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MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Fox News ("CARTER SAYS U.S. CAN GET DPRK TO GIVE UP ITS NUCLEAR WEAPONS", 2009/01/26) reported that former President Jimmy Carter said Monday he believes DPRK would be willing to give up its nuclear weapons for U.S. diplomatic recognition, a peace deal with ROK and America, and if it got new atomic power reactors and free fuel oil. "It could be worked out, in my opinion, in half a day," Carter said in an interview Monday with The Associated Press.

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2. US-DPRK Relations

Agence France Press (Mark Landler, "CLINTON RAISES PROSPECT OF DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WITH DPRK", Washington, 2009/01/27) reported that Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton suggested on Tuesday that there could be high-level direct negotiations with DPRK. Mrs. Clinton reaffirmed the Obama administration's commitment to multilateral negotiations with DPRK over its nuclear program, with PRC, Japan, Russia and ROK also taking part.

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3. Russo-DPRK Relations

Agence France Press ("RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY DELEGATION IN DPRK - REPORT", Seoul, 2009/01/27) reported that a Russian foreign ministry delegation arrived in DPRK Tuesday, state media said. The team was led by deputy foreign minister Alexei Borodavkin, the Korean Central News Agency said in a brief report. It is not clear whether he will meet Kim.

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4. Inter-Korean Relations

JoongAng Ilbo (Chae Byung-geon and Jung Ha-won , "OFFICIALS DRAW UP LIST OF ABDUCTEES", 2009/01/28) reported that ROK's Unification Ministry is drawing up an extensive list of ROK citizens believed to have been kidnapped by the DPRK. According to unnamed government officials, the Unification Ministry formed a special two-man task force to create a database on the abductees in order to be "better prepared for possible negotiations on the abductees with the North."

Yonhap News (Hwang Doo-hyong, "S. KOREA URGED TO BUILD TRUST WITH N. KOREA FOR EVENTUAL REUNIFICATION", Washington, 2009/01/27) reported that U.S. scholars urged the ROK to build mutual trust and develop institutions governing bilateral relations with the DPRK as a precondition for the eventual reunification of the two Koreas. In a policy report posted on the Korea Economic Institute's Web site, Sangmin Bae and Martyn de Bruyn, assistant professors of political science at Northeastern Illinois University, noted that the European Union developed "a set of institutions that governs relations between its member states." "We argue that these institutions can be exported to the Korean peninsula to create an environment in which trusting relations can be built," they said.

Yonhap (Kim Hyun, "SEOUL WELCOMES N. KOREAN LEADER'S CALL FOR DENUCLEARIZATION AMID LINGERING DOUBT", Seoul, 2009/01/28) reported that the ROK on Wednesday welcomed DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's reported commitment made in a meeting with a visiting PRC official last week to a nuclear-free peninsula. "If these remarks are true, we view them positively," Kim Honyoun, spokesman for Unification Ministry said in a briefing. "Our government has a consistent position of developing inter-Korean relations through dialogue," he said. Seoul on Wednesday also announced it will outlaw the use of DPRK bills for an anti-DPRK propaganda leaflet campaign. "The government's position is that it should not permit bringing in North Korean bills, due to concern that it may damage the order of inter-Korean exchanges," unification ministry spokesman Kim said.

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5. ROK Defense

Agence France Press ("ROK TO DEPLOY REMOTE-CONTROLLED MINES - OFFICIAL", Seoul, 2009/01/27) reported that ROK will deploy remote-controlled mines along the DMZ by 2013, a defense ministry spokesman said Tuesday. Bids have been invited for the development of the new mines called "spider bombs," the spokesman said. "The development is part of our plans to slash the number of troops, a move which will lead to fewer soldiers patrolling sensitive areas," the spokesman said.

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6. DPRK Human Rights

Agence France Press ("UN SHOULD ACT ON DPRK HUMAN RIGHTS - ENVOY", Tokyo, 2009/01/27) reported that the United Nations envoy on human rights in DPRK said Tuesday that the entire United Nations should work together to improve the "grim" situation. "We get many reports of violations - public executions, ... torture, political detention camps of enormous proportion," he said.

He said that authorities were also trying to assert control over the population through restrictions on food. "I ask the total U.N. system to act, on the basis of graduated pressures, graduated influences," Vitit Muntarbhorn said in Tokyo.

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7. ROK Government

JoongAng Ilbo (Sio Ji-eun, "NEW DEVELOPMENTS SLATED IN 5 TOWNS", 2009/01/28) reported that the Ministry of Agriculture said yesterday that it will foster new development in five cities as part of a trial project to lure big city younger adults back to their hometowns. "Securing a younger workforce is needed because the agricultural and fishing industries are currently led by older and poorer folks and few are willing to take over their jobs," said an Agriculture Ministry official.

Korea Times ("HALF OF ROK CITIZENS DISAPPROVE OF SEOUL'S FOREIGN POLICY", Washington, 2009/01/27) reported that about 42 percent of ROK citizens think the morality of their country's foreign policy is below average compared to other countries, a survey conducted by World Public Opinion showed Monday, with 46 percent saying about average and only 10 percent responding with above average.

