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I. United States

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1. DPRK Famine

The Associated Press (Kyong-Hwa Seok, "S.KOREANS FAST IN SUPPORT OF HUNGRY," Seoul, 04/25/98) reported that hundreds of thousands of people throughout the world participated in an "international fasting day" aimed at raising some 12.7 billion won (US$8.5 million) worldwide to buy 50,000 tons of corn for the DPRK. A total of 107 cities in 36 nations, including San Francisco, Washington, New York, Tokyo, Beijing, Paris, and Berlin, participated in the campaign. Organizers in the ROK estimated the number of overseas participants at about 10,000. There was no DPRK response to the international campaign. Organizers broadcast taped messages from world leaders,

including Pope John Paul II, Dalai Lama, Reverend Billy Graham, and former US President Jimmy Carter, urging citizens' participation. Organizers said that money donated by 130,000 individual telephone callers in the first 3 hours of the campaign reached 130 million won (US$87,000). The money directly donated by visiting participants was not yet counted. The UN World Food Programme expressed its appreciation to the campaign, saying that donors have been slow to respond to its latest appeal for emergency food aid for the DPRK.

The Associated Press (John Leicester, "N. KOREA FACES CLEAN WATER CRISIS," Beijing, 04/25/98) reported that Red Cross representatives, after two weeks in the DPRK, said Saturday that the famine appears to have eased in some areas, but that the country faces a new potential health crisis from contaminated water. The representatives said that power and chlorine shortages have shut down water treatment plants or forced them to operate at reduced capacity, and people lack fuel to boil contaminated water. Johan Schaar, a member of the Red Cross team that visited two northwestern provinces bordering the PRC, said that water pumping in urban areas has "almost collapsed totally," leading many people to draw "severely contaminated" well water. He warned, "the coming summer, with the warm weather, could constitute a very severe health crisis." Schaar added, however, that foreign food aid has made an important difference and that the delegation did not see severely malnourished people. He stated, "We are a little optimistic," adding that health workers they spoke to said "the situation has probably become a little bit better than a year ago." He noted, though, that food harvested last year has run out, leaving the country dependent on aid and imports from abroad at least until a new harvest is gathered in the autumn. Ernst Lauridsen, a doctor on the Red Cross team, said that while cholera has so far not been reported, unsafe water and poor sanitation is "fertile ground for a cholera epidemic." He added that children and mothers were most at risk from unsafe water, and that diarrhea, vomiting, and stomach infections are already the most or second most common illnesses, particularly among children.

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2. Foreign Film Production in DPRK

The Associated Press ("REPORT: N.KOREA OFFERS MOVIE EXTRAS," Hong Kong, 04/26/98) reported that Hong Kong's Sunday Morning Post said that the DPRK has offered 200,000 soldiers as extras to Hong Kong film director Jacob Cheung, who plans to shoot the first foreign movie in the DPRK. The 200,000 extras would give the movie one of the biggest casts in film history. The Hong Kong film team believes that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il, who reportedly owns a collection of 20,000 foreign films, is taking an interest in the project. Cheung said that the film is about a small state defended by a pacifist against invasion just before China's Warring States period between 403 BC and 221 BC The team chose to film at an ancient castle close to Pyongyang, as lower costs there would allow more shooting time than in the PRC. Shooting of the film is scheduled to begin in late August.

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3. US-ROK Military Relations

The Associated Press ("U.S. TOP GENERAL IN S. KOREA TO STRENGTHEN MILITARY TIES," Seoul, 04/27/98) reported that General Henry H. Shelton, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, arrived in Seoul Monday to discuss strengthening the US-ROK military alliance. Shelton was scheduled to meet with President Kim Dae-jung, Defense Minister Chun Yong-taek, and ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman General Kim Jin-ho. He also planned to visit Panmunjom and US infantry and air force bases.

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4. PRC-ROK Relations

The Associated Press ("CHINA VICE PRESIDENT VISITS SKOREA," Seoul, 04/26/98) reported that PRC Vice President Hu Jintao arrived in the ROK Sunday to meet with President Kim Dae-jung, acting Prime Minister Kim Jong-pil, and other ROK leaders. Hu was accompanied by 40 government officials.

