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Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. Russia on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Agence France Press ("RUSSIA WELCOMES NORTH KOREA'S MOVE ON NUCLEAR TALKS - REPORT", Moscow, 2009/07/27) reported that Russia welcomes the DPRK's suggestion it could re-enter talks over its nuclear weapons program, a source in the Russian Foreign Ministry was quoted as saying. "This is a step in the right direction," the unnamed Russian diplomat said.

Russia Today (""NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR TESTS WILL STOP IF DIALOGUE RESTARTS" ", 2009/07/27) reported that the DPRK will stop its nuclear tests as soon as they return to the negotiating table, believes Georgy Toloraya, Research Director on Korea at the Russian Academy of Sciences. Pyongyang says the penalties violate its sovereignty. It also warned those supporting the sanctions "will not help to ease existing tension".

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2. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Agence France-Presse ("NKOREAN CALL FOR DIALOGUE 'FAILS TO MEET' DEMANDS: US",

Washington, 2009/07/27) reported that the DPRK's call for a dialogue "fails to meet" demands it return to nuclear disarmament negotiations with the US and four other countries, a senior US official said. A senior State Department official told AFP the statement "fails to meet" US and international demands for the DPRK to resume disarmament talks. "We have a (six-party) framework and the North Koreans need to recommit to denuclearization through that framework and implement their obligations," the official said.

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3. US on DPRK Nuclear Program

Yonhap News (Hwang Doo-hyong, "OBAMA SEEKS SUPPORT FROM CHINA FOR N. KOREA'S DENUCLEARIZATION ", Washington, 2009/07/27) reported that US President Barack Obama called on the PRC to cooperate with the United States in efforts to denuclearize the DPRK and urged the DPRK to abide by its pledge of nuclear disarmament made under a six-party deal. "Neither America nor China has an interest in a terrorist acquiring a bomb, or a nuclear arms race breaking out in East Asia," Obama said during the opening session of the two-day US-PRC Strategic and Economic Dialogue held at the Ronald Regan Building here. "That is why we must continue our collaboration to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and make it clear to North Korea that the path to security and respect can be traveled if they meet their obligations."

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4. Iran-DPRK Relations

Mehr News Agency ("SPEAKER SAYS PARLIAMENT FAVORS EXPANSION OF TIES WITH NORTH KOREA ", Tehran, 2009/07/27) reported that Iran 's parliament will support an expansion of all-out ties with the DPRK, Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani said. In a meeting with DPRK ambassador So Se Pyong, Larijani highlighted the important role parliaments play in developing relations and vowed that Mjlis will support expanding parliamentary, political and economic relations between the two nations. He said the two countries could promote their relations based on their common interests.

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5. Inter-Korean Relations

Korea Times ("SEOUL LIKELY TO LIFT BAN ON TRIPS TO N. KOREA", 2009/07/27) reported that the ROK will likely allow residents to visit the DPRK by gradually lifting a travel ban imposed since the DPRK's second nuclear test in May, sources said. An official of the Ministry of Unification, however, said nothing has been decided yet. "We haven't decided yet on the issue but are having positive discussions," he said.

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6. DPRK-Ethiopian Relations

Ethiopian Review ("NORTH KOREA MEDICAL TEAM ARRIVES IN ETHIOPIA", Addis Ababa ,

2009/07/27) reported that a medical team of Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) has arrived here on Tuesday to provide voluntary medical service for two years in Ethiopia __ , the Ministry of Health said. Public Relations Directorate office of the Ministry told ENA on Wednesday that the 27 member medical team arrived here as per the agreement of Ethiopia and the DPRK to cooperate in the health sector.

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7. EU Sanctions on the DPRK

Agence France-Presse ("EU ADOPTS NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS OVER NUCLEAR, WEAPONS TESTS", 2009/07/27) reported that the European Union adopted reinforced sanctions against the DPRK over its nuclear and weapons tests, in line with a U.N. resolution. E.U. foreign ministers, meeting in Brussels, passed without discussion a move to enforce U.N. Security Council Resolution 1874 "in a robust way as requested" by E.U. leaders at a summit last month, a statement said. In addition to the U.N. sanctions, the E.U. decided on the "autonomous listing of items subject to export ban, autonomous listing of persons and entities subject to travel ban and asset freeze, enhanced financial vigilance and reinforced cargo inspections."

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8. Japan Export Controls on the DPRK

Reuters ("JAPAN MAN "ADMITS SELLING TRUCKS" TO NORTH KOREA", Tokyo, 2009/07/27) reported that the chief executive of a Japan-based trading company pleaded guilty to illegally exporting to the DPRK two tanker trucks that could be used as missile launch pads, Kyodo news agency said. In addition to shipping the trucks to the DPRK via the ROK last year, the 50-year-old company head also pleaded guilty in a Kobe court to exporting four used Mercedes-Benz cars and 34 pianos to the DPRK in breach of a ban on the export of luxury goods to Japan's unpredictable neighbor, Kyodo said. Prosecutors were seeking a three-year jail term for what they said was an extremely serious crime, the news agency said.

