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I. NAPSNet

1. DPRK Nuclear Program

Agence France-Presse ("NKOREA'S DISABLEMENT TO BEGIN IN MID OCTOBER: REPORT ", Seoul, 2007/10/07) reported that the DPRK will likely begin disabling its nuclear facilities in mid-October under a disarmament-for-aid deal that should see the process completed by year's end, a news report said. The disablement would take 45 days from the start until late November or early December, Seoul's Yonhap news agency said quoting unnamed officials.

Yonhap ("U.S. NUCLEAR EXPERTS GROUP TO DELAY NORTH KOREAN TRIP TO THURSDAY ", Seoul, 2007/10/08) reported that a group of US nuclear experts will fly to Pyongyang Thursday to discuss detailed steps for the disablement of the DPRK's nuclear facilities, delaying its trip by two days from its original schedule, a diplomatic source said. The American experts group has adjusted its plan and will fly to the DPRK capital from Beijing Thursday via an Air Koryo flight, the source said on condition of anonymity.

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2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program

Joongang Ilbo (Brian Lee, "ROH OPTIMISTIC ABOUT RESOLVING NORTH NUKE ISSUE", 2007/10/09) reported that a year after the DPRK tested a nuclear weapon, Seoul is increasingly voicing optimism that the nuclear crisis there will be resolved. "As the inter-Korean summit meeting reconfirmed, I believe the North Korean nuclear issue is heading toward a quick resolution," Roh said in an address to the National Assembly read yesterday by the prime minister. The president's remarks came amid criticism from conservatives that Seoul failed to properly address the nuclear issue at the summit.

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3. ROK on Peace Treaty

Yonhap (Yoo Cheong-mo, "ROH AIDE SAYS KOREAN PENINSULA PEACE SUMMIT LINKED TO

PROGRESS IN SIX-PARTY TALKS", Seoul, 2007/10/08) reported that a top security policy aide for ROK President Roh Moo-hyun said that the implementation of the latest inter-Korean agreement on holding a three- or four-party summit on permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula would be closely linked to the progress of the six-nation talks on disabling the DPRK's nuclear program. "The atmosphere for three- or four-party summit talks on the declaration of the end of the (1950-53) Korean War will depend on progress in the six-nation nuclear talks," said Baek Jong-chun, chief presidential secretary for foreign, security and unification policy.

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4. DPRK Terror List Status

Kyodo ("U.S. NOT STICKING TO FULL RESOLUTION OF ABDUCTION ISSUE", Washington, 2007/10/08) reported that the US is not sticking to a full resolution of the issue of the DPRK's past abduction of Japanese nationals as a condition for removing Pyongyang from its list of terrorism-sponsoring states, diplomatic sources said. While Japan has been asking the US not to delist the DPRK until all abductees are returned, the US is paying greater attention to how cooperative the DPRK will be such as in giving additional explanations about the fate of eight abductees including Megumi Yokota as the criteria for judging the abduction issue resolved in removing the DPRK from the list, said the sources.

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5. Inter-Korean Relations

Korea Herald (Jin Dae-woong , "SEOUL TO RAISE POWS, ABDUCTEES AT N.K. TALKS", 2007/10/08) reported that the ROK will again demand the DPRK repatriate ROK prisoners of war and civilian abductees at the defense chiefs' talks slated for November, the chief presidential security adviser said. In a meeting with managing editors of local media, National Security Secretary Baek Jong-cheon said President Roh Moo-hyun raised the sensitive matter during his summit with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il Oct. 3. But Kim did not respond, Baek said. Defense Minister Kim Jang-soo and his DPRK counterpart Vice Marshal Kim Il-chol are to hold talks in November to discuss follow-up measures for the establishment of a peace zone in western waters outlined in the Oct. 4 Summit Declaration.

The Financial Times (Anna Fifield, "S KOREAN PRINCIPLES SLIP ACROSS BORDER", Seoul, 2007/10/05) reported that the DPRK's rusting economy is set to receive a huge injection of cash - and capitalism - following this week's landmark agreement with the ROK, which paves the way for the establishment of joint complexes and for the development of its crumbling infrastructure. The willingness of Kim Jong-il to allow such development speaks volumes of the worsening circumstances in the DPRK. "It's important that North Korea accepted the idea of developing their economy," said Choi Choon-heum, of the ROK's Korea Institute for National Unification. "Kim Jong-il is becoming increasingly desperate."

