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I. **United States**

1. **DPRK Participation in APEC**

Agence France Presse ("S. KOREAN PRESIDENT CALLS FOR N. KOREA TO JOIN APEC, URGES ASIAN SAFETY NET," Seoul, 3/31/00) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung said Friday at a two day Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum that the DPRK should be given guest membership in APEC. Kim also urged the establishment of an APEC social safety net to help regional economies struck by natural disasters, a fund that could help non-members such as the DPRK. Kim

said, "I believe that taking an interest in the economic difficulties of North Korea is very important for the peace and common prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region. I hope that North Korea will be able to participate in APEC activities as an economy with guest status, upon consultation with APEC members. Furthermore, I look forward to a day when North Korea will become a member of APEC. I believe it is time for businesses in the APEC member economies to fully consider entering the North Korean market. It is my belief that in times of unforeseen difficulties, the member economies should provide assistance so the burden can be shared. In this context, I hope that support for both APEC member and non-member economies will be strengthened."

2. PRC Threat to Taiwan

The Washington Post (Thomas E. Ricks, "TAIWAN SEEN AS VULNERABLE TO ATTACK," 3/31/00) reported that a new and highly classified US Defense Department report said that Taiwan is far more vulnerable to attack from the PRC than is generally recognized, because its military has fallen behind technologically. A US administration official familiar with the report said that it points out "a host of problems" with the Taiwanese military's ability to defend against airplanes, ballistic missiles and cruise missiles. The report concluded that Taiwan's military capability has been weakened by the island's diplomatic isolation, and faults the military for allowing poor security at its bases, for tolerating bitter interservice rivalries, and for failing to develop a professional corps of senior enlisted troops to operate its weapons systems. The official said, "there is no other military in the world that experiences the kind of isolation Taiwan's does. They don't train or have contacts with anyone. And as warfare has become more complex, it has become more difficult for them to handle all these new technologies." The report was produced by officers on the staff of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff and by officials in the policy formulation office of the Office of the Secretary of Defense. The official continued that overall, the report outlines "not a very pleasant picture" of Taiwan's defenses. He added, "these guys don't know how to do a lot of this stuff." The report implicitly argued that the military balance may now be tilting too much in favor of the PRC. Richard Fisher and William Triplett, two PRC specialists, said that they believe the US Defense Department is deliberately suppressing the report. The report was completed in January, but since then has been labeled a "draft." Some congressional aides suspect it has been kept in that form because it makes it easier for the US Defense Department to refuse to show it to them. The report has been widely discussed in foreign policy circles, but very few people actually have been permitted to read it. US Defense Department spokesman Kenneth Bacon responded that the report was not being suppressed and a planned briefing to Taiwanese officials was postponed simply for logistical reasons. Bacon said, "we always planned to brief the Taiwanese on the contents of the assessment before releasing it to the appropriate people in Congress." [Ed. note: This article was included as a Top Story in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 31, 2000.]

3. US-PRC Talks

The New York Times (Erik Eckholm, "2 DAYS OF U.S.-CHINA TALKS SAID TO AID RELATIONS," Beijing, 3/31/00) reported that US National Security Adviser Samuel R. Berger completed two days of talks with the PRC in Beijing on March 30. A senior official described the talks as "serious and thoughtful," and said that they would aid the recovery of US-PRC relations. The dominant topic in the meetings between the Berger and top officials, including PRC President Jiang Zemin, was Taiwan and new tensions following the PRC's threats against the island and the election victory of an opposition candidate. The official said that the US reaffirmed to the PRC its support for "one-China," but also stressed the need for peaceful dialogue between the PRC and Taiwan. The official also said that the PRC repeated warnings that PRC-US relations will be seriously damaged if the US accedes to Taiwan's request for more advanced defensive weapons. The official said that Berger also made

clear that the decision on arms sales would be influenced by the level of tension. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 31, 2000.]

