NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, January 29, 2007

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, January 29, 2007", NAPSNet Daily Report, January 29, 2007, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-monday-january-29-2007/

NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, January 29, 2007

NAPSNet Daily Report Monday, January 29, 2007

I. NAPSNet

- 1. Six Party Talks
  2. US-DPRK Relations
  3. Japan Pressure on DPR Koreans in Japan
  4. Japan on Abduction Issue
  5. UNDP Audit
  6. DPRK on UNDP Audit
  7. DPRK-Iran Relations
  8. ROK-US Trade Relations
  9. Japan-US Security Alliance
  10. Japan Constitutional Revision
  11. PRC African Diplomacy
  12. Cross Strait Relations
  13. PRC Pollution
  14. PRC Rural Unrest
  15. PRC Space Program

Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. NAPSNet

1. Six Party Talks

Joongang Ilbo ("6-WAY TALKS MOMENTUM GETS A PUSH", 2007-01-27) reported that the foreign ministers of the PRC and ROK agreed to issue a document at the next session of the six-party nuclear talks proposing initial steps. Officials at the ROK Foreign Ministry here were unwilling to comment on whether those Sino-RO Korean plans had been coordinated with Japan, the United States and Russia, but suggested that the work to set up benchmarks had been at least generally agreed. Although speculation continues to center on the week of Feb. 5 as a starting date for the next round of formal talks, the PRC hosts have yet to announce a date. The outlines of an agreement would offer Pyongyang diplomatic recognition, security assurances and economic aid in return for a freeze of Pyongyang's nuclear facilities and resumed nuclear oversight by international inspectors.

(return to top)

2. US-DPRK Relations

Associated Press ("U.S., N. KOREA TO RESUME FINANCIAL TALKS", 2007-01-29) reported that the groundwork has been laid for U.S.-DPRK talks Tuesday on U.S. financial restrictions. U.S. Deputy Treasury Secretary Robert M. Kimmitt said the talks will resume in Beijing at the DPRK's request. "I would say these talks are proceeding in a business-like fashion," he said in an interview Saturday on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum. "I think progress is being made on the technical understanding on both sides. But these are a set of talks, from our perspective, designed to make clear that the action that we took was narrowly targeted, focused on illicit conduct -- and the way to cure it is to foreswear such conduct, make restitution for what's been done in the past, and move forward," Kimmitt said. In a sign of stepped-up diplomacy with Pyongyang, the U.S.-DPRK talks will be quickly followed in early February by another round of Six Party Talks.

(return to top) Chosun Ilbo ("NUKE DEAL MAY INCLUDE FREEING N. KOREA FUNDS", 2007-0--29) reported that the U.S. may soon put forward a package deal that includes easing financial sanctions on the DPRK. Government sources said that the deal includes unfreezing the DPRK accounts with the Macau-based Banco Delta Asia (BDA). For the U.S., including the BDA issue in the deal means unfreezing DPRK accounts worth US$10-13 million, which are assumed to be legal. The U.S. froze the accounts at the Macau-based bank, accusing them of being used for illegal activities like money laundering. Nam Sung-wook, a DPRK studies professor at Korea University, said that the U.S. will be able to continue its investigation into other accounts even if it unfreezes the accounts in question. Unfreezing the accounts would not be a serious loss of face for the U.S., because they can say that the measure was merited by the results of their investigation. (return to top)

3. Japan Pressure on DPR Koreans in Japan

Reuters ("JAPAN POLICE NAB ENGINEER LINKED TO NORTH KOREA", 2007-01-29) reported that the Japanese police said they had arrested an engineer and his wife suspected of violating the country's labor law, after media reported the man was linked to a group leaking missile technologies to the DPRK. Media reports said police were investigating whether a group of scientists for which the engineer served as an adviser had been involved in leaking missile and other advanced technologies. A police spokesman declined to comment on the reports. Police said they believed So Sok-hong, a 74-year-old DPR Korean engines expert living in Japan, and his 72-year-old wife Pak Chong-sun recruited several ethnic Korean workers for Japanese electrical machinery firms for more than two years from March 2004 without informing the labor office. The group of scientists is

affiliated with the pro-Pyongyang General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, or Chongryon. The group was not available for comment. An increasing number of firms in Japan have been investigated in recent years on suspicion of illegally exporting to the DPRK "dual-use instruments," or civilian devices that can be used for military purposes.

