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Preceding NAPSNet Report

MARKTWO

I. NAPSNet

1. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks

The Associated Press ("CHINA: NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR TALKS COULD RESUME", 2009/10/07) reported that the PRC's top envoy on DPRK issues said that Pyongyang's readiness to hold discussions with the US is a positive development that could pave the way for a resumption of stalled international talks on the DPRK's nuclear program. PRC Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei said Wednesday that a dialogue between Pyongyang and Washington would help "create the conditions needed to reopen" the deadlocked negotiations. Wu said such bilateral talks could be considered part of the six-nation process. "I hope the dialogue between North Korea and the U.S. can achieve concrete progress," he added.

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2. US on DPRK Sanctions

Agence France Presse (Shaun Tandon , "FOR US, NORTH KOREA STEP VINDICATES HARD LINE: ANALYSTS", Washington, 2009/10/07) reported that the DPRK hopes to lure the United States to the table with its offer to resume denuclearization talks, but many in Washington see the shift as proof its hard line is working, analysts say. Experts said that recent sanctions on the DPRK, imposed by the United Nations with strong US support, were working better than perhaps even the Obama administration hoped. The administration has found that with sanctions "they have a very powerful tool, and one that could become even more powerful," said Victor Cha, who was former president George W. Bush's top adviser on the DPRK.

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3. ROK on DPRK Sanctions

Associated Press (Jae-soon Chang, "SKOREA: SANCTIONS ON NKOREA SHOULD REMAIN IN PLACE", Seoul, 2009/10/08) reported that U.N. sanctions on the DPRK must remain in place even if the nation comes back to the six-party talks , ROK Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan said Thursday. "It's impossible to halt or lift sanctions just because North Korea returns to dialogue," Yu told reporters, adding that all five countries negotiating with the DPRK are united in that position. Yu said the DPRK is showing a "dual attitude of offering to talk while continuing nuclear development."

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4. EU on DPRK Missiles

Yonhap News (Tony Chang, "EUROPE COULD PARTICIPATE IN COMPENSATION FOR N. KOREA'S DENUCLEARIZATION: FRENCH ENVOY", Seoul, 2009/10/07) reported that France's special envoy for the DPRK said Wednesday that European countries could possibly take part in the international community's compensation process for the DPRK when the communist country ultimately decides to give up its nuclear program. "Yes, I believe Europe could participate in such (a) cooperative process," Jack Lang, French President Nicolas Sarkozy's special envoy, said in a press conference. Lang, who offered the view in his private capacity through an interpreter, was confident that Europe "was capable in cooperating (with international community) for peace and security (of the world)."

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5. Interdiction of DPRK Vessel

Dong A Ilbo (Lee Chi-dong, " 'SEIZED NK CONTAINERS WERE HEADED FOR SYRIA'", 2009/10/07) reported that four DPRK containers allegedly storing items related to chemical weapons seized in Busan last month were headed for Syria, a government source in Seoul said. The DPRK has long been suspected of transferring nuclear technology to Syria. "(South) Korean and U.S. intelligence are focused on the fact that the seized containers were heading for Syria," the source said. "They are concerned that protective clothing in containers can be used to develop weapons of mass destruction in Syria, such as nuclear or biological chemical weapons."

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6. Inter-Korea Relations

Yonhap News ("SEOUL'S BUDGET FOR INTER-KOREAN COOPERATION REMAINS UNTAPPED", Seoul, 2009/10/07) reported that the ROK has so far this year spent less than 5 percent of its annual budget earmarked to promote reconciliation with the DPRK, the Unification Ministry's data showed Wednesday. The data showed that the ROK has set aside 1.16 trillion won (US$990.94 million) for this year's inter-Korean cooperation budget, which includes 43 billion won transferred from last year, to support joint business projects and provide industrial and humanitarian aid to the the DPRK. The budget spending as of the end of September amounted to 55.9 billion won, 4.8 percent of the total, according to the data.

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA KEEPS EXPENSE CAP ON N. KOREA VISITS ", Seoul, 2009/10/07)

reported that the ROK said Wednesday it will keep the cap on expenses that its citizens can spend during their visits to the DPRK either for family reunions or tourism. Under a guideline renewed on Tuesday, ROK citizens visiting the DPRK to meet family members there cannot spend more than US$1,000.

