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I. United States

- 1. [US on DPRK Nuclear Talks](#)
- 2. [US-DPRK Relations](#)
- 3. [US on DPRK Nuclear Issue](#)
- 4. [PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks](#)
- 5. [ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue](#)
- 6. [ROK-German Relations](#)
- 7. [Inter-Korean Summit](#)
- 8. [DPRK Economic Reforms](#)
- 9. [DPRK - Russia Trade](#)
- 10. [DPRK Agriculture](#)
- 11. [DPRK Bird Flu Outbreak](#)
- 12. [DPRK on USS Pueblo](#)
- 13. [Goethe Institute Center in Pyongyang](#)
- 14. [DPRK Human Rights](#)
- 15. [DPRK Maritime Accident](#)
- 16. [DPRK on Japan Textbook Issue](#)
- 17. [PRC on DPRK Defectors](#)
- 18. [DPRK World Cup Match](#)
- 19. [US-ROK Relations](#)
- 20. [ROK-US Military Alliance](#)
- 21. [ROK on Balancer Doctrine](#)
- 22. [Japan, PRC, ROK Meeting](#)
- 23. [PRC on Japan UNSC Bid](#)
- 24. [ROK on UNSC Bid](#)
- 25. [Japan India UNSC Bid](#)

26. [ROK-Japanese Relations](#)
27. [Sino-Japanese Relations](#)
28. [Sino-Indian Relations](#)
29. [PRC Military](#)
30. [PRC Religious Freedom](#)

[Preceding NAPSNet Report](#)

I. United States

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks

The Associated Press ("U.S. MAKES NEW PITCH FOR NORTH KOREA TO RETURN TO SIX-PARTY NUCLEAR TALKS", 2005-04-12) reported that the US has no intention of invading the DPRK and would deal with security guarantees "in an appropriate way" if Kim Jong Il's government would return to multinational talks, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said. "We continue to believe the right place for North Korea to seek to address its concerns is through the six-party talks," Boucher said. "At this point, as I've said, we don't know what their intentions are in terms of actually showing up and conducting serious discussions."

[\(return to top\)](#) Los Angeles Times ("NEW U.S. POINT MAN ON N. KOREA SEES HOPE", 2005-0-12) reported that it will be one year in June since the last round of multinational talks aimed at pressing the DPRK to stop building nuclear weapons. To even the most casual observer, the talks are going badly indeed. But Christopher R. Hill, the new assistant secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific affairs, is being paid to be an optimist. "I'm not quite prepared to pull the plug," said Hill in an interview at the US Embassy here in the ROK capital. "I still think [the six-party process] is the best mechanism we have for dealing with it, and I would hope that the North Koreans will come around. Certainly the issue is not whether or not we are going to solve this problem ... but how do we solve it." [\(return to top\)](#)

2. US-DPRK Relations

VOA News ("U.S. SAYS NORTH KOREAN SOVEREIGNTY NOT IN QUESTION", 2005-04-12) reported that the State Department said that no one, including the US, questions the DPRK's sovereignty. The comment followed a news account that Pyongyang is demanding a US pledge to respect its sovereignty before it will again discuss the future of its nuclear weapons program. The State Department says acceptance of the DPRK's sovereignty has long been explicit in US public statements, and it is calling on Pyongyang to return unconditionally to the PRC-sponsored six-party talks on its nuclear program.

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

3. US on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Donga Ilbo ("SUBMISSION OF NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR CRISIS TO U.N. POSSIBLE", 2005-04-12) reported that UN Ambassador appointee John Bolton implied at the Senate Committee Hearing on his nomination that the UN could set out to apply sanctions against the DPRK. He added, "The fact

that there is a possibility that the issue can be submitted to the UN Security Council is significant as a warning against North Korea and other countries that try to acquire WMD." If the Security Council deals with the DPRK nuclear issue, it means that the current frame of the six-party talks will break and a new international discourse on sanctioning the DPRK will begin.

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

4. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Joongang Ilbo ("CHINA'S HU CANCELS NORTH VISIT OVER TALKS, SOURCES SAY", 2005-04-12) reported that diplomatic sources in Beijing said yesterday that a scheduled visit by the PRC's President Hu Jintao to Pyongyang has been postponed indefinitely, because the DPRK has failed to give a clear date for a return to disarmament talks. A source in Beijing said that the PRC intended to extract a promise from Mr. Kang that Pyongyang would return to the six-party talks before Mr. Hu would visit the DPRK in the middle of this month. The unsatisfactory results of Mr. Kang's visit have resulted in the postponement of Mr. Hu's trip, the source said.

