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# NAPSNet Daily Report 29 January, 1997

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## **I. United States**

### **1. DPRK Famine Prospects**

The Associated Press (Robert H. Reid, "U.N.: NORTH KOREA HAS FOOD CRISIS," United Nations, 1/29/97) reported that UN World Food Program spokesman Michael Ross said Wednesday that the DPRK's food shortage is so acute that many city dwellers are receiving only 15 percent of the daily ration given to refugees in UN-managed camps in Africa. Dwindling supplies have forced the DPRK

government to reduce the amount of food provided by the state-run ration system from about 14 ounces per person a few months ago to 3 1/2 ounces. Refugees in UN-supported camps receive about 23 ounces of rations a day. The UN agency estimates that the DPRK has only enough food in warehouses to last until late spring or early summer. One World Food Program official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said a sign of the crisis is the near total absence of animals -- dogs, cats, chickens and cattle -- throughout the DPRK. "This means they've been slaughtered for food," the official said. The US State Department announced Monday that the DPRK had postponed by one week its meeting with US and ROK officials for a briefing on the four-party peace talks proposal, in order to conclude negotiations with Western firms on grain imports. Last week, InterAction, a coalition of 150 American humanitarian groups, said that the DPRK's 23 million people are "in the throes of a life-threatening food shortage that could take on famine proportions in the months to come." [Ed. note: For more information please see "DPRK Food Situation" in the US section of the January 23 Daily Report.]

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