NAPSNet Daily Report 29 August, 2001

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 29 August, 2001", NAPSNet Daily Report, August 29, 2001, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-29-august-2001/

CONTENTS

I. United States

1. US-DPRK Relations
2. DPRK Famine
3. ROK-Japan Relations
4. Japanese Rocket Launch
5. PRC-US Relations
6. Cross-Strait Relations
7. US Missile Defense

II. Republic of Korea 1. DPRK-PRC Talks

III. Russian Federation 1. Former ROK Soldier's Escape from DPRK
2. RF Pacific Fleet Exercises
3. RF-PRC Relations

I. United States

1. US-DPRK Relations

Reuters (Sonya Hepinstall, "EXPERTS: US HAS RARE OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE N.KOREA," Washington, 08/28/01) reported that experts at a two-day conference on "North Korea in the World Economy" that ended Tuesday argued that the US should do more to restart talks with the DPRK. Former US Ambassador to the ROK Donald Gregg said that this was an "extraordinary juncture in Northeast Asia" because of the shared regional concern over developments in the DPRK. He stated, "I think that there is an opportunity such as I have never seen in Northeast Asia to pull that region together in an era of cooperation. The United States must be willing to stand in the mainstream of history as a player." He argued that the US President George W. Bush administration should separate its DPRK policy from its interest in pursuing a national missile defense (NMD). He also suggested dropping the term "rogue state" and ending the practice of lumping the DPRK in with Iraq. Gregg stated, "I think the case (for NMD) can be made on its own merits apart from hanging

pejorative labels on North Korea that no other country in the region will subscribe to." Leon Sigal, author of "Disarming Strangers: Nuclear Diplomacy with North Korea," called on the US to soften its rhetoric toward the DPRK. Sigal argued, "To say you don't trust Kim Jong-il is asking for trouble." Currently the administration points to the threat from countries like North Korea, Iraq and Iran, which it calls rogue states, as justifications for a missile defense. Deputy Director-General of the first Asian department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Georgi Toloraya said that he believed the DPRK had changed more in the past two years than it had over the past half-century. Toloraya, who traveled with Kim Jong-il on his recent train journey around Russia, said that he was convinced Kim wanted dialogue and cooperation as an equal. US State Department Northeast Asia expert John Merrill said that he was "guardedly optimistic. Chairman Kim Jong-il seems to be back in diplomatic outreach and summit mode."

2. DPRK Famine

Reuters ("NORTH KOREAN OFFICIALS MEET FAO CHIEF DIOUF," Seoul, 08/29/01) reported that the DPRK's Korea Central News Agency (KCNA) reported on Wednesday that UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Director- General Jacques Diouf met with Kim Yong-nam, president of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly, and vice foreign minister Choe Su-hon on Tuesday. KCNA gave no details of Diouf's talks.

3. ROK-Japan Relations

Dow Jones Newswires ("JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA TO HOLD EXCHANGE PROGRAM," New York, 08/29/01) reported that Kyodo News said that the Japanese government announced Wednesday that Japan and the ROK will conduct a large-scale occupational and cultural exchange program in Seoul September 10 to help improve bilateral relations. Tadahiro Matsushita, a senior vice minister in the Cabinet Office, said that about 4,000 private-sector people from the two countries will participate in the exchange program. ROK President Kim Dae-jung will address the audience during the program.

4. Japanese Rocket Launch

The Associated Press (Kenji Hall, "JAPAN'S 1ST H2-A ROCKET BLASTS OFF," Tokyo, 08/29/01) reported that Japan successfully launched its first H2- A rocket on Wednesday. The National Space Development Agency launched the rocket three hours later than scheduled because of a malfunction in a device designed to indicate whether a pipe to the rocket's fuel tank was connected properly. The rocket is designed to carry a 4-ton satellite, but during the test only carried a 3-ton sphere and equipment to monitor and record the rocket's flight systems. Japanese space officials said that it rivals rockets built in Europe and the US, and are working on a special rocket booster that would allow the H2-A to carry a 7.5-ton payload into orbit within two years.

5. PRC-US Relations

The Washington Times (Bill Gertz, "CHINA FUTURE SUPERPOWER, MAY BE THREAT," 8/29/01) reported that US Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz said in an interview that the PRC is "almost certain" to become a superpower this century and could emerge as a threat to the US. Wolfowitz said, "I would say overall we're concerned about the direction of Chinese policy, and the developments we see there. I think the right way to think about China is that it's a country that is almost certain to become a superpower in the next half-century, and maybe in the next quarter-century, and that's pretty fast by historical standards." He said that the question is whether the

emerging PRC will live at peace with its neighbors "or will it go the way of traditional power diplomacy, which I think in this era with these weapons would be tragic mistake for everybody." He added, "I don't think China has to be a threat, but I think if we're complacent, then we could actually contribute to the opposite effect." Regarding Taiwan, Wolfowitz said, "We can more than adequately back up the commitments that are enshrined in the Taiwan Relations Act and which the president affirmed. So the Chinese would be making a great mistake if they thought they could settle this thing on their terms by using force." He noted that US President George W. Bush and US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld have been "very clear" that the US will defend Taiwan from PRC attack. He said, "Indeed, I think the country as a whole is united on that. In some ways, it's the central point of US-China relations. Looking to the future, I think it's terribly important that everybody behave sensibly and maturely and keep that situation ... a peaceful one, which it has been for quite a long time now." Wolfowitz also said the continuing buildup of short-range missiles opposite Taiwan violated the PRC pledge to resolve the standoff with the island peacefully. [Ed. note: This article appeared in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for August 29, 2001.]

