NAPSNet Daily Report 26 March, 2001

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 26 March, 2001", NAPSNet Daily Report, March 26, 2001, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-26-march-2001/

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I. United States

1. DPRK-EU Talks

The Associated Press (Kim Gamel, "EU TO SEND MEDIATORS TO KOREA," Stockholm, 03/25/01) and the Washington Post (William Drozdiak, "EU SEEKS TO FILL U.S. ROLE IN KOREAS," Stockholm, 03/25/01, A01) reported that the European Union (EU) said that Swedish Prime Minister Goeran Persson will lead a delegation to Seoul and Pyongyang for talks with the leaders of the DPRK and the ROK. At a news conference following a two-day summit of EU leaders that ended on Saturday, Persson stated, "The aim is to express support for the process started by [ROK President] Kim Dae-jung, a process aimed at bringing to an end one of the last conflicts with origins in the Second World War." While no official date has been set for the visit, Persson said it could occur by late May. He will be accompanied by the EU's foreign policy czar, Javier Solana, and its external affairs commissioner, Chris Patten. Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lindh stated, "It's becoming clear that the new U.S. administration wants to take a more hard-line approach toward North Korea. That means that Europe must step in to help reduce tension between the two Koreas, not least because the outside world is so worried about North Korean missiles." European leaders said that they hoped for early results from their efforts, including "a second inter-Korean Summit." They pledged "substantive talks" with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il on "the full range of issues of concern to them and to the Union." [Ed note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 26.]

2. Light-Water Reactor Project

The Washington Post (Doug Struck, "U.S.-LED PLANT BESET BY DELAYS," Seoul, 03/25/01, A01) reported that 207 construction workers have been brought to the DPRK from Uzbekistan to replace striking DPRK workers at the light-water reactor construction site. Chang Sun-sup, ROK representative on the board of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) said that despite the problems with the reactor construction, "There's just no alternative." However, Jhe Seong-ho, an international law expert and a government adviser on KEDO, argued, "This is mission impossible. It's now in the seventh year, and not much has been done. Realistically, this KEDO plan doesn't look like it's going to work." He added, however, "Even the conservatives in Korea think cancellation is too dangerous." Jhe stated, "It seemed the Americans lack the will to carry out this agreement." Yukiko Fukawgawa, a Korea expert at Aoyama University in Tokyo, said, "KEDO is almost dead." Henry Sokolski, head of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center in Washington, stated, "It makes no sense." Sokolski recently warned that the project "when fully implemented would result in a massive expansion of North Korea's nuclear materials production base. It could produce between 75 to 150 bombs' worth of nuclear material annually." However, Cheon Seong-whun, an arms control expert at the Korea Institute for National Unification, responded, "That is sheer nonsense." Cheon said that such extraction is hugely difficult and would require a large reprocessing effort far beyond the DPRK's technical or financial means, adding that the fuel in the plant will be under strict control of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Han Sung-joo, ROK foreign minister when the deal was negotiated, stated, "North Korea has lived up to their part" of the agreement. "The question is, has the U.S. moved the goal posts along the way?" Desaix Anderson, the executive director of KEDO, argued that the Agreed Framework "has kept the nuclear activities of North Korea frozen for seven years. And it has been the initial stage of a sea change in Korea. You can stop it now only if you want to pay the cost: a strong risk of military conflict." US Representative Henry Hyde (Republican- Illinois), chairman of the House International Relations Committee, said in a recent speech in Washington that US President George W. "Bush's insistence on verification will make it very unlikely that the nuclear reactors will ever be completed in North Korea." Peter Hayes, Executive Director of the Nautilus Institute, stated, "At every step along the way, this project has faced problems. But now, it's difficult to see what could stop it."

