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I. United States

- 1. [Inter-Korean Nuclear Talks](#)
- 2. [US on Inter-Korean Nuclear Talks](#)
- 3. [PRC on US Involvement in Six-Party Talks](#)
- 4. [UN on Six-Party Talks](#)
- 5. [US-DPRK Relations](#)
- 6. [US on DPRK Nuclear Test](#)
- 7. [ROK on DPRK Nuclear Test](#)
- 8. [ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue](#)
- 9. [US, ROK, PRC, Russia on UNSC Sanctions on the DPRK](#)
- 10. [Japan on UNSC Sanctions on the DPRK](#)
- 11. [Japan Proposes Five-party Talks](#)
- 12. [Japan on DPRK Ship Docking](#)
- 13. [UN on Importance of NPT Conference](#)
- 14. [Inter-Korean Relations](#)
- 15. [Inter-Korean Negotiations](#)
- 16. [DPRK on International Journalism Standards](#)
- 17. [ROK on FIFA Penalty Against DPRK](#)

[Preceding NAPSNet Report](#)

I. United States

1. Inter-Korean Nuclear Talks

AsiaNews/Agencies ("NORTH KOREA PROPOSES TALKS WITH THE SOUTH", None) reported that the DPRK has proposed holding a bilateral meeting with the ROK next week. This was revealed today by the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), the official DPRK news bureau. Kwon Houn, head of the DPRK's delegations to the inter-Korean talks, sent a telegram to his ROK counterpart Chung Dong-young, DPRK Unification Minister. He offered to set a meeting on 16 and 17 May in Kaesong, a city on the border of the two Koreas. Lee Duk Haeng, an official within the Unification Ministry said the DPRK is seeking for the ROK to serve as a "sort of mediator in [the] increasingly tense relations with the US."

[\(return to top\)](#) Associated Press ("KOREAS RESUME TALKS AFTER 10-MONTH HIATUS", None) reported that the ROK accused the DPRK of increasing regional tensions by preparing ingredients for nuclear bombs and attempted to persuade the DPRK back into disarmament negotiations during their recent talks Monday. The two countries met for their first talks in 10 months. The ROK promised a new "substantial proposal" if the DPRK returns to the talks but declined to elaborate on the proposal. [\(return to top\)](#) Reuters ("S. KOREA HAS NEW OFFER IF NORTH GOES TO ATOM TALKS", None) reported that the ROK is prepared to make a new and serious proposal to advance the six-party talks on the DPRK's nuclear program if the DPRK returns to the stalled negotiations, according to ROK Vice Unification Minister Rhee Bong-jo. The proposal would differ from an offer of aid and security guarantees made at the last round of the talks in June last year, Rhee told DPR Koreans at bilateral talks in the northern city of Kaesong. He declined to elaborate on what would be included in the proposal. [\(return to top\)](#)

2. US on Inter-Korean Nuclear Talks

AFX ("US CAUTIOUS AS NORTH, SOUTH KOREA MEET", None) reported that the DPRK held senior level negotiations with the ROK today, igniting hopes for the resumption of the six-party talks to end the nuclear standoff. The DPRK called for the inter-Korean dialogue over the weekend, the first meeting between the two sides in nearly a year. At the same time however, the DPRK increased its propaganda offensive on the US. US and ROK officials were encouraged by the DPRK's move toward dialogue, but cautioned that the DPRK has a history of trying to strengthen its bargaining position by driving a wedge between the ROK and US. US envoy Christopher Hill said he was looking for something concrete to emerge after months of deadlock. "I am tired of looking at signals and reading tea leaves," he was quoted as saying by Yonhap news agency.

