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I. United States

1. US-DPRK Talks

U.S. Department of State's Office of International Information Programs ("REP. LEACH SAYS RESUMPTION OF TALKS DEPENDS ON NORTH KOREA," 7/26/01) reported that US House of Representative James Leach, a Republican of Iowa, gave an assessment of US policy toward the DPRK on July 26 to the House International Relations subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific. Leach said that after a careful reassessment, the Bush administration has set forth "a comprehensive approach toward North Korea." He said that the Bush administration policy was one of reaffirming support for the US-DPRK alliance, and "endorsing the historic 'Sunshine Policy' of [ROK] President Kim [Dae-jung] with the explicit goal of encouraging progress toward North-South reconciliation." According to Leach, Bush has directed that "serious discussions" take place with the DPRK on such issues as improved implementation of the Agreed Framework, verifiable constraints on the DPRK's missile programs and a ban on its missile exports, and a less threatening military posture. He said, "From a Congressional perspective, it would appear that the ball is now squarely in North Korea's court, both in terms of promptly resuming a high-level dialogue with Seoul, and responding affirmatively to the U.S. decision to proceed with comprehensive discussions with Pyongyang."

2. Colin Powell's PRC Visit

Agence France Presse ("SCHOLARS RELEASE EASES POWELL'S BEIJING VISIT," Hanoi, 7/26/01) reported that US Secretary of State Colin Powell promised Thursday to deal with the PRC in a spirit of candor and realism, after the PRC defused the latest Sino-US row by freeing two US residents convicted of spying. Powell arrives in Beijing on July 28 on a day-long visit after talks with PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan in Hanoi. Powell said, "I am a great believer in looking at the whole agenda from human rights to proliferation to economics to regional security issues. Look at the whole range of issues before us ... and start it off in a spirit of openness, candor, and realism." In advance of the July 28 talks, which include a Powell meeting with PRC President Jiang Zemin, the PRC freed scholars Gao Zhan and Qin Guangguang, two days after they were handed 10-year jail terms for spying.

3. US Policy toward PRC

The Wall Street Journal (Neil King Jr., "US, CHINA RETURN TO BUSINESS AS USUAL," Hanoi, 7/26/01) reported that analysts said that the US spy plane does not seem to have affected US engagement policy toward the PRC. Gary Schmitt, who runs the Project for a New American Century, said, "Sadly, it's business as usual. It's now pretty clear there's only going to be a slight tuning of emphasis on China between Clinton and Bush." The article said that critics of the PRC among Republicans in the US Congress have fought a losing battle against the larger pro-business wing of the US Republican Party, which has lobbied hard for engagement. US Representative Christopher Smith, a New Jersey Republican who is a vocal critic of human-rights in the PRC, said, "Unfortunately, the China hands in this administration who think you can smile your way to progress with the Chinese are the same ones who are crafting the policy. Many of us are very disappointed." He added, "Clinton coddled China, and now it looks like Bush isn't going to be much different." Military contacts have picked up since the plane incident, with US Defense Department officials meeting often for low-level talks with their counterparts in the PRC. The article said that PRC leaders clearly want to get beyond their disputes with the US, but many observers there are still confused about US intentions. Jin Canrong of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences said that the toughness that the administration has telegraphed is "a posture, not an emergent policy." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for July 26, 2001.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. ASEAN Regional Forum

The Korea Herald (Hwang Jang-jin, "ARF URGES INTER-KOREAN SUMMIT," Seoul, 07/26/01) reported that foreign ministers from Asia-Pacific nations on Wednesday urged both Koreas to hold a second summit as soon as possible, saying that it would help reduce a significant threat to the region's stability, ROK officials said. The 23- member ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) adopted a chairman's statement wrapping up its one-day conference that discussed regional security issues. The statement expressed support for the ROK initiative to reconcile with the DPRK and called for an early reopening of talks to put the peace process back on track, a Foreign Ministry official said. On Tuesday, ROK Minister Han Seong-soo took part in the "ASEAN plus Three" meeting of foreign ministers from ASEAN nations and the ROK, Japan and the PRC.