(return to top)

4. Japan on Abduction Issue

Bloomberg News ("JAPAN BRINGS ABDUCTIONS FILM TO DAVOS; THREATENS MORE SANCTIONS", 2007-01-26) reported that Japan's government brought a film to Davos to raise awareness among 2,500 political and business leaders about the abductions of Japanese nationals by the DPRK and threatened more sanctions. Yuriko Koike, special national security adviser to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, invited attendees and journalists at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum to a sushi reception to urge them to see "Megumi," a documentary about 13- year-old Megumi Yokota, who was kidnapped in 1977. This isn't the first time Japan is trying to bring international awareness to the abductions, which occurred in the 1970s and 1980s.The DPRK has admitted to kidnapping 13 Japanese and allowed five to return in 2002. Japan says 17 citizens were kidnapped and has imposed sanctions on the country for the kidnappings and for its nuclear test in October last year.

(return to top)

5. UNDP Audit

Washington Post ("U.N. PROGRAM FACING NEW CURBS IN N. KOREA", 2007-01-26) WASHINGTON POST: By Colum Lynch Washington Post Staff Writer, Friday, January 26, 2007; A13 UNITED NATIONS, Jan. 25 – reported that the U.N. Development Program's executive board decided to stop paying for its local staff and supplies in foreign currency, and to call for the U.N. General Assembly's board of auditors to determine within three months whether the development agency violated its own guidelines by doing so. The board also decided to delay approval of the program's 2007-2009 budget until the audit is finished.

(return to top)

6. DPRK on UNDP Audit

Financial Times ("N KOREA BOWS TO AUDIT OF UN AGENCY", 2007-01-26) reported that the DPRK agreed to an external audit and tighter rules for the UN Development Programme’s operation in the country. Approval of a future UNDP programme will be contingent on the audit’s findings. The board agreed to end direct payments in hard currency, to stop the hiring of DPRK government officials, and to cease support to government ministries. Officials said the UN would still need to buy local currency through the central bank. One diplomat said the decision could herald for the UN a new approach to doing business with autocracies under international scrutiny. It would also inject transparency into UN agencies, which operated under different rules from the secretariat and had refused to make internal audits available, the diplomat said. Pyongyang, which sits on the 36-member board, went along with the decision and did not force the issue to a vote, even though it dismissed the allegations as politically motivated.

(return to top)

7. DPRK-Iran Relations

China Post ("NORTH KOREA DENIES COOPERATING WITH IRAN IN NUCLEAR PROJECT", 2007-01-28) reported that the DPRK dismissed allegations that it is cooperating with Iran in nuclear development, accusing Western media of spreading lies to damage the country's reputation. The British newspaper The Daily Telegraph said the DPRK was helping Iran to prepare for its own underground test, possibly before the end of this year, citing an unidentified senior European defense official. The DPRK vowed that it would continue to honor its duty in the area of nuclear nonproliferation as a "responsible nuclear weapons state." At the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, Mohamed ElBaradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog had seen no direct evidence of such cooperation.

(return to top)

8. ROK-US Trade Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("ROH SAYS U.S. FTA WILL BE THOROUGHLY EXAMINED", 2007-01-29) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun has ruled out signing any terms in free trade talks with the US without a thorough evaluation. In his New Year's news conference, President Roh said the government favors neither farmers nor companies, and asked the public to trust his administration to conclude a fair deal.

(return to top)

9. Japan-US Security Alliance

Reuters ("JAPAN'S DEFENSE MINISTER CHIDES U.S. AGAIN: KYODO", 2007-01-29) reported that Japan's defense minister has criticised Washington's handling of the relocation of an American base in Japan in his second attack on US decision-making inside a week, Kyodo news agency said. Fumio Kyuma said on Saturday Washington did not understand the need for the cooperation of Okinawa's governor for the deal to go ahead.