Korea Herald (Kim So-hyun , "SEOUL TO REVISE PLANS ON INTER-KOREAN TIES ", 2009/10/08) reported that Seoul plans to revise its 2007 roadmap on improving ties with Pyongyang to tune into its new policy of linking the DPRK nuclear program with inter-Korean relations. The strategic goals of the five-year plan, drawn under the previous administration in November 2007, include denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, establishing peace, entering the initial stage of an inter-Korean economic community, substantial resolve of humanitarian issues and building a legal and institutional basis for inter-Korean relations.

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7. DPRK Economy

Institute for Far Eastern Studies ("DPRK ADMITS SANCTIONS PRESSURE, STRESSES FRUGALITY ", 2009/10/07) reported that the March 2009 issue of the DPRK journal Economic Research emphasized that with the strengthening of international economic sanctions against the DPRK, actively participating in the “Battle for Savings” was essential in all sectors in order to construct a “strong and prosperous nation.” The recently obtained academic journal called on readers to broaden the “savings battle” in an article titled, “Strongly Spreading the Battle for Savings Is an Important Measure for the Construction of an Economically Strong Socialist Nation.” The journal accused the United States of “villainously daring to carry out military pillaging and economic sanctioning measures” in order to blockade the DPRK and reported that “American and Japanese Imperialists are not only sanctioning imported and exported goods, but are going as far as to interfere with loan accounts.” These statements may provide some insight into the economic and social difficulties the international sanctions are causing for the DPRK.

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8. ROK Defense

United Press International ("SOUTH KOREA EYES WEAPONS TEST KIT", Los Angeles, 2009/10/07) reported that Universal Detection Technology announced it has become a featured exporter of biological weapon detection equipment to the ROK. The test kits are designed to detect and test for anthrax, botulinum toxin, Ricin and other potential biological weapons in as little as three minutes. The announcement comes on the heels of a report on the DPRK weapons program by the ROK Ministry of Defense.

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9. US-ROK Security Alliance

Yonhap News ("SCHEDULED 2012 TRANSFER OF OPCON ON TRACK: U.S. COMMANDER ", 2009/10/07) reported that the United States will transfer the wartime command of ROK troops as scheduled in 2012 despite concerns over a nuclear-armed DPRK, the commander of U.S. forces in

Korea said Wednesday. "On the OPCON transfer, we are on track. We will be prepared for 17 April, 2012," Gen. Walter Sharp said in a forum here. "By 2012, the Republic of Korea military leadership will be ready to take over."

Korea Times (Jung Sung-ki, "PACIFIC AIR FORCE CHIEF MEETS DEFENSE MINISTER", 2009/10/07) reported that Defense Minister Kim Tae-young met Wednesday with the four-star general of the U.S Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) and discussed issues of mutual concern. Gen. Gary North's visit was part of the commander's inaugural tour of PACAF bases. Kim and North exchanged views on a range of security issues, including the 2012 transition of wartime operational control from the U.S. military to Korean commanders.

JoongAng Ilbo (Kim Min-seok, "KEY U.S. MISSILE NOT AVAILABLE SOON", 2009/10/08) reported that the ROK government has not been able to secure a key missile designed to attack core DPRK missile sites. According to the data submitted by the Defense Acquisition Program Administration to the National Assembly, Seoul has yet to purchase the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile, or JASSM, from the United States. Grand National Party Rep. According to the data, the U.S. Air Force notified the ROK on Sept. 11 that it would not be able to sell its JASSM and that it didn't expect the U.S. government to export the missile to anywhere until mid-2010.

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10. ROK Climate Change

Xinhua News Agency ("S.KOREA, BRITAIN VOW TO EXPAND COOPERATION IN GREEN GROWTH ", Seoul, 2009/10/07) reported that the ROK and Britain on Wednesday pledged to expand bilateral cooperation in green growth. During a meeting between ROK President Lee Myung-bak and visiting British Business Secretary Peter Mandelson, Lee said his country hoped that cooperation among companies of the two countries in green growth industries and technologies could be expanded against the background of a free trade agreement (FTA) between the ROK and the European Union, according to the ROK's presidential office Cheong Wa Dae.

JoongAng Ilbo (Lee Eun-joo , "GREEN FINANCE VITAL TO FUTURE GROWTH", 2009/10/07) reported that for the local economy to realize the growth potential in green industry, targeted financial support is crucial, a business lobby group said. In a report, the Korean Chamber of Commerce and Industry cited so-called "green finance" an essential part of the government-driven green growth campaign to support eco-friendly businesses and products. For green finance to find roots here, the ROK government should help establish a financial institution dedicated to funding eco-friendly companies, especially smaller ones, and providing tax benefits to green banking institutions, according to the report.

