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I. United States

1. DPRK on Nuclear Test

International Herald Tribune ("NORTH KOREA DENIES PLAN FOR NUCLEAR BOMB TEST", 2005-05-27) reported that the DPRK has denied it was getting ready for a nuclear test. In a commentary broadcast on Thursday night, Korean Central Television, the DPRK's only nationwide network, accused the US of spreading "a fabrication that there are some kind of missile tests and signs of an underground nuclear test." Confusion over whether the DPRK would test a bomb, even among scientific and political experts, is a clear reflection of the regime's tactics on nuclear policy, experts say. They summarize the DPRK's approach as "strategic ambiguity" - that is, a policy of making concerned nations guess about the DPRK's intent and become anxious enough to make concessions.

[\(return to top\)](#) Reuters ("NORTH KOREA SAYS US FABRICATING NUCLEAR TEST REPORT", 2005-05-27) reported that the DPRK accused the US of fabricating reports that it may conduct a nuclear test, but did not outright deny it could go ahead with one, an ROK news agency reported on Friday. [\(return to top\)](#)

2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Test

Bloomberg ("S. KOREAN FOREIGN MINISTER SAYS NO SIGN OF NORTH'S NUCLEAR TEST", 2005-05-30) reported that, according to ROK Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ban Ki Moon, the ROK government hasn't seen any evidence DPRK may be preparing for an underground nuclear test in the immediate future. The ROK and US have differed in opinion, with US National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley saying the US has "seen some evidence" that the DPRK may be preparing to test its first nuclear weapon. Ban said that the ROK is working closely with the US and other nations to prevent such a test from taking place.

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3. US Military Build-up on Korean Peninsula

New York Times ("PRESSURE ON NORTH KOREA: US STEALTH JETS SENT TO SOUTH", 2005-05-30) reported that the deployment last week of 15 stealth fighters to the ROK, along with the severing of the US military's only official interaction with the DPRK, appears to be part of a new push by the Bush administration to further isolate the DPRK despite the PRC's refusal to join the effort. The deployment came just after the US Defense Department said Wednesday that it was suspending the search for soldiers missing in action since the Korean War. Although senior Pentagon officials say the F-117 stealth fighters are part of preparation for a long-planned training exercise, the show of force comes at a delicate moment both militarily and politically. US Administration officials have suggested in recent interviews that they are headed toward taking a hard line, cracking down on the DPRK's exports of missiles, drugs and counterfeit currency.

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4. US Mixed Signals on DPRK

Reuters ("US SENDS MIXED MESSAGES IN N. KOREA DISPUTE", 2005-05-27) reported that amid increasing concern over DPRK's nuclear ambitions, the US is sending mixed messages about its intentions, promoting negotiations while planning for "other options" if talks fail. Even as top officials have affirmed a commitment to dialogue, the Bush administration this week suspended a

long-running and successful joint search with Pyongyang for missing US servicemen from the Korean War and deployed Stealth fighters to the region for training. "If the United States wants to send a mixed message, then it certainly is," Wendy Sherman, a former US envoy to DPRK in the Clinton administration, said in a telephone interview.

[\(return to top\)](#) Chosun Ilbo ("CHENEY CALLS KIM JONG-IL 'IRRESPONSIBLE LEADER'", 2005-0-30) reported that, while appearing on CNN's "Larry King Live" to be broadcast in the US on Monday, US Vice President Dick Cheney called DPRK leader Kim Jong-il an "irresponsible leader" who fails to look after his own people. Cheney said he was concerned about the future of stalled six-party talks, but the US was "continuing to work it very hard" to resume talks. Cheney's comments follow a threat by US President Bush on Friday that "terrorists and tyrants can no longer feel safe hiding behind innocent life" because the US can now attack regimes rather than nations. [\(return to top\)](#)

5. Expert on US-DPRK Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("NEWSPAPER SMELLS US MOVES TO ISOLATE N.KOREA", 2005-05-29) reported that, according to the LA Times on Saturday, the abrupt suspension of operations to retrieve the remains of US soldiers missing in action in the DPRK was part of an attempt by the Bush administration to further isolate the Pyongyang regime, as was the firing of the head of KEDO. L. Gordon Flake, a DPRK expert and head of the Mansfield Center for Pacific Affairs in Washington, told the paper a series of recent steps by the US government were signs that Washington was "gearing up for the next phase" now that it appears unlikely Pyongyang will return to the six-party talks on its nuclear program.

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6. US-ROK Relations

The Korea Herald ("TOP NUCLEAR NEGOTIATOR TRAVELS TO US ", 2005-05-30) reported that ROK Deputy Foreign Minister Song Min-soon and Cheong Wa Dae's National Security Adviser Kwon Chin-ho will leave for Washington today, in order to discuss the DPRK nuclear issue with their counterparts and prepare for the June summit. Song is scheduled to meet officials at the US State Department and National Security Council, including Assistant Secretary of State and his counterpart for the nuclear talks, Christopher Hill. Kwon will meet Stephen Hadley, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and other US officials, Cheong Wa Dae spokesman Kim Man-soo said.

