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I. United States

- 1. [US on DPRK Nuclear Issue](#)
- 2. [US Delegation DPRK Visit](#)
- 3. [ROK on DPRK Nuclear Talks](#)
- 4. [US Negotiating Team for DPRK Nuclear Issue](#)
- 5. [US Policy on DPRK Nuclear Issue](#)
- 6. [ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue](#)
- 7. [US-ROK Relations on DPRK Nuclear Issue](#)
- 8. [PRC on DPRK Stability](#)
- 9. [ROK on Inter - Korean Summit](#)
- 10. [Inter - Korean Relations](#)
- 11. [Inter - Korean Economic Cooperation](#)
- 12. [Inter - Korean Communications](#)
- 13. [Korean Unification](#)
- 14. [Japan on DPRK Abductees](#)
- 15. [Japan - DPRK World Cup Match](#)
- 16. [ROK Military](#)
- 17. [Japan - ROK Relations](#)
- 18. [ROK on Japanese Emperor Visit](#)
- 19. [Japan on Emperor's Visit to the ROK](#)
- 20. [Sino - ROK Relations](#)
- 21. [Cross Strait Relations](#)
- 22. [Sino - US Military Relations](#)

- 23. [PRC Intellectual Property Rights](#)
- 24. [PRC Foreign Investment](#)
- 25. [Hong Kong Government](#)
- 26. [PRC Energy Supply](#)
- 27. [PRC Infrastructure](#)

[Preceding NAPSNet Report](#)

I. United States

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Kyodo News ("U.S. VOWS TO SEEK DIPLOMACY ON N. KOREA AFTER ENDING IRAQ ARMS PROBE", 2005-01-13) reported that the US reiterated its policy Wednesday to improve intelligence and to seek a diplomatic solution on the DPRK's nuclear ambitions after confirming that it has "essentially" concluded its prolonged, fruitless search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. "We're working together (with the international community) to confront threats in places like North Korea and Iran," McClellan said. "The president is pursuing diplomatic solutions in close consultation with other countries."

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

2. US Delegation DPRK Visit

Associated Press ("US DELEGATION MEETS WITH NORTH KOREA 'S NO 2 MAN -REPORT", 2005-01-13) reported that a US delegation met Thursday with the DPRK's No. 2 man and its envoy to the six-nation talks on the DPRK's nuclear ambitions to discuss "pending issues," the DPRK's official news agency, KCNA, reported. The delegation led by Rep. Curt Weldon, R-Pa., vice chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, met Kim Yong Nam, head of the Presidium of the DPRK's Supreme People's Assembly, KCNA said. The short KCNA dispatch gave no further details.

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

3. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Reuters ("S. KOREA'S ROH SEES NORTH TALKS WHEN BUSH TEAM SET", 2005-01-13) reported that stalled six-party talks on the DPRK's nuclear program could resume as soon as President Bush finishes putting together his new diplomatic team, ROK President Roh Moo-hyun said Thursday. "When the US diplomacy team is organized we will start to see some movement or action," he said through an interpreter. "A negative projection and scenarios we should follow if the situation turns sour are things I do not wish to mention at all."

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

4. US Negotiating Team for DPRK Nuclear Issue

Korea Herald ("U.S. AMBASSADOR HILL MAY BECOME MAIN NUCLEAR NEGOTIATOR", 2005-0-

-13) reported that US Ambassador Christopher Hill may be Washington's next top nuclear negotiator, according to reports circulating here, and ROK officials signaled it as "highly probable." The latest information out of Washington indicates Hill is likely to succeed Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs James Kelly, who currently heads the US's delegation to the six-nation disarmament talks on the DPRK's nuclear standoff.

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

5. US Policy on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Korea Times ("GREGG PREDICTS CHANGE IN WASHINGTON'S NK POLICIES", 2005-01-13) reported that Donald Gregg, former US ambassador to Seoul, on Thursday said that he would prefer to be upbeat as there are positive signals regarding Washington's changing attitudes toward the DPRK. "I take as positive news the possibility that Christopher Hill may replace James Kelly," Gregg, chairman of the Korea Society in the US, told The Korea Times. "I think he is very talented, very strong, very committed to the idea of engagement with North Korea. I think that is a very good possibility."

