NAPSNet Daily Report 29 October, 2001

Recommended Citation

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

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I. United States

1. Inter-Korean Talks

The Associated Press ("N. KOREA STILL SEEKS TALKS WITH SOUTH," Seoul, 10/28/01) reported that the DPRK said on October 28 that it remains committed to reconciliation with the ROK, despite the suspension of high-level talks that had been scheduled to start this weekend. On October 28, the DPRK's official communist party newspaper, Rodong Sinmun, urged all Koreans to unite in a "patriotic struggle" to implement the joint declaration signed at the summit. It added, "It is the core of the joint declaration to independently solve the issue of the country's reunification ... free from any foreign domination and interference."

2. DPRK-US Talks

The Associated Press (Jae-suk Yoo, "N. KOREA OK's TALKS WITH US," Seoul, 10/29/01) and Reuters (Paul Eckert, "N. KOREA ASSAILS BUSH BUT WANTS BETTER US TIES," Seoul, 10/29/01)reported that the DPRK said Monday it does not oppose dialogue with the US, reversing its earlier position that it was no longer interested in dialogue and improvement of relations. Rodong Sinmun, the official newspaper of the nation's ruling Workers' Party, said, "It is good, not bad, to improve North Korea-U.S. relations." It reaffirmed its opposition, however, to US efforts to widen discussions to include DPRK's conventional arms in addition to its missile program. The article said the DPRK "neither neglects nor opposes" dialogue with the US. However, it said the Bush administration's proposal to discuss DPRK's conventional arms is "aimed to disarm North Korea and torpedo the North Korea-US dialogue."

3. PRC-Russian Talks

The Associated Press (John Iams, "CHINA LEADER, PUTIN DISCUSS TERROR," Moscow, 10/27/01) reported that PRC Vice President Hu Jintao met with Russian President Vladimir Putin on October 27 to discuss the war against terrorism, events in Afghanistan and the prospects for a post-Taliban government. As Putin welcomed Hu, he said, "We have today a high level of cooperation in the political, economic and military areas as well as in our coordination in the international arena." With stops in Russia, Britain, France, Spain and Germany, the trip is regarded as an effort to raise Hu's international profile. Hu informed Putin that the PRC parliament ratified a friendship treaty with Russia on October 27. Putin has submitted the same friendship treaty with the PRC to the State Duma, parliament's lower house, for ratification, the Kremlin press service said on October 27.

4. Analysis of PRC Vice President Hu Jintao

The New York Times (Erik Eckholm, "CHINA'S HEIR APPARENT IN DEBUT ON THE WORLD STAGE," Beijing, 10/29/01) reported that PRC Vice President Hu Jintao, who is expected to succeed Jiang Zemin in the winter of 2002, is being examined closely during his trip to Russia this weekend and to Britain on Monday. To foreign and domestic scholars, Hu is a political cipher. His personal leanings are largely unrevealed on the great issues of the day, including the pace of political change in the PRC and the country's ultimate goals abroad. Hu has been part of the ruling inner circle and the presumed successor since 1992, when Deng Xiaoping, then the paramount leader, labeled him the most promising leader of his generation and promoted him onto the seven-member Standing Committee of the party Politburo. He has been the PRC vice president since 1998. It seems clear that he is part of the governing consensus that favors the economic opening of the PRC, but under the continued rule of the Communist Party. Some Western diplomats say they are hopeful that as the spearhead of a new generation, he will be a force for faster change, but they also admit that they just do not know. He is said to have a photographic memory, and in meetings here with foreign officials, he is known for speaking clearly and without notes. But he hews to the script, and people come away with a feeling that he showed "no surface," as one diplomat put it last week. The European tour is intended in large part to burnish Hu's credentials as a statesman for the home audience. PRC and Western experts say that while there has been much speculation that Zeng Qinghong, a party insider who is a protege of Jiang's, might rival Hu for the top spot, that now appears unlikely. The other unresolved question is whether Jiang will also step down from his third major title: chairman of the military commission. Some PRC and Western experts say Jiang has the votes to keep that powerful post, which would definitely crimp Hu's powers. However, other experts say that Jiang appears more likely to resign in full. [Ed. note: This article appeared in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for October 29, 2001.]