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6. US-ROK Security Alliance

Yonhap ("ALLIES TO HOLD DEFENSE TALKS IN SEOUL NEXT WEEK ", Seoul, 2007/10/08) reported that the ROK and the US will hold military talks in Seoul next week, with the planned change in their wartime joint operation plan high on agenda, the Defense Ministry said. The upcoming Security Policy Initiative (SPI) talks, a working-level channel between the allies aimed at coordinating their military policies, is also intended to prepare for the allies' higher-level defense talks next month also to be held in Seoul, it added. "The SPI will be held on Oct. 19 in Seoul," Defense Ministry spokesman Kim Hyung-gi said. He did not provide more details or the agenda, but another senior ministry official said the envisioned transfer of wartime operational control (OPCON) of ROK troops will be the main topic.

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7. ROK Trade Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("ASEAN SERVICES DEAL MAY PRECEDE COMPLETE FTA", 2007/10/09) reported that the ROK and Southeast Asian nations have reached an agreement on services, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said yesterday, raising hopes for a comprehensive free trade deal by year's end. Asia's third-largest economy and nine of the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, have been negotiating to complete free trade talks on services and investment by Dec. 31.

Chosun Ilbo ("TRADE MINISTER KIM TO DISCUSS KOREA-EU FTA IN BRUSSELS ", 2007/10/08) reported that Trade Minister Kim Jong-hoon is meeting his European counterpart in Brussels this week to discuss on-going bilateral free trade negotiations. During his three-day stay in Brussels from Tuesday, Minister Kim will meet the EU's trade commissioner, Peter Mandelson, and exchange views on the trade talks. ROK trade representatives are also holding FTA talks with their Canadian counterparts in Ottawa this week, the 11th such discussions.

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8. Japan SDF Indian Ocean Mission

The Associated Press (Hiroko Tabuchi, "JAPAN MAY CUT SUPPORT OF AFGHAN MISSION", Tokyo, 2007/10/08) reported that Japan would scale back its support of the US in Afghanistan by ending naval assistance to vessels involved in ground missions there under a ruling party proposal that officials predicted Sunday would gain parliament's approval. A new draft law, submitted to the opposition, would clearly limit the mission to naval refueling and supplying of water to vessels participating in the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom's maritime patrol missions in the Indian Ocean. "Under the new law, there will be no refueling to ships providing support for ground operations (in Afghanistan)," Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura said.

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9. US-Japan Security Alliance

Reuters ("U.S. AND JAPAN AT ODDS OVER RISING MILITARY BASE COSTS ", Tokyo, 2007/10/08) reported that the US and Japan are locked in a dispute over the US demand that Japan shoulder more costs for water supplies and utilities at U.S. military bases in Japan, media reports said. The

US has urged Japan to cover rising costs of boosting US military capabilities in the Asia-Pacific region to deal with the DPRK and PRC, Kyodo news agency quoted sources close to the matter as saying. Japan has resisted the demand, the sources were quoted as saying without elaborating.

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10. PRC Environment

Reuters (Tan Ee Lyn, "INNER MONGOLIA GRASSLANDS TURNING TO SAND ", Baoligen, 2007/10/08) reported that the steppes of Inner Mongolia are arid even at the best of times, but low rainfall as world temperatures rise is turning these grasslands into sand. Deserts make up about 27.5 percent of the PRC's total land area today compared to about 17.6 percent in 1994, experts say. The PRC's "Green Great Wall," a 700 km (435 mile) barrier of shrubs and trees planted to hold back the advancing desert, has slowed down the desertification but hasn't stopped it completely. Environmentalists say the government needs to do more than just plant trees, it needs to prevent overexploitation of the land which is another cause of the expanding deserts.

Washington Post (Ariana Eunjung Cha, "IN CHINA, A GREEN AWAKENING", Wuxi, 2007/10/06) reported that one morning this summer, residents of this eastern city awoke to find that their beloved Tai Lake had turned rancid. The water was filled with a bloom of blue-green algae that gave off a rotten smell. It was not only undrinkable; it was untouchable. Few living things stirred in the water. City officials decided they'd had enough. In a series of radical proclamations that sent shudders through the business community, Wuxi declared itself a newly reformed green city. By September, the city had closed or given notice to close more than 1,340 polluting factories. Wuxi ordered the rest to clean up by June or be permanently shut down.

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11. PRC Internet Access

Xinhua ("INTERNET SPREADING IN CHINA'S RURAL AREAS ", Beijing, 2007/10/08) reported that the Internet has been extending fairly rapidly in the PRC's rural areas, with the number of rural net users reaching 37.41 million by the end of June, approximately 5.1 percent of the total of rural population. Statistics from the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) show that at the same time urban netizens had reached 125 million, or 21.6 percent of urban population. The PRC's rural net users were 23.1 million at the end of 2006, indicating that in six months 14.3 million farmers newly got access to the Internet.