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5. Compensation for ROK Comfort Women

The Associated Press (Yuri Kageyama, "JAPAN MUST PAY EX-WWII SEX SLAVES," Tokyo, 04/27/98) reported that Yamaguchi District Court Judge Hideaki Chikashita ruled Monday that the Japanese government must compensate three ROK women forced into sexual slavery for Japanese soldiers during World War II. Chikashita called the army's actions an example of sexual and ethnic discrimination and a "fundamental violation of human rights." He stated that the sex slaves' right to compensation was guaranteed under the constitution and was acknowledged when the government in 1993 admitted the army's actions in kidnapping and enslaving the women. However, he rejected claims by seven other women in the case, who had demanded that the government pay them for being forced to work in Japanese military plants during the war, claiming that they had not suffered as much as the sex slaves. The ruling awarded the women the equivalent of US$2,300 each. Seita Yamamoto, attorney for the three women, said he would appeal for more money. He stated, "From the defendants' viewpoint, (the award) is not enough. Some are outraged." He added, however, "Although the defendants did not clearly win, the government has clearly lost." Japanese government spokesman Kanezo Muraoka called the ruling "regrettable," but both the Japanese Foreign Ministry and the ROK Foreign Affairs Ministry declined comment until the ruling could be studied more thoroughly. Five other lawsuits by former sex slaves are still pending.

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6. Reform of ROK National Security Agency

The Associated Press ("S.KOREA SPY AGENCY ADOPTS NEW NAME," Seoul, 04/26/98) reported that the ROK intelligence agency, the Agency for National Security Planning, said Sunday that it will change its name to National Intelligence Service. The organization said in a statement, "With the new name, we will make a new beginning as an intelligence agency trusted by the people." The agency will ask the National Assembly to approve the new name next week.

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7. ROK Financial Crisis

The Associated Press ("S. KOREAN PROSECUTORS TO QUESTION FORMER PRES KIM YOUNG-SAM," Seoul, 04/27/98) reported that ROK prosecutors said Monday that they will question former President Kim Young-sam about whether his economic advisers tried to cover up the severity of the financial crisis. Prosecutors have been trying to establish criminal charges against Kim's two economic aides, former Finance Minister Kang Kyong-shik and former chief presidential economic adviser Kim In- ho. After stepping down in February, former president Kim said he was informed of the severity of the financial crisis only 10 days before the ROK called in the International Monetary Fund. Prosecution officials ruled out any possibility of bringing criminal charges against former President Kim, saying that the investigation is simply to find out whether his policy-makers lied

about the financial crisis.

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8. PRC-Taiwan Talks

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN NEGOTIATOR RETURNS HOME," Taipei, 04/24/98) reported that Jan Jyh-horng of Taiwan's semi-official Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) returned home Friday after concluding two days of meetings in the PRC. Shortly before leaving Beijing on Friday, Jan called his visit a "significant development," adding that he expects another meeting soon with Li Yafei, a deputy secretary general of the PRC's Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS), to put the final touches on plans for a trip by SEF chairman Koo Chen-fu to Beijing later this year. He said that Koo might attend a conference as the PRC suggests, or lead a delegation of SEF directors to meet ARATS officials.

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9. Taiwanese Diplomacy

The Associated Press (Jocelyn Gecker, "TAIWAN PM BEGINS MALAYSIAN MEETINGS," Kuala Lumpur, 04/26/98) reported that Taiwanese Prime Minister Vincent Siew began meetings in Kuala Lumpur Sunday to discuss Taiwanese investment and ways to help Malaysia through its economic crisis. Reports from Taiwan said Siew is expected to meet with Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad and his deputy, Anwar Ibrahim. A spokesman for the PRC Embassy in Kuala Lumpur said Sunday, "We are opposed to any kind of official contact with Taiwan. We would like to see that there is no Malaysian official or high ranking people meeting with Vincent Siew." He added, "No matter what kind of visit they call it, it has an official position." However, Taiwanese Foreign Minister Jason Hu, who is accompanying Siew on the trip, stated, "For our survival, we insist on taking any moves that will help us create a new era."

The Associated Press ("DIPLOMATIC SETBACK FOR TAIWAN," Beijing, 04/24/98) reported that the PRC's Xinhua News Agency said Friday that the foreign ministers of the PRC and the African country of Guinea Bissau signed a communique announcing ties between the two resumed as of Thursday. The Taiwanese Foreign Ministry promptly issued a statement declaring it had severed diplomatic ties with Guinea Bissau and was discontinuing aid to the country. The statement accused the PRC of a "two-faced methodology," because the news came the same day that Taiwanese negotiators returned from a visit to Beijing. It stated, "On the one hand China expresses friendliness, on the other it lures away our allies, wrecking the harmonious atmosphere between the sides, and exerting a negative influence on future pleasant interaction."