5. PRC Ratifies Anti-Terror Treaties

Reuters ("CHINA'S CONGRESS RATIFIES ANTI-TERROR TREATIES," Beijing, 10/28/01) reported that the PRC's official Xinhua news agency reported on October 28 that the PRC parliament has ratified two international anti-terror treaties, underlining its commitment to the global war on terrorism. However, the approval of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, came with reservations about a requirement that disagreements over interpretation and implementation of the treaty be settled in an international court. The paper said, "The People's Republic of China makes reservation on clause one of article 20 of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and shall not be subjected to the clause's restrictions." The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) also approved the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism. The details of the Shanghai convention were not immediately clear, but PRC media has reported it would strengthen cooperation of the six member countries against terrorism.

6. US Arms Sales to Taiwan

Reuters ("TAIWAN WELCOMES POSSIBLE U.S. ANTI-TANK MISSILES," Taipei, 10/27/01) reported that Taiwan welcomed on October 27 a decision by the US to consider selling the island an anti-tank missile system. The US had said on October 26 that it is considering selling 40 Javelin anti-tank missile systems to Taiwan for an estimated $51 million USD. A spokesman at Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense said, "We are happy to see that happen. With those (weapons), it will help a lot to our defense systems." The spokesman said he did know if the US would sell other weapons to Taiwan in the near future.

7. Japanese Support of US Led Action

The Associated Press (Hans Greimel, "JAPAN PASSES LAW TO JOIN WAR," Tokyo, 10/29/01) reported that legislation authorizing Japan's military to support the US-led war on terror won final approval Monday, paving the way for Japan to send troops overseas but not into actual combat. The change allows Japan's military to transport supplies, conduct search-and-rescue missions and dispatch medical teams in support of U.S. forces and their allies. Japanese units are restricted, however, to areas where they are not likely to face combat. The final version requires the government to seek parliament's approval for dispatching the military within 20 days of giving orders to move out. It also prohibits the Japanese military from transporting weapons and ammunition on foreign soil. Japanese media have reported that initial missions will probably involve naval vessels transporting fuel and gathering reconnaissance.

The Associated Press ("JAPAN REPORTEDLY CONSIDERS WARSHIPS," Tokyo, 10/27/01) reported the Asahi newspaper reported on October 28 that that Japan's Defense Ministry is considering sending four warships to the Indian Ocean. The Japanese ships, which could include an Aegis-class destroyer and a supply vessel, may leave as early as mid-November and reach the island of Diego Garcia within two to three weeks. The report did not cite sources. The paper said depending on a safety assessment by that flotilla, Japan could dispatch another two warships.

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK Policy towards US

Joongang Ilbo (Hwang Jang-jin, "N.K. ONCE MORE DECLARES PRINCIPLES FOR DIALOGUE WITH U.S.," Seoul, 10/29/01) reported on Oct. 29th that the DPRK repeatedly declared that it would resume dialogue with the US only when the Bush administration returns to the more compromising stance taken by the former Clinton administration. A statement released by spokesman of the Foreign Ministry of the DPRK once again condemned President Bush's statement against its leader Kim Jong-il on the eve of the Asia Pacific Economic Forum (APEC) in Shanghai, China. The state-run newspaper Rodong Sinmun read, "We are not against opening the dialogue itself, in fact our position is to end the hostile relations and promote bilateral relations." The newspaper then went on to suggest that for starters, it is important to go back to the 1994 Agreed Framework and Joint Communiqué sealed between the US and the DPRK late last year. The paper added that the resumption of talks between the two countries depends on future US attitudes.

2. CSCAP Meeting

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Hee-sung, "NORTH AND SOUTH TO ATTEND CSCAP MEETING SIMULTANEOUSLY," Seoul, 10/29/01) reported that the DPRK and the ROK are to attend the Council for Security Cooperation in Asia Pacific (CSCAP) meeting to be held in Washington D.C. October 29-31. The meeting, focused on world terrorism and its influence over security, marks the first time the US has granted a visa to DPRK officials since the inauguration of the Bush administration early this year, triggering hopes of improvement in ties between the DPRK and the US. Park Hee-kwon, Security Policy Advisor of the ROK, and Jo Kil-hong from the Research Center for Arms Control and Peace of the DPRK, are to attend the meeting as head delegates of each side, along with three or four related officials. The two representatives reportedly have no scheduled arrangement for individual contacts, but are likely to exchange opinions during the main talks when addressing inter- Korean issues and the resumption of bilateral talks.