Reuters ("EXPERTS ENDORSE NEW LOOK AT N. KOREA NUCLEAR DEAL," 03/26/01) reported that

a 28- member working group on Korea of the Council on Foreign Relations, headed by former senior US State Department official Morton Abramowitz and James Laney, president emeritus of Emory University, urged US President George W. Bush to consider possible revisions to the 1994 Agreed Framework. In a letter to Bush released on Monday, the task force stressed that while there should be "no unilateral changes by any party ... circumstances require a fresh look" at the agreement. The experts said that the Agreed Framework deferred the difficult dismantling of the DPRK's nuclear program and that significant technical and legal hurdles remain before it can be completed. They recommended that Bush "undertake a deliberate and careful review of the status of the Agreed Framework together with Japan, Korea [ROK] and the European Union." The letter stated, "This review should focus on both the remaining challenges to full implementation to the Agreed Framework as well as potential opportunities to engage North Korea on a review of the terms to meet Pyongyang's immediate energy needs." Noting the DPRK's "striking" request for electrical energy from the ROK, the letter said, "The South is under no obligation to provide this energy and should not do so without linking it to the North's obligations under the Agreed Framework." It added, "Nevertheless, this new development suggests that some reworking of the 1994 accord might be possible." It recommended that "for now, we should continue to support South Korea's efforts at cooperation and reconciliation while maintaining a robust deterrent and close ... coordination" between the US, Japan and the ROK. It said that Bush should resume negotiations on DPRK missiles "when ready." It said that the US "bottom line" must include effective verification, provision of assistance that would not involve sensitive technology transfers, elimination of already-deployed long-range missiles and movement toward reducing the DPRK conventional military threat.

3. DPRK Policy Coordination

Reuters ("U.S., ALLIES DISCUSS NORTH KOREA, BACK REGULAR TALKS," Seoul, 03/26/01) and the Associated Press ("US, JAPAN, SKOREA DISCUSS NKOREA," Seoul, 03/26/01) reported that officials from the US, Japan, and the ROK met Monday in Seoul to discuss the DPRK. In a joint statement following the meeting, they stated, "The three delegations reiterated the importance of continued close consultation and coordination of policy toward North Korea." They also reaffirmed their commitment to continue the 1994 Agreed Framework, while urging the DPRK to join them for successful implementation of the agreement. They also urged the DPRK to address concerns about its development of missiles and other weapons of mass destruction. The statement said that the next round of trilateral talks would be held in May. Tom Hubbard, acting US assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, headed the US delegation, while the ROK team was led by Lim Sung-joon, a deputy foreign minister, and Kunihiko Makita, director general of Asian and Pacific bureau at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, led the Japanese delegation.

4. ROK View of US Policy toward DPRK

The New York Times (Howard W. French, "SEOUL FEARS U.S. IS CHILLY ABOUT DETENTE WITH NORTH, Seoul, 03/25/01) reported that ROK analysts are describing ROK President Kim Dae-jung's meetings with the US President George W. Bush administration as an end to the most active phase of Kim's sunshine policy. However, an unnamed Western official who participated in the talks stated, "Personally, I was a bit surprised by all of the reports that President Kim was somehow dissed." He argued that agreement on Kim's four main objectives had been "achieved before he even stepped off the plane." Noting that the Bush administration began emphasizing the DPRK conventional artillery, Choi Jin-wook, director of North Korean studies at the Korean Institute for Unification Studies, stated, "The artillery are a threat that we want to resolve, but it is not an immediate issue, and some people wonder why the U.S. is being so tough on such an issue all of a sudden." Regarding US calls for reciprocity in dealing with the DPRK, former ROK Foreign Minister Lee Joung-binn stated, "Our

position is that given the reality on the Korean Peninsula, it is more appropriate to see reciprocity in a comprehensive manner. We are 10 times the size of North Korea in economic terms, and we have twice the population." Kang Hack-sung, professor of international relations at Korea University, argued, "Many Koreans in fact saw President Kim's sunshine policy as a kind of expensive appeasement policy, and those who opposed it in terms of transparency will question it more openly now." Selig S. Harrison, an expert on Korea at the Century Foundation, said that the state of the ROK economy enabled the opposition to undermine Kim Dae-jung on the DPRK issue. He added, "Still, there are certain things that President Kim can go ahead with, regardless of what the United States does." [Ed note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 26.]

