries, while an international group that includes Kurt Campbell, deputy assistant defense secretary for the Asia-Pacific region, agreed with Hamilton that the political consequences were serious, but he said that initial intelligence assessments often do not hit the mark. Campbell said it is difficult using satellite photographs and other techniques to glean enough information to figure out what is going on in the DPRK, a closed and tightly controlled state. US intelligence has uncovered no evidence of a renewed nuclear weapons program, Campbell said. The Clinton administration has, however, requested the DPRK government to allow inspection of its underground site. (Korea Times, "TOP DEMOCRAT SLAMS CIA FLUB ON N. KOREAN LAUNCH," 09/26/98)

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3. ROK-Japan Fisheries Talks

The ROK's main opposition Grand National Party (GNP) said Friday that the ROK government yielded too much to Japan in the fisheries agreement that was wrapped up in Tokyo. "The government has lost the golden Yamato, or Taehwatoe, fishing bank in the East Sea in succumbing to Japanese demands," Representative Kang Hyon-wook, chief policymaker of the party, argued. Kang also cited the eastern limit for the ROK's fishing area at the longitudinal line of 135.5 degrees 30 minutes east as another concession to Japan. Given the former fishing agreement under which the ROK shared the Taehwatoe fishing ground with Japan and the eastern limit to the longitudinal line of 136 degrees east, the new accord is a crucial setback for the local fishing industry, Kang argued. The opposition camp went on to raise a suspicion that the government made the concession in the interests of a hurried conclusion to the fishery talks, mindful of ROK President Kim Dae-jung's visit to Japan next month. "Though the deadline for the fishery accord is still four months away, the ROK government has hastily concluded it," the GNP claimed. (Korea Times, "GOVERNMENT YIELDED TOO MUCH TO JAPAN IN FISHERIES AGREEMENT: GNP," 09/26/98)

III. Japan

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1. US Bases in Japan

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("PRIME MINISTER MAY RECONSIDER ALTERNATIVE HELIPORT," 09/25/98) reported that in response to a question about the construction of an alternative heliport in Okinawa by Democratic Party Diet member Yukio Hatoyama at an Upper House plenary session on September 24, Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi suggested that he may reconsider the Japanese government's proposal. Obuchi said, "I think the proposal of alternative off-shore heliport is the best option, but I would like to wait and see what kind of discussion may take place within the prefecture, while considering the course of past events." The Yomiuri Shimbun pointed out that Obuchi may have made his statement in light of the proposal by Keiichi Inamine, conservative candidate for the Okinawa Governor's race in November, for the construction of a civilian-military dual use airport as an alternative to the heliport proposal. The report added that Obuchi said to reporters after the

plenary session, "The off- shore heliport is the principle, but I just added the statement 'I would like to observe the present situation.'"

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2. Japanese-PRC Reactions to DPRK Launch

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("JAPANESE AND PRC FOREIGN MINISTER EXCHANGES VIEWS ON DPRK MISSILE TEST," New York, 09/24/98) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura and his PRC counterpart, Tang Jiaxuan, met at the UN in New York on September 23. Komura said to Tang about the DPRK's missile test, "The missile was launched over Japan. This is a serious situation not only for Japan but for the peace and security of Northeast Asia as well." In response, Tang said, "It is understandable that Japan has grave concern about the DPRK's action this time."

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3. Japanese-Russian Relations

The Daily Yomiuri (Akinori Uchida, "KOMURA AGREES WITH IVANOV ON TREATY BY 2000," New York, 09/23/98) reported that in his first meeting with his Russian counterpart Igor Ivanov at a New York hotel on September 21, Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura agreed that Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi would visit Russia in early November and that they intended to follow through on agreements to sign a peace treaty by 2000. They also agreed that Komura would visit Russia in October. He had originally been scheduled to visit Moscow in September, but delayed the trip out of consideration for Russia's impasse over choosing a new prime minister. According to the report, Obuchi's visit would last several days, likely including November 11 and 12. The report added that Komura reportedly said that he wanted to cooperate with Russia to sign the treaty and did not want to go "backward in the stream of history."

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.
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