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12. PRC Transplants

The Associated Press ("CHINA AGREES NOT TO TAKE INMATES' ORGANS", London, 2007/10/06) reported that PRC medical officials agreed not to transplant organs from prisoners or others in custody, except into members of their immediate families. The agreement was reached at a meeting of the World Medical Association in Copenhagen. The PRC has previously acknowledged that kidneys, livers, corneas and other organs are routinely removed from prisoners sentenced to death row. But officials insist that this only happens when consent is provided.

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II. ROK Report

13. Peace Declaration Talks

Joongang Ilbo (Chung Young-hwan, "THREE-OR-FOUR-PARTY TALKS HELD WITHIN ROH'S TERM", Seoul, 2007/10/09) reported that there is a possibility for the three-or-four-party talks mentioned during the summit meeting to be held within this year. Cheon Ho-sun, the Blue House spokesperson, said that they would try to hold the talks within this year without considering the remainder of ROK President Roh's term of office. Song Min-soon, the minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, said on the same day that the date depends on how the DPRK nuclear problem processes. It is presumed that the denuclearization can be started on October 20th at the earliest. Therefore, considering that the DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has always been waiting for the political "big deal," if he does something very crucial and decisive for the denuclearization of the DPRK, the three-or-four-party talks are very likely to be held within this year or early next year.

Kyunghyang Shinmun ("[OPINION] PRIOR CRITERIA FOR THE EARLY OPENING OF 3 OR 4 PARTY TALKS", Seoul, 2007/10/08) said in an editorial that the ROK government is accelerating preparations for the prompt holding of the three-or-four-party talks to declare the end of the war on the Korean Peninsula. It is obvious for the government to do so because the joint treaty can function more powerfully at an earlier stage. However, there are several prior conditions for the successful achievement of the next talks. It should be confirmed who is going to participate in the talks, whether it will be three or four, and what the talks will be mainly dealing with, since the notion of the declaration of the end of the war on the Korean Peninsula is quite different from the general sense. The government needs to make their logic more specific and plausible. The most important point of all is how the DPRK nuclear problem processes. The DPRK should act more cooperatively as they have promised.

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14. Conventional Force Reductions

Yonhap ("WHY IS KIM JONG-IL OPPOSED TO THE DISARMAMENT OF DMZ", Seoul, 2007/10/09) reported military officials analyzed that the reason DPRK leader Kim Jong-il rejected ROK President Roh Moo-hyun's proposal to disarm the DMZ during the summit last week may be because the rapid reduction of military forces might have been burdensome for the DPRK. They also pointed to the fact that there aren't enough job opportunities for laid off soldiers due to the stagnant economic situation. One of the military officials said that the DPRK might have been concerned that they don't have decent monitoring facilities such as unmanned drones, and one of the military's functions is to monitor the zone.

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15. Negotiating with DPRK

Yonhap ("HWANG JANG-YOP: 'NO MORE NEGOTIATION WITH KIM JONG-IL' ", Seoul, 2007/10/09) reported that Hwang Jang-yop, former secretary of the DPRK Workers' Party, asserted on the 9th that consistent negotiation with Kim Jong-il and excessive support will only result in intensifying his regime. He also mentioned that Kim would never be able to use his nuclear weapons, which will only cause the breakdown of the nation. He added that the purpose of the DPRK strengthening their military power is not to provoke the war, but only to threaten the ROK so that the ROK can "beg" for peace. He insisted that even though the DPRK doesn't seem to be preparing for war on the surface, since they are strengthening their power, the ROK should reinforce their regime by strengthening the National Security Law in order not to be invaded and to pursue democracy.

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16. Results of Summit

Hankyoreh (Lee Byung-chul , "INTER-KOREAN SUMMIT NOW A MATTER OF PRACTICE", Seoul, 2007/10/08) reported that this summit meeting was such an unexpected success, considering that there was not enough time for preparation. ROK President Roh Moo-hyun is now free from both the conservatives and progressives criticizing him. DPRK leader Kim Jong-il is considered as taking much of the actual benefits through economic cooperation with the ROK. One of the most crucial achievements from this summit is that the two Koreas started discussing establishing a permanent peace system on the Peninsula, which is closely related to the peace and unification of the nation. Even with these successful results, there still exist some other factors such as amicable cooperation and support of neighboring countries and the ROK government and people.

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