[\(return to top\)](#) Korea Times ("US EYES KAESONG FOR NUKE TALKS BREAKTHROUGH", None) reported that US assistant secretary of state Christopher Hill said he was looking forward to hearing the results of the inter-Korean talks in Kaesong and hoped it would bring about a possible breakthrough in the deepening standoff over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program. "I hope especially that North Korea can be convinced to return to the six-party talks," Hill said. However he was cautious of placing too much weight on the DPRK's decision to reopen government-t-government contacts with the ROK. "I'm tired of looking at signals and reading tea leaves," he said. "I will just be pleased when we have a date to start (the six-party talks.)" [\(return to top\)](#)

3. PRC on US Involvement in Six-Party Talks

Reuters ("CHINA CLAIMS U.S. SLOWING DOWN NUKE TALKS WITH NORTH KOREA", None) reported that Yang Xiyu, a senior PRC Foreign Ministry official and top official on the DPRK nuclear talks accused the US of undermining efforts to revive negotiations with the DPRK. Yang said that

when US President George W. Bush called DPRK leader Kim Jong-il a "tyrant" last month, he "destroyed the atmosphere" for negotiations. He also said there was "no solid evidence" that the DPRK was preparing to test a nuclear weapon. Yang's comments reflect growing frustration within Beijing with the Bush administration. Yang said, "It is true that we do not yet have tangible achievements (in ending the DPRK's nuclear weapons program.) But a basic reason for the unsuccessful effort lies in the lack of cooperation from the US side."

[\(return to top\)](#)

4. UN on Six-Party Talks

Yonhap News ("ANNAN STRESSES 6-PARTY TALKS FOR NK NUKE DEADLOCK", None) reported that United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan stressed the importance of the six-party talks in dealing with the DPRK nuclear crisis on Friday. "The only thing is to keep pressing to get the six-party talks back, and I hope that will be successful because that is the only game in town," Annan told reporters at the UN's headquarters. Annan made the remarks amid the recent disclosures from the DPRK that it has finished extracting 8,000 spent fuel rods from a nuclear plant. Annan stated, "I think the long-term economic prospects after they have resolved this should be a real inducement for them to cooperate." The secretary general also expressed concern for the lagging Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) conference. He said recent developments in the DPRK "indicate the importance of this conference and the need for member-states to focus on this NPT conference and try and strengthen it and make progress."

[\(return to top\)](#)

5. US-DPRK Relations

Asahi Shimbun ("U.S. AND N. KOREA REVIVE STEPS IN RENEWED DIALOGUE ", None) reported that a senior official of the US State Department has made contact with the DPRK's UN representative with the goal of resuming the stalled six-party talks on the DPRK's nuclear program. According to sources, the official likely asked the DPRK's deputy ambassador to the United Nations, Han Song Ryol, about the DPRK's intentions after its moves to prepare a nuclear test and last week's announcement that it planned to restart construction of two other nuclear reactors. The two sides also probably confirmed that if the DPRK returns to the six-party talks, the US hopes to meet bilaterally with the DPRK again.

[\(return to top\)](#)

6. US on DPRK Nuclear Test

New York Times ("N. KOREA WARNED ABOUT NUKE TEST", None) reported that the US warned the DPRK for the first time that if it conducted a nuclear test, the US and several Pacific powers would take punitive action, but officials did not say what kind of sanctions would result. Stephen Hadley, US President George Bush's national security adviser said on CNN, "Action would have to be taken." Asked earlier about recent reports that intelligence agencies had warned the DPRK could conduct its first test Hadley said, "We've seen some evidence that says that they may be preparing for a nuclear test. We have talked to our allies about that." But he cautioned that the DPRK was "a hard target" and that correctly assessing its intentions was nearly impossible. Hadley's warnings mark the first time anyone in the Bush administration had approached drawing a "red line" that the DPRK could not cross without suffering penalties.

[\(return to top\)](#) Bloomberg/Associated Press ("U.S. ADVISOR: NORTH KOREA MAY BE SET TO TEST NUKE", None) reported that according to US national security advisor Stephen Hadley, the US has "seen some evidence" that the DPRK may be ready to test a nuclear weapon and is consulting with allies about a response. Hadley said such testing would be an act of defiance directed at the US, the PRC, Russia, Japan and the ROK, which have been pressuring the DPRK to return to the talks. The five nations have expressed concern since the US and Japanese newspapers reported earlier this month that the DPRK may be preparing for a nuclear test. The DPRK and ROK resumed talks following a 10-month break. The ROK said it planned to use the talks to urge the DPRK to return to the six-party talks. Vice Unification Minister Rhee Bong-jo told reporters before leaving for the DPRK, "We will try our best to create a good condition and atmosphere for the resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue." [\(return to top\)](#)

7. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Test

Chosun Ilbo ("INTELLIGENCE CHIEF SEES NO N.K. NUKE TEST", None) reported that according to ROK National Intelligence Service chief Ko Young-koo there was "no convincing evidence" that the DPRK was preparing for a nuclear test. Ko added that the US has monitored the digging of a tunnel of indeterminate use in the area of Kilju, North Kangyeong Province, where reports claimed a test was being prepared, since the late 1990's. His comments were made to the ROK National Assembly's Committee on Friday.