6. Cross-Strait Relations

Reuters ("CHINA FIRM ON CONDITIONS FOR TAIWAN TRADE LINKS," Beijing, 8/29/01) reported that the PRC ruled out direct trade links with Taiwan on Wednesday unless the island embraced its "one China" principle. In response to a proposal by a Taiwan government urging talks on opening direct commercial ties, the PRC's official Xinhua news agency said that the "one China" principle was not negotiable. Xinhua said in an editorial, "Our principles for pushing forward the 'three links' are one China, direct, two-way and mutually beneficial. This will not change. If they think they can avoid the one China principle and the 1992 consensus by just talking about economic problems, this is not realistic and will not succeed."

7. US Missile Defense

The Associated Press (George Gedda, "BUSH MISSILE DEFENSE PLAN EYED," Washington, 08/29/01) reported that Robert Sherman, an arms expert at the Federation of American Scientists, said that the proposed US missile defense system is comparable to France's attempt to prevent an invasion from Germany using the Maginot Line. Sherman argued that if someone wanted to attack the US with nuclear weapons, "The ICBM [Inter- Continental Ballistic Missile] would be more expensive, less accurate and much less reliable than clandestine delivery. Even more important, the ICBM would leave an unmistakable return address, while clandestine delivery offers at least the possibility of anonymity." However, John E. McLaughlin, deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, said last week that the mere threat of an ICBM would complicate US decision- making in a crisis by possibly preventing the US from coming to the aid of its allies. McLaughlin added that countries would not even have to test their missiles. He stated, "For them, it may be enough to demonstrate their capabilities in the form of a space launch vehicle - a strategy that could achieve the twin goals of deterrence and prestige without the political and economic costs that a long-range ballistic missile test might bring." He stated, "The intelligence community continues to project that as we progress through the next 15 years, our country most likely will face ICBM threats from North Korea, probably from Iran and possibly from Iraq."

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-PRC Talks

The Korea Herald (Hwang Jang-jin, "N.K., CHINA MOVE TO CEMENT TIES AHEAD OF U.S. TALKS," Seoul, 08/29/01) reported that ROK officials and analysts said Tuesday that the leaders of the DPRK and the PRC will use their planned summit talks next month to bolster their partnership in a bid to enhance their positions in their respective talks with the US. The two nations announced on August 27 that PRC President Jiang Zemin will pay an "official goodwill visit" to the DPRK from September 3-5 at the invitation of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il. No details about their agenda was provided. Diplomatic sources said, however, that the two leaders are likely to focus on cementing bilateral ties, their cooperation in countering the US missile defense plan, and issues regarding security on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia.

III. Russian Federation

1. Former ROK Soldier's Escape from DPRK

Mikhail Skibkin of Izvestia ("FIFTY YEARS IN CAPTIVITY," Moscow, 10, 08/23/01) reported that a former ROK soldier who became a POW a month after the Korean War started escaped from the DPRK to the ROK. Mr. Shin Sun-su, 72, worked at a coalmine in the DPRK for fifty years. According to the ROK Defense Ministry, some 20 former ROK servicemen have returned to the ROK in recent years. ROK special agencies believe that there are still at least 300 former ROK servicemen kept in DPRK POW camps.

2. RF Pacific Fleet Exercises

Nezavisimoye voyennoye obozreniye ("PACIFIC FLEET EXERCISES," Moscow, 3, 08/24-30/01, #31(253)) reported that on August 28-29 exercises will take place under the direction of Vice Admiral Yevgeniy Litvinenko, Commander, Pacific Fleet, RF Navy, in the areas of combat training in the Bay of Peter the Great, Sea of Japan. Ships, submarines, aircraft and land units of the Fleet will take part in the exercises aimed at training the crews of oceanic zone ships to perform combat tasks.