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7. ROK on Summit with US

Korea Times ("ROH TO PRESENT NUCLEAR SOLUTION TO BUSH", 2005-05-30) reported that, according to ROK minister of foreign affairs and trade Ban Ki-moon, ROK President Roh Moo-hyun will have an in-depth discussion with US President Bush at next week's summit on a proposal the ROK believes could be acceptable to all the nations in the six-party talks. "Other options [to deal with the nuclear issue] could be considered only when a diplomatic solution is no longer possible," Ban said in response to questions. "But, at this stage, they would not be discussed in the Roh-Bush summit."

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8. Anti-US Protest in ROK

Reuters ("S. KOREANS CLASH WITH POLICE IN ANTI-US PROTEST", 2005-05-29) reported that approximately 1,000 ROK students marching toward a US military base to protest against the US's DPRK policy clashed with riot police on Sunday. The march toward the base in the center of Seoul was called by a major students' activist group demanding the US scrap a policy it says heightens tensions with the DPRK.

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9. ROK Defense Minister visits Australia and Singapore

Korea Herald ("DEFENSE CHIEF LEAVES FOR AUSTRALIA, SINGAPORE ", 2005-05-30) reported that ROK Defense Minister Yoon Kwang-ung yesterday left for a trip that will take him to Australia for bilateral defense talks and Singapore where he will meet with US and Japan counterparts to discuss the DPRK nuclear weapons program. In the first visit by a ROK defense chief to Australia, Yoon is scheduled to meet Defense Minister Robert Hill to discuss ways to fight terrorism and to develop their defense industries. In Singapore, Yoon will give a speech on the ROK's view on weapons of mass destruction in the Asia-Pacific region, and call for the international community's support for Seoul's position to end the DPRK's nuclear activities through diplomacy.

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10. WFP Call for Aid to DPRK

Financial Times ("UN FOOD AGENCY CALLS FOR AID BOOST TO NORTH KOREA", 2005-05-27) reported that the UN World Food Programme, which feeds 6.5 million DPRK citizens, is imploring the US, Japan and the ROK to increase their donations to the agency despite the political stand-off over the DPRK nuclear weapons programme. Aid agencies report that food shortages are reaching a critical stage at the same time as prices of staple goods are spiralling, making life even more difficult for DPRK citizens, among the world's poorest people.

[\(return to top\)](#) Washington Times ("RESIDENTS STARVING FOR GLOBAL FOOD AID ", 2005-05-27) reported that, according to a WFP official, the DPRK is sliding toward a starvation crisis rivaling its famine in the mid-1990s as the harsh impacts of its market reforms have benefited only a small number of its citizens. The WFP has fallen far short this year of donations it needs to provide 3.8 million "core" beneficiaries with vegetable oil, maize and rice milk, said Anthony N. Banbury, Asia director for the WFP. The US, which provided 100,000 tons of food in 2003 and 50,000 tons in 2004, has not donated this year, Mr. Banbury said. He continued by stating that the price of food in DPRK markets has risen since economic reforms were implemented in July 2002, and poor people can't buy it. [\(return to top\)](#)

11. ROK Aid to DPRK

Korea Times ("OVERLAND FERTILIZER DELIVERY TO NORTH KOREA COMPLETE", 2005-05-29) reported that, according to the ROK Unification Ministry, the ROK completed on Saturday the overland delivery of 10,000 tons of fertilizer to the DPRK as part of 200,000 tons of aid pledged at high-level talks earlier this month. The remainder of the fertilizer aid, valued at about 90 billion won (\$89 million), is being delivered by sea. The resumed aid comes amid concerns from UN humanitarian agencies that the DPRK may be headed toward a serious food crisis this summer due

to a slump in international food aid.

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12. June 15 Celebration Preparations

Chosun Ilbo ("S. KOREA SETS UP TASK FORCE FOR INTER-KOREAN CELEBRATION", 2005-05-30) reported that on Sunday, the ROK government set up a task force to prepare for the joint-celebration marking the fifth anniversary of an historic summit between the leaders of the ROK and DPRK, starting June 14th. The move comes a day after the two countries agreed on which and how many officials from both Koreas will attend the event. Each government will send a 20-member delegation, headed by a ministerial-level official. An official from ROK's Defense Ministry may also attend the celebration. The inclusion of an ROK military official would set a significant precedent.

[\(return to top\)](#) Korea Times ("20 OFFICIALS TO ATTEND JUNE 15 CELEBRATIONS", 2005-05-29) reported that ROK planning for the fifth anniversary of the landmark inter-Korean summit will go into full swing this week after the DPRK and ROK agreed Saturday to each send 20 officials to the June 15 celebrations in Pyongyang. "We will do our best to prepare for the events with the support and cooperation of related government agencies and ministries," a Unification Ministry spokesman said. ROK's delegation will be led by Unification Minister Chung Dong-young, while the DPRK's top official will be Kwon Ho-ung, a senior Cabinet councilor and confidant of leader Kim Jong-il. [\(return to top\)](#) Korea Herald ("KOREAS AGREE ON JOINT SUMMIT ANNIVERSARY EVENT", 2005-05-29) reported that the DPRK and ROK will each be represented by a 20-member government delegation and 50 support personnel next month in Pyongyang at a ceremony that marks the fifth anniversary of their historic 2000 summit accord. About 615 civilians, including 200 overseas ROK citizens, will also attend the June 15 ceremony, which will be the biggest joint event ever held in Pyongyang. The civilian delegation will comprise unification activists, lawmakers and religious and cultural leaders. Among those included will be Ven. Bub-jang, secretary general of the Jogye Order, the ROK's largest Buddhist sect. There is much speculation about whether Chung will meet DPRK leader Kim Jong-il. [\(return to top\)](#)

