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I. United States

1. DPRK on DPRK Nuclear Talks

The Associated Press ("N.KOREA BLAMES U.S. FOR STALEMATE IN TALKS", 2004-10-11) reported that the DPRK on Monday blamed the US for the stalemate in talks on its nuclear weapons programs, and warned it would use a "war deterrent force" if Washington brought the nuclear dispute before the UN Security Council. "If the US applies more sanctions to the DPRK by putting the UN in motion, the DPRK will promptly and resolutely react to it with self-defensive war deterrent force," the DPRK's official news agency, KCNA, said. "Sanctions mean a war and war does not know any mercy," KCNA said. "The DPRK is not in a position to come out to the talks because the US has deliberately laid a stumbling block in the way of the dialogue," KCNA added.

Reuters ("N.KOREA SAYS TO RESUME TALKS IF U.S. ENDS HOSTILITY", 2004-10-08) reported that the DPRK wants bilateral nuclear talks with the US but would rejoin stalled six-party meetings at once if Washington dropped its "hostile policy" toward Pyongyang. "The six-party talks can be resumed right now if the US rebuilds the groundwork of the talks with a willingness to make a switchover in its hostile policy toward the DPRK," said a statement by the DPRK Foreign Ministry.

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2. DPRK Missile Preparations

Reuters ("REPORT: NORTH KOREA MISSILE PREPARATIONS ENDING", 2004-10-11) reported that activity around the DPRK's missile launch sites is tailing off, calming fears of a ballistic missile test, a Japanese newspaper reported on Monday, citing government sources. "The series of moves appear to have been North Korean military training," the Yomiuri quoted a government source as saying. The paper quoted him as adding that about 70 percent of the activity had ceased.

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3. US on DPRK Missile Threat

Kyodo ("U.S. AEGIS CRUISER LAKE ERIE MAKES PORT CALL AT NIIGATA", 2004-10-11) reported that the US Aegis guided missile cruiser Lake Erie made a port call at Niigata port on Monday in an apparent effort to counter perceived DPRK ballistic missile threats. The US Navy says the port call is to give crew members a rest and to replenish supplies, but it is widely seen as part of its efforts to build a missile defense network against DPRK threats.

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4. DPRK on US Missile Defense

Yonhap ("N. KOREA BLASTS U.S. FOR DEPLOYING AEGIS DESTROYERS IN EAST SEA ", 2004-1-11) reported that the DPRK blasted the US Saturday for deploying high-tech destroyers off its east coast, calling it a "very dangerous provocation." The DPRK also said it would "further increase its invincible national defense capacity" to counter the US move.

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5. NGO on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREAN RELATIONS UNDERMINED BY NK NUCLEAR PROGRAM ", 2004-10-11) reported that NGO and international peace advocate Pugwash announced in a statement at the 57th Seoul conference that the DPRK's withdrawal from the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 2003 has created a great danger that should be resolved through multilateral talks and cooperation. It also said that without efforts to abrogate atomic weapons, the whole world could face catastrophic disaster.

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6. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Yonhap ("RULING PARTY CHIEF TO PROMOTE SENDING ENVOYS ON N.K. NUCLEAR ISSUE ", 2004-10-11) reported that the chief of the ROK's ruling party said Monday he would promote sending special envoys to countries participating in six-party talks on the DPRK's nuclear activity to resolve the two-year international dispute. Lee Bu-young, chairman of the Uri (Our) Party, said he would meet President Roh Moo-hyun to discuss the dispatch of special envoys to the DPRK, the US, PRC, Japan and Russia. Lee also said he would push for a summit between the leaders of the two Koreas, according to the results of activities by the special envoys.

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7. Sino - DPRK Relations

Donga Ilbo ("STRANGE ATMOSPHERE ALONG BORDER BETWEEN NORTH KOREA AND CHINA ", 2004-10-11) reported that according to Sankei Shimbun on October 9, The PRC People's Liberation Army has deployed 10,000 troops to three areas near the Duman River, the border between the PRC and DPRK, in order to prevent DPRK troops from escaping in groups from the DPRK on October 4. Sankei also recently reported that 30,000 Chinese troops have been deployed near the Aprok River along the border starting early this month. Sankei analyzed that the PRC's reinforcement of troops

near the border can be interpreted as the PRC's intention to put pressure on Kim Jong-il's regime, citing the fact that diplomatic relations between the DPRK and PRC have cooled down.

