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I. United States

1. US-ROK-Japan DPRK Monitoring and Inspection System

Kyodo News ("JAPAN, US, S. KOREA MULLING INSPECTION SYSTEM ON N. KOREA," Tokyo, 09/25/03) reported that Japan, the US and the ROK will embark on establishing an international inspection system to verify that the DPRK is dismantling its nuclear arms program once it announces an intention to do so, Foreign Ministry officials said Thursday. Senior officials from the three countries will discuss the details of the verification system at a meeting on Monday and Tuesday in Tokyo, the officials said. The envisaged system involves experts from various countries including the three nations as well as from the International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.N. nuclear watchdog, the officials said. The three countries decided to pursue the inspection system to achieve their goal of persuading North Korea to dismantle its nuclear weapons development program in a verifiable and irreversible manner, they said. It will be the first time that senior officials from the three countries get together to coordinate policy toward North Korea following the first round of six-nation talks held in late August in Beijing on the DPRK nuclear standoff. Mitoji Yabunaka, director general of the Foreign Ministry's Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs James Kelly, and ROK Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo Hyuck will

participate in the meeting. The six nations have agreed to hold a second round of talks toward a common objective of achieving a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula, though the date and venue have yet to be decided. The three officials are also expected to discuss how they would respond to North Korea's security concerns and promote energy aid for the North, the officials said. They will also exchange views on the timing of holding a meeting of executive board members of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) to make a final decision on freezing a project to construct two light-water nuclear reactors in North Korea. The three countries and the European Union are the executive board members.

2. DPRK on US Nuclear Diplomacy

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA TELLS US TO "BUCKLE DOWN" TO NUCLEAR CRISIS TALKS," Seoul, 09/25/03) reported that the DPRK told the US to "buckle down" and resolve the nuclear crisis by dropping its "hostile" policy towards the DPRK. Pyongyang blames US "hostility" for the nuclear impasse and says Washington pays lip-service to diplomacy while hiding its real intention to resolve the stand-off by military force. "The US would be well-advised to stop such foolish an act as digging its own grave, make a bold switchover in its anachronistic hostile policy ... and buckle down to solving the issues between the DPRK (North Korea) and the US including the nuclear issue," said Minju Josun, the official newspaper of the DPRK cabinet. Pyongyang said Washington deliberately sabotaged six-way talks on the nuclear crisis held in Beijing last month while forging ahead with plans to launch nuclear war.

3. DPRK US Servicemen Remains Recovery

US Department of Defense, "Remains of US Servicemen Recovered in North Korea," Washington DC, 09/24/03) issued a release stating remains believed to be those of four American soldiers missing in action from the Korean War have been recovered by two teams of US specialists. A joint team operating near the Chosin Reservoir in the DPRK recovered two sets of remains believed to be those of US Army soldiers from the 7th Infantry Division who fought against PRC forces from November-December 1950. Approximately 1,000 Americans are estimated to have been lost in battles of the Chosin campaign. Additionally, a second team recovered two sets of remains in Unsan County, about 60 miles north of Pyongyang. This area was the site of battles between communist forces and the US Army s 1st Cavalry and 25th Infantry Divisions in November 1950. The Defense Department s Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office negotiated terms with the North Koreans in July, which led to the scheduling of two, month-long operations this year. As a matter of policy, these recovery talks deal exclusively with the issue of recovering the remains of missing Americans. POW/MIA accounting is a separate, stand-alone humanitarian matter, not tied to any other issue. The second operation will end on October 28, 2003 when these remains and others will be repatriated. The 28-person US contingent was composed primarily of specialists from the Army s Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii. Since 1996, 26 individual joint operations have been conducted in the DPRK, during which 182 sets of remains believed to be those of US soldiers have been recovered. Of the 88,000 US service members missing in action from all conflicts, more than 8,100 are from the Korean War.

The official release can be found: http://www.dod.gov/releases/2003/nr20030924-0475.html

4. US Rumsfeld on DPRK-US Relations

Department of Defense News Briefing ("EXCERPT FROM SECRETARY RUMSFELD'S 'REMARKS AT

THE US/KOREAN BUSINESS COUNCIL LUNCHEON," 09/23/03) carried a transcript that quoted US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, "Americans I should add are proud of the role that we have played in the success and we're certainly committed to Korea's continued security and prosperity and make no mistake those two words are inextricably linked, you cannot have prosperity without security, it simply doesn't happen there has to be an environment that's hospitable to investment, enterprise and without security that doesn't happen. What we're doing to strengthen deterrence on the Korean Peninsula and what we see in the period ahead. Last December the ROK Defense Minister - Minister Joon and I met to initiate a process to examine the structure of the alliance and to make recommendations as to how we might improve and strengthen that for future generation. President Bush met with President No last May to discuss the best way to accomplish our goals and I had the pleasure of meeting with Minister Lee's successor Minister Cho Young Gil in Washington last July. Together we've undertaken an important joint review of our military posture with eye towards how best to take advantage of the new technologies and capabilities and strengthen our deterrence for the 21st Century security environment. Change is always hard, it's hard when you try to change a business, it's hard when you try to change a government bureaucracy, it's hard when you try to make adjustments in a relationship like this, so I think it's worth some time to discuss it and make sure everyone is on the same wave length. We have discussed transforming our combined forces, which is both a necessity but it's also an opportunity to modernize the alliance and adapt it to the changing security requirements of region and world and let there be know doubt we are in a new security environment. This is a different period than the preceding period when our relationship was fashioned and put in place. We've pledged to work together to employ new technologies and capabilities to transition to a more capable and sustainable US military presence on the peninsula. This includes expanding the role of ROK Defense Forces in defense of the peninsula, relocating the US Garrison at Yongsan and consolidating US Forces around several key hubs. While the size and shape of the US footprint in the world and the region may evolve and in deed it will evolve not just in Northeast Asia but in Europe and elsewhere across the globe we're addressing this subject in an important way. There certainly would be no change at all in our commitment to the defense of South Korea and just let there be no doubt about that. Our goal is to reinforce deterrence and to position the alliance for the period ahead."