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9. DPRK Leadership

Mainichi Shimbun ("U.S. REPORT: N. KOREA PREPARING FOR KIM'S SUCCESSION", Washington, 2009/07/27) reported that a U.S. spy agency report says the DPRK has restarted a subtle but persistent propaganda campaign to prepare the country's people for a successor to ailing leader Kim Jong Il. The report, based on publicly available information, said the DPRK renewed last year the on-again, off-again effort, first begun eight years ago and now apparently focused on elevating 26-yea--old Kim Jong Un, the youngest of Kim Jong Il's three sons. The succession push is meant to coincide with the 2012 birth centennial of Kim Jong Un's grandfather, the country's revered founder Kim Il Sung. The report was compiled by the U.S. Director of National Intelligence's Open Source Center.

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10. DPRK Internal Control

Mainichi Shimbun ("N. KOREANS RISKING LIVES FOR S. KOREAN SOAP OPERAS", 2009/07/27) reported that teams of DPRK agents known as "109 squads" are sweeping through border towns at night, arresting smugglers and confiscating banned ROK videos and music amid concerns about the popularity of soap operas from Seoul, a think tank said. Those convicted of sneaking contraband movies into the country face harsh penalties -- including public execution in some cases, researchers at the state-run Korea Institute for National Unification said.

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11. US-ROK Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("AMERICA'S IMAGE IMPROVES DRAMATICALLY AMONG KOREANS", 2009/07/27) reported that a survey by a Washington-based think tank indicates an improvement in America's image among Koreans. According to the Pew Research Center, 78 percent of Koreans or about eight out of ten now regard the U.S. favorably. This compares sharply to 58 percent in 2007 and 70 percent last year.

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12. ROK Arms Imports

Dong-A Ilbo ("KOREA 3RD BIGGEST BUYER OF US WEAPONS LAST YEAR", 2009/07/27) reported that the ROK is the world's third largest buyer of U.S. weapons behind Israel and Saudi Arabia, the Pentagon's annual report said yesterday. Last year, the ROK bought 790 million U.S. dollars worth of U.S. arms, including two Aegis destroyers (300 million dollars) that can simultaneously attack several targets. The ROK in 2007 had bought 590 million dollars worth of U.S. weapons.

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13. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute

Yonhap News ("JAPAN'S MAIN OPPOSITION PARTY LAYS CLAIM TO S. KOREAN ISLETS ", 2009/07/27) reported that Japan's main opposition party on Monday vowed to "seek an early solution to the issue through dialogue" to territorial disputes if it takes power. In its manifesto for the Aug. 30 general election, the Democratic Party of Japan said "it will tenaciously hold talks to achieve an early and peaceful solution to the issues of northern territories and Takeshima over which Japan has territorial sovereignty."

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14. US-Japan Security Alliance

Kyodo News ("ROOS LAUDS ALLIANCE AS U.S. 'CORNERSTONE'", Washington, 2009/07/27) reported that John Roos, nominee for the next U.S. ambassador to Japan called the Japan-U.S.

alliance "the cornerstone of security and stability in the East Asia-Pacific region" and pledged to work hard to solidify the bilateral "special bond" if his nomination is confirmed. Roos, a 54-year-old California-based lawyer, said in a Senate confirmation hearing that close bilateral relations will remain unchanged even if the Democratic Party of Japan wrests power from the long-governing Liberal Democratic Party in the Aug. 30 general election, as opinion polls indicate.

Associated Press (Yuri Kageyama, "ELECTION WON'T ALTER JAPAN-US ALLIANCE: COMMANDER", Tokyo, 2009/07/28) reported that Lt. Gen. Edward Rice, top commander for U.S. troops in Japan, said the bilateral defense alliance has continued without problems over several changes of administrations in the U.S., and so it should be no different for Japan. "I believe that regardless of whom the people of Japan choose as their next government, the fundamental pillars of our alliance will remain strong," Rice said at the Japan National Press Center. "I am confident that the alliance will continue to survive for many, many years into the future."

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15. Japan SDF Anti-Piracy Operations

Kyodo News ("SDF ANTIPIRACY MISSION NOW COVERS ALL SHIPS", 2009/07/27) reported that the Self-Defense Forces' antipiracy operations off Somalia will fall under a new law that took effect Friday to authorize them to escort commercial ships of any nation. With the law coming into force, the legal basis for Maritime Self-Defense Force operations will be switched from the maritime police-action provision of the SDF Law to the new antipiracy law, which was enacted June 19. Under the new law, MSDF destroyers will be allowed to fire on pirate boats that, despite warning shots, close in on commercial ships. Still, they cannot harm pirates except in limited circumstances, including in self-defense.