[\(return to top\)](#) Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. MUST STICK TO CIVD PRINCIPLE: HERITAGE FOUNDATION", 2005-01-13) reported that the conservative US think tank Heritage Foundation, considered by many to be where Republican Party policies are born, published a set of policy recommendations for President George W. Bush's second term Wednesday. About the DPRK, the Heritage Foundation says, "Any necessary preconditions for future reduction of tensions with North Korea must include North Korea's complete, irreversible, and verifiable dismantlement of its nuclear weapons program," - a principle it says the US must firmly stick to. [\(return to top\)](#)

6. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Korea Times ("NORTHEAST ASIAN EXPERTS BACK SIX-PARTY TALKS", 2005-01-13) reported that foreign affairs experts gathering from around Northeast Asia to discuss ways to achieve regional peace and prosperity on Thursday agreed on one thing: they face a hard task. However, on many other issues participants in the forum hosted by the ROK's ruling party remained strongly divided. Lim Chae-jung, acting chairman of the Uri Party, was forthright in presenting the ROK government's concerns about military intervention to end the nuclear crisis. "The only solution is through peaceful means," he said. "We have made this message loud and clear. I hope that our friends and allies hear this message and understand our position."

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

7. US-ROK Relations on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Donga Ilbo ("DIFFERING VIEWS ON NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR AMBITIONS MAKE IT "HARD TO RETAIN U.S.-KOREA ALLIANCE"', 2005-01-13) reported that "We cannot retain a Korean-American alliance because of our differing views on North Korea and its nuclear program and changed security interests. It is time that we prepared a friendly divorce." So said the vice president for defense and foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute Ted Carpenter and research engineer Doug Bandow on January 12. Bandow argued for a gradational withdrawal of US forces from the ROK. He said, "Korea has not been a point of strategic importance since the end of the Cold War and serves as a military base for its neighbors at best," and asserted, "We can no longer retain the kind of US-Korea alliance we had in the past."

[\(return to top\)](#) Chosun Ilbo ("FORMER U.S. ENVOY WARNS SEOUL AGAINST SUPPORTING PYONGYANG", 2005-01-13) reported that former Bush administration special envoy to the DPRK Charles Pritchard said Thursday the ROK must not give the US the impression that it supports Kim Jong-il's regime. At an international symposium on peace and prosperity in Northeast Asia hosted by the Uri Party's Policy Development Research Institute, Pritchard said the Bush administration could scupper the ROK plans that appear to be in Pyongyang's interest, such as the construction of power grids and railway lines in connection with the Kaesong project, or the building of ports and roads.

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

8. PRC on DPRK Stability

JoongAng Ilbo ("CHINESE ENVOY DISCOUNTS PYEONGYANG COLLAPSE", 2005-01-13) reported that Li Bin, the PRC's ambassador to the ROK, flatly dismissed suggestions yesterday that the DPRK could collapse despite a steady flow of defectors who have said the regime is becoming politically unstable. Mr. Li also said that the stationing of PRC military units along the DPRK border was part of a move to unify frontier controls. Speaking to the JoongAng Ilbo in an interview at the PRC Embassy in Hyoja-dong, he said, "To think that North Korea will collapse is far-fetched speculation."

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

9. ROK on Inter - Korean Summit

JoongAng Ilbo ("ROH READY FOR SUMMIT, ANYTIME AND ANYWHERE", 2005-01-13) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun said yesterday he is ready for an inter-Korean summit, anytime, anywhere and on any subject. "There are many who emphasize the need for an inter-Korean summit and I agree with them," Mr. Roh said. "My position is clear. I am willing to have an inter-Korean summit regardless of time, place and subject, if Pyeongyang wants it." But Mr. Roh said he believes there is a low possibility for a summit at the moment.

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

10. Inter - Korean Relations

Asia Pulse ("S. KOREAN LABOR UNIONS TO SEND AID TO N. KOREA", 2005-01-13) reported that ROK labor organizations will send donations to the DPRK to help develop Mount Paekdu, the highest mountain on the Korean Peninsula, officials said Thursday. The Korean Confederation of Trade Unions and the Federation of Korean Trade Unions, the nation's two labor union umbrella organizations, said they will donate paving materials, valued at 700 million won (US\$675,000), to the construction of a new access road to the mountain. The southern labor representatives will meet their northern counterparts Jan. 20-23 in the DPRK to discuss various issues of mutual concern, including joint May Day events.

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

11. Inter - Korean Economic Cooperation

Korea Herald ("INTER-KOREAN INDUSTRIAL PARK HITS UNEXPECTED OBSTACLE", 2005-01-13) reported that sudden DPRK decisions to block some inter-Korean events slated for the northern border town of Gaeseong have experts in Seoul scratching their heads trying to analyze Pyongyang's intentions. Some analysts say the joint South-North industrial venture in the border town has been questioned by the DPRK's military, while others think Pyongyang is raising the stakes for future

talks with Seoul.

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

12. Inter - Korean Communications

Korea Times ("TALKS ON INTER-KOREAN TELECOM ACCORD TO BEGIN JAN. 26", 2005-01-13) reported that the ROK and DPRK will start talks on practical measures for implementing an inter-Korean agreement on telephone lines between the ROK and the Kaesong Industrial Complex from Jan. 26, government officials said Thursday. At the three-day meeting, businessmen from the two Koreas are likely to seek agreement on construction work of the telephone lines and call rates, officials said. KT, the ROK's largest fixed-line operator, signed an agreement on providing telephone lines with the DPRK's communication agency last December.