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8. DPRK on US Troop Realignment

Yonhap ("N.K. VOICES CONCERN OVER ALLEGED U.S. MARINE REDEPLOYMENT PLAN ", 2004-10-11) reported that the DPRK on Sunday expressed "concern" over foreign media reports that the US is planning to relocate some of its marines stationed in Japan to the ROK. Commenting on reports that Washington plans to redeploy 1,000 marines from the island of Okinawa to the ROK by 2008, Pyongyang accused the US of gradually preparing for an attack on the DPRK, according to the DPRK's daily newspaper Rodong Sinmun.

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9. DPRK on US Elections

Yonhap ("N. KOREA CRITICIZES U.S. ELECTION SYSTEM AS 'ANTI-PEOPLE'", 2004-10-11) reported that the DPRK criticized the US presidential election system as undemocratic and "anti-people" on Saturday, claiming that it fails to represent the will of the working class. The Rodong Sinmun, the DPRK's main newspaper, said electoral colleges, consist mainly of capitalists and therefore, a US president elected under the system cannot represent working-class people and protect their rights. It took current president George W. Bush as an example.

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10. Japan on DPRK Sanctions

Kyodo ("KOIZUMI PREFERS N. KOREA DIALOGUE TO ECONOMIC SANCTIONS", 2004-10-11) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi indicated Saturday that he prefers dialogue with the DPRK to economic sanctions and said he doubts if sanctions would be effective. "I would like to work with patience to get North Korea to respond sincerely" to pending issues, Koizumi told a news conference in Hanoi in response to questions by reporters on Japan's handling of the DPRK nuclear and abduction issues.

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11. Japan on DPRK Abductees

Kyodo News ("JAPAN, N. KOREA TO HOLD UPGRADED ABDUCTION TALKS IN MID-NOV.", 2004-10-11) reported that Japan and the DPRK on Friday agreed to upgrade bilateral talks on the DPRK's past abductions of Japanese to senior working-level and hold the next round in Pyongyang in mid-November, Japan's top government spokesman Hiroyuki Hosoda said. This means the two countries can negotiate the deadlocked issue more concretely and more effectively than the past two rounds of working-level sessions in Beijing in August and September, the chief Cabinet secretary told a press conference. "We can expect major progress" this time, Hosoda said.

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12. ROK on Inter-Korean Relations

Hanoi ("ROH ASKS FORBEARANCE FOR NORTH ", 2004-10-11) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun said yesterday that countries trying to solve the DPRK nuclear problem should give Pyeongyang "clear hope and expectations for opening and reform so that it will not engage in any extreme behavior." He continued, "The last time North Korea was directly or indirectly involved in any terror was the bombing of a Korean Air flight in 1987. All countries should understand that no evident terror efforts have taken place since then. China, Japan, Russia and South Korea never excite North Korea and they will never gain anything by exciting North Korea."

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13. Inter Korean Economic Relations

The New York Times ("MIXED MESSAGES ON U.S. ROLE AS TWO KOREAS BEGIN JOINT PROJECTS", 2004-10-08) reported that facing a battery of ROK television cameras, a US Army officer on Thursday praised the new railroad and four-lane highway that unrolled behind him, passing through breaks in the barbed wire to cross the demilitarized zone into the DPRK. Nearby, his commanding officer, Maj. Gen. Thomas P. Kane of the Air Force, briefed reporters on the 10-fold jump in north-south road traffic since work began last summer on the ROK's first industrial park in the DPRK, in Kaesong, 10 miles north of Dorasan. General Kane predicted enthusiastically, "Within a year, we could have 2,000 movements daily, 1,000 up, 1,000 down."

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14. DPRK on Inter Korean Economic Relations

Asia Pulse ("NORTH KOREA RENEWS COMMITMENT TO ECONOMIC PROJECTS", 2004-10-11) reported that despite persisting international concerns over its nuclear program, the DPRK demonstrated its intention Monday to push ahead with its cross-border ventures with the ROK by adopting two related laws. In what appeared to be an attempt to mend its ties with Seoul, however, the DPRK on Monday announced two sets of regulations covering insurance and real estate for ROK citizens doing or wanting to do business in the DPRK. "Despite a chill in inter-Korean dialogue, the North's announcement has signaled its intention to pursue better relations with the South on the basis of economic cooperation," a unification ministry official said, requesting anonymity.