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16. Japan SDF Golan Heights Mission

Kyodo News ("SDF PEACEKEEPING MISSION IN GOLAN HEIGHTS EXTENDED", 2009/07/27) reported that Japan decided to extend the Self-Defense Forces mission taking part in U.N. peacekeeping operations in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights in southwestern Syria for another six months until March 31 next year. The decision came in response to a U.N. Security Council decision to extend the mission of the U.N. Disengagement Observer Force in the Golan Heights.

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17. Japan Politics

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN AT 'HISTORIC TURNING POINT': OPPOSITION LEADER", Tokyo, 2009/07/27) reported that Japan's opposition leader Yukio Hatoyama , widely tipped to become the next prime minister, said the country was "at a historic turning point " as it nears elections next month. A confident Hatoyama said Japan was "at a historic turning point, not only in the sense that we will end the long-running LDP (Liberal Democratic Party) government" of unpopular conservative Prime Minister Taro Aso . A government change would also "make up for two lost decades" economically and end the strong influence of state bureaucrats, said the US-educated

engineer as he outlined his party's campaign platform.

Kyodo News ("POLL SHOWS DPJ WITH CLEAR LEAD OVER LDP IN VOTER SUPPORT", Tokyo, 2009/07/27) reported that t he main opposition Democratic Party of Japan maintains a clear lead over the ruling Liberal Democratic Party in voter preference ahead of a general election expected to be held Aug. 30, a Kyodo News survey showed Monday. The nationwide telephone poll conducted Saturday and Sunday found that 30.7 percent of the respondents said they will vote for the DPJ in the proportional representation section, compared with 15.6 percent for the LDP. The latest figure for the DPJ was down 5.5 percentage points from the previous survey carried out a week earlier, but the LDP failed to gain ground with the support rate for the party in this category remaining unchanged. Among the rest of those polled, 37.4 percent said they have yet to decide which party to vote for.

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18. Japan Climate Change

Bloomberg News (Sachiko Sakamaki and Takashi Hirokawa, "DPJ TO RAISE TARGET FOR JAPAN'S GREENHOUSE-GAS CUTS, OKADA SAYS ", 2009/07/27) reported that t he opposition Democratic Party of Japan, favored to win next month's election, aims to lower the country's greenhouse-gas emissions 25 percent by 2020 from 1990 levels, party leader Katsuya Okada said. The DPJ's target exceeds the 8 percent goal Prime Minister Taro Aso announced in June. Aso said at the time that pushing for bigger cuts in emissions such as carbon dioxide would hurt Japanese business competitiveness. "Japanese people, especially in the business circle, say our target is tough," Okada, 55, said in a July 24 interview at party headquarters in Tokyo. "But internationally speaking, our number is more in line with the trend as the European Union seeks a 20 percent cut and the Group of Eight countries agreed on an 80 percent cut by 2050."

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19. Sino-US Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA'S HU SEEKS COMMON GROUND WITH US", Washington, 2009/07/27) reported that the PRC 's President Hu Jintao called for common ground with the United States, saying the two countries share major responsibilities in the world. In a message sent to the start of top-level talks in Washington, the PRC 's leader said he sought a "positive, cooperative and comprehensive relationship" between the two countries. "Our two countries should endeavor to expand common ground, reduce differences, enhance mutual trust and strengthen cooperation," he said.

Washington Post ("OBAMA STRESSES COOPERATION BETWEEN U.S. AND CHINA", 2009/07/27) reported that President Obama opened a high-level meeting with PRC officials today declaring that the United States and PRC share a joint responsibility for the 21st century and should strive to cooperate on key issues such as climate change, nuclear proliferation, transnational threats and the world economy. "The pursuit of power among nations must no longer be seen as a zero-sum game," he said. "Progress -- including security -- must be shared."

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20. Sino-Russian Military Exercise

RTTNews ("RUSSIA, CHINA CONCLUDE JOINT MILITARY EXERCISE", 2009/07/27) reported that Russia and the PRC concluded Sunday a five-day massive military exercise along their common border, establishing real combat cooperation, Russia's commander of the joint Sino-Russian exercises Peace Mission 2009 said. "We became friends in the course of the joint work, and it is very easy for us to settle all issues. We have established real combat cooperation. We are military professionals and do not notice differences in the languages," Deputy Commander in Chief of the Ground Troops Alexander Studenikin said after the joint exercise concluded.