5. ROK Cabinet Reshuffle

The Associated Press (Paul Shin, "SOUTH KOREA CABINET HAS MAKEOVER," Seoul, 03/26/01), The Wall Street Journal (Jay Solomon and Hae Won Choi, "KOREA'S KIM SACKS KEY MINISTERS IN A SWEEPING CABINET SHAKE-UP," Seoul, 03/27/01), The New York Times (Don Kirk, "SOUTH KOREAN LEADER PICKS OLD U.S. HAND AS FOREIGN MINISTER," Seoul, 03/26/01) and Reuters (Samuel Len, "KOREA SACKS FOREIGN MINISTER IN CABINET SHAKE-UP," Seoul, 03/26/01) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung replaced nine out of 22 ministers on Monday. Foreign Minister Lee Joung-binn resigned and was replaced by Han Seung-soo, a former ambassador to the US. Lim Dong-won, head of the National Intelligence Service, replaced Park Jae-kyu as unification minister. Kim Dong-shin, a career military man and former Army chief of staff, was named Defense Minister. Shin Wookhee, professor of international relations at Seoul National University, said that the new ministers "are likely to express their own opinions more. That will help cultivate balanced policies." Shin also noted, "There had been questions about whether the head of the National Intelligence Service was in the right post to handle rapprochement with North Korea. This now means the Unification Ministry will single-handedly lead engagement, in line with its original function." In a statement, the main opposition Grand National Party dismissed the appointments as a "typical example of cronyism."

6. DPRK-New Zealand Relations

The Associated Press ("NEW ZEALAND, N.KOREA TO OPEN TIES," Wellington, 03/25/01) reported that New Zealand officials said Sunday that New Zealand would establish diplomatic relations with the DPRK on Monday. An official statement said that New Zealand hopes the move will enable it to discuss security and humanitarian issues with the DPRK and to help defuse tension on the Korean peninsula. It also hopes that the establishment of diplomatic relations might lead to economic ties.

7. DPRK Delegation to Hyundai Funeral

The Associated Press ("N.KOREA DELEGATION ARRIVES IN SEOUL," Seoul, 03/23/01) reported that a DPRK delegation arrived in Seoul Saturday to attend the funeral of the late Hyundai founder Chung Ju-young. The four DPRK delegates arrived with a large funeral wreath from DPRK leader Kim Jong-il.

8. Comfort Women Issue

The Associated Press ("COURT REJECTS EX-KOREAN DEMANDS," Tokyo, 03/26/01) reported that a Japanese court on Monday rejected demands for compensation by a group of ROK former sex slaves

and soldiers forced into service by Japan's army during World War II. Judge Shoichi Maruyama said that all claims for compensation were settled by the 1965 treaty establishing diplomatic ties between Japan and the ROK. He added that violation of international laws by sexual slavery do not allow compensation.

9. Japanese View of World War II

The New York Times (Howard W. French, "JAPAN'S RESURGENT FAR RIGHT TINKERS WITH HISTORY," Tokyo, 03/25/01) reported that a best-selling Japanese book of cartoons called "On War" celebrates Japan's actions during World War II as the liberation of Asians from Western imperialism, and denies atrocities such as the Nanjing massacre, sexual enslavement, and biological warfare experiments. The book's author, Yoshinori Kobayashi, argued, "Whenever history is discussed, Nanjing massacre, comfort women and Unit 731 are always raised as if Japanese history consists of only these things." He stated, "there are a vast number of historical facts that make up Japan. We are just thinking of what to choose out of them in order to explain the present." Akimasa Miyake, a historian at Chiba University, warned, "Since the mid-1990's, revisionism, or some would say nationalism, has been surging in Japan. There is a feeling of emergency here, and we are very worried. But fortunately, so far this sort of reactionary movement hasn't reached the core of the society." However, Kanji Nishio, a leader of the Create New History group, stated, "I think it is ridiculous, and very sad and tragic that Japan cannot write its own patriotic history. We lost the war, and a fantasy was born that by talking bad about yourself, you can strengthen your position. I call that masochistic." A group led by the 1994 Nobel literature laureate Kenzaboro Oe said in a statement, "The voice of criticism has been raised from Korea and China, but of course the textbook issue is our own problem. Can we raise the Japanese of the future who must live in international society by such textbooks?"

