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I. **United States**

1. EU Role on Korean Peninsula

Agence France Presse ("SOUTH KOREA SAYS IT DID NOT PRESS FOR EU PEACE INITIATIVE," Seoul, 3/28/01) reported that the new ROK foreign minister Han Seung-soo insisted Wednesday that the ROK had not asked the European Union to launch a Korean peninsula peace initiative, but added that the ROK still supports the move. Han stated, "It's their independent initiative. We wouldn't like to see the EU's visit misconstrued by others as if we asked them." Diplomats at several leading EU embassies expressed surprise at the remarks by the minister. The foreign ministry denied that the comments indicated that the ROK was cool toward the EU mission.

2. US View of DPRK Threat

Agence France Presse (Eileen Bryne, "US COMMANDER IN SKOREA SAYS THREAT FROM NORTH INCREASED DESPITE FAMINE," Washington, 3/27/01) reported that US General Thomas Schwartz, commander of the US forces in the ROK, told a congressional committee on March 27 that over the past year the military threat from the DPRK had increased, despite the continuing famine there. Schwartz said that the DPRK military was "bigger, better, closer, deadlier," and its armed forces were training at a higher level. Schwartz stated, "We have estimations up to one million died of starvation in the same period of time. It's serious, extensive and it's continuing." He also said, "I would not recommend any kind of reduction of forces in the Korean Peninsula at this time." Schwartz acknowledged that the US commitment in the ROK represented a substantial demand on resources, but he argued that any cutback in the numbers of US troops stationed in the ROK could only result from an improved political climate. He stated, "If in the future, we go down the path of reconciliation (and) confidence-building measures that are verifiable and reciprocal, if we see that the North takes the actions, not the words ... to reduce the threat, then there could be a concomitant reduction in troops." Schwartz said that the DPRK had sold missiles to Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, Yemen, and Egypt. He added that the DPRK was "the number-one proliferator of missiles in the world." However Admiral Dennis Blair, commander-in-chief of the US Pacific Command, told the committee that the DPRK had continued to observe the moratorium on missile testing that has been in force in recent years. Blair said, "And although the North Koreans seem uniquely capable of selling missiles which haven't been tested, and some fool countries seem uniquely capable of buying them, even though they don't know if the damn things work or not, they have not in fact fired them since that time."

3. US Policy toward DPRK

The Los Angeles Times published an opinion piece by Michael Parks and Gregory F. Treverton, fellows at the Pacific Council on International Policy, ("KEEP NORTH KOREA ON LIFE SUPPORT," Seoul, 3/27/01). The article said that the summit meeting between US President George W. Bush and ROK President Kim Dae-jung this month was "a diplomatic train wreck" and "should never have happened." The authors observed that the meeting "injected dangerous confusion into [the US-ROK] relationship." They noted that Bush made clear at the meeting that he does not trust the DPRK and "he wants a policy that starts with that and not with assumptions that the DPRK has been won over by Kim's 'sunshine' policy." While that view is understandable, the authors wrote, "the Bush administration in the end will come out about where the Clinton administration was." That policy, they continued, "amounts to keeping the North on life support while hoping that it will gradually reform under the pressure of its own economic disaster." They noted that turning tougher if the DPRK does not begin to reciprocate looks attractive in the US, but it also would open a significant gap between the Bush administration and Kim Dae-jung. They wrote that after the summit, even ROK citizens who have opposed "sunshine" worried that the Bush team might be tempted to cast the

DPRK as the rogue enemy, which "would unleash real anti-Americanism in South Korea. More to the point, it would encourage the North to replay its nuclear card, putting the Bush administration in the box where the Clinton administration found itself in 1994." Therefore, they concluded, there "is no real alternative to engagement and life support. But the Bush team might improve on the Clinton policy in two respects. First, patient diplomacy might succeed where it has failed in the past in convincing the North that conventional power plants would serve its interests as well as or better than nuclear ones. Second, as Washington reengages Pyongyang, it and Seoul (and Tokyo) might establish an agreed road map for what they want from North Korea and what they will do in return. Such a road map had been precluded in the case of North Korea by the guerrilla war between the Clinton administration and Republicans in Congress. Bush has a chance to do better."

