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# NAPSNet Daily Report Thursday, September 07, 2006

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# I. NAPSNet

## 1. US on DPRK-Iran Ties

Korea Times ("NORTH KOREA-IRAN MISSILE CONNECTION VERY STRONG", 2006-09-07) reported that arms connections between the DPRK and Iran are very strong, with the former regime being the main supplier of ballistic missile technologies to Tehran, a senior US non-proliferation official said Wednesday. Undersecretary of State Robert Joseph, in charge of arms control and international security, was cautious about going into intelligence, the Yonhap News Agency in Seoul reported. ``But I can say that the connections between North Korea and Iran are very strong," he was quoted as saying at a news conference with the foreign press.

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## 2. Israel on DPRK Threat

Yonhap ("NORTH KOREA CAN BE A POTENTIAL THREAT TO ISRAEL:ISRAELI LAWMAKER", 2006-09-07) reported that a visiting Israeli parliamentarian on Thursday said that the DPRK could be a potential threat to Israel, claiming that the communist country had secret arms deals with Iran. "North Korea may not be a direct threat to Israel," Yoel Hasson, a member of the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, told Yonhap News Agency, "but Israel is a part of the international community that feels threatened by North Korea." The lawmaker is in the ROK to attend a three-day meeting of politicians from Asian nations that begins Friday.

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## 3. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Tests

Yonhap ("SPECULATIONS OF N.K. NUCLEAR TEST WILL HURT INTER-KOREAN TIES: ROH", 2006-09-07) reported that the ROK has no evidence whether or when the DPRK will conduct a nuclear test and warned that speculation will only hurt inter-Korean relations, President Roh Moo-hyun said here Thursday. He said the DPRK's missile tests in July were most likely motivated politically and "too meager" to reach the US but "too big" to be directed at the ROK.

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## 4. US on DPRK Sanctions

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S. POISED TO TIGHTEN NOOSE ON N.KOREA ", 2006-09-07) reported that the US looks poised to hit the DPRK with further sanctions. US State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said Wednesday the US is discussing additional measures against the DPRK under the UN Security Council resolution over the DPRK's missile tests. He did not mention details. McCormack said if Pyongyang goes through with a rumored nuclear test, it would be considered a provocation of the international community and urged concerned countries starting with the PRC to make that clear to the DPRK.

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## 5. Kim Jong-il Visit to PRC

Chosun Ilbo ("BEIJING HINTS KIM JONG-IL TO VISIT AFTER ALL", 2006-09-07) reported that the PRC has hinted that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il may visit the country after all, two days after officially denying it. Asked about persistent rumors that Kim is or will soon be in the PRC, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said Thursday, "China and North Korea have traditionally maintained friendly relations, and the leaders of the two nations have visited each other's countries. If we hear any news about visits to be paid by high-ranking government officials of the two countries that you are interested in, we will let you know in a good time." The remarks are strikingly similar to what the ministry said when Kim visited the PRC in April 2004 and January 2006.

[\(return to top\)](#) International Herald Tribune ("SOUTH KOREA SAYS NORTH KOREAN LEADER CHINA TRIP WOULD BE POSITIVE", 2006-09-07) reported that a trip by DPRK leader Kim Jong Il to the PRC would be a positive development, the ROK's point man on the communist regime said Thursday, but added that Seoul had no information any such travel was imminent. Unification Minister Lee Jong-seok said a summit by Kim in the PRC would be very meaningful in breaking the current deadlock on the DPRK's nuclear and missile programs, calling it potentially "very positive" during a news briefing. [\(return to top\)](#)

## 6. ROK-US Aircraft Sales

JoongAng Ilbo ("SOUTH KOREA TO PURCHASE RECONNAISSANCE PLANES ", 2006-09-07) reported that the Pentagon has notified the US Congress it plans to sell RC-800 reconnaissance aircraft worth about \$200 million to Seoul to boost the ROK's intelligence gathering capabilities. On Wednesday, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency asked Congress to approve the sale. "Korea needs the sustainment support to continue its tactical reconnaissance and signal intelligence (Sigint) operations," said a statement released by the agency, an arm of the Pentagon charged with arms exports.

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## 7. ROK-US WMD Training

Chosun Ilbo ("U.S., KOREA TO CONDUCT JOINT WMD TRAINING", 2006-09-07) reported that ROK and US forces will hold a joint drill next Tuesday to tackle biological weapons and weapons of mass destruction. The US Army 20th Support Command said Wednesday that the ROK's 24th Special Forces Chemical Battalion and the US Army 22nd Chemical Battalion will be taking part in the drill in the state of Maryland, and it will cover detection of such weapons.

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## 8. ROK-US Free Trade Talks

Yonhap ("U.S. OFFICIAL SAYS RICE, BEEF COMPROMISES KEY IN TRADE TALKS WITH SOUTH KOREA", 2006-09-07) reported that a senior official in charge of agriculture for Washington state sees compromises in rice and beef as the key for the ROK and the US to wrap up their free trade negotiations. "Compromises in beef and rice are very important for both South Korea and the United States," said Washington State Agriculture Director Valoria Loveland. "If rice and beef are on the table and they are sticking points, I hope South Korea and the U.S. find some compromises to get the free trade agreement."