(return to top)

10. Japan Constitutional Revision

The Associated Press ("PREMIER: JAPAN MUST AMEND CONSTITUTION", 2007-01-29) reported that Japan must overhaul its pacifist constitution, increase its international security role and free itself of World War II's political remnants, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told Parliament in a major policy speech. Setting out his administration's objectives for the coming year, Abe highlighted rewriting the constitution, bolstering Japan's security alliance with the US and implementing classroom reforms that will instill a sense of patriotism in the nation's youth.

(return to top)

11. PRC African Diplomacy

The Associated Press ("CHINA PRESIDENT PREPARES FOR AFRICA TOUR ", 2007-01-29) reported that twice in the past three years, PRC President Hu Jintao has been greeted in Africa as the welcomed leader of a new economic and political power. But on a trip starting Tuesday, he also faces

growing skepticism about the PRC's role on the continent. The expectations swirling around Hu's trip further punctuate the PRC's arrival as a force in Africa, rivaling the European colonial powers that once held sway.

(return to top) Kyodo ("CHINA TO CANCEL DEBTS OWED BY 33 AFRICAN COUNTRIES", 2007-0--29) reported that the PRC will cancel debts owed it by 33 poor African countries, the Commerce Ministry announced Monday, a day before President Hu Jintao's scheduled departure on an eight-country visit to Africa. The ministry said the PRC will cancel 168 interest-free loans, which matured at the end of 2005, for the "most indebted and most underdeveloped" countries by the end of 2007. It did not give a figure for the amount of debt forgiven. (return to top)

12. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France-Presse ("TAIWAN'S CHEN RAPS CHINA OVER MISSILE ARSENAL", 2007-01-29) reported that Taiwan's independence-minded President Chen Shui-bian has accused the PRC of "provoking" his government by targeting the island with nearly 1,000 missiles, stepping up the rhetoric against Beijing. In a wide-ranging interview with CNN broadcast at the weekend, Chen insisted that the PRC had put Taiwan on the defensive with its provocative acts, rejecting Beijing's claims that he was to blame for cross-strait tensions.

(return to top) Reuters ("NEW TEXTBOOKS PUT SPACE BETWEEN TAIWAN AND CHINA", 2007-01-29) reported that new high school textbooks that drop phrases linking the PRC and Taiwan as one country have reached Taiwan's classrooms, the publisher said. The changes could spark a strong reaction from Beijing. In one change, Sun Yat-sen, father of the revolution that toppled China's last emperor in 1911, is no longer referred to as "father of the nation." Other changes included substituting "China" for "my country," "this country" or "the mainland." (return to top)

13. PRC Pollution

BBC News ("CHINA ADMITS TO CLIMATE FAILINGS", 2007-01-29) reported that the PRC is failing to make progress on improving and protecting the environment, according to a new PRC government report. The research ranks the PRC among the world's worst nations - a position unchanged since 2004. After the US, the PRC produces the most greenhouse gases in the world.

(return to top)

14. PRC Rural Unrest

The Associated Press ("10 ARRESTED IN CHINA POLLUTION PROTEST ", 2007-01-29) reported that police in the Southern PRC arrested 10 farmers embroiled in a dispute with a paper mill over pollution they say is killing their crops and fouling their water sources, villagers and media reports said. The men were taken away in a pre-dawn raid on Jan. 12, accused of "obstructing public duties," said Li Yongjin, a resident of the town of Botang in the impoverished region of Guangxi.

(return to top)

15. PRC Space Program

Xinhua ("CHINA TO PROMOTE MANNED SPACE FLIGHT, LUNAR PROBE ", 2007-01-29) reported that the PRC will promote manned space flight, lunar exploration and a number of other science and technology initiatives in 2007, said Minister of Science and Technology, Xu Guanhua, here on

Monday. "These key projects are vital to upgrading China's innovation capacity and consequently its economic competitiveness," said the minister.

(return to top)

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-monday-january-29-2007/

Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org