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I. Unites States

1. US on PRC Pressure on the DPRK

Associated Press ("U.S. WANTS CHINA TO PRESSURE N. KOREA", 2005-06-23) reported that a senior US administration official suggested Thursday that the PRC put economic pressure on the DPRK to induce it to reopen nuclear weapons negotiations. Robert Joseph, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security said the PRC shares with the US and other nations an interest in a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula. He added, "It is very much in China's interest to exert as much influence as it can. My sense is that the North Koreans will come back," he said. "I hope in the near term." Joseph gave no indication the US would revise its bargaining tactics to try to reach an agreement with the DPRK to end its nuclear weapons program.

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2. ROK on Balancer Role

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA WILL BE A FORCE TO RECKON WITH: ROH", 2005-06-26) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-hyun said Saturday that the ROK needs to become a force to reckon with if it wants to keep the peace in Northeast Asia. In an address to mark the 55th anniversary of the Korean War and commemorate its victims, Roh said no country "can keep the peace by will alone." "As long as we are unable to change the power structure of Northeast Asia, our will for peace is meaningless," he said. Roh said the ROK was "no longer a weak power that's the object of rivalry stuck between the Great Powers...We are steadily developing an independent defense capacity based on being the world's 10th largest economy." He vowed the country would "contribute to peace and prosperity not only on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia."

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3. ROK Unification Minister to Visit US

Yonhap News ("S. KOREAN UNIFICATION MINISTER TO BRIEF U.S. OFFICIALS ON NUKE", 2005-06-27) reported that the ROK's unification minister will visit Washington this week to brief US officials on the outcome of his recent meeting with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il and inter-Korean talks. "Minister Chung is scheduled to explain pending issues to and exchange opinion with US government officials and Congressional leaders, based on his meeting with DPRK leader Kim Jong-il and the outcome of Cabinet-level talks," ministry spokesman Kim Hong-je told reporters. Chung hopes to meet Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley during the trip but no firm schedules have been set yet, Kim said.

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4. US to Target Companies with Ties to DPRK

Agence France Presse ("US IN NEW BID TO CURB WMD", 2005-06-27) reported that the US government has a new plan to freeze US assets of individuals or companies doing business with

entities in Iran, the DPRK and Syria thought to be involved in weapons programs, according to the Washington Post on Monday. An internal government memo obtained by the Post described the new tool to halt the spread of weapons "by authorizing the blocking or 'freezing' of assets of WMP proliferators and their supporters". The report cited a government list of eight entities to be targeted by the order. Four are Iranian, including Iran's energy department; three are North Korean; and one is a Syrian government research facility.

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5. US Pressure Group on DPRK Human Rights Issue

Associated Press ("TEXAS CHRISTIANS SPOTLIGHT RIGHTS IN NORTH KOREA", 2005-06-27) reported that Christian supporters from US President Bush's Texas hometown, believed to have been instrumental in pressuring the White House to raise concerns over war-ravaged Sudan, are launching another international human rights campaign, this time against the DPRK. Members of the Midland Ministerial Alliance, a network of more than 200 churches in the city, are in Seoul this week seeking support for their latest push for improved human rights in the DPRK. "North Korean human rights will be the primary focus that we encourage the community here to actively engage in, to use their influence, and to not rest until the lives of North Koreans have changed for much better," alliance spokeswoman Deborah Fikes told ROK lawmakers Friday.

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6. DPRK Studies International Banking

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA STUDIES INTERNATIONAL BANK SYSTEM AT BIS MEET", 2005-06-27) reported that DPRK central bank officials are studying the international banking system as the DPRK extends its economic reforms which started in 2002. Governor Kim Wan-Su and Kim Myong Su, deputy director of the international department at the DPRK central bank, are meeting with their counterparts from other nations at an annual gathering of the Bank for International Settlements. When asked whether the reception and Sunday's morning meeting went well, Kim Myong Su told Reuters: "Yes. We talked about the banking system." Kim added: "We would like to know about the structure of the BIS and we would like to study the international banking system."