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

13. Korean Unification

Chosun Ilbo ("UNIFICATION COSTS DAMAGE KOREA'S CREDIT RATING: S&P", 2005-01-13) reported that the international credit rating agency Standard & Poor's (S&P) said Thursday the risk posed to the ROK by the DPRK was greater than that posed to Taiwan by the PRC. S&P said that while economic development in the ROK and Taiwan is of a similar standard, the difference in credit rating was primarily due to the fact that the DPRK posed a greater risk than the PRC, based on the cost of unification the ROK would have to bear.

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

14. Japan on DPRK Abductees

Asahi Shimbun ("LDP EYES HUMAN RIGHTS BILL TO PUT MORE PRESSURE ON PYONGYANG", 2005-01-13) reported that in a move to exert more pressure on the DPRK, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party has decided to draft human rights legislation aimed specifically at people fleeing the reclusive state. The proposed legislation is being touted as a "third plank" in efforts to get the DPRK to resolve the decades-old abduction issue. "By supporting defectors from North Korea, we will be encouraging a regime change (in Pyongyang)," said Abe, who heads the LDP task force dealing with the abduction issue.

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

15. Japan - DPRK World Cup Match

Kyodo ("SOCCER: N. KOREA TEAM TO ARRIVE IN JAPAN ON FEB. 7", 2005-01-13) reported that the DPRK national soccer team, which will play Japan on Feb. 9 in a World Cup qualifier, will arrive in Japan on Feb. 7 and stay at a Tokyo hotel, officials of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (Chongryon) said Thursday. Eighteen players and about 10 team officials are scheduled to come to Japan on a flight to Narita airport outside Tokyo for the match at Saitama Stadium 2002 and leave for the DPRK on Feb. 10, they said.

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

16. ROK Military

Donga Ilbo ("40,000 MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS TO BE CUT BY 2008", 2005-01-13) reported that the Ministry of National Defense (MND) announced on Thursday, January 13, that it would cut the current military force of 690,000 military service members by 40,000 to maintain its force level at 650,000 members by 2008.

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

17. Japan - ROK Relations

Korea Herald ("DEFENSE MINISTER STRESSES JAPAN'S TRANSPARENT ROLE IN REGION", 2005-01-13) reported that Japan's overhaul of its defense guidelines to play a more expanded global role and the DPRK nuclear standoff topped the agenda of talks yesterday between the ROK and Japanese defense chiefs, officials said. In an annual meeting, ROK Defense Minister Yoon Kwang-ung asked Japan's Defense Agency Director General Yoshinori Ono to implement Japan's new defense policy in a "transparent and prudent" manner, Maj.Gen. Han Min-koo, an official at the international affairs bureau, told reporters. Ono asked the ROK to take an active role in resolving the 27-month standoff over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program.

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

18. ROK on Japanese Emperor Visit

Reuters ("S. KOREA WOULD WELCOME VISIT BY JAPAN EMPEROR", 2005-01-13) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun said on Thursday the ROK would welcome a visit by the Japanese emperor, despite lingering sensitivities related to Japan's 1910-45 colonization of the Korean peninsula. Such a visit would be a further sign of warming ties between the Asian neighbors, although it would be controversial for many ROK citizens, who still deeply resent Japan's colonial legacy.

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

19. Japan on Emperor's Visit to the ROK

Kyodo ("KOIZUMI SEES CLIMATE NOT RIPE FOR EMPEROR TO VISIT S. KOREA", 2005-01-13) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said Thursday the stage has not been set for the Japanese emperor to visit the ROK, following ROK President Roh Moon Hyun's remark that Seoul would welcome such a visit. "It's not at such a stage yet. The imperial household has a full schedule for the family," Koizumi told reporters.

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

20. Sino - ROK Relations

Washington Post ("CHINESE AGENTS STORM BRIEFING BY SOUTH KOREAN LAWMAKERS", 2005-01-13) reported that PRC security agents raided a news conference organized by visiting ROK legislators Wednesday, shutting off the lights in a hotel meeting room and forcibly ejecting several foreign journalists. The raid prompted official statements of protest and concern in Seoul. Four members of the ROK's opposition Grand National Party had called the news conference to urge the PRC government to show leniency toward refugees from the DPRK and to release ROK activists

jailed for trying to smuggle the refugees out of the PRC. The visiting legislators refused orders to leave the room, resulting in a standoff that lasted nearly 13 hours.