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11. ROK International Aid

JoongAng Ilbo (Moon Gwang-lip , "GOV'T TO SUPPORT MORE ECO-PROJECTS IN ASIA", 2009/10/07) reported that the government has announced it will provide 7 trillion won ($5.98 billion) in loans to developing countries over the next four years, which it hopes will bolster the

nation’s green growth initiatives. The Ministry of Strategy and Finance said it has set aside 1.7 trillion won at the Economic Development Cooperation Fund for loans to support green growth projects in developing countries between this year and 2012.

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12. ROK Refugees

Korea Times (Park Si-soo, "REFUGEE CLAIMS JUMP 10-FOLD", 2009/10/07) reported that the number of asylum seekers waging a court battle to get refugee status has increased 10 fold over the past year, a Seoul court said Wednesday. The Seoul Administrative Court, the only one handling refugee issues in Korea, said a total of 99 asylum seekers have filed legal suits so far this year. The Korea Immigration Service (KIS) has expedited the screening of the claims. Last December, the number of pending cases reached a record-high 1,450, according to the office.

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13. ROK-Russia Relations

Korea Times ("RUSSIAN-KOREANS TO SETTLE IN S.GYEONGSANG", 2009/10/07) reported that around 180 displaced ethnic Koreans based in Russia are planning to return to the ROK and live in South Gyeongsang Province. They were moved to the island of Sakhalin after the 1904 Russo-Japanese War and during the Japanese occupation. This is the first time Sakhalin Koreans have decided to permanently resettle in the province, according to its Red Cross chapter and Gimhae City officials, Wednesday.

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14. Japan, PRC, ROK Education

Yonhap News ("JAPAN SEES IMPORTANCE OF MAKING COMMON HISTORY TEXTBOOK WITH S. KOREA, CHINA ", Tokyo, 2009/10/07) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada said Wednesday it is "ideal" for the ROK, the PRC and Japan to write a history textbook based on a common recognition of the history of the countries, a Japanese daily reported, "Ideally in the future, we need to have a common history textbook for (Japan, the PRC and the ROK)," Okada was quoted by the Sankei Shimbun as saying during his lecture at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan. "As a first step toward the publication of the common textbook, the three countries are to implement a joint study of the history," Okada also said.

Yonhap (Byun Duk-kun, "SEOUL WELCOMES HISTORY TEXTBOOK WITH JAPAN, BUT SAYS WILL TAKE TIME", Seoul, 2009/10/08) reported that the ROK on Thursday welcomed the Japanese foreign minister's suggestion to compile a joint history textbook. "It will be a positive development if we can actually publish a common textbook," an official at the presidential office Cheong Wa Dae said. The official noted a joint study was already underway by the three countries' private sectors for a common history textbook, but said it will be a "long-term" project. "They have to consider the circumstances facing each country, but it will still be an important attempt," the official told reporters.

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15. US-Japan Nuclear Pact

Kyodo News ("JAPAN RECORDED WHEN U.S. ENVOY CONFIRMED SECRET NUKE PACT IN 1968", 2009/10/07) reported that the Japanese Foreign Ministry was keeping a record when the U.S. ambassador in 1968 reminded it of a secret 1960 bilateral nuclear deal, a former senior ministry official attested Tuesday in further evidence contrary to Tokyo's stance that no such pact has existed. According to the senior official who once headed the ministry's former Treaties Bureau and spoke on condition of anonymity, the record had been covertly maintained by the Treaties and the North American Affairs bureaus at least until the end of the 1990s. But it has maintained that no nuclear arms have been brought into Japan in violation of its nonnuclear principles as no such consultations have taken place.

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16. Japan-US Military Relations

Kyodo News ("HATOYAMA HINTS AT POSSIBLE CHANGE OF STANCE ON FUTEMMA RELOCATION ", Tokyo, 2009/10/07) reported that Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama hinted Wednesday at the possibility that the government may shift its stance on the issue of relocating the U.S. military facility in Okinawa and accept the existing Japan-U.S. bilateral accord that states the facility be moved within the prefecture. ''What we stated in our manifesto is certainly one promise we have made, and I still don't think we should change that so easily,'' Hatoyama told reporters in the evening, but added, ''I would not deny the possibility that it would change in terms of time.''