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15. Inter Korean Technological Exchange

Chosun Ilbo ("LAWMAKERS EXPRESS CONCERNS OVER TECHNOLOGY LEAKS TO N. KOREA, CHINA ", 2004-10-11) reported that with a government-funded research center pushing joint computer programming development plans with the DPRK, there is concern that cutting-edge technology might be leaked to the DPRK. United Liberal Democrat lawmaker Ryu Geun-chan said during a parliamentary investigation of the Daedeok Science Town Management Office (DASTO) on Monday that there had been talk DASTO had secretly pushed cooperation with the DPRK's Korean Computer Center to develop programming technology and its use. He pointed out there were international agreements restricting the export of strategic goods, and there were suspicions concerning the reasons why a government institution like DASTO might be unreasonably pushing a project of that sort.

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16. US-ROK on Inter-Korean Economic Exchange

Yonhap ("KOREA, U.S. TO DISCUSS STRATEGIC GOODS SHIPMENT TO N.K. COMPLEX ", 2004-1-11) reported that the ROK and the US will hold talks in Seoul this week to review requests by four local companies which want to operate factories at the pilot site of an industrial complex for ROK firms in the DPRK, a government source said Sunday. The insider said representatives from the US Commerce Department will arrive to discuss the possible transfer of "strategic" machinery and equipment that the companies need in order to start production in Kaesong.

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17. IAEA on ROK Nuclear Experiment

Washington Post ("IAEA CHIEF DOUBTS S. KOREAN ARMS PLANS", 2004-10-11) reported that the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency said on Friday that the ROK's recently disclosed work with uranium and plutonium did not appear to be part of a weapons program, describing it as "simply two scientific experiments on a small scale." "I don't think we have seen any intentions to develop nuclear weapons" by the ROK, the director general of the IAEA, Mohamed ElBaradei, told reporters in Tokyo after completing an official trip to the ROK capital, Seoul.

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18. ROK Nuclear Safety

Korea Times ("BIG FLAW FEARED IN KOREA'S NUCLEAR SAFETY", 2004-10-11) reported that on Sept. 14, 11 workers were exposed to radioactivity after over 3,000 kilograms of heavy water leaked due to their carelessness at a nuclear power plant in Kyongju, North Kyongsang Province. With no report of casualties, the accident was mostly forgotten, but a lawmaker warns it could be an omen of far bigger things to come lest the ROK increases its number of nuclear safety officials. Kang Jae-sup of the main opposition Grand National Party made the point on Monday during a parliamentary inspection into the Korea Institute of Nuclear Safety (KINS).

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19. US - ROK Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA-U.S. JOINT SECURITY DECLARATION NECESSARY FOR STABILITY ", 2004-10-11) reported that a new ROK-US joint security declaration to rebuild the alliance between the two countries, the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security (IFANS) made a claim that the two countries should announce the declaration at the first summit after US presidential elections. He added that the new declaration should include the confirmation of (1) the ROK-US alliance as the cornerstone for stability and prosperity not only on the Korean Peninsula but also in the Asia Pacific region; (2) the effectiveness of the ROK-US Mutual Defense Treaty; (3) the continued station of 25,000 US troops in the ROK; (4) the increased role of the ROK and strategic flexibility of US troops in the ROK in defending the ROK; (5) the comprehensive alliance that contributes to the world, based on common values of democracy and capitalism.

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20. ROK Military Strength

Chosun Ilbo ("AMMUNITION STOCK FALLS SHORT OF REQUIREMENTS ", 2004-10-11) reported that an opposition lawmaker on Monday alleged that ammunition reserves of the ROK Armed Forces meet just 59 percent of the ammunition that will be needed if a war breaks out, even with support from US Forces Korea. During the National Assembly's annual audit of state affairs, opposition Grand National Party (GNP) lawmaker Park Jin said that ammunition reserves of the Korean Army, Navy and Air Force meet just 18 percent of the required wartime amount.

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21. Japan PSI Drill

Donga Ilbo ("Japan's Self-Defense Forces Participate in the PSI Drill ", 2004-10-11) reported that the Asahi Daily reported yesterday that a multinational joint military drill for the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) against WMD will be held in the open sea of Tokyo Bay on October 26, with Japan taking the initiative and 18 nations including the US, Australia, and France participating. In this drill, Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force, together with the military of the other participating nations, will board an imaginary ship carrying WMD and search for relevant materials, virtually targeting the DPRK.

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22. Japanese - ROK Relations

Kyodo News ("JAPAN-S. KOREA SUMMIT SLATED FOR DEC. 17-18 IN KAGOSHIMA", 2004-10-11) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and ROK President Roh Moo Hyun will hold a summit on Dec. 17-18 in the spa resort of Ibusuki, Kagoshima Prefecture, Foreign Ministry sources said Friday. Koizumi and Roh are expected to reaffirm bilateral cooperation to resolve the standoff over the DPRK's nuclear ambitions and their resolve to conclude a bilateral free trade agreement by the end of 2005.

