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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK on Nuclear Program

The Associated Press (Jae-soon Chang, "PRO-N. KOREA PAPER: NUCLEAR TENSION COULD SPIKE", Seoul, 2008/08/27) reported that the DPRK's threat to restore its nuclear facilities should not be seen as "empty talk" and the standoff could develop into a crisis similar to the country's first atomic test, a pro-Pyongyang newspaper said. The DPRK's statement "must not be empty talk. If the United States moves on a road to intensify confrontation with the North ... it may lead to a situation where the hands of the denuclearization clock may run backward," the paper said. "There is no guarantee that the same situation in which the DPRK was forced to conduct the nuclear test would not be created," it said.

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2. Russia on DPRK Nuclear Program

Kommersant ("RUSSIA CALLS ON N. KOREA TO COMPLETE DISABLEMENT OF NUCLEAR FACILITIES", 2008/08/27) reported that Moscow regrets that the DPRK has decided to halt disablement of nuclear facilities. The RF Foreign Ministry made a statement Wednesday, saying that the decision of the DPRK to suspend disablement of its nuclear facilities in Yongbyon and consider restoring them to the original state has evoked disappointment and concern in Moscow.

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3. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

The Associated Press ("US SHRUGS OFF NORTH KOREAN DISABLEMENT HALT ", Washington, 2008/08/27) reported that the US is shrugging off the DPRK's threat to backtrack on an agreement to dismantle its nuclear program. State Department spokesman Robert Wood said Wednesday that the U.S. "can't get overly excited by a down in the situation right now because this process does go up and down."

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4. DPRK Nuclear Program

Reuters (Jon Herskovitz , "NORTH KOREA STILL HOLDS PLUTONIUM CARD: ANALYSTS", Seoul, 2008/08/27) reported that the DPRK's threat to restart its plant that makes arms-grade plutonium is feasible, although the task would be a daunting one, analysts said. "The North Koreans have mastered the nuclear fuel cycle. They understand the technical aspects of it," said Daniel Pinkston, an analyst with the International Crisis Group in Seoul. "They have the human resources, which is the most important... The North Koreans' thinking may be: 'We can rebuild it. We can make it better and we have enough nuclear weapons to deter anyone for the one to three years it might take to get this back up and running'," Pinkston said.

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5. Japan-DPRK Relations

Kyodo News ("NO EFFECT ON ABDUCTION FROM N. KOREA SUSPENSION OF NUKE DISABLEMENT", Tokyo, 2008/08/27) reported that the DPRK's suspension of disablement work on its nuclear facility has no direct influence on its reinvestigation into Japanese abductees, Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura said. At a press conference, Machimura expressed hope that Pyongyang will set up a reinvestigation committee as soon as possible, based on a promise it made earlier this month.

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6. Inter-Korean Relations

Joongang Ilbo (Park Sun-young, "POLICE GO AFTER PRO-NORTH POSTS ON THE INTERNET", 2008/08/27) reported that the National Police Agency yesterday called on the Korea Communications Commission to get rid of some 400 pro-DPRK posts from a domestic leftist group's Web site. The posts, uploaded on the site of an organization called Solidarity for Practice of the South-North Joint Declaration, idealized the DPRK regime and lauded its juche ideology of self-reliance. That violates the National Security Law, police officials said.

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7. Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation

Yonhap News ("HEAD OF HYUNDAI ASAN TO RESIGN OVER TOURIST DEATH ", Seoul, 2008/08/27) reported that the head of Hyundai Asan Corp. is expected to step down over the recent shooting death of a ROK tourist at the Mount Geumgang resort in the DPRK, company sources said. Yoon Man-joon, head of the company that operated tours just north of the demilitarized zone on the east coast, is planning to resign at a temporary shareholders' meeting planned for Thursday, in which new board members are also to be selected.

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8. DPRK Espionage

BBC News ("S KOREA ACCUSES REFUGEE OF SPYING ", 2008/08/27) reported that a DPRK woman has been arrested in the ROK on suspicion of spying for the DPRK. Prosecutors say Won Jeong-hwa was trained in espionage before being sent to the ROK, where she claimed asylum. She is accused of giving sexual favours to army officers in exchange for military secrets. She has been accused of collecting photographs and obtaining information about the location of key military installations, to hand over to DPRK agents in the PRC.