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8. ROK-US Relations

JoongAng Ilbo (Jeon Ick-jin, "CITY HURT BY DEPARTING GIS WANTS GIS TO DEPART", 2009/01/28) reported that "Since the number of U.S. soldiers based here was cut in half from 10,000, business has gone downhill," said Jeon Jung-bae, 51, who runs a shoe store in the neighborhood. Ironically, residents in Dongducheon say they are despondent over news that the plan to withdraw U.S. military camps from the city has been postponed for a couple of years. "Dongducheon will have a chance to be newly developed only when the U.S. military camps are withdrawn as scheduled," Jeon said.

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9. ROK Role in Afghanistan

Yonhap (Lee Chi-dong, "S. KOREA TO GRADUALLY EXPAND ITS ROLE IN AFGHANISTAN", Seoul, 2009/01/28) reported that ROK Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Yong-joon Wednesday said that the ROK will focus on expanding its civilian-led operation in Afghanistan first and follow up with other contributions. Lee said in his meetings with Afghan officials and U.S. military leaders during a three-day visit to Afghanistan last week, "We have neither received any request for the troop dispatch nor discussed it. We talked about specifics on ways to support the reconstruction of Afghanistan." "Expanding our contribution to the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) will be a focal point to begin with," he said.

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10. Japan SDF Anti-Piracy Operations

Associated Press (Mari Yamaguchi, "JAPAN ORDERS SHIPS TO FIGHT SOMALIA PIRATES", Tokyo, 2009/01/28) reported that Japanese Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada on Wednesday ordered the dispatch of ships to fight pirates off the shores of Somalia. Hamada did not say how many Japanese ships would be sent or when, and said his dispatch order was an interim measure until parliament passes a formal law outlining the ships' activities. "The pirates' activities off the Somali coast are a major threat not only to Japan but also to international society and it is a problem that we must deal with urgently," Hamada said.

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11. Japan WMD Security

The Journal Of Commerce Online (Hisane Masaki, "JAPAN PLANS TO LAUNCH US-BACKED PORT SECURITY PROGRAM", Tokyo, 2009/01/27) reported that the Japanese government announced that a pilot project of the United States-led Megaports Initiative will be launched at the Port of Yokohama, near Tokyo, on March 2. The agreement calls for the two countries to introduce a cargo-screening system at the Port of Yokohama as a pilot project of the initiative to detect possible nuclear and other radioactive materials. But no specific date has been set for the launch of the pilot project.

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12. Japan Environment

Japan Times (Minoru Matsutani, "DATA ON FISH MARKET TOXIN WITHHELD",) reported that the Tokyo Metropolitan Government on Monday revealed it learned in June that the concentration of a toxic substance, benzopyrene, at the proposed site of a new fish market in Toyosu, Koto Ward, was 115 times higher than in a previous inspection but withheld the information for five months from a panel of soil pollution experts.

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13. Russo-Japanese Territorial Dispute

Kyodo News (" DISEMBARKATION CARD SUBMISSION REQUESTED TO ENTER KUNASHIRI", Moscow, 2009/01/27) reported that the Russian authorities requested that Japanese government officials on a humanitarian mission Tuesday submit disembarkation cards before arriving on disputed Kunashiri Island, bilateral sources said. As such submission would mean that the Japanese side accepts the Russian claim that the island belongs to Russia, the officials rejected the request, according to the sources.

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14. Russo-Japan Relations

Kyodo News ("JAPANESE FISHING SHIP CAPTURED BY RUSSIAN AUTHORITIES IN SEA OF JAPAN", Tokyo, 2009/01/28) reported that a Japanese fishing boat from Sakaiminato, Tottori Prefecture, was seized by Russian authorities in the Sea of Japan on Tuesday, according to officials of the prefectural government and the fishery firm owning the ship. The ship may have been captured by Russian border security authorities when it tried to reenter into the Japanese territorial waters.

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15. Japan Government

Japan Times (Masami Ito, "DIET POISED TO OK SECOND EXTRA BUDGET", 2009/01/27) reported that the Diet was set Monday to approve over the strong protests of opposition parties a second supplementary budget for fiscal 2008 that includes Prime Minister Taro Aso's controversial ¥2 trillion cash handout. The Democratic Party of Japan, the largest opposition force, has repeatedly demanded that the government abandon what it calls the "pork-barrel" program and use the money in other ways to help the public.

Asahi Shimbun ("VOTERS TURN AGAINST LDP IN YAMAGATA", Yamagata, 2009/01/28) reported that voters have delivered their first rebuke to the ruling party by narrowly electing opposition-backed independent Mieko Yoshimura in Sunday's gubernatorial election in Yamagata Prefecture. The electoral contest pitted incumbent Hiroshi Saito--an independent backed by the Liberal Democratic Party--against newcomer Yoshimura, 57, who becomes the nation's sixth female prefectural governor. The election was seen as a litmus test for the administration headed by Prime Minister Taro Aso as it has not been previously tested at the ballot box.