[\(return to top\)](#)

8. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Chosun Ilbo ("NO FUTURE FOR PENINSULA IF NORTH HAS NUKES: PARK", None) reported that according to ROK Grand National Party chairwoman Park Geun-hye, there would be no future for the two Koreas if the DPRK realizes its nuclear ambitions. "It's important now to convince the North that it can gain nothing with nuclear weapons," she said. "We have to send people to North Korea that can help resolve the issue of trust with the North." Asked if she herself was ready to act in that role she said, "The government wouldn't make me a special envoy... But I would serve in whatever capacity if it helps resolve the nuclear dispute." Park added that as long as the DPRK has nuclear weapons, "full-scale exchanges between North and South Korea would be impossible. Neither North nor South Korea would have a future. You need to be firm when it's time to be firm."

[\(return to top\)](#)

9. US, ROK, PRC, Russia on UNSC Sanctions on the DPRK

Donga Ilbo ("RUSSIA AGREES TO SUBMIT NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR ISSUE TO UN SECURITY COUNCIL IF PYONGYANG CONDUCTS NUCLEAR EXPERIMENT ", None) reported that concerning the issue of submitting the issue to the UN Security Council if the DPRK conducts a nuclear experiment, reactions from six-party talk nations range from moderate to hard-line. US Senate Foreign Relations Committee Lugar's reaction to Russia's agreement to submit the issue to the UNSC was positive. PRC Foreign Ministry Spokesman Kong Quan said "The principle of Chinese diplomacy is to disapprove of pressure and more than disapprove of sanctions. Pressure and sanctions only make the problem more complex." ROK Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon said, "There has not been a consultation among the relevant parties on whether to submit the issue to the Security Council. Our position is that we can seek other solutions only after we have found no resolution despite the exhaustion of diplomatic endeavors."

[\(return to top\)](#)

10. Japan on UNSC Sanctions on the DPRK

Agence France Presse ("JAPAN THREATENS SANCTIONS AGAINST PYONGYANG", None) reported that according to a senior leader of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party, Japan will impose economic sanctions against the DPRK if it conducts a nuclear test. Shinzo Abe, acting secretary general of the party said a nuclear DPRK is the biggest threat facing Japan and it would be "unthinkable" for Tokyo to do nothing in case of a DPRK nuclear test. Abe said, "If their possession of nuclear weapons is fully confirmed and they conduct a nuclear test, we must bring the issue to the UN Security Council and call for economic sanctions."

[\(return to top\)](#)

11. Japan Proposes Five-party Talks

Yomiuri Shimbun ("GOVT MAY PROPOSE TALKS MINUS PYONGYANG", None) reported that the Japanese government is studying proposals to resume the talks on the DPRK's nuclear weapons program without the DPRK's involvement. According to Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura, the government may make the proposal at a bureau chief-level meeting with the US and ROK within the month. A Liberal Democratic Party group studying economic sanctions against the DPRK is to announce a blueprint within the month for punitive action in case Pyongyang conducts a nuclear test.

[\(return to top\)](#)

12. Japan on DPRK Ship Docking

United Press International ("JAPAN ALLOWS N. KOREAN SHIP TO DOCK", None) reported that Japan issued a certificate to allow the newly insured DPRK vessel Man Gyong Bong-'92 to return to Japanese ports. The revised Law on Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, which took effect in March, requires all foreign ships of 100 tonnes or more to carry protection and indemnity insurance to cover costs from oil spills or groundings. The measure was seen as a de facto sanction against the DPRK over the abduction decades ago of a number of Japanese citizens because most of its ships are not covered, the Asahi Shimbun reported Thursday. The passenger-cargo ship has not visited Japan since December. After examining the ship's application, the ministry decided the vessel is now within the law.