Joongang Ilbo (Lee Chul-hee, "'BE PATIENT,' CHINA COUNSELS," Hanoi, 07/25/01) reported that

Han Seung-soo, ROK minister of foreign affairs and trade, asked his PRC counterpart, Tang Jiaxuan, for help in getting the DPRK back into talks with the ROK. In Hanoi on Tuesday, Han also held unofficial talks with a DPRK representative on the sidelines of the annual meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF). Han, emphasizing the necessity of maintaining the momentum of reconciliation and cooperation on the Korean Peninsula, told Tang that it is equally important for the DPRK to reopen talks with the US. "It is advisable to be patient in the reconciliation and cooperation policies toward North Korea," Tang responded. "Economic conditions in North Korea have improved, but the food and energy shortages are serious."

Joongang Ilbo (Peter Eng, "U.S. ASSURES COMMITMENT TO ASIA –AP," Vietnam, 07/26/01) reported that Secretary of State Colin Powell assured the ARF that the US puts a priority on relations with the PRC and with the Asia-Pacific in general, an ASEAN diplomat said. In a meeting with Thai Foreign Minister Surakiart Sathirathai, Powell stressed that "the U.S. remained committed in the region, and that the administration was very focused on Asia," Thai spokesman Norachit Sinhaseni said.

2. DPRK-US Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("N. KOREA DEMANDS TREATY WITH U.S.," Seoul, 07/25/01) reported that the DPRK renewed its long-standing demand Tuesday that the US sign a peace treaty with it and withdraw its troops from the ROK. The demand came in a commentary by the country's Foreign Ministry. Friday is the anniversary of the signing of the armistice that ended the Korean War in 1953. "If the state of armistice on the Korean peninsula is to be converted into a durable peace, it is necessary, first of all, to sign a peace agreement between the DPRK and the United States and put and end ... to the presence of the U.S. forces in South Korea," the DPRK 's foreign news outlet, Korean Central News Agency, quoted the Foreign Ministry as saying.

3. ROK Protest of US Missile Defense

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "KOREAN ACTIVISTS ACCUSE POWELL OF EXPLOITING SEOUL VISIT FOR MD," Seoul, 07/26/01) reported that a group of ROK activists on Wednesday protested US Secretary of State Colin Powell's visit to Seoul scheduled for Friday, claiming it is only aimed at forcing the ROK to support the US missile shield plan. "It's obvious that Powell is coming here to enforce Korea's participation in the Missile Defense (MD) program," the Korean Committee Against MD and for Peace said in a statement. The statement, issued at a press conference in Seoul, claimed that MD was designed only to serve the US intention to enhance its hegemony in the international community. "It also runs squarely counter to the peace and unification efforts on the Korean Peninsula," the resolution said. Committee members called on the Seoul government to officially announce its opposition to the MD project. After the news conference, about 15 committee members planned to visit the US Embassy in Seoul to deliver a protest letter to President George W. Bush, but the plan was rejected by embassy officials.

4. US-ROK Military Relations

The Korea Times (Kim Kwang-tae, "US REFUSAL ON INTEGRATION ISSUE AMOUNTS TO PRESSURE ON KOREA," 7/26/01) reported that ROK Representative Kang Chang-hee said on July 25 that the US refusal to cooperate with the ROK in integrating US weapons and cryptographic equipment should it select a non-US platform is part of US pressure to get the ROK to buy F-15 fighters. Kang added that the US pressure should not be allowed to be a decisive factor in selecting

a successful bidder in the ROK's US$3.3 billion next-generation fighter program. The concern was echoed by Representative Kang Chang-sung of the opposition Grand National Party, a member of the National Assembly Defense Committee. Kang said, "The US' refusal was already foreseen. We expected that the U.S. would make utmost efforts to keep the production line of the F-15 from being shut down by stressing the importance of inter- operability between Korean and US military equipment." Kang criticized US General Thomas Schwartz, commander of the ROK-US Combined Forces Command (CFC), saying that his remarks in the US Senate suggesting that war could break out in the Korean peninsula is an attempt to sell US military hardware. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for July 26, 2001.]

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