4. PRC Human Rights

The Los Angeles Times (Jonathan Peterson and Tyler Marshall, "WHITE HOUSE BACKS IDEA OF CHINA WATCHDOG," Washington, 3/31/00) reported that the US Clinton administration said it was willing to endorse new ways of reviewing the PRC's conduct on human rights and other sources of friction between the US and the PRC. US officials said that the approach means subjecting the PRC to some form of ongoing scrutiny, but eliminating the divisive annual debate now conducted as a condition of its having normal trade relations with the US. Officials said that the administration is prepared to support creation of a human rights watchdog group, modeled after the Helsinki Commission that monitored Soviet human rights behavior in Eastern Europe in the 1970s and 1980s. It is also discussing ways to keep up pressure on the PRC on workplace standards and trade commitments. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 31, 2000.]

5. PRC-India Border Dispute

Agence France Presse ("INDIA CALLS ON CHINA FOR A SETTLEMENT OF BORDER DISPUTE," New Delhi, 4/1/00) reported that India on Saturday called on the PRC to improve relations and urged a settlement of a border dispute. Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee said in a message to his PRC counterpart Zhu Rongji, "we attach importance to the development of friendly, cooperative, good-neighbourly and mutually-beneficial relations with China. With the joint efforts of the two sides, we can build a stable relationship of constructive cooperation into the 21st century and thereby contribute to peace and stability in the Asian region." Indian President K.R. Narayanan is set to visit the PRC in May to attend ceremonies marking the anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties. In a message to PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan, Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh said that it was the responsibility of India and the PRC to impose a regime of peace in the region. Singh said, "we must persist with this, even as neighbors, we address ourselves to unresolved issues, for that is our joint responsibility to the future." India says that the PRC still holds 40,000 square kilometers (16,000 square miles) of its territory in Kashmir, while the PRC lays claim to a wide swathe of territory in the far-eastern Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh.

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-PRC Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("KIM JONG-IL INVITES A CHINESE LEADER TO NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 03/30/00) reported that DPRK Workers' Party General Secretary Kim Jong-il has reportedly sent a personal letter through Foreign Minister Paek Nam-sun, who visited the PRC recently, to PRC leaders, including President Jiang Zemin, inviting one of them to the DPRK. According to diplomatic sources in Beijing on March 30, Minister Paek delivered the letter to Prime Minister Zhu Rongji when they met on March 20. In the letter, General Secretary Kim emphasized the tradition of exchanges between the two nations, strongly requesting that President Jiang, Prime Minister Zhu, or Li Peng, chairman of the standing committee of the National People's Congress, visit the DPRK. Experts said that General Secretary Kim's letter shows that the DPRK has actively come forward to improve ties with the PRC. This move draws attention because it hints at DPRK's future direction in foreign

policy.

2. DPRK-Italy Relations

Joongang Ilbo (Lee Young-jong, "N. KOREAN FOREIGN MINISTER ACCEPTS ITALIAN INVITATION," Seoul, 03/30/00) reported that the DPRK's official Central Television reported on March 29 that DPRK Prime Minister Paek Nam-sun has accepted Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini's invitation to visit Italy.

3. DPRK Participation in International Summit

The Korea Herald ("N.K. TO DISPATCH NO. 2 MAN TO 'SOUTH SUMMIT' IN CUBA," Seoul, 03/31/00) and The Korea Times (Son Key-young, "KIM YONG-NAM TO ATTEND 'SOUTH SUMMIT' IN CUBA," Seoul, 03/30/00) reported that the DPRK will take part in the South Summit, a five-day meeting for developing countries scheduled for April 10 in Cuba. The ROK Foreign Affairs and Trade Ministry said on Thursday that Kim Yong-nam, chairman of the standing committee of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly, is expected to represent his nation at the meeting. The summit was mainly organized by G-77 members to discuss practical cooperation issues on the occasion of the beginning of a new millennium. Over 70 heads of developing countries will attend the meeting. "Kim's attendance at the summit meeting is another example of North Korea's recent active diplomacy," a ministry official said. The ROK plans to dispatch an ambassadorial-level figure to the Havana meeting as a guest.