[\(return to top\)](#)

13. UN on Importance of NPT Conference

Agencies ("NORTH KOREA AND IRAN SHOW NUKE PACT NEEDS UPDATE", None) reported that recent moves by Iran and the DPRK show how important it is to strengthen the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, according to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan on Friday. Annan urged delegates at a global conference on the treaty to stop bickering and speed up their work. The DPRK declared this week it had taken spent atomic fuel from a reactor, a process that could give it more material to make nuclear arms, and US officials have said it appeared the DPRK was preparing for a nuclear test. The DPRK pulled out of the non-proliferation pact in 2003 and is not attending the month-long conference at UN headquarters searching for ways to improve the treaty. But many governments are pressing the DPRK to reverse its course and end its nuclear arms ambitions.

[\(return to top\)](#)

14. Inter-Korean Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("TWO KOREAS ENGAGED IN MONTHS OF CONTACT", None) reported that for six months, top officials from the two Koreas have been carrying on secret communications as the ROK has sought ways to restart a high-level dialogue with the DPRK, according to senior ROK Unification Ministry officials. Chung Dong-young, ROK Unification Minister and top DPRK policymaker exchanged three letters with Im Dong-ok, a senior DPRK party official in charge of ROK affairs over the past six months. The latest exchanges took place early this month in the hopes of resuming the stalled inter-Korean talks.

[\(return to top\)](#)

15. Inter-Korean Negotiations

Bloomberg ("KOREAS IN TALKS ON FAMILIES AND FERTILISER", None) reported that the DPRK and ROK agreed to hold working-level talks today and tomorrow amid escalating tensions. Rhee Bong Jo, vice-minister in the ROK unification ministry said in Seoul on Saturday, "We will discuss ways to normalise North-South relations as well as deliver the international community's concerns regarding the nuclear weapon issue." Rhee added, "We will urge the North to come to the six-party talks." He said the agenda would include fertiliser shipments to the DPRK and the resumption of reunions of separated families.

[\(return to top\)](#)

16. DPRK on International Journalism Standards

Korea Times ("PYONGYANG ADOPTS GLOBAL STANDARDS, N.K. REPORTERS SAY", None) reported that according to two DPRK journalists attending a journalism course at the International Institute of Journalism Berlin-Brandenburg, people in the DPRK have begun to adopt international standards in some parts of their everyday language. The two also explained how they use their own word processing program for news writing. Kim Jong-Chol, of the Minju Choson said, "In our newspaper, computers are connected to the Intranet. We also use digital cameras even though some of them have a low DPI (dots per inch). His counterpart Nam Song-il of the Korean Central News Agency said DPR Koreans can find advertisements in the Pyongyang Sinmun, a newspaper which the city authority produces. Newspapers are delivered to subscribers by 7 a.m. for a small delivery fee and can be found for free in public places such as subway stations. Nam added, "Everybody studies English in public schools and language institutes. In the case of reporters, most of them have no problem communicating in English."

[\(return to top\)](#)

17. ROK on FIFA Penalty Against DPRK

Reuters ("S. KOREA TELLS FIFA IT OVER-REACTED IN NORTH CASE", None) reported that the ROK's soccer chief told FIFA it has subjected the DPRK to excessive punishment for crowd trouble in Pyongyang and that it feared the DPRK would withdraw into seclusion. However, the world soccer's governing body would not back down. FIFA ruled earlier this week that the DPRK would have to play its home World Cup qualifier against Japan behind closed doors in Bangkok in June because of crowd trouble during March qualifiers against Bahrain and Iran. Letters were exchanged, between FIFA

president Sepp Blatter and ROK Association president Chung Mong-joon, in which Chung argued strongly that FIFA's decision was disproportionate. "As far as I remember, FIFA has not taken such severe sanctions against of the member associations recently involved in similar or, in some cases, even worse incidents such as Georgia, Iran, Albania, Cost Rica and Mali," said Chung, who is also a FIFA vice-president.

[\(return to top\)](#)

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