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21. Sino-Russian Trade Relations

CCTV ("CHINA, RUSSIA DISCUSS MARKET CLOSURE", 2009/07/27) reported that the PRC and Russia have agreed the sudden closure of a Moscow market used by PRC merchants should not hurt economic ties. PRC Vice Minister of Commerce Gao Hucheng says the two sides have reached a broad consensus on the proper handling of the issue. Gao says they will develop a work plan to stop illegal activities, including "grey customs clearance." The city also will provide PRC merchants with the necessary assistance and legal aid concerning the placement of their goods and the establishment of a standardized market.

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22. Cross Strait Relations

Bloomberg News ("CHINA'S HU CONGRATULATES TAIWAN'S MA ON PARTY POST", 2009/07/27) reported that the PRC's President Hu Jintao congratulated Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou on his election as head of the Kuomintang party in the first public exchange of messages between the two sides' leaders in 60 years. In his message, Hu said he hoped the two political parties can continue to promote the peaceful development of cross-strait relations and deepen mutual trust. "Ma can use this other hat improve cross-strait relations on a party-to-party basis, something that is not acceptable on a state-to-state basis," said Lee Lai To, an Associate Professor at the National University of Singapore.

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23. PRC Public Diplomacy

Agence France Press ("CHINA LAUNCHES ARABIC INTERNATIONAL TV CHANNEL", 2009/07/27) reported that the PRC launched an international Arabic-language television channel as part of an ambitious programme to promote the country's views abroad. State-run China Central Television (CCTV) said the new service would broadcast news, entertainment and education programmes 24 hours a day to a potential audience of about 300 million people in 22 countries. CCTV vice-president Zhang Changming said in a statement the channel "would serve as an important bridge to strengthen communication and understanding between China and the Arab countries."

Xinhua News ("CHINESE DEFENSE MINISTRY TO LAUNCH BILINGUAL WEBSITE ", Beijing, 2009/07/27) reported that the PRC's Ministry of National Defense will launch an official bilingual website on Aug. 1, Thursday's China Daily reported. "The launch of the MND website is a major step for the PLA to open up to the outside world," said Senior Colonel Huang Xueping, deputy director-general of the ministry's information office. The site, in Chinese and in English, will operate on a trial base, Huang said.

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24. PRC Ethnic Unrest

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA: XINJIANG VOWS 'IRON HAND' AGAINST VIOLENCE", Beijing, 2009/07/27) reported that the second-in-command of the PRC's Xinjiang region has vowed to crack down on violence with an " iron hand ", state media said, weeks after ethnic unrest in the Muslim area left over 190 dead. "We will continue to resolutely crack down on aggressive moves by the enemies and curb violent crimes with an iron hand," said Nur Bekri, the head of the Xinjiang regional government, according to the Xinhua news agency .

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25. PRC Anti-Corruption Measures

The Financial Times ("CHINESE OFFICIAL CALLS FOR POWER SCRUTINY", 2009/07/27) reported that a PRC mayor has called for greater media and public scrutiny of government corruption, in a rare official acknowledgment of a growing scandal in southern Guangdong province. ”I hope there will be more oversight from the media and from all walks of life,” Wang Rong, acting mayor of Shenzhen, said in his first briefing with foreign media since his appointment last month. There has been widespread speculation on PRC websites and in the Hong Kong media about the arrests of at least half-a-dozen senior Guangdong officials and their possible link to a case involving Huang Guangyu, a self-made retail billionaire from the province who was detained late last year.

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II. PRC Report

26. PRC Education

Xinhua News Agency ("XIJIANG FOREIGN EXCHANGE ASSOCIATION DONATES BOOKS TO HONG KONG UNIVERSITIES", 2009/07/27) reported that Delegation of Xinjiang Foreign Exchange donated 5000 books to two Hong Kong universities on July 24, to promote cultural exchange between the two and help more Hong Kong youth know Xinjiang.

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27. PRC Environment

China Energy Net ("CHINA TO GRADUALLY ELIMINATE ALL GASOLINE-FUELED AUTOMOBILES", 2009/07/27) reported that an Official of China National Development and Reform Commission said at China-EU Social Forum today that in order to develop low-carbon economy, by 2030, the PRC will eliminate all gasoline-fueled automobiles.

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28. PRC Earthquake Reconstruction

Sichuan Government website ("SCOTLAND-CHINA ASSOCIATION VISITS SICHUAN", 2009/07/27) reported that a delegation of UK Scotland-China Association have paid a visit to Sichuan from June 28 to July 2. The delegation visited the newly completed Wenchuan Earthquake Exhibition Hall, and moved by Chinese people's spirit of disaster relief. All the delegation members then decided to donate fund to help Wenchuan reconstruction.

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