The full transcript can be found: http://www.dod.mil/transcripts/2003/tr20030923-secdef0702.html

5. ROK on ROK Troops in Iraq

BBC ("ROK MINISTER SAYS NATIONAL INTERESTS TO GUIDE IRAQ TROOPS DECISION," 09/25/03) reported that the ROK's foreign minister said on Wednesday that "national interests" should be given the highest consideration in the government's decision on a US request to send troops to Iraq. "We have to decide whether to dispatch troops to Iraq after comprehensively taking into account cost versus profit, moral justification, public opinion and the international situation," Yoon said in a meeting with ROK correspondents here. Asked which factor will be given the highest consideration, Yoon said if he had to choose one he would say it is "national interests". He added, however, that those factors cannot be prioritized as if scores are given to them. Yoon said it would be good if the government will be able to reach a conclusion on the issue in October, but a decision may be delayed because the government has to consider various factors. "I think we have to decide at least by the end of the year," he said. Earlier this month, the US asked South Korea to contribute more troops to help keep order in Iraq. In May, the ROK dispatched some 675 army engineers and medics to assist the US-led rehabilitation of postwar Iraq. Yoon is here to attend a meeting of the UN General Assembly. He is scheduled to address the meeting on Thursday. He said relations between the ROK and the US are on a more stable footing now compared with earlier this year.

6. Japan Domestic Politics

Agence France-Presse ("KOIZUMI TO CALL GENERAL ELECTION ON NOV 9: REPORTS," 09/25/03) reported that after shaking up his cabinet and the top ranks of his ruling party, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has decided to dissolve the lower house of parliament next month to call a snap general election on November 9, reports said Thursday. Koizumi would dissolve the House of Representatives, which convenes after the summer recess on Friday, on October 10, after pushing through a bill extending a special anti-terrorism law expiring November 1, Kyodo News agency said, citing a ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) lawmaker. Campaigning would begin on October 28, Kyodo said. The Asahi Shimbun and the Nihon Keizai Shimbun dailies also ran similar reports saying Koizumi felt he would be able to get the anti-terrorist law extended before dissolving parliament because the main opposition party, which is opposed to the bill had decided not to boycott debate on it. The Democratic Party of Japan, which on Wednesday formally merged with the smaller Liberal Party, feels it is now well-positioned to take on the LDP at the ballot-box, Kyodo and the Asahi said.

7. Dalai Lama PRC Visit

Agence France-Presse ("DALAI LAMA SAYS HE IS READY TO GO TO CHINA," 09/26/03) reported that the spiritual leader of Tibet, the Dalai Lama, said he was willing to do almost anything to settle the issue of Tibet, even if it meant going to China personally. "To find a mutual agreement or solution, I am ready to meet the PRC leadership or, if I get a chance, to meet the Tibetans inside Tibet and explain or clarify my position," he told the Voice of America, a US government-funded broadcasting service. "I believe this would be very beneficial," he stressed, rejecting the notion he had any separatist designs. "I have reiterated like a mantra that I am not seeking independence, I am not trying to separate Tibet from China," he said. "I am only seeking a genuine autonomy for Tibet, but the PRC leadership has a hard time believing what I am saying. This is why a face-to-face meeting is very important." The Buddhist spiritual leader pointed out that the situation was so urgent that he is ready to send his envoys to the PRC for talks at any time.

8. Japan 8.0 Earthquake

Agence France-Presse ("QUAKE MEASURING 8 ON RICHTER SCALE HITS NORTHERN JAPAN, INJURING 121," 09/26/03) reported that a powerful earthquake measuring 8.0 on the Richter scale and a series of aftershocks struck northern Japan on Friday, injuring at least 121 people, officials and news reports said. The quake occurred at 4:50 am (1950 GMT Thursday), with its focus located off the coast of Hokkaido, 750 kilometers (465 miles) north of Tokyo and 60 kilometers (37 miles) below sea-level, the Meteorological Agency said. A second quake measuring 7.0 occurred in the same place at 6:08 am, the agency said, adding that at least 15 strong aftershocks had jolted the region. At least 121 people have been injured in the quake, including one person who was hurt when an express train derailed, the state-run Japan Broadcasting Corp. (NHK) reported.

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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