3. DPRK Refutes Bush's Remark

Joongang Ilbo ("U.S. RE-DESIGNATES NORTH KOREA IN THE LIST OF RELIGIOUS VIOLATION," Seoul, 10/29/01) reported that the US State Department re-designated the DPRK as one of the countries of particular concern in the International Religious Freedom Act along with Burma, the PRC, Iran, Iraq and Sudan in its annual report on religious freedom on October 26. Richard Boucher, spokesman of the US State Department said that US Secretary of State Colin Powell added the DPRK to the list in accordance with the Religious Freedom Act of 1998. Boucher said, "Religious and human rights groups outside the country have provided numerous unconfirmed reports that members of underground churches have been beaten, arrested or killed because of their religious beliefs. Reports of executions, torture and imprisonment of religious persons in the country continue to emerge."

4. Financial Inter-Korean Cooperation

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Hee-sung, "BOK CALLS FOR FINANCIAL INTER- KOREAN COOPERATION - AND FAST," Seoul, 10/29/01) reported that the Bank of Korea (BOK) on October 29 called for greater financial cooperation between the ROK and the DPRK in support of further inter-Korean economic activity. The BOK stated that joint inter-Korean projects could face serious problems and pointed out that financial supply is not proceeding smoothly and direct settlement of funds is impossible. The report further underlined the need to form a new organization to take charge of currency of the DPRK and the ROK.

5. ROK To Attend ASEAN Plus 2 Summit

Chosun Ilbo (Kim Hee-sung, "PRESIDENT TO ATTEND ASEAN PLUS 3 SUMMIT," Seoul, 10/29/01) reported that ROK President Kim Dae- jung embarks on a three-day visit to Brunei, October 28 to attend the ASEAN, along with three summit meetings that includes the ROK, the PRC and Japan. During the visit, President Kim will hold a trilateral summit with PRC and Japanese counterparts and conduct separate one-on-one meetings with ASEAN leaders. The president is expected to discuss increased cooperation in East Asia as a means of preventing terrorism while also promoting trade and investment.

III. Japan

1. Japanese Logistic Support for US

The Asahi Shimbun ("AEGIS VESSELS FOCUS OF DEBATE," Tokyo, 10/29/01) reported that the biggest question facing Japan's Defense Agency officials was whether to deploy the advanced Aegis guided-missile destroyers. Some officials favor deployment of an Aegis destroyer, saying it could both escort the Maritime Self- Defense Force (MSDF) fueling ships in the Indian Ocean and provide valuable intelligence to US Navy ships in the region. But officials within the ruling coalition remain cautious. The concern is over whether the high-tech equipment aboard Aegis destroyers will further fuel criticism from an already wary public on SDF personnel becoming involved in combat situations. To ward off domestic criticism, ruling coalition members have suggested restricting the use of the destroyers' capabilities. But Defense Agency officials argue this is unrealistic, asserting the difficult of limiting the ability of the computer-linked systems. Others question why such an advanced ship is being deployed in the campaign against the Taliban who possess no weapons that require the use of an Aegis destroyer. There are also concerns that close contact between the MSDF and US Navy could result in Japan's ships becoming involved in the use of force, which is prohibited by the Constitution.

2. Revision of the Self-Defense Forces Law

The Asahi Shimbun English edition ("SDF CONTRACTORS FEAR FALLING AFOUL OF NEW LAW," Tokyo, 10/29/01) reported that contractors for the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) are worried about proposed revisions to the SDF Law that would leave even company employees liable for prison terms of up to five years for leaking defense secrets. The revision would give Japan's Defense Agency, which procures equipment from about 900 firms every year, protection similar to that enjoyed by US forces under the Japanese Law. Industry representatives made their concerns known to Defense Agency officials during a meeting early last month at which officials of about 100 firms were briefed on the proposed changes in the SDF Law. Some executives complain that the agency has never informed them when a given piece of equipment is no longer considered top secret. Other firms claim the agency is more concerned about creating new secrets and passing the associated cost onto the companies.

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:
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