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7. Lee on ROK Stance on the DPRK Nuclear Issue

Korea Times ("SEOUL MUST GET TOUGH ON NK: LEE HOI-CHANG", 2005-06-26) reported that defeated ROK presidential candidate Lee Hoi-chang urged the government on Sunday to get tough with the DPRK over its nuclear weapons programs. "Seoul must be prepared to wield a stick if, indeed, the situation warrants," he said in a thesis written during his stay as a visiting fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution in California. Lee added that the DPRK seems determined to become the world's ninth nuclear power, despite the ROK's efforts. "Although no one can be certain about Pyongyang's ultimate objective, developments thus far point to the North's being determined to be a nuclear power," he said.

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8. Inter-Korean Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("N. KOREAN DELEGATION RETURNS TO PYONGYANG", 2005-06-24) reported that the DPRK delegation to the latest round of inter-Korean cabinet-level talks departed Seoul on Friday morning after productive discussions with their ROK counterparts. The task now is to follow suit on the agreements made aimed at reviving stalled cross-border projects and normalizing bilateral relations. "During this meeting, we focused on ways to put into action the issues that were discussed when I met with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il last week in Pyongyang." Unification Minister Chung Dong-young said. "We agreed that the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is our ultimate goal, and to take substantial measures, depending on the surrounding atmosphere, to peacefully resolve the nuclear issue through dialogue."

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9. Inter-Korean Cooperation

Xinhua ("S. KOREA, DPRK AGREE ON MEDICAL EXCHANGES AND COOPERATION", 2005-06-24) reported that the Red Cross societies of the ROK and DPRK agreed on exchanges and cooperation in medical affairs, according to a news release of the South Korean National Red Cross (KNRC) on Friday. The Red Cross Hospital in Seoul and Pyongyang will exchange staff members at least once a year under the agreement signed by the head of KNRC, Han Wan-sang, and his DPRK counterpart, Change Jae On, in Pyongyang. Under the agreement, the ROK is also to provide medicine and equipment to the Red Cross Hospital to help its modernization.

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10. Inter-Korean Cooperation on Stem Cells

Bloomberg ("S. KOREA OFFERS TIE-UP WITH NORTH ON STEM CELLS, MAEIL SAYS", 2005-0-25) reported that the ROK offered to collaborate with the DPRK on stem cell research, according to the ROK's Unification Minister Chung Dong Young. The ROK made the offer during four-day ministerial-level talks that ended Friday in Seoul. The DPRK did not give an immediate answer Chung said. The ROK's stem cell research pioneer Hwang Woo Suk said earlier this month he would consider collaborating with researchers in the DPRK if he were sure there would be no effort to use his technology for military purposes.

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11. DPRK Food Rations, ROK Food Aid to DPRK

Joongang Ilbo ("NORTH TO CUT FOOD RATION, AGENCY SAYS", 2005-06-27) reported that an emergency report on the food crisis in the DPRK, the WFP says the regime is expected to cut its daily food ration for individuals from an already sub standard 250 grams of rice and corn to 200 grams. At last week's inter-Korean ministerial talks, Seoul agreed to provide 500,000 tons of rice to the DPRK. No shipment schedule has been worked out, however. Seoul announced yesterday that it would send 150,000 tons of fertilizer to the DPRK through the Red Cross, in addition to the 200,000 tons it sent in May. The first fertilizer shipment is to be sent today.

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12. EC Humanitarian Aid to the DPRK

European Commission ("NORTH KOREA: COMMISSION APPROVES MORE THAN €10 MILLION IN HUMANITARIAN AID", 2005-06-27) reported that the EC has adopted a €10.715 million humanitarian aid plan to support the health sector in the DPRK. The aid is being provided through ECHO, the European Commission's humanitarian aid department. It will provide much-needed equipment and medicines, and help rehabilitate health centers, hospitals and special services. Medical supplies will be provided for more than 8 million people in the DPRK. A project to improve the health of elderly people will continue to be financed. Ante-natal care will be boosted with the rehabilitation of delivery facilities. UNICEF's national vaccination program targeting 235,000 children under one year of age will also benefit.

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13. Japan-DPRK Relations

Financial Times ("CALL FOR TOKYO TO NORMALISE TIES WITH PYONGYANG", 2005-06-26) reported that the International Crisis Group will advise in a report that Japan should accelerate efforts to normalize ties with the DPRK,. The think-tank argued that for Japan, normalization would help preserve regional stability and represent another step towards closure on its wartime history. For the DPRK, it could produce the single greatest economic infusion for revival of its economy. The group says the abduction issue and the nuclear question must be dealt with simultaneously. "Bilateral issues between the two countries need to be cleared up if any real progress is to be made on the multilateral front," the group says.