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10. Russian Nuclear Weapons Research

The Associated Press ("RUSSIA TO CUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS RESEARCH FACILITIES," Moscow, 04/27/98) reported that, according to the ITAR-Tass news agency, the Russian Atomic Energy Ministry on Monday announced plans to sharply reduce the number of institutions involved in nuclear weapons research and production. The cuts will begin this year, and in five to seven years all Russian nuclear weapons projects will be carried out at two research centers and one production facility. The move is part of Russia's military conversion program, but is also prompted by problems with state financing of the industry, as last year Russia's defense programs received only 30 percent of the funds allocated to them in the budget, and the state's debt to the industry reached 306.1

million rubles (US$51 million). The ministry refused to say which research and production centers will remain in operation, but officials said that Russia's two main nuclear research centers, Arzamas-16 and Chelyabinsk-70, were most likely to stay open.

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11. Nuclear Weapons Abolition

Reuters ("CAMPAIGNERS HOPE FOR BAN ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS BY 2000," Geneva, 04/27/98) reported that Abolition 2000, an umbrella coalition of nuclear disarmament advocates, on Monday urged governments to work towards a pact for signature by 2000 that would eliminate all nuclear weapons within a fixed time-frame. The group issued its appeal as diplomats gathered for two weeks of discussions on preparations for a full-scale conference in two years time to review the Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty. Leaders of the coalition presented an international petition on the issue to the chairman of the review meeting, Eugeniusz Wyzner of Poland, which they said was signed by 13 million people in Japan since November of last year. David Krieger of the US-based Nuclear Age Peace Foundation argued, "It is time for the nuclear powers to live up to their commitments and really work for nuclear disarmament." He added, "These signatures represent voices of the common people, people in Japan who know the devastation caused by nuclear weapons. They are tired of waiting." Apart from the appeal for a treaty on eliminating weaponry, the petition also calls for the separation of warheads from delivery vehicles and for them to be disabled. It also calls on the five declared nuclear powers to pledge that they would not be the first to use nuclear weapons in any conflict.

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12. US Theater Missile Defense

The Washington Post (Bradley Graham, "A BUMPY PATH FOR MISSILE DEFENSES," Downey, 04/27/98, A01) reported that the US has spent US$50 billion on research over fifteen years to build an intercontinental ballistic missile defense. The US continues to spend nearly US$1 billion annually on developing a national system to protect US territory and about US$3 billion on battlefield weapons to safeguard US troops abroad. Defenders of the plan blame delays on the absence of a firm commitment to the project and on shifts in the focus of research from space-based arsenals to predominately ground-based weapons. Greg Canavan, a senior scientist at the Los Alamos National Laboratory, argued, "The reason things have been moving slowly is that not all the key players see this as important to do in a big hurry." John Peller, program manager for national missile defense at the Boeing Corporation, called the current program "less technically challenging" than reaching the moon or inventing the space shuttle, and Shell Wald, program manager for Raytheon, argued, "There are no more scientific unknowns from this point." However, in 20 intercept attempts over the past decade using various designs, only seven missiles struck their targets. Stephen Schwartz, a defense analyst with the Brookings Institution, stated, "It's an absurd notion that if only we had the national will, this stuff would work." US Defense Secretary William S. Cohen argued that the proliferation of missile technology around the world made the US effort necessary. The current plan is to build a "limited" defense, relying on about 20 interceptors initially, to block a few missiles launched intentionally by "rogue" nations such as the DPRK, or accidentally by major powers such as Russia and the PRC. The decision to deploy the system, however, would be conditional on four factors: the threat by the time development is completed; the effectiveness of the system; the cost of deployment; and whether it violate the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. However, the Senate Armed Services Committee on Thursday endorsed legislation that would commit the US to deploying a national system "as soon as is technologically possible."

II. Republic of Korea

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1. Reform of ROK National Security Agency

The ROK National Security Planning Agency announced Sunday that it is changing its name to the National Intelligence Service (NIS) and its motto from "working from the shade towards the light" to "intelligence is national power." The bill to formalize the change will be submitted to the cabinet early this week before being forwarded to the National Assembly. The change is part of the intelligence body's aim to improve its image and credibility with the general public. (Chosun Ilbo, "NSPA CHANGES TO NIS," 04/26/98)

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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The Center for International Studies,
Yonsei University, Seoul, Republic of Korea
The Center for Global Communications, Tokyo, Japan
Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Wade L. Huntley: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Shin Dong-bom: dongbom_shin@wisenet.co.kr
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Choi Chung-moon: cily@star.elim.co.kr
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hiroyasu Akutsu: akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@glas.apc.org
Moscow, Russian Federation

Chunsi Wu: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

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Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org