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17. Japan SDF in Afghanistan

Associated Press ("OKADA SAYS SENDING TROOPS IS NOT SOLE OPTION IN AFGHAN SUPPORT", Tokyo, 2009/10/07) reported that foreign Minister Katsuya Okada said Wednesday there is a need to provide income guarantees and vocational training to prevent people in Afghanistan from turning to the Taliban, while hitting back at arguments that such a focus could mean a shift by Japan to "checkbook diplomacy." "Sending troops is not necessarily the only way to provide support," Okada told reporters. "There are many people that are joining the Taliban because they have no other ways to support their livelihoods," Okada said at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan.

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18. Sino-Japan Relations

Reuters (Steve Chao , "EAST ASIA GROUP NEEDS CHINA COOPERATION - JAPAN FM", Tokyo, 2009/10/07) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada on Wednesday shrugged off the idea that Tokyo's plans to form an East Asian Community could spark rivalry with Beijing over who would take the leading role. "I think Japan and China must cooperate in order for the East Asian

Community to be a success," Okada said when asked about possible competition with Beijing for the lead role.

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19. Sino-US Relations

Associated Press ("CONGRESS MEMBERS HONOR THE DALAI LAMA", Washington, 2009/10/07) reported that lawmakers honored the Dalai Lama with a human rights award as President Obama faced criticism for delaying a meeting with the exiled Tibetan Buddhist spiritual leader. The Obama administration was accused of "kowtowing" to Beijing, as supporters of the Dalai Lama gathered at the Capitol as he received an award in memory of the late Rep. Tom Lantos, a Holocaust survivor and longtime champion of human rights. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said at the ceremony that "unless we speak out for human rights in China and in Tibet, we lose all moral authority to talk about human rights anywhere in the world."

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20. PRC Tibet Issue

Agence France Presse (Claire Cozens , "NEPAL'S TIBETANS SQUEEZED AS CHINA FLEXES MUSCLES", Kathmandu,) reported that as Beijing marked the 60th anniversary of Communist rule last week, police in Nepal quietly rounded up dozens of Tibetan exiles they said were suspected of planning to hold anti-PRC protests. The pre-emptive arrests in early morning raids across the capital Kathmandu were the latest sign of an increasingly hardline approach by Nepalese authorities to the country's Tibetan population. In recent months the Tibetan exiles say their lives have become increasingly difficult as Nepal -- reportedly under heavy pressure from the PRC -- has sought to restrict their activities.

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21. PRC Climate Change

Bloomberg (John Duce, "CHINA LAGS BEHIND THE WEST IN GREEN TECHNOLOGY BY A DECADE", 2009/10/07) reported that the PRC is lagging behind the West in green technology by at least a decade, Wang Xiaokang, president of state-controlled China Energy Conservation Investment Corp., said at a climate-change conference in Hong Kong today. The PRC needs international help with technology to reduce carbon emissions, Wang said.

New York Times (Jad Mouawad, "CLIMATE AGENCY SEES CHINA'S EFFORTS PAYING DIVIDENDS", 2009/10/07) reported that the downturn will make it a bit easier to slow the rise in emissions responsible for climate change. The International Energy Agency made that prediction in a report on global greenhouse gas emissions. Because of slower economic growth, the agency slashed, by 5 percent, its estimate of how much greenhouse gas emissions will be produced in 2020. Another reason for cautious optimism, the report said, is that the PRC will be able to slow the growth of its emissions much faster than commonly assumed because of its rising investment in wind and nuclear energy and its newfound emphasis on energy efficiency.

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22. PRC Ethnic Unrest

Reuters (Inal Ersan , "PREPARE TO FIGHT CHINA, QAEDA FIGURE TELLS UIGHURS", Dubai, 2009/10/07) reported that a prominent al Qaeda militant urged Uighurs in Xianjiang to make serious preparations for a holy war against the "oppressive" PRC and called on fellow Muslims to offer support. Abu Yahya al-Libi, in a video posted on an Islamist website on Wednesday, warned the PRC of a fate similar to that of former communist superpower, the Soviet Union. "The state of atheism is heading to its fall. It will face what befell the Russian bear (Soviet Union)," he said in the message in which he accused China of committing massacres against Uighurs and seeking to dissolve their identity.

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