4. Taiwan Missile Development

Jane's Defence Weekly (Robert Karniol, "TAIWAN DEPLOYS SKY SPEAR EXTENDED-RANGE MISSILE," 3/28/01) reported that according to the Taipei Times newspaper, Taiwan has made advances in its development of the Tien Chi (Sky Spear) surface-to-surface ballistic missile (SSBM). The Tien Chi is a short-range SSBM capable of striking targets in the PRC. It was developed by the military-run Chung Shan Institute of Science and Technology and has a limited payload of less than 100kg (Jane's Defence Weekly, 29 January 1997). Jane's Defense Weekly has also learned from a high-level US official that up to 50 Tien Chi missiles have been deployed at two sites: Tungyin Island, and an unidentified second location. Those on Tungyin Island are housed in silos and protected by batteries of Tien Kung 2 SAMs. However, the official casts doubt over the nature of the warhead, saying, "The limited payload is too small to be effective, which leads to other questions." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 28, 2001.]

5. US Arms Sales to Taiwan

The Washington Times published an opinion piece by Tony Blankley, a columnist for the Washington Times ("BUSH DENIES AEGIS SALE," 3/28/01, 19) which said that according to a source with links to former chairman of the US Joint Chiefs, retired Admiral Thomas Moorer, US President George W. Bush decided late last week to not to sell Aegis-class guided missile destroyers to Taiwan. Blankley wrote that this previously unreported decision reflects a win for US Secretary of State Colin Powell over the US Defense Department, which, in the internal administration debate, was believed to be supporting the sale. Blankley also noted that Bush's decision to deny the sale provides the first measure of his strategic Asian vision. He wrote that despite Bush's call for a need to counter the PRC missile threat and Bush's criticism of the Clinton policy toward the PRC, when Bush came to this first big decision on Asian military policy, he continued Clinton's position. Blankley wrote, "While opposing the Aegis sale hardly constitutes an embrace by Mr. Bush of Mr. Clinton's overall China strategy, it is a missed opportunity to match action to rhetoric. He will surely get further opportunities but they won't get any easier; and they will get more urgent." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 28, 2001.]

6. South China Seas Dispute

Agence France Presse ("PHILIPPINES SEND GUNBOAT TO KEEP CHINA FROM SHOAL," Manila, 3/28/01) reported that Philippine National Security Adviser Roilo Golez said Wednesday that the Philippines sent a gunboat to the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea to ward off any attempt by the PRC to erect structures on the rock. Golez said that the Philippines was concerned

over the pattern of PRC maritime activity around the shoal. He added that the PRC activity around the shoal was consistent with the pattern it employed in laying claim and later occupying several disputed reefs in the Spratly group. He said that the PRC would normally deploy fishing boats, build up the number of boats to justify the presence of a Chinese naval vessel for their protection, then build a shelter. Golez stated, "I think we have to presume the same thing could happen in Scarborough Shoal. The view right now is that the PLA (People's Liberation Army) are beefing up their forces so that they would eventually become a dominant power in the area."

II. Republic of Korea

1. Inter-Korean Summit

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "PRESIDENT PROPOSED KIM JONG-IL'S SEOUL VISIT FOR THIS SPRING, SAYS NEW UNIFICATION MINISTER," Seoul, 03/28/01) reported that new Unification Minister Lim Dong-won on Tuesday revealed that ROK President Kim Dae-jung suggested during his summit with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il last June that the latter's trip to Seoul take place this spring. "Nothing has been decided about it, though. We expect the return visit will take place within the first half of this year," Lim told reporters.

2. New ROK Foreign Minister

The Korea Herald ("NEW FOREIGN MINISTER STRESSES CLOSE TIES WITH BUSH ADMINISTRATION," Seoul, 03/28/01) and the Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "NEW FOREIGN, SECURITY TEAM FACES DUAL TASKS," Geneva, 03/28/01) reported that new Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister Han Seung-soo on Tuesday emphasized the need for the ROK to maintain its close cooperation with the US administration. "It is important to further cement the Korea-U.S. alliance through close cooperation with the Bush administration," Han said in his inaugural ceremony attended by ministry officials.