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9. DPRK Defections to the ROK

Korea Herald ("N. KOREAN DEFECTORS ARRIVING IN SOUTH UP 42 PCT IN H1", 2008/08/27) reported hat the number of DPRK defectors who arrived in the ROK rose 42 percent in the first half of this year from a year ago, the Unification Ministry was quoted as saying by Yonhap News Agency. The ministry estimated the number of DPRK defectors coming to the ROK in the first six months of this year to be 1,744, up 41.7 percent from 1,230 during the same period last year.

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10. DPRK on US-ROK Joint Military Exercsies

Yonhap News (Shim Sun-ah, "S. KOREA-U.S. WAR GAMES CAST DARK CLOUD OVER NUCLEAR TALKS: NK DAILY ", Seoul, 2008/08/27) reported that the DPRK claimed last week's annual military drills between the ROK and the US had impeded the six-party nuclear disarmament talks. The drills "are further increasing the danger of military conflicts and a nuclear war on the Korean Peninsula, beclouding the prospect of settling the nuclear issue," the Rodong Shinmun said in an article carried by the DPRK's official Korean Central News Agency.

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11. US-ROK Security Alliance

Xinhua News ("S KOREA, U.S. TO DISCUSS DEFENSE COST-SHARING", Seoul, 2008/08/27)

reported that the ROK and the US will hold a new round of negotiations over the defense cost-sharing of the expense of U.S. troops stationed in the ROK, the Foreign Ministry said. The ROK and the US will hold the second high-level talks on setting the cost-sharing ratio for the coming years in Seoul on Aug. 28-29. The two countries will make joint efforts to find a way for sharing the cost in an adequate and reasonable manner in this round of talks, the ROK Foreign Ministry said.

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12. ROK Environment

Joongang Ilbo (Cho Jae-eun , "'GREEN KOREA' TO BE REALITY BY 2030", 2008/08/27) reported that the government laid out its 20-year road map for a greener ROK yesterday. To increase its reliance on renewable energy instead of fossil fuels, it will build new nuclear reactors and support the use of various alternative fuels. During a National Energy Committee meeting, chaired by President Lee Myung-bak, officials set the goal of reducing reliance on fossil fuels to 61 percent by 2030 instead of the present 83 percent. If the plan is carried out, it will result in savings of $34.4 billion in energy-related imports and create 950,000 new jobs, according to the NEC.

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13. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute

The Associated Press (Hyung-Jin Kim, "SKOREAN EMOTIONS RUN HIGH OVER ISLAND DISPUTE", 2008/08/27) reported that a rifle-toting South Korean stands guard on the remote and rocky islet of Dokdo, gazing out over the expanse of blue ocean toward Japan for any potential challenge to his country's control. Kim Eun-taek is part of a 40-member police contingent that has been on high alert since mid-July. In Japan, the dispute appears not to arouse anywhere near the same level of public emotion as in the ROK, though it remains a favorite cause of the vocal right wing and among fishermen on Japan's western coast who want greater access to the rich waters between Japan and the Korean peninsula.

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14. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Mission

The Asahi Shimbun ("DIET BACK SEPT. 12; BATTLE OVER MSDF MISSION LOOMS", 2008/08/27) reported that the extraordinary Diet session will start Sept. 12 and last for 70 days, which will not be enough time for the ruling party to pass legislation to extend the anti-terrorism refueling mission in the Indian Ocean. The ruling coalition will likely have to extend the session to pass the bill.

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15. Japan SDF Military Drills

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("SDF CUTS BACK ON DRILLS DUE TO RISING FUEL COSTS", 2008/08/27) reported that the Self-Defense Forces have been forced to scale back daily activities and contemplate the cancellation of large-scale military exercises due to the continued rise in global fuel

prices. The Air Self-Defense Force has already begun limiting the frequency of military exercises, which use a substantial amount of fuel.

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16. Japan Aid Workers in Afghanistan

The Asahi Shimbun ("KIDNAPPED AID WORKER SLAIN IN AFGHANISTAN", 2008/08/27) reported that Japanese aid worker Kazuya Ito, kidnapped in Afghanistan on Tuesday, was apparently killed by his captors during a gunbattle with police trying to rescue him. Ito, 31, was a member of Peshawar-kai, an NGO that provides relief programs in Afghanistan and Pakistan. His body was recovered from a mountainous area about 20 kilometers north of where the pair was abducted, NGO members said. The site is about 40 kilometers north-northeast of the eastern city of Jalalabad.