[\(return to top\)](#) Donga Ilbo ("SEOUL SUMMONS CHINESE AMBASSADOR OVER DEFECTION INCIDENT", 2005-01-13) reported that the ROK government summoned the PRC Ambassador in Seoul, Li Bin, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade on January 13. It expressed regrets over the event, asked for an explanation and a promise not to let it happen again. The GNP also strongly demanded an explanation and an apology from the PRC authorities on this incident. Meanwhile, the PRC government attributed the responsibility to the lawmakers of the GNP on the same day. At a regular briefing, PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan argued, "The press conference of the representatives of the GNP might have encouraged the illegal activities of the North Korean defectors in China, and it didn't suit the purposes of their visit." [\(return to top\)](#)

21. Cross Strait Relations

Reuters ("CHINA FLOATS TAIWAN ROAD LINK PLAN", 2005-01-13) reported that the PRC has floated long-term plans for what would be one of the new wonders of the world -- a highway linking it with arch foe Taiwan, an island about 200 km (125 miles) offshore. Communications Minister Zhang Chunxian said the PRC would invest two trillion yuan (\$241.7 billion) on building 34 highways over 20 to 30 years, with one linking the mainland to Taipei, the capital of Taiwan, an island Beijing considers a breakaway province.

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

22. Sino - US Military Relations

China Daily ("TETE-A-TETE IMPROVES CHINA-US MILITARY TIES", 2005-01-13) reported that Sino-US relations are today in a good period but the two militaries still need better communications and to find areas for co-operation, said former US Secretary of Defence William Cohen on Tuesday. There are areas where the military of the two countries can co-operate, such as overseas peace-keeping and humanitarian relief work, he said. Cohen called for the two militaries to have an open attitude towards each other so as to increase transparency.

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

23. PRC Intellectual Property Rights

Agence France Presse ("CHINA SAYS PROGRESS BEING MADE ON SAFEGUARDING IPR", 2005-01-13) reported that PRC Vice Premier Wu Yi has said a national campaign to combat intellectual property rights (IPR) violations is making an impact with an IPR group drawn from judiciary and law enforcement agencies leading the charge. In a two-month period since the campaign started, authorities prosecuted over 1,000 cases involving 550 million yuan (66 million dollars), while the Commerce Ministry investigated 9,000 cases of trademark infringement, Wu said.

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

24. PRC Foreign Investment

The Associated Press ("CHINA SEES FOREIGN INVESTMENT SURGE", 2005-01-13) reported that the PRC attracted a record \$60.6 billion in direct foreign investment in 2004 as major overseas retailers, automakers and other manufacturers ramped up spending, the government said Thursday.

The Ministry of Commerce also reported that overseas investors pledged \$153.5 billion in direct foreign investment in 2004, up 33.4 percent over the previous year, ensuring that heavy flows of capital into the country will continue.

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

25. Hong Kong Government

The Associated Press ("HONG KONG LEADER ADMITS POOR GOVERNANCE", 2005-01-13) reported that Hong Kong's deeply unpopular leader Tung Chee-hwa acknowledged that his government had undermined itself by failing to heed public demands and poorly handling recent crises. Tung pledged to do a better job, and announced initiatives to fight poverty and improve the economy - areas in which he's been criticized.

[\(return to top\)](#) The New York Times ("HONG KONG'S LEADER APOLOGIZES BUT PROMISES TO REMAIN IN OFFICE", 2005-01-13) reported that facing broad public dissatisfaction and renewed speculation over whether he might step down, Hong Kong's leader made several apologies on Wednesday for his governance but promised to remain in office. "We have our inadequacies and we have to summarize our experience and learn our lesson," said Tung Chee-hwa, the chief executive of Hong Kong, an autonomous PRC territory, echoing criticisms of him last month by President Hu Jintao of the PRC. [\(return to top\)](#)

26. PRC Energy Supply

International Herald Tribune ("CHINESE REACH INTO GULF", 2005-01-13) reported that lured by the world's largest oil reserves and markets considered too risky by some Western companies, the PRC is quickly becoming a major economic player in the Gulf, making deals in transportation and technology, showcasing its consumer goods and shoring up agreements to meet its colossal energy needs. Trade between the PRC and the six rich countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council - the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman - was expected to reach \$20 billion in 2004, up from \$16.9 billion in 2003, according to the PRC's National Bureau of Statistics. And trade between the PRC and Iran is expected to have totaled \$7 billion in 2004, up from \$5.6 billion in 2003, according to the Iran-China Chamber of Commerce.

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

27. PRC Infrastructure

The Associated Press ("CHINA TO DOUBLE SPENDING ON RAIL BUILDING", 2005-01-13) reported that the PRC will spend more than \$12 billion on railway construction this year, almost double last year's amount, as it rushes to expand its overloaded transport networks, state media reported Thursday. With its railways turning away two-thirds of cargo due to lack of capacity, the PRC is engaged in a frenzy of transport construction: modern deep water ports, slick new airports, even a train route line across Himalayan permafrost into Tibet.

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

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