3. Role of EU on Korean Peninsula

The Korea Herald (Chon Shi-yong, "SEOUL TO FILE PROTEST OVER WASHINGTON POST REPORT," Seoul, 03/28/01) reported that the ROK government will file a protest with the Washington Post over its recent report that President Kim Dae-jung asked the European Union to make up for the US hesitation in improving relations with the DPRK. "This report is groundless," Chong Wa Dae spokesman Park Joon-young said in his daily press briefing. The spokesman said that President Kim neither met EU officials nor delivered his desire following his summit talks with US President George W. Bush in Washington early this month. The Post report, filed from Stockholm and published Sunday, said that President Kim "stepped up his pleas for an EU role after his disappointing talks with Bush in Washington two weeks ago." It quoted unnamed senior EU officials as saying that Kim told them he came away deeply disappointed from recent talks with Bush in Washington.

4. DPRK Abductees

The Korea Herald (Kim Hyung-jin, "KOREA, JAPAN TO COMBINE EFFORTS TO BRING BACK ABDUCTEES FROM N.K.," Seoul, 03/28/01) reported that a group of Korean and Japanese activists with family members who were kidnapped and sent to the DPRK will visit a UN human rights body

early next month to appeal for international support for repatriation, organizers said Tuesday. During their visit to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in April 7-10, they will submit requests to confirm the fate of their lost family members.

5. ROK Adherence to MTCR

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "SOUTH KOREA JOINS GLOBAL MISSILE REGIME," Seoul, 03/28/01) reported that the ROK joined a global regime barring the proliferation of technology for missiles with a range of more than 300 km (187 miles), the Foreign Ministry said Tuesday. ROK's entry to the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) was approved at a meeting of the global organization in Paris on Monday, said Moon Dong-hoo, an official at the ministry's arms control bureau. By joining the regime, the ROK has agreed not to give any other country technology to build missiles with a range longer than 300 km (187 miles). Its entry increases the regime's membership to 33 countries, including the United States, Russia and Japan.

6. New US Ambassador to ROK

Joongang Ilbo (Choi Won-ki, "THOMAS C. HUBBARD - NEXT U.S. AMBASSADOR TO KOREA," Seoul, 03/28/01) reported that Thomas C. Hubbard, the acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, has been selected as the new US ambassador to the ROK, as reported by one diplomatic source on Tuesday March 27. "The appointment of Hubbard would be welcomed both in Seoul and Washington," said the source well-versed in ROK-US relations. The ROK seems pleased with the latest US decision due to Hubbard's knowledge and past experience in the Korean Peninsula. "Hubbard will have no problem even if he has to start his duty from this very day," said one diplomat who spoke in condition of anonymity.

7. DPRK-Russia Railway Talks

Joongang Ilbo ("PYONGYANG AND MOSCOW CONCLUDES ON RAILWAY CONNECTION," Seoul, 03/28/01) reported that the Russian delegation headed by Russian Railways Minister Nicholi Akshonenko visited Pyongyang in order to discuss the railway-matters with the DPRK and stayed from March 16-20. Their aim is to restore the Traversing Korea Railways (approx. 930 km) that stretches from Hasan to the border of the ROK. If this project is realized, then the cargo transportation period of 40-45 days from the Korean Peninsula to Europe through the Suez Canal might be reduced to about 14 days and the owners of the cargo are likely to save about US\$200 of freight per container.

8. Aid for DPRK

Joongang Ilbo ("MCI DISPATCHES \$3.9 MILLION WORTH SUPPLIES TO NORTH," Seoul, 03/28/01) reported that the Mercy Corps International (MCI), the US-based international humanitarian aid agency, will dispatch US\$3.9 million worth of goods to the DPRK on Saturday March 31. The supplied goods that come from local communities in the US and Canada would be sent to aid the DPRK's agriculture sector. The shipment would start heading to the DPRK by Boeing-747 operated by Evergreen International Aviation of McMinnville, Oregon on Sunday April 1. This is the third time for Evergreen Aviation to assist MCI in sending aid materials abroad.

III. Russian Federation

1. DPRK-ROK Mail Exchange

Segodnya ("NORTH AND SOUTH KOREAS EXCHANGED MAIL," Moscow, 4, 03/16/01) reported that the DPRK and the ROK carried out the first ever mail exchange in 50 years. Each side transferred to its counterpart about 300 letters from relatives to addressees living across the border.