4. Aid to DPRK

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "INTERNATIONAL AID FOR N. KOREA TOTALED \$380 MILLION LAST YEAR," Seoul, 03/31/00), Chosun Ilbo ("INTERNATIONAL AID TO NK STEADILY INCREASES," Seoul, 03/30/00) and The Korea Times (Lee Soo-jeong, "INT'L AID TO NK ON STEADY RISE: UNIFICATION MINISTRY," Seoul, 03/30/00) reported that the ROK Unification Ministry said on Thursday that the amount of assistance for the DPRK has grown steadily over the past few years, with the international community granting it US\$380 million worth of aid in 1999. Topping the list of donors were the US, which contributed US\$207 million, or 53 percent of the total, followed by the PRC (US\$78.6 million), the ROK (US\$46.8 million) and the EU (US\$37.4 million), a ministry tally showed. "Despite the 'donor fatigue' demonstrated in some countries, which is a result of the lack of visible change in North Korea, overall aid has been steadily rising for the past several years," said a ministry official. Aid increased 25 percent last year from 1998, when it stood at US\$330 million. Corresponding figures for 1997 and 1996 were US\$260 million and US\$90 million, respectively. "The continued increase is mainly due to persistent calls for help for the economically ailing country by major donors, including the United States," said Hong Yang-ho, director general for the Humanitarian Affairs Bureau. Food accounted for more than 90 percent of the aid, with fertilizers and medicines constituting most of the remainder, he added.

5. DPRK-ROK Economic Cooperation

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Jong-yoon, "DOMESTIC COMPUTER SECURITY FIRM OFFERS SECURITY SYSTEM AT NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR PLANT," Seoul, 03/30/00) reported that internet security firm Cyber Patrol and a voice recognition technology firm called L and H Korea stated on March 23 that they had jointly constructed and established a security system utilizing voice recognition technology at the nuclear plant site being built by the Korean Peninsula Energy Development

Organization (KEDO) in Hamkyungnam-do, the DPRK. The technology, called Speaker Verification (SV), identifies authorized users by comparing their voices to a digitized sample making it impossible for unauthorized individuals to use the computer system.

6. DPRK Defectors

Joongang Ilbo (Lee Yong-jong, "SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT TERMS NORTH KOREAN DEFECTORS AS 'REFUGEES'," Seoul, 03/30/00) reported that for the first time, the ROK government has shifted its policy on DPRK defectors in the PRC and Russia referring to them as "refugees" instead of "escapees." This is the first time that the ROK officially took a position on the status of DPRK defectors and aid for them. A Foreign Ministry official in Seoul commenting on the change said, "We have decided to call them refugees because most of DPRK escapees in eastern China are running away from hunger or governmental surveillance. We will seek appropriate protection for them under international law, such as the convention on refugees, from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR) and related international organizations." Meanwhile, ROK Ambassador to Geneva Chang Man-soon, speaking at the UN Human Rights Committee's 56th session in Geneva, stated, "Those who can be categorized as 'refugees' should be protected by international agreements on humanitarian grounds." The shift in policy is a preview of the ROK government's future strategy on the refugee issue. The government believes it is better to refer to the DPRK defectors as refugees to enhance their bargaining position in the event of another forcible return to the DPRK.

III. Japan

1. Japan-DPRK Talks

The Asahi Shimbun ("GOVERNMENT TO ENCOURAGE ROK-DPRK GOVERNMENTAL DIALOGUE," 03/29/2000) reported that Kojiro Takano, Japanese Ambassador for negotiations with the DPRK, talked to the Asahi Shimbun on March 28 regarding the normalization talks between Japan and the DPRK. Takano said that he would encourage the DPRK to agree to start ROK-DPRK dialogue and also would seek a further understanding by the DPRK in terms of the issue of past history. Takano stated, "The difference between the previous talks between Japan and the DPRK and the talks this time is that security issues have become more serious. These issues, including the missile issue, have become a big security concern for East Asia." With regard to the issue of past history, Takano said that because the Japanese government had already announced its position on the issue, it would not be a big problem. Takano also said, "Japan and the DPRK were never in the state of war, so the issue of compensation does not exist. (However, regarding the DPRK's right to demand compensation for Japan's colonization,) this issue should be dealt with as our negotiations progress."