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## **9. Japan-ROK Relations**

Kyodo News ("JAPAN, S. KOREA END REGULAR 'STRATEGIC DIALOGUE'", 2006-09-07) reported that Japan and the ROK ended a two-day regular "Strategic Dialogue" on Thursday in Seoul aimed at exchanging views on matters of mutual interest, including the DPRK's nuclear weapons program. "The two sides held a very useful exchange of opinions and agreed to hold the fourth 'strategic dialogue' at an early date," the ROK's Foreign Affairs and Trade Ministry Spokesman Chu Kyu Ho said in a report by Yonhap News Agency.

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## **10. Japan on PRC, ROK Meetings at ASEM**

Kyodo News ("KOIZUMI HEADS FOR ASEM, STRONGLY HINTS NO TALKS WITH CHINA, S. KOREA", 2006-09-07) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said Thursday he has no intention to meet with his counterparts from the PRC and the ROK for as long as the two countries demand that he stop visiting the war-linked Yasukuni Shrine as a condition to restart stalled bilateral talks. "I will meet with them if there are no preconditions. I won't beg for them to meet with me by saying I won't go to Yasukuni anymore," Koizumi told reporters ahead of his departure for Finland to attend the Asia-Europe Summit Meeting, which PRC and ROK leaders are also scheduled to attend.

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## **11. Japan on War Atrocity Apologies**

Agence France-Presse ("JAPAN'S ABE SAYS NO NEED FOR FRESH WAR APOLOGY", 2006-09-07) reported that Shinzo Abe, the front-runner to be Japan's next prime minister, said there was no need to make a freshly worded apology over the nation's war atrocities. The conservative politician, however, acknowledged that Japan "left scars" on other nations through its aggression. "I don't think it is necessary to make a statement every time the administration changes," Abe, the chief cabinet secretary, told a news conference.

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## **12. US on Japan Defense Reform**

Kyodo News ("U.S. COMMANDER SEES NEED OF JAPAN USING COLLECTIVE DEFENSE RIGHT", 2006-09-07) reported that Commander James D. Kelly of the US Naval Forces in Japan suggested Thursday he sees the need for Japan to exercise the right of collective self-defense so bilateral missile defense can work effectively. Kelly, speaking to a group of Japanese reporters at the naval headquarters, also expressed hope that increased discussions on issues including a possible "change of the Constitution" will be held in Japan. Kelly said a system of "mutual defense" is necessary between the US and Japan. He questioned the current situation where the US Navy can defend the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force in the event Japan comes under foreign attack while both countries are involved in missile defense, but in a reverse case Japan cannot do likewise.

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## **13. PRC on Iran Nuclear Program**

Reuters ("CHINA URGES IRAN DIALOGUE AS POWERS MEET", 2006-09-07) reported that the PRC said on Thursday it hoped a crisis over Iran's nuclear program could be resolved through dialogue as senior diplomats from six world powers prepared to meet to discuss next steps, including possible sanctions. The officials from Germany and the five permanent Security Council members -- the US, Britain, France, Russia and the PRC -- are set to consider imposing penalties on Iran after it ignored last month's UN Security Council deadline to stop nuclear enrichment work, said diplomats. "China advocates this issue be resolved through negotiation and dialogue in a peaceful way and this position remains unchanged," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang.

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## **14. PRC at APEC Meeting**

Xinhua ("CHINA TO FOSTER TRADE, INVESTMENT COOPERATION WITH APEC MEMBERS", 2006-09-07) reported that the PRC is taking such concrete measures as increasing imports, strengthening protection of intellectual property rights, and implementing opening-up policy, aiming to promote trade and investment cooperation with other APEC members, said a Chinese minister. The PRC is changing trade promotion modes, expanding imports and promoting protection of intellectual property rights, making contribution to the development of the region and the world, Finance Minister Jin Renqing said at the 13th APEC (the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) Finance Ministers' Meeting which started here Thursday.

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## **15. PRC Economic Reform**

Xinhua ("REPORT RANKS CHINA 4TH FOR REFORMS", 2006-09-07) reported that the PRC has been ranked the fourth-best reformer in terms of the ease of doing business in 175 economies, following Georgia, Romania and Mexico. The World Bank and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private sector arm of the World Bank Group, which produced the ranking, praised the nation for speeding up economic reform. "China has picked up the pace of its reforms, like speeding business entry, increasing investor protections and reducing red tape in cross-border trading, during the past year," Caralee McLiesh, an author of the report, said in a video conference yesterday.

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## **16. PRC Diplomatic Appointment**

Xinhua ("CHINA'S NEW AMBASSADOR TO DPRK", 2006-09-07) reported that the PRC has appointed a new ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the DPRK Thursday. Liu Xiaoming replaces Wu Donghe as the PRC's envoy to Pyongyang. President Hu Jintao issued the nomination after the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), the top legislature, has approved it.

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## **17. PRC Pollution**

Agence France-Presse ("ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION COSTS CHINA 64 BILLION DOLLARS IN 2004", 2006-09-07) reported that environmental pollution cost the PRC 511.8 billion yuan (64 billion dollars) in economic losses in 2004, amounting to 3.1 percent of total economic output that year, state media said. The findings were revealed in a government research report, the first investigation into the impact of pollution on the PRC's gross domestic output, the official Xinhua news agency said. To determine the impact, researchers calculated a "Green GDP" by subtracting the cost of natural resources used and the cost of environmental degradation from total GDP, Xinhua said.

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