2. RF Relations with DPRK, ROK, US

Izvestia ("VLADIMIR PUTIN: WE HAVE MADE A STEP ON THE PATH TOWARD CONSOLIDATION OF THE SOCIETY," Moscow, 1, 3, 03/22/01) published an interview of editors-in chief of four leading newspapers of RF with RF President Vladimir Putin, who summarized the results of his first year in power. Asked in particular about his visits to Cuba, Vietnam, Mongolia and the DPRK, Putin said, "Take for instance North Korea. First, it is our neighbor, we are vitally interested in stability and peace on the peninsula. Russia's adjacent regions are dependent on that. And not only the adjacent ones. We now have agreed with South Korea and in principle with North Korea on connection between the Trans-Korean and Trans-Siberian railways. That will substantially improve the performance of MPS [RF Railways Ministry] and the regions through which Trans-Siberian railway goes, and will facilitate the economic development of Russia." As for RF-US relations, Putin stated, "of course, the United States is a major partner of ours. As for the new Administration policies toward Russia and our mutual relations with the USA, I think nothing should be dramatized."

3. Northeast Pacific Border Cooperation

Segodnya ("EXPERTS DISCUSS BORDER PATROL COOPERATION ISSUES IN THE PACIFIC," Moscow, 4, 03/15/01) reported that on March 14 a meeting of experts on border patrol cooperation in the Northeast part of the Pacific Ocean opened in Vladivostok, with RF, US, Japan and ROK delegations participating. It was the first meeting of such representative scale. The delegations were headed by the respective heads of national border guard services. Maritime crime, drug traffic, smuggling of arms and bioresources were to be discussed.

4. RF Submarines

Nezavisimoye voyennoye obozreniye ("15% OF SUBMARINES ARE AT SEA," Moscow, 1, 03/23-39/01, #10(232) reported that Rear Admiral Vladislav Ilyin, First Deputy Chief, Main Headquarters, RF Navy, said altogether some 12- 15 nuclear submarines of the Northern Fleet and the Pacific Fleet were permanently on combat duty or patrolling at sea. He said that the RF Naval Command varied the number depending on to the situation. According to foreign sources, presently the RF Navy has 19 nuclear submarines with ballistic missiles (Project 941 - 3, Project 667 BDRM - 7, Project 667BDR - 7 and Project 667B - 2) plus 43 multi-purpose nuclear submarines and 16 diesel-electric submarines.

5. USA Threat Assessment

Izvestia's Aleksandr Shumilin ("PENTAGON RE-TARGETING," Moscow, 6, 03/27/01) reported that US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld informed US President George Bush on Department of Defense plans to change US defense priorities. Rumsfeld believes that the main threat to US

originates not from Europe (that is the RF), but from Asia Pacific (that is the PRC and the DPRK). His report claims that the "military threat to the USA on the part of Russia has diminished, while on the part of China it has increased." Hence, DoD is expected to make emphasis not on aircraft carrier too vulnerable to missile attacks, but on strategic "stealth-type" bombers. US-PRC relations were aggravated recently by US delivery of Aegis systems to Taiwan. PRC Chairman Jiang Zemin commented, "the more weapons you deliver to Taiwan, the more active effort we intend to undertake to ensure our national security. That is destructive to relations between China and the USA.... Were it not for US interference we would have long since solved the problem of Taiwan by liberating that island." Some RF experts in that contest expect the US to try discouraging RF from arms deliveries to PRC.

6. PRC Defense Effort

Izvestia's Georgiy Stepanov ("FULL READINESS," Moscow, 6, 03/12/01) reported that the PRC announced an almost 18 percent rise in its defense spending in 2001 "in connection with a sharp change in the military situation in the world," as the PRC Finance Minister put it. The present PRC defense budget is 141 billion yuan, or about US\$17 billion. Experts claim the real defense expenditure is 3 to 5 time bigger, because the PRC keeps silent about its spending on arms and equipment procurement and military research and development. Commercial activities of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), which owns 15,000 commercial enterprises, including 1500 hotels, are also exempt from the account. Though in 1997-2000 the PLA was reduced by 500,000, still with its 2.6 million servicemen the PLA is the biggest armed force on the world. Quantitative superiority is not enough, therefore despite the PRC's GNP growth rate slowing, its defense expenditure is on the rise. Presently the PLA has 300 warheads for "strategic missiles," but within this decade the number is expected to grow to 600-900.