10. Japan-Russia Peace Treaty

The Associated Press (Alexander Zemlianichenko, "JAPAN, RUSSIA DISCUSS PEACE TREATY," Irkutsk, 03/25/01) and Reuters (Elaine Lies, "RUSSIA, JAPAN TO WORK HARDER ON ISLAND DISPUTE," Irkutsk, 03/25/01) reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori met for 90 minutes in the eastern Siberian city of Irkutsk on Sunday and agreed to hold further talks on resolving the Kuril Islands dispute. Putin stated, "I would like to inform you with great satisfaction of a new step forward in the establishment of relations of partnership between Russia and Japan. I am certain in the near future, we will concentrate on working out the concrete basis for moving toward a peace treaty." In a joint statement, the two verified that the 1956 Soviet-Japan declaration "is a fundamental legal document establishing the departure point for peace treaty negotiations."

11. US Ambassador to Japan

The Associated Press ("HOWARD BAKER TAPPED FOR JAPAN AMBASSADORSHIP," Washington, 03/26/01) reported that US President George W. Bush on Monday named former Senator Howard Baker to be ambassador to Japan. Bush said in a statement, "Howard Baker is a true statesman and the appointment of a man of his experience and expertise exemplifies the importance I place on the relationship between the U.S. and Japan."

12. US Policy toward PRC

Reuters ("U.S. GENERAL URGES CHINA PACIFIC COOPERATION," Chicago, 03/26/01) reported that General Henry Shelton, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Monday that the US needs to pursue cooperation with the PRC. Shelton stated, "We all recognize that China is ... emerging into the international community right now. I believe it would behoove us from a military perspective to engage China to try to explore the areas where we can have cooperation." He added that while the US has strong interests and allies in the region, "that doesn't mean it has to be another cold war developing in the Pacific. We think we should continue to engage China to ... preclude that from happening." He warned, however, that the PRC "have increased their defense spending.... They are rapidly acquiring additional types of not only defensive but offensive types of weapons systems that could be deployed. We need to watch that, particularly as we look out into the 2015 to 2020 time frame." He stated, "I for one believe that we need to maintain our armed forces' strength to make sure we guard against strategic surprise and that we always deal from a position of strength."

13. US Arms Sales to Taiwan

The Washington Post (John Pomfret, "JIANG HAS CAUTION FOR U.S.," Beijing, 03/24/01, A01) reported that PRC President Jiang Zemin on Saturday urged the US not to sell advanced weapons to Taiwan. Jiang stated, "No matter who administers the government in the United States and no matter what kind of slightly different language he might use, one thing is very certain. The United States has to look at U.S.-China cooperation from a strategic standpoint, looking at strategic interests." Jiang said that Taiwan is the "key" to relations with the US and that mistakes on this issue could be costly for all sides. He warned, "If the United States were to sell advanced weapons to Taiwan such as the Aegis system, that would be very detrimental to China-U.S. relations." He added, "The more weapons you sell, the more we will prepare ourselves in terms of our national defense. This is logical." [Ed note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 26.]