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17. Japan on US-India Nuclear Deal

Kyodo News ("MACHIMURA SUGGESTS JAPAN'S ACCEPTANCE OF U.S.-INDIA NUCLEAR DEAL", Tokyo, 2008/08/27) reported that Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura suggested Wednesday that Japan will accept the controversial accord allowing the United States to transfer nuclear technology to India, which is a non-signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. ''Needless to say, Japan supports the NPT regime and does not allow nuclear proliferation,'' Machimura told a news conference. He added, however, that Japan needs to partly accept India's position.

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18. Sino-Japanese Military Relations

Kyodo News ("JAPAN DEFENSE CHIEF, CHINA ENVOY AGREE TO BOOST DEFENSE EXCHANGES", Tokyo, 2008/08/27) reported that Japanese Defense Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi and PRC Ambassador to Japan Cui Tiankai agreed Wednesday to enhance bilateral defense exchanges including a planned visit by the Japanese defense minister to the PRC later this year, a Japanese official said. Cui was quoted as telling Hayashi that he would like him to cooperate so that defense-related people in both countries can work more closely at a time when bilateral defense exchanges have gathered ''momentum.''

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19. Sino-Mongolian Military Relations

Xinhua News ("MILITARY OFFICIALS OF CHINA, MONGOLIA DISCUSS REGIONAL SECURITY, DEFENSE ISSUES", 2008/08/27) reported that Mongolian and PRC military officials held the third Defense Security Consultation on Wednesday, discussing regional security situation, international peacekeeping, bilateral ties and other issues of common concern. Assistant chief of the general staff of the PRC's People's Liberation Army (PLA) Chen Xiaogong and state secretary of the Mongolian

Defense Ministry M. Borbaatar attended the consultation. Chen said that cooperation between the two militaries in the fields of high-level exchanges, personnel training, and frontier defense had been highly effective and helped promote bilateral relations.

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20. Shanghai Cooperation Organziation

Asia-Plus ("SHANGHAI GROUP'S BUSINESS COUNCIL DISCUSS ENERGY, FOOD SECURITY", Dushanbe, 2008/08/27) reported that in the run-up to the summit of the heads of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states, a board meeting of the organization's business council opened in Dushanbe today. Participants in the meeting discuss issues of energy and food security, development of tourism and agricultural problems.

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II. PRC Report

21. Civil Society and the 512 Earthquake

China Soong Ching Ling Foundation website, http://www.sclf.org/jgdt/200808/t20080826_10668.htm ("CHINA RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES DONATES AMBULANCES TO SICHUAN DISASTER AREAS", 2008/08/27) reported that on Aug.21, the donation ceremony of “China Ronald McDonald House Charities donates 10 ambulances to women and children agencies of Sichuan disaster areas” was hold in Beijing. PRC Ronald McDonald House Charities which is under China Soong Qing Ling Foundation is established in 2006, and it aims at improving the health of PRC children and providing help to PRC Disadvantaged children. The ten ambulances are worth 1.3 million yuan and before this, China Ronald McDonald House Charities and McDonald's (China) Co., Ltd. have donated 13.5 million yuan to Sichuan disaster areas.

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22. PRC Civil Society

China Children and Teenagers’ Fund, http://www.cctf.org.cn/contents/shownews.asp?news_sn=2008826516 ("JACKIE CHAN: MAKING DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN’S OLYMPIC DREAM COME TRUE", 2008/08/26) reported that for over 60 disadvantaged children coming from Shanxi, Hunan, Henan and other provinces, Aug. 22 is an unforgettable day of their lives. Because thanks to the endowment of the PRC Children and Teenagers’ Fund, they not only came to the PRC National Stadium Bird’s Nest to watch the Olympic Games, but also visited the Olympic Village and ate Beijing roast duck in the company of superstar Jackie Chan. Chan’s kindness has set a good example to the children and the children are encouraged to study hard and grow into adults who are beneficial to the society.

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23. PRC Civil Society and Public Health

Dabashan Environment and Poverty Issues Seminar, http://www.83zpss.com/News/GB/ArticleShow.asp?ArticleID=512 ("WOMAN HEALTH PROJECT COMING INTO EVALUATION", 2008/08/26) reported that the Woman Health Project which was supported by Hongkong community partner and executed by Dabashan Environment and Poverty Issues Seminar has come into the stage of evaluation. During the two years of the project, the Dabashan community has carried out a series of health promoting activities. It has solved the lighting problem of part of the community, and built 1 kms of road. New village health post has also been set up with 2 trained doctors and the necessary facility. The farmers of the community welcome the experts' evaluation and hope they make good suggestions for the further development of their community.

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