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16. Japan Whaling Issue

The Australian (Mark Dodd, "CANBERRA RULES OUT U-TURN ON WHALING", 2009/01/28) reported that Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith and Environment Minister Peter Garrett deny the Government has been involved in a secret whaling deal. "These discussions, as I understand it, have been taking place," Mr Smith told ABC radio. "But they're a long way from any formal proposal or formal suggestion, or anything that the Australian Government has agreed to. Our priority remains that Japan cease whaling in the Great Southern Ocean, and our overall objective is for whaling to end completely."

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17. Sino-US Relations

Washington Times ("GATES: U.S. CAN HANDLE PRC THREATS", 2009/01/26) reported that Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said Tuesday that the United States is prepared to deal with any

military threat from PRC. "We have the capability in place to deal with any Chinese threat for some time to come," he told the Senate Armed Services Committee in wide-ranging testimony.

Reuters (John Whitesides, "CLINTON WANTS "COMPREHENSIVE DIALOGUE" WITH PRC", Washington, 2009/01/27) reported that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said on Tuesday she would pursue a broad dialogue with PRC that extends beyond the economic concerns emphasized by former President George W. Bush. "We need a comprehensive dialogue with China. The strategic dialogue that was begun in the Bush administration turned into an economic dialogue," Clinton told reporters.

Reuters (Andrew Torchia, "PRC VOWS COPYRIGHT COOPERATION AFTER WTO CASE", Shanghai, 2009/01/27) reported that PRC pledged on Tuesday to cooperate with other countries to strengthen its protection of copyrights and trademarks, after the United States claimed victory in a groundbreaking World Trade Organization case.

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18. Cross Strait Relations

Taiwan News ("RAYTHEON WINS \$154 MILLION CONTRACT TO UPGRADE TAIWAN PATRIOTS", 2009/01/27) reported that Raytheon Co., the world's largest missile maker, won a contract from the US Army valued at \$154 million to upgrade Patriot air-defense systems for Taiwan. The upgrades will allow Taiwan's Patriot systems to fire the latest version of the missile, the Patriot Advanced Capability-3, or PAC-3. The U.S. in October proposed making \$6.46 billion in weapons sales to Taiwan, including 330 of the Lockheed Martin Corp.-built PAC-3 missiles valued at \$3.1 billion.

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19. PRC Defense

Agence France Press ("PRC TO BEGIN PROJECTING MILITARY AROUND THE WORLD: ANALYSTS", London, 2009/01/27) reported that PRC is likely to begin deploying its military increasingly further from its borders, analysts at a top thinktank said on Tuesday. PRC was also unlikely to constrain its defence budget because of an economic downturn the analysts at the International Institute for Strategic Studies said. "All indications are, given China's strategic interests and its sense of entitlement as a nascent major power that it will go on, attempting to increase its defence capability, probably with considerable success."

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20. PRC Tibet Issue

Reuters (Benjamin Kang Lim, "CHINA CASTS LATE TIBETAN MONK AS ALLY AGAINST UNREST", Beijing, 2009/01/28) reported that the PRC is marking 20 years since the death of the 10th Panchen Lama, the second-most senior figure in Tibetan Buddhism, by lauding him as an enemy of separatism. In the People's Daily on Tuesday, Du Qinglin, chief of the Communist Party's United Front Department, which deals with religious and ethnic groups, wrote "We must learn from and

continue his patriotic spirit . He was always at the forefront of the struggle against separatism and resolutely protected ethnic unity." "China's leaders are locking themselves into a very tight corner -- it can't rule Tibetans without the mediation of a leader whom Tibetans trust and respect, but it denounces the Dalai Lama as a monster," said Robbie Barnett, a Tibetologist at Columbia University. "The Panchen Lama has become increasingly important as a symbolic figure since his death because Beijing's policies increasingly seem focused on undoing everything he struggled for," Barnett said.

Associated Press ("CHINA DETAINS 81 PEOPLE IN TIBET CRACKDOWN", Beijing, 2009/01/28) reported that at least 81 people in Tibet have been detained for suspected criminal activity , state media reported. Tibet independence advocates said Wednesday the anti-crime crackdown appeared to be aimed at intimidating Tibetans ahead of sensitive anniversaries in coming weeks. The public security bureau of Lhasa launched a "strike hard" campaign against crime on Jan. 18, with raids on numerous residential areas, rented rooms, hotels, guesthouses, Internet cafes and bars, the Tibetan Daily said in a report on the China Tibet News. Two people were being held because "reactionary music" was found in their cell phones, the report said.

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21. PRC Human Rights

Agence France Press ("OBAMA URGED TO PRESSURE PRC ON HUMAN RIGHTS", Washington, 2009/01/27) reported that at a congressional hearing, organizations including Amnesty International and Reporters Without Borders said the climate was once again icy for PRC rights activists after last year's Beijing Olympics sparked hopes for a thaw. The new administration under Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton "have a particular interest in the human rights situation in China," said James McGovern, co-chair of a House of Representatives commission on human rights. Representatives of Tibetans and Uighur Muslims said crackdowns on their peoples had intensified once the global media had decamped after the Olympics.

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Nautilus Institute
2342 Shattuck Ave. #300, Berkeley, CA 94704 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:
nautilus@nautilus.org