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14. Japan Puts DPRK on G8 Summit Agenda

Australian Broadcasting Corporation ("STALLED NUCLEAR TALKS ON G8 SUMMIT AGENDA", 2005-06-27) reported that Japan will raise the issue of the DPRK's nuclear arms development at next week's G-8 summit. Deputy Foreign Minister Mitoji Yabunaka said the present situation is worrisome and the matter will be discussed. "Japan of course cannot tolerate North Korea's nuclear development. Our basic thinking is that six-way talks should be resumed quickly to resolve this issue," Yabunaka said.

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15. ICG on Japan-DPRK Relations

Donga Ilbo ("JAPAN WILL NOT RESPOND TO NORTH KOREA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM BY GOING NUCLEAR", 2005-06-27) reported that according to an analysis, even if the DPRK goes nuclear, Japan will neither develop nuclear weapons nor attempt to put restraint on the DPRK on its own. The analysis is in a new report titled "North Korea and Japan-the Frame of Conflict" by the International Crisis Group, an organization that conducts research on international crisis and conflicts. The report was written based on interviews with specialists on diplomatic affairs including Japanese government officials. The report predicts that even in case the Japanese government decides to further develop its nuclear programs, gaining a public consensus favorable to the development project alone will take 5 to 10 years.

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16. ICG on Japan-DPRK Abductee Issue Effects on Nuclear Talks

Korea Times ("ABDUCTION ISSUE LIMITING JAPAN'S ROLE IN NUKE TALKS", 2005-06-27) reported that antagonism over Japanese citizens abducted by the DPRK during the Cold War is limiting Japan's potentially important role in resolving the DPRK nuclear crisis, according to a report by the ICG released yesterday. In the report, entitled "Japan and North Korea: Bones of Contention," the Brussels-based group said public outrage in Japan over 13 Japanese that Pyongyang admits to having kidnapped in the 1970s and '80s is dictating the country's policy toward the DPRK. While the nuclear issue is the paramount concern of policymakers and security experts, the abduction issue is the primary focus of the Japanese public," it said. "Consequently, the government will not have full freedom to negotiate on the nuclear issue until it can satisfy the public the abduction problem has been resolved or at least will be resolved in parallel."

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17. Japanese Protest on Abductee Issue

Mainichi Shimbun ("ABDUCTEES' FAMILIES DEMAND SANCTIONS AGAINST PYONGYANG", 2005-06-24) reported that the families of missing Japanese victims of abduction by the DPRK and supporters staged a sit-in demonstration in Tokyo Friday demanding that Japan immediately impose economic sanctions against the DPRK. "To rescue the abduction victims, impose economic sanctions as soon as possible," the group of abductees' families and supporters said. The group began the sit-in demonstration in front of the House of Representatives members' office building and planned to hold similar demonstrations for four to five hours every day until Sunday.

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18. Bird Flu in Japan

United Press International ("BIRD FLU DETECTED IN JAPAN", 2005-06-27) reported that a diluted strain of bird flu virus has turned up at a poultry farm in Japan. Unlike the avian flu virus that last year infected farms in Yamaguchi and Kyoto prefectures, the strain is not particularly virulent, and only a small percentage of the infected chickens have died, according to officials from the agriculture ministry and the prefectural government, They added the virus posed no immediate health concerns for humans.

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19. DPRK-Yemen Economic Cooperation

Korean Central News Agency ("NORTH KOREA, YEMEN SIGN ECONOMIC COOPERATION AGREEMENTS", 2005-06-25) reported that an agreement on trade and economic cooperation and an agreement on encouraging and protecting investment were signed between the governments of the DPRK and Yemen. Present at the signing ceremonies from the DPRK were members of a DPRK government economic delegation led by Minister of Foreign Trade Rim Kyong-man and from Yemen the Minister of Industry and Commerce Khalid Rajah Shaykh, Director of the General Bureau for Investment Abd-al-Karim and other officials.

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