3. RF-PRC Relations

Zavtra ("RUSSIA AND CHUNGKUO," Moscow, 5, August, 2001, #34(403) published a full page article prepared by "Namakon" Analytical Center and subtitled "The Other Side of the Chinese Card." The preface claims that in the US presently there are hawks--represented for example by Thomas Graham, recently promoted to a high position in US State Department--who insist on confrontation with the PRC and turning the RF into a junior ally, and doves--represented by, for example, Henry Kissinger--who urge the US to carry out a "soft" division of the world into spheres of influence and to actually restore a bipolar world order with the US and the PRC as its poles. According to the latter scenario, the RF is to be sacrificed to the PRC, while some parts are to go to Germany, Turkey and other US satellites. As the RF is not asked its opinion, being considered just an object of world politics, not an actor, the relevant position of the PRC should be analyzed. In the authors' opinion, "China today is both a promising partner and a potential adversary to Russia. In general the nature of relations between our countries is determined by three problems: border, demography and economy. Officially Beijing today calls its claims on Russian territories a fact of history, not a contemporary fact, yet in private some representatives of authorities often talk about lands near Amur and even Sakhalin as 'illegally taken away by Tzarist Russia.' The implementation of the 1991 Agreement does not at all mean that the territorial problem has been solved finally. It is expected that by the mid-21st century some 7 to 10 million Chinese will live in Russia, thus

becoming the second biggest ethnic group after ethnic Russians themselves. Lack of a clear and coherent immigration policy practically guarantees tensions on ethnic grounds, which with comparative ease may lead to international conflict between Russia and China. China is important for Russia economically, however Russia should not see the PRC as a market capable of absorbing products that are non-competitive in Europe and America.... China is not inclined to reward us for political loyalty with industrial contracts. We should not rely too much on large-scale modernization of Chinese heavy industry enterprises build with Soviet assistance in 1950s, as China is interested in much more modern equipment than Russia can offer today. So far Russia is in fact a monopolist in the Chinese arms market only. China strives not so much to buy weapons, but to get access to technologies. Russia should be especially cautious in technology transfers. Otherwise Russia may lose its military-technological lead as concerns China, which so far has been its most important advantage. The military- technical cooperation in its present format serves more Chinese interests, than Russian ones. The RF helps the PRC to modernize its armed forces and in return gets relatively modest economic yield which cannot save the Russian defense industry." The article added, "In early 1999 China produced a program of development of new and renewable power sources. In that connection all talks concerning excessive energy transfers from East Siberian hydropower stations to China will obviously remain just talks. The PRC does not need a Russia-China energy bridge." The authors concluded, "The PRC does not need alliances and by no means will agree with Moscow's leadership. Most probably Russia will not enjoy super- favorable conditions in the Russia-China-US triangle. China will play on US-RF contradictions. The main danger posed to Russia by a stronger China is its 'noiseless' gradual departure from the Far East and Siberia. Russia's excessively big dependence on the PRC in economic and political matters can be considered a real threat. One should not also ignore the internal conflict in Xinjiang. If China's desperation to cope with Turk-Moslem separatism turns to an open interference in the territories of Central Asian countries, that will be an intrusion to the zone of Russian interests. China confirmed its interest in the Caspian region by a trip of a delegation of the People's Liberation Army to Georgia. Considering Georgia's importance to Russia and the complicated relations between the two countries, the visit caused an unequivocal reaction in Moscow. By going out of Mongolia, Russia lost even a theoretical capability to repeat the Manchurian operation of August, 1945, which probably served as the basis for strategic planning in the 1970s and 1980s. And defense of the Russian Far East is fraught with great difficulties. Facing Chinese superiority in conventional forces and Chinese nuclear deterrent and taking into account military- geographic advantages of PRC, Russia will have to simultaneously make stress on nuclear weapons, both strategic and tactical, and make it possible to move additional forces to its Far East in case of a conflict with China. As the US did regarding the Soviet Union, Russia might provoke China to an accelerated build-up of its nuclear capacity, resulting in a strategic parity between the two countries and Russia's loss of its present advantage." The remedies proposed include placing priority on development of Siberia and the Far East, attraction of foreign investment and labor, creation of economic and technological interdependence with the PRC, and development of relations with the US and East Asian countries. In particular, "by trying to preserve the equilibrium, Tokyo and Moscow for the first time in history can seriously help each other. Hence, making a formula for solution of the territorial problem within the framework of the future peace treaty is of utmost importance. One needs to stress that we do not have to make a choice between Tokyo and Beijing. Russia and the PRC are mutually interested in peaceful development of the situation on Korean Peninsula. Here China's influence is incomparably stronger that that of Russia. Some opportunities are possible in the future. Russia for a Korea 'squeezed' between China and Japan may become a kind of 'a window,' while for Russia 'a Korean factor' in development of its Far East may partly balance China and Japan. India and Pakistan joining the ranks of nuclear powers forces Russia to define finally its interests in that region. The RF and India finding themselves in one camp and the PRC and Pakistan finding themselves in the opposite would by no means meet Russian interests."

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.

Produced by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development in partnership with:
International Policy Studies Institute Seoul, Republic of Korea
Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China
Monash Asia Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Gee Gee Wong: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

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

Robert Brown: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Kim Hee-sun: khs688@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

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

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

Yunxia Cao: yule111@sina.com
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

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

John McKay: John.McKay@adm.monash.edu.au
Clayton, Australia

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-29--ugust-2001/

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