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I. United States

1. DPRK Asylum Seeker in PRC

Agence France-Presse ("EX-NORTH KOREAN ARMY OFFICER SEEKS ASYLUM IN SOUTH KOREAN CONSULATE IN CHINA," 05/29/02) reported that a former officer in the DPRK army has entered the ROK consulate in Beijing, diplomatic sources said. But the diplomats warned he and the three other DPRK asylum-seekers will have more difficulties gaining passage to the ROK than previous asylum seekers. The army officer -- a former head of a platoon in the Korean People's Army -- entered the consulate Monday while lining up for a visa, said an Asian diplomat, who requested anonymity. The man, identified as Sok Chol-ho, 36, entered with a PRC ID card. Sok had snuck into the PRC from the DPRK in 1996 and had been living there since then. Prior to that, he was once one of the many personal guards of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il, the diplomat said.

2. ROK on PRC DPRK Asylum-Seeker Request

The Associated Press (John Leicester, "SOUTH KOREA MULLS CHINESE REQUEST ON NORTH KOREAN ASYLUM-SEEKERS," 05/29/02) reported that the ROK might consider a PRC request to hand over four DPRK asylum seekers if the PRC promises to let them leave the PRC, an ROK official said Wednesday. The three men and one woman are holed up in the consular office of ROK embassy in Beijing, where they sought refuge over the past week. "Under Chinese law and international law,

embassies and consulates in China have no right to grant asylum to citizens of third countries," said PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson Kong Quan. An ROK official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said his government could consider the request only if the PRC guarantees that the DPRK asylum-seekers' wishes will be respected. He said all four have asked to go to the ROK. "As long as there is no promise from the Chinese side to let them leave China it would be very difficult for us to hand them over to the Chinese," he said. He would not comment on the status of any negotiations with China over the issue.

3. Japan-ROK Extradition Treaty

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN'S PARLIAMENT APPROVES BILATERAL EXTRADITION TREATY WITH SOUTH KOREA," Tokyo, 05/28/02) reported that the Japanese Diet on Wednesday approved an extradition treaty with the ROK (as part of security-related preparations for co-hosting the World Cup soccer finals. The upper Diet unanimously voted in favor of the treaty - only the second extradition treaty Japan has ever agreed to, said parliamentary official Hideharu Mori. Japan's first such pact was signed with the US in 1978. The treaty, which passed Japan's lower Diet on May 7, calls for each country to hand over the other's nationals suspected or convicted of crimes that carry a prison term of longer than one year. Both sides can also ask help in pursuing politicians accused of wrongdoing or fugitives who have fled the country. The extradition pact, signed by Japanese and ROK justice ministers last month, requires ratification by both countries' legislatures. The pact is expected to go into effect 15 days after the two sides exchange signed documents, a Justice Ministry official said on condition of anonymity.

4. Cross-Straits Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN PRESIDENT GETS LOW MARKS FROM CHINA AFTER TWO YEARS IN OFFICE," 05/29/02) reported that the PRC gave Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian low marks for his performance as leader of the island over the past two years, saying it had been disappointed by his words and deeds. But the cabinet's Taiwan Affairs Office said Wednesday that members of Chen's Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) could visit the PRC as long as they did not do so in their capacity as DPP politicians. "Two years ago, after he assumed office, we said we would listen to his words and watch his behavior," Zhang Mingqing, spokesman of the office, said. "Over the past two years, he has not accepted the one-China principle .... he even hasn't acknowledged that he himself is Chinese," Zhang said. "Not only does he not accept this, he has also incessantly engaged in 'gradual independence' for Taiwan," he said. Earlier this month, Chen said he planned to send the head of the DPP's Chinese Affairs Department to Beijing "to enhance mutual understanding and facilitate reconciliation between parties." The PRC immediately replied saying it would only allow the delegation to visit if the DPP agreed to give up its pro-independence platform and accept the "One China" formula. Zhang said Wednesday that individual DPP members could in principle visit the PRC, as long as they did not do it in the capacity of DPP politicians.

Asia Pulse ("TAIPEI WON'T ACCEPT BEIJING'S 'ONE CHINA' PRECONDITION: MOFA," 05/29/02) reported that Taipei will never yield to the PRC's "one China" precondition for reopening cross-Taiwan Strait talks, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reiterated Tuesday. MOFA Spokeswoman Katherine S.Y. Chang said that Taiwan will never give way to the PRC's "one China" request and will only rekindle negotiations if "parity" and "reciprocity" are guaranteed. Chang made the remarks after PRC expert Ramon Myers said earlier this month that the PRC has made concessions toward the so-called "1992 consensus" and that it is the government of President Chen Shui-bian that refuses to compromise over the issue. Regarding the "One China" dispute, Chang said the Republic of China government views it as a discussible issue but will never accept it as a prerequisite to

cross-strait talks. "President Chen has also repeatedly displayed goodwill toward the mainland and any issue can be talked about, including the 'one China' dispute, but the Taiwan authorities will never accept being downgraded to a local government by the mainland," she stressed.

5. Taiwan Security Committee

Asia Pulse ("TAIWAN'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTRY SETS UP SECURITY COMMITTEE," Taipei, 05/28/02) reported that Taiwan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Eugene Chien confirmed yesterday that his ministry has launched a special committee to engage in dialogue with the Ministry of National Defense on arms sales and security-related issues. Chien said that hopefully in the near future, the committee set up under the Research and Planning Board will function as a mechanism to conduct dialogue with the US, Japan and other countries in the region on security issues. "MOFA already has an existing communication channel with national security departments," Chien said, but added that "however, we still need a think tank to help sort out problems from our own perspectives rather than to receive passively one-sided opinions from the MND."

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.
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