The Associated Press (William Foreman, "TAIWAN SHOPPING FOR U.S. DESTROYER," Taipei, 03/24/01) reported that Taiwan's interested in Aegis-class destroyers demonstrates that Taiwan's greatest fear from the PRC is no longer invasion, but rather missile attack. Robert Karniol, Asia Pacific editor of Jane's Defense Weekly, said that while Taiwan needs the destroyers as a defense against missiles, "I don't think [the US President George W. Bush administration] have the guts" to sell the destroyers to Taiwan. However Damon Bristow, a researcher at the Royal United Services Institute for Defense Studies in London, stated, "The ships ... need a lot of support and the Taiwanese navy is rather small. I don't think they could operate with full effectiveness." Eric McVadon, a former defense and naval attache at the US Embassy in Beijing, said that Taiwan cannot match the PRC's arms acquisitions and expressed confidence that US forces would help defend Taiwan. He stated, "The U.S. Navy has a lot of Aegis ships. Taiwan doesn't need to worry about that."

14. US Military Policy Review

Reuters (Charles Aldinger, "RUMSFELD CASTS EYE ON ASIA IN DEFENSE VISION," Washington, 03/24/01) reported that US officials said Friday that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has signaled to US President George W. Bush his intention to press dramatic changes in US military strategy, with increased emphasis toward Asia. One official stated, "He [Rumsfeld] did not make any recommendations or discuss weapons in detail. But the secretary made clear that China and Asia--and the distances involved there--are looming ever larger on our radar. That will obviously make [arms] changes necessary." [Ed note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 26.]

The Singapore Straits Times (David Hsieh, "CHINA WON'T BE US' 'MAJOR ADVERSARY'," Beijing, 03/26/01) reported that Professor Zhu Feng of Beijing University said that the major review of future US defense strategy that US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld discussed with President George W. Bush on Friday will make just enough of a shift to make sure that US ability to intervene in Asia is not challenged by either the PRC or Russia. Zhu stated, "The biggest challenge to the US is still Russia, so any adjustment in its defense strategy will be limited." He added that Russia is still regarded as a "dangerous proliferator" of advanced weapons by the US. He said that US policymakers know that the PRC will not be able to mount a credible military challenge to the US in the Asia-Pacific region for another 20 years. He noted, "In its global reach, the US must guarantee the security of its military personnel and equipment, and the biggest threat to that is missiles. National Missile Defense and Theatre Missile Defense systems also conform to the new military doctrine." [Ed note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 26.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK Condolers to ROK

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "N.K. MOURNERS RAISE HOPES OF BREAKTHROUGH," Seoul, 03/26/01) reported that a four-member DPRK delegation visited the ROK Saturday to pay tribute to the late Hyundai Group founder Chung Ju-yung. Song Ho-kyong, who was the main negotiator in dealings with Hyundai as vice chairman of the DPRK's Asia-Pacific Peace Committee, led the condolence delegation. The delegation also delivered a large funeral wreath sent by DPRK leader Kim Jong-il as well as Kim's condolence message, in which he praised the late tycoon's contribution to inter-Korean cooperation and expressed hope that Hyundai's business projects will continue. The trip by the DPRK condolers, who flew through the direct inter-Korean route over the West Sea that was first opened for the summit last June, raised expectations for the early resumption of dialogue between the two Koreas.

2. DPRK-France Relations

The Korea Herald ("NORTH KOREA TARGETS FRANCE TO COMPLETE EU TIES BREAKTHROUGH," Seoul, 03/26/01) reported that a top DPRK envoy is to visit France soon in a bid to have full diplomatic relations with the European Union (EU). DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister Choe Su-hon will be in Paris between April 2 and 4 for talks on forging ties, ROK government officials who have recently been in touch with French counterparts said Sunday. One top official said that if the DPRK were successful, it would be a "diplomatic jackpot."