2. DPRK Diplomacy

The Yomiuri Shimbun (Yoshikazu Shirakawa, "DPRK HIGH-RANKING OFFICIAL TO ATTEND G77 MEETING," Seoul, 03/31/2000) reported that according to a source from the ROK Foreign and Trade Ministry, the DPRK's second highest-ranking figure, Kim Yong-nam, would attend a meeting among the G77 countries, a group of 77 developing countries, on April 10 in Cuba. The report said that Kim will also meet with representatives from some of these countries individually and they will discuss cooperation and exchange among the developing countries. The report also said that Kim is also likely to attend a foreign ministerial meeting among non-aligned nations, slated for April 7 in

Colombia. The report concluded that the DPRK seems to be aiming to facilitate improvement of its relations with Japan, European countries, the PRC and Russia by these meetings.

3. Japanese-ROK Talks

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("KONO TELLS KIM DAE-JUNG ABOUT JAPAN'S DECISION TO SEND RICE TO DPRK," 03/27/2000) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono met with ROK President Kim Dae-jung on March 27 in Seoul. Kono told Kim, regarding to Japan's decision to send 100,000 thousand tons of rice to the DPRK, "Although there was domestic opposition to the decision, we decided to send rice to the DPRK to construct a ground for the normalization talks." In response, Kim said, "(The decision) also means to help DPRK people who are suffering hunger." Regarding Japanese-US-ROK security cooperation toward the DPRK, Kim said, "(The countries) should make it clear to the DPRK that we engage in dialogue with the DPRK only when the DPRK shows a forward-looking attitude, while taking a firm deterrence posture toward the DPRK."

4. Japanese-ROK Cultural Exchange

The Nikkei Shimbun ("ROK TO BEGIN THIRD ROUND OF LIBERALIZATION OF JAPANESE POPULAR CULTURE," 03/26/2000) reported that Japanese Education Minister Hirofumi Nakasone met with ROK Culture and Sightseeing Minister Park Ji-won on March 25 in Sendai, Japan and discussed cultural exchanges between Japan and the ROK. Nakasone and Park agreed that in addition to co-hosting the World Cup Soccer games in 2002, the two countries would have an exposition of Japanese-Korean antiques. The report also said that according to the Japanese Culture Agency, Park told Nakasone that the ROK government would conclude a report in April on the past two iterations of liberalization of Japanese popular cultural exports, and that liberalization policy would continue. Park also said that the report would be positive.

5. Japanese-PRC Relations

The Asahi Shimbun ("JAPAN DECIDES ON FOURTH YEN LOAN TO PRC THIS YEAR: EMPHASIS IS ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION," 03/28/2000) reported that the Japanese and PRC governments signed a document in Beijing on March 27 to the effect that the Japanese government would provide approximately 193 billion yen to the PRC for 19 projects. The projects include environmental protection and development of the western part of the PRC, slated to start this year. The report added that Japan's yen loan to the PRC has amounted to more than 722 billion yen since 1996, when the yen loan package began.

6. Japanese-Russian Relations

The Nikkei Shimbun ("GOVERNMENT AIMS AT EARLY SUMMIT TALKS WITH RUSSIA'S NEW PRESIDENT," 03/27/2000) reported that Japanese officials welcomed the victory of Vladimir Putin in the presidential election and said that they would soon begin coordinating talks between the new Russian president and Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi. Obuchi, while welcoming Putin's victory, announced, "I hope from the bottom of my heart that (President Putin) will regard individual dignity and courageously tackle the task of building a peaceful and prosperous country." With regard to Japanese-Russian relations, Obuchi said, "I will strive to cooperate with the new Russian administration and also to further develop our relations in all areas, including negotiations for a peace treaty (between the two countries

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.

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