7. PRC Stance on US Missile Defense

Izvestia's Georgiy Bovt("CHINESE SMARTNESS," Moscow, 1, 03/16/01) reported that the PRC for the first time expressed its willingness to talk with the US on US National Missile Defense (NMD) plans. The Arms Control Department Chief of the PRC Foreign Ministry drew a distinction between a Theater Missile Defense (TMD) intended to defend Taiwan and NMD, intended to protect the US proper from "rogue" states. The PRC continues to sharply criticize TMD, but is ready to "reduce differences." The PRC is against US deliveries of Aegis systems to Taiwan and is ready to limit the number of its missiles targeted at Taiwan to the present level of 300. The number has been increased by 50 annually. The situation shows that despite superficial similarity, the positions of the PRC and the RF are not identical. "We should not hope for stable PRC support of our rejection of NMD," because (1) PRC-US relations are much more diversified, with a much greater economic component present there, (2) Taiwan is the most important issues for PRC in the missile defense context, and (3) US NMD is much more sensitive for PRC with its 20 ICBMs capable to hit the whole US territory then for the RF with its hundreds of such ICBMs, though PRC now has more capacity than RF to build more solid fuel ICBMs. The conclusion is that the "RF-PRC 'anti-America alliance' on the missile defense issues is conditional, short-term and non-trustworthy."

8. PRC-India-Central Asia

Nezavisimaya gazeta's Aleksey Tamin ("ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS FROM CHINA DISCOVERED IN INDIA," Moscow, 6, 03/22/01) reported that servicemen of Armed Forces of India recently shot 4 armed insurgents in Kashmir. Before dying, two of those confessed they were Uighur Moslems

originated from Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region (SUAR) of the PRC. The facts became a matter of deep concern for both India and the PRC. The latter is especially concerned, because of the rising Wahhabite activities among the local Uighurs and the fact that SUAR borders both Pakistani occupied part of Kashmir and Taliban controlled Afghanistan. Both Uighur insurgents confessed that they had underwent military training in Mojaheed camps in Beluchistan, Pakistan. After terrorist acts in India they were to be sent to Chechnya, RF. "A new field for India-China cooperation is open, that is a joint struggle against Islamic fundamentalism, a common enemy. Maybe the fact will make it possible for China to look anew at Pakistan, its partner."

9. RF-Japanese Summit

Segodnya's Aleksandr Chudodeyev ("THE ISLANDS WILL STAY IN THE SAME PLACE," Moscow, 1, 03/26/01) reported that RF President Vladimir Putin and Japanese Premier Yoshiro Mori after their meeting in Irkutsk said that they still hoped to conclude a peace treaty. Putin called that "a priority in Russia's policy toward Japan," while Mori expressed satisfaction with the "sincerity and enthusiasm" of Putin, who wanted "to resolve the long-standing problems in Russo-Japanese relations while retaining honor and dignity of both parties." Yet, their Irkutsk Statement does not even mention when the follow-up discussions are to be resumed, possibly due to Mori's near-zero rating as a politician in Japan. At the summit, the RF President repeated his proposal to develop relations on the basis of the Soviet- Japanese declaration of 1956, under which a return to Japan of two islands out of four South Kurils is possible on principle after a peace treaty is signed. Japan, however, wishes to get back all four before the treaty conclusion. Putin on Sunday made a "noteworthy" remark that the relevant paragraph of the 1956 Declaration is in need of "additional work of experts to work out uniform understanding." Segodnya's author believed the remark was actually a hint that Japan should better get a bird in the bush than nothing at all.

Nezavisimaya gazeta's ("A COLD SUNDAY IN IRKUTSK," Moscow, 6, 03/27/01) reported that at the RF-Japanese summit in Irkutsk, economic cooperation was discussed in addition to the issues of South Kurils and peace treaty. The discussions concerned RF power deliveries to Japan, and joint work in the energy sector of some third countries, fisheries, and relevant coordination of law-enforcement. The summit was the 6th meeting between RF President Vladimir Putin and Japanese Premier Yoshiro Mori. In the words of Nezavisimaya gazeta's author, "Mori-junior has been good at implementing his father's testament. His brief stay in power brought about a serious progress in Japanese- Russian relations and solidified their basis by steadfast and careful work."

10. RF-Japanese Consular Relations

Dipkurier ("A JAPANESE PREFECTURE REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE OPENED IN YUZHNO-SAKHALINSK," Moscow, 1, 02/22/01, #5(25) reported that a Japanese Consulate General was opened in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, and thus Japan became the first foreign country to have three consulates general in the RF Far East. The Hokkaido Prefecture of Japan also opened its representative office in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. No other Japanese prefecture has got representative offices abroad.

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We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

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