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23. ROK Sex Trade

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREAN SEX WORKERS RALLY TO PROTEST STRICTER ANTI-PROSTITUTION LAW", 2004-10-11) reported that hundreds of sex workers rallied in a red-light district in the ROK Monday to protest against anti-prostitution laws they say threaten their livelihoods. The government began enforcing the new laws last month to target human traffickers, pimps and prostitutes. The legislation more than doubled the penalties for brothel owners who confine women and force prostitution, calling for property confiscation, up to 100 million won (US\$87,000; euro 70,500) in fines or up to 10 years in jail.

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24. ROK on UN Post

Reuters ("SOUTH KOREA NOT OUT OF THE RUNNING FOR U.N. POST", 2004-10-11) reported that the ROK might put forward a candidate to take over from UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan when

his term expires in 2006, a ROK official said Sunday. A newspaper report was wrong when it said on Sunday that the ROK had decided not field a candidate, said President Roh Moo-hyun's foreign policy adviser, Chong Woo-seong. "Our position has not been decided," Chong said.

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25. US on Cross Strait Relations

Washington Post ("POLITICS PUTS HOLD ON TAIWAN ARMS PURCHASE \$18.2 BILLION DEAL FOR U.S. WEAPONS STALLED DESPITE AMERICAN WARNING OF CHINA THREAT", 2004-10-11) reported that a proposed \$18.2 billion purchase of US weapons by Taiwan has bogged down in the island's hard-fought electoral politics despite repeated warnings from the Bush administration that the new arms are imperative to bolster defenses against the PRC. Government and opposition officials said resistance to the arms deal has swelled to the point where there is little chance it can be approved in the legislature, as required, before Taiwan's parliamentary elections, scheduled for Dec. 11. Moreover, the outcome of the vote will help determine whether President Chen Shui-bian's government can ever win approval for such a large purchase, they said.

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26. Chirac on PRC Arms Embargo

The Associated Press ("CHIRAC CALLS FOR END TO CHINA ARMS EMBARGO", 2004-10-11) reported that French President Jacques Chirac on Saturday called for an end to a European Union arms embargo on the PRC as companies from both nations signed contracts worth more than \$1 billion during a high profile visit meant to strengthen commercial ties. Speaking at a joint news conference with PRC President Hu Jintao, Chirac criticized the EU arms ban as lacking "justification or foundation." He said France hoped to see the ban lifted "within several months."

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27. Taiwan on Cross Strait Relations

Washington Post ("TAIWAN'S CHEN SEEKS TO RESTART CROSS-STRAIT TALKS", 2004-10-11) reported that President Chen Shui-bian of Taiwan, in a conciliatory gesture aimed at the PRC's newly consolidated leadership, proposed a fresh start Sunday for long-suspended talks to improve relations and lower tension across the Taiwan Strait. Chen said his government was willing to return to the artful ambiguity of the 1992 Hong Kong accord as a starting point for improving ties. Renewed contacts, he said, would "seek possible schemes that are not necessarily perfect but acceptable as preparation of a step forward in the resumption of dialogue and consultation."

The New York Times ("IN AN OVERTURE, TAIWAN'S PRESIDENT CALLS FOR OPENING PEACE TALKS WITH MAINLAND CHINA", 2004-10-11) reported that President Chen Shui-bian of Taiwan on Sunday called for opening peace talks with mainland PRC, in a conciliatory overture following President Hu Jintao's consolidation of power last month in Beijing. In a National Day speech here, Mr. Chen called for an emphasis on arms control, in light of mainland PRC's buildup of ballistic missiles pointed at Taiwan and a recent threat by Taiwan to aim rockets at Shanghai if the mainland attacks. "I propose that both sides should seriously consider the issue of arms control and take concrete actions to reduce tension and military threats across the Taiwan Strait," Mr. Chen said.

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28. PRC on Cross Strait Relations

The Associated Press ("CHINA SAYS TAIWAN LEADER'S PEACE OVERTURE ONLY "INSINCERE" WORD PLAY", 2004-10-11) reported that the PRC's state-controlled media Monday rejected the Taiwanese president's National Day call for peace talks with Beijing, saying it was "too insincere and vague to be treated seriously." The state-run newspaper China Daily, often used as a medium to communicate the country's policies, ran a front-page commentary citing mainland researchers accusing Chen of "playing word games." "The researchers said Chen's peace overture was 'too insincere and too vague to be treated seriously by the mainland,'" the article said. It added, "He did not spell out what he meant by the proposal."