3. DPRK Talks with ROK Activists

The Korea Herald ("P'YANG PROPOSES BEIJING TALKS WITH KOREAN ACTIVISTS," Seoul, 03/26/01) reported that the DPRK notified an ROK civic group alliance Thursday that it has accepted the group's proposal to hold working-level talks in preparation for celebrations to mark the first anniversary of the inter-Korean declaration of peace and reconciliation signed at the June 15 summit. In a fax message sent to an ROK citizen's alliance devoted to reunification and the implementation of the declaration, the DPRK National Reconciliation Council said, "We accept your proposal to hold grand symposiums and other reunification events during the period between June 15 and August 15, as well as working-level talks to prepare for the events." In the notification, the

DPRK suggested holding working- level talks in Beijing on March 26-31. It also said that the chief of the council and three other delegates would represent the DPRK at the talks.

4. Aid for DPRK

The Korea Herald ("INT'L CHURCH GROUP SEEKS DONATIONS FOR N. KOREA," Seoul, 03/26/01) reported that a Geneva-based international Christian aid organization has urged the international community to help them raise nearly US$2 million for the DPRK, an agency source said. The amount targeted this year by "Action By Churches Together" was a little lower than last year's US$2.75 million, but it intends to spend the money in six months time, from March to September. Under the appeal carried on ACT's Web site (http://www.act-intl.org), contributions will be used to buy high-protein food like soybeans and cooking oil, raw materials for local pharmaceutical companies and nutritious food for the aged and weak people. ACT also said that it plans to help farmers increase the production of potatoes in the DPRK and provide materials for building green houses there.

5. DPRK Rejects UN Chairmanship

The Korea Herald ("PYONGYANG ABDICATES U.N. CHAIRMANSHIP," Geneva, 03/24/01) reported that the DPRK has notified the United Nation Disarmament Center that it will decline its turn to lead the alternating chairmanship of the center's secretariat, a diplomatic source said Thursday. The DPRK was scheduled to assume the chairmanship of this year's last session from August 22 to the end of this year. The source said that the DPRK was reported to have expressed its unwillingness to assume the chairmanship citing its manpower shortage and the heavy administrative tasks required.

6. DPRK-UK Relations

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "BRITAIN NEARLY READY TO OPEN EMBASSY IN N.K.," London, 03/24/01) reported that Britain will open its first embassy in the DPRK "in the near future," Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said Thursday. In a written statement to Parliament, Cook said the planned embassy in Pyongyang would improve Britain's ability "to analyze political, economic and social developments and to help support recent positive developments in inter-Korean relations."

7. Three-Way Talks on DPRK

The Korea Times ("3-WAY TALKS ON NK POLICIES OPEN," Seoul, 03/25/01) reported that the ROK, Japan and the US were to hold a trilateral consultation meeting in Seoul Monday to coordinate their DPRK policies. The ROK and the US were to hold a bilateral meeting first in the morning and then enter into a trilateral meeting with Japan in the afternoon at the Westin Chosun Hotel in downtown Seoul, a Foreign Affairs- Trade Ministry official said. As the Bush administration did not appoint an assistant secretary of state, acting assistant secretary of state Thomas Hubbard was to lead the US delegation, while Japan decided to dispatch Kunihiko Makita, director general of the Foreign Ministry's Asian Affairs Bureau, instead of Deputy Vice Minister for Foreign Policy Shotaro Yachi, who is unable to attend due to his busy schedule. Deputy Foreign Minister Yim Sung-joon was to head the ROK side.

8. US Policy towards DPRK

Chosun Ilbo (Joo Yong-joon, "POWELL OFFERS SELECTIVE SUPPORT ON NK POLICY," Seoul,

03/25/01) reported that US Secretary of State Colin Powell said Friday that the US was in no particular hurry to embrace the DPRK and would set its own timeframe for improving relations. Powell said that he supported ROK President Kim Dae-jung's policy towards opening up the DPRK, but that it needed to be embarked on with prudence. His remarks, made at a National Press Association meeting, were interpreted to mean that the US will selectively support President Kim's "sunshine policy." Powell noted that the US wants to make sure that Kim Jong-il understands that the US is analyzing his moves and its skepticism. He said that some of the things offered by the DPRK need to be checked over time.

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Produced by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development in partnership with:
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