13. ROK on Japan-ROK Relations

Korea Times ("SEOUL REJECTS JAPAN OVERTURE", 2005-05-29) reported that Seoul has rejected an apology by Tokyo's Vice Foreign Minister Shotaro Yachi who sparked controversy by claiming that the US does not trust the ROK with classified intelligence. "Our government will not view the remarks as an individual issue," the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said in a statement. "We will study the future direction of Korea-Japan relations by considering this incident comprehensively together with other remarks that distort our history." The Ministry said it will not let the matter rest. "His remarks cannot help being seen as disparaging our government and stirring conflict in the [ROK-US] alliance."

[\(return to top\)](#) Korea Times ("BAN SPEAKS OUT ON JAPAN SUMMIT, YACHI REMARKS ", 2005-0-30) reported that Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon said yesterday the recent controversial remarks by a top Japanese diplomat should be considered separately from the forthcoming summit talks between the two countries. Ban was answering a question on whether the remarks by Japan's Vice Foreign Minister Shotaro Yachi that the US does not fully trust the ROK would affect plans for President Roh Moo-hyun to meet Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi next month. "Of course [the controversy] would have a negative impact on the summit talks, but the summit meeting is an opportunity to comprehensively review issues. It is appropriate to consider the issues separately," Ban said. [\(return to top\)](#)

14. Japan on Japan-ROK Relations

Korea Herald ("JAPANESE OFFICIAL REGRETS REMARKS ", 2005-05-27) reported that, according to the ROK Foreign Ministry, Japanese Vice Foreign Minister Shotaro Yachi expressed regret over his remarks on ROK-US ties that "caused misunderstanding". Yachi reportedly explained his remarks were emphasizing the importance of the ROK-Japan and ROK-Japan-US alliances.

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15. DPRK-PRC Economic Cooperation

Associated Press ("CHINESE TRADE WITH NORTH KOREA UP SHARPLY: SOUTH KOREAN REPORT", 2005-05-29) reported that, according to the ROK-run Korea Trade Investment Promotion Agency, the PRC's trade with the DPRK rose 35 percent in 2004 and grew at almost double that rate in the first three months of this year. The PRC was the source of 85 percent of the US\$59 million in foreign investment the DPRK attracted last year.

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16. ASEAN-DPRK Relations

Yonhap ("LAO DELEGATION MEETS N. KOREA'S NO. 2 LEADER", 2005-05-30) reported that, according to the KCNA, a high-level delegation from Laos met with Kim Yong-nam, chairman of the DPRK Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly on Monday. The Lao delegation, led by Deputy Prime Minister Somsavat Lengsavad, has been visiting the DPRK since Saturday. The trip is seen as aimed at persuading the DPRK to attend this year's meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) that Laos will host in July.

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17. Inter-Korean Civil Relations

Korea Times ("INCHON MAYOR EMBARKS ON N. KOREA TRIP", 2005-05-30) reported that, according to the KCNA, an ROK delegation led by Incheon Mayor Ahn Sang-soo arrived in Pyongyang on Monday. "The two Koreas are making brisk exchanges on a government level, but ties between cities remain dormant," Ahn said at Incheon International Airport before heading to the DPRK on a flight provided by Pyongyang. "This trip is expected to serve as a model for city-level inter-Korean exchanges," he added. The mayor plans to propose that a road be constructed linking Incheon and Kaesong.

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18. Inter-Korean Music Festival

LA Times ("KOREAS TO HOLD JOINT MUSIC FESTIVAL", 2005-05-27) reported that the two Koreas will hold a joint music festival at Kungang next month, despite tension over the North's nuclear program. Foreign buyers will visit RO Korean companies operating in the Kaesong Industrial Complex, Vice Unification Minister Rhee Bong-jo said. German buyers are to visit a kitchenware plant at the industrial complex on June 1, Rhee told a regularly scheduled briefing.

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19. Inter-Korean Scientific Exchange

Korea Times ("HWANG WANTS STEM CELL COOPERATION WITH NORTH KOREA", 2005-05-29) reported that the ROK's famous cloning scientist Hwang Woo-suk said joint stem cell research with the DPRK will be possible with the approval of the ROK government. "Under the [ROK] government's rational consideration, we will be able to stage North-South collaboration in stem cell research," Hwang said. "We cannot hand over our core technologies to the North. But I think we can share our advanced cloning knowledge with the North, the same ethnicity of us, so that they can develop their own scientific ability."

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