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29. Sino - Russian Relations

Reuters ("RUSSIA'S PUTIN, FROWNED ON IN WEST, HEADS FOR CHINA", 2004-10-11) reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin, accused in the West of backtracking on democracy, turns East this week to visit the PRC which many in the Kremlin camp see as a model of an economically-successful autocracy. "In the eyes of foreign investors, the centralization of political power can make Russia much more similar to China, which has the best investment climate among developing countries," the business daily Vedomosti wrote.

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30. PRC on Jailed Dissident

The Associated Press ("CHINA WON'T RELEASE U.S.-BASED DISSIDENT", 2004-10-11) reported that the PRC insisted Sunday its jailing of US-based PRC activist Yang Jianli is in line with PRC law and rejected appeals by American lawmakers for his release. Yang, who runs a Boston-based foundation that advocates democratic change in the PRC, was meeting with PRC dissidents and laid-off workers when he was detained in 2002. He was sentenced in May to five years in prison.

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31. PRC Media Freedom

Agence France-Presse ("HONG KONG COURT DISMISSES APPEAL FOR NEWSPAPER SEARCH WARRANT", 2004-10-11) reported that a Hong Kong court has dismissed an anti-graft body's appeal to restore a search warrant for a newspaper after a swoop that sparked an outcry about press freedoms in the city. The Court of Appeal said it did not have the jurisdiction to hear the appeal by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), which wanted the warrant to search the Sing Tao Daily newspaper reinstated.

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32. PRC Human Rights and the Olympics

Los Angeles Times ("TRYING TO GET BEIJING TO GO FOR GOLD ON RIGHTS", 2004-10-11) reported that four years before Beijing hosts its big coming-out party - the 2008 Summer Games - the event is shaping up as one of the most controversial global sports events in recent memory.

Although the PRC has made huge strides economically, its authoritarian political system makes it a prime target for human rights activists. "Human rights groups looking at China are definitely riding this wave," said Nicolas Becquelin, Hong Kong-based research director with Human Rights in the PRC, a New York-based civic group. "Human rights is the barometer of a healthy political system, and we see this global event as a way to make China accountable. They need to do more than hold some big, perfectly scripted event."

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33. PRC AIDS Issue

Reuters ("BEIJING TO INSTALL CONDOM MACHINES TO FIGHT AIDS", 2004-10-11) reported that Beijing will install about 1,000 condom vending machines in hotels, bars, universities and on construction sites in the PRC capital this month to fight the spread of AIDS, the official Xinhua news agency said on Sunday. The United Nations has said the number of AIDS victims in the PRC could quickly rise to 10 million if serious steps to fight the epidemic are not taken.

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTHERN CHINA OFFERS GAY MEN FREE HIV TESTS", 2004-10-11) reported that the southern province of Guangdong is offering free HIV tests to homosexual men as part of its fight against the spread of the virus which causes AIDS. The provincial centre for disease control's AIDS institute began interviewing and offering tests to gay men Sunday as part of its research into the spread of HIV among homosexuals, the China Daily and the Guangdong-based Information Times said. HIV infection in Guangdong is believed to be spread predominantly through heterosexual sex and, to a lesser degree, needle-sharing among drug users, the center's deputy director He Qun said.

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34. PRC Fuel Efficiency Standards

The Associated Press ("CHINA ENACTS FUEL STANDARDS FOR CARS", 2004-10-11) reported that the PRC has introduced its first fuel-efficiency standards for passenger cars, moving to control soaring oil consumption and ensure foreign automakers share their latest technology, the government said Friday. They were approved by the State Council, the PRC's Cabinet, early last month, said an official at the PRC Automotive Technology & Research Center, which proposed the standards.

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35. PRC Hostage Issue

Reuters ("TALKS CONTINUE AFTER CHINA HOSTAGE DEADLINE PASSES", 2004-10-11) reported that Al Qaeda-linked militants holding two PRC engineers hostage in Pakistan threatened to kill one on Monday unless security forces ended a siege of their hideout, a tactic a minister said had echoes of Iraq. Abdullah Mehsud, leader of the kidnappers holding the engineers in Pakistan's remote South Waziristan region, initially insisted that they and the hostages be allowed to join him in a nearby area by noon otherwise one of the Chinese would be killed. The deadline was subsequently extended by four hours and officials said negotiations were continuing.

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