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

5. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Yonhap news ("ROH PLEDGES MASSIVE ECONOMIC AID TO N.K. ON NUKE RESOLUTION", None) reported that ROK President Roh Moo-hyun reconfirmed his government's pledge to help the DPRK develop its economy without a regime change, but conditioned it on a peaceful resolution of the DPRK nuclear issue. "We have intentions to continue to provide assistance to North Korea without destabilizing North Korea in the process of the North's pursuit of reform and openness," Roh said. "We think North Korea is striving to seek reform and openness in the way China and Vietnam are pursuing them." Roh, however, said his government will be able to provide "full-fledged assistance" to the DPRK "only if the North Korean nuclear issue is resolved."

[\(return to top\)](#) Korea Times ("ROH OPPOSES NK REGIME CHANGE", 2005-04-12) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun expressed hope that the DPRK will model itself on the PRC and Vietnam in its efforts to transform into a market economy. Roh said the DPRK's stability should not be shaken in the process of opening and reform, and also noted the ROK is firmly committed to helping the DPRK in its bid for economic revitalization. "The reason we help North Korea is because of the need to ensure peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. In addition, North Koreans are our brethren," Roh said. [\(return to top\)](#)

6. ROK-German Relations

Korea Times ("SEOUL, BERLIN AGREE TO COOPERATE ON NK NUKES", 2005-04-12) reported that Germany expressed support for the ROK's endeavors to find a peaceful resolution to the continuing impasse over the DPRK's nuclear program, presidential secretary for public relations Cho Ki-sook said. President Roh Moo-hyun and German President Horst Kohler also agreed to promote bilateral relations in economic and security areas in a meeting at the Charlottenburg Palace here. "The two leaders agreed to upgrade the bilateral relation into a substantial and cooperative partnership on the basis of common historical experiences of national division and war," Cho said.

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

7. Inter-Korean Summit

Kyodo News ("INDONESIA'S MEGAWATI TO DELIVER S. KOREAN MESSAGE TO KIM JONG IL", 2005-04-12) reported that former Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri arrived in Pyongyang to deliver a reconciliatory message from the ROK President Roh Moo Hyun to the DPRK's top leader Kim Jong Il, her close aides said. "In his message, the South Korean president expressed his readiness to visit Pyongyang to resume inter-Korea dialogues on the Korean Peninsula if North Korea shows positive signals," a close Megawati aide told Kyodo News.

[\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap news ("SEOUL DENIES REPORT OF ROH SENDING MESSAGE TO N. KOREAN", 2005-04-12) reported that the ROK dismissed a wire report that former Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri will deliver ROK President Roh Moo-hyun's message on inter-Korean summit and reconciliation to DPRK leader Kim Jong-il during Megawati's ongoing trip to Pyongyang. "It is not true," Roh's spokesman Kim Man-soo said. [\(return to top\)](#)

8. DPRK Economic Reforms

Asia Pulse ("N.KOREA SIGNALS CONTINUED PUSH FOR ECONOMIC REFORM: OFFICIALS", 2005-04-12) reported that the DPRK has expressed its intention to continue pressing ahead with economic reforms that the DPRK launched three years ago in a bid to improve its sickly economy, ROK officials said. "Our general assessment is that they place emphasis on agriculture and improvement of the socialist economy," an analyst at the Unification Ministry said on condition of anonymity. "They also voiced their willingness to continue to push for economic reform."

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

9. DPRK - Russia Trade

Yonhap news ("NORTH KOREA-RUSSIA TRADE JUMPS 80 PER CENT - SOUTH OFFICIALS", 2005-04-12) reported that the DPRK's trade with Russia jumped 80% year-on-year to 210m US dollars last year, the ROK's trade agency said. According to the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency, the DPRK's imports from Russia increased 78% to 20m dollars, while its exports surged 157% to 7m dollars in 2004. Pyongyang purchased a great deal of oil products, mainly used for fuel, from Russia, accounting for more than three-quarters of total imports. The large shipment items to Russia from the DPRK were pork and cement.

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

10. DPRK Agriculture

Bloomberg ("NORTH KOREA TO BOOST SPENDING ON AGRICULTURE IN 2005", 2005-04-12) reported that the DPRK's National Assembly said the country will boost spending on agriculture by 29 percent this year to try to end food shortages that mean the country depends on the UN to feed its people. The DPRK plans to "decisively settle the food problem" this year, DPRK Premier Pak Pong Ju said in a speech at the 11th Supreme People's Assembly yesterday, the official Korean Central News Agency reported. "Agriculture is the main front in the socialist economic construction this year," Pak said.

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

11. DPRK Bird Flu Outbreak

Arirang TV ("N.K. PROPOSES INTER-KOREAN MEETING NEXT WEEK TO TACKLE BIRD FLU", 2005-04-12) reported that the ROK and DPRK representatives will hold working-level talks next week to settle the details of Seoul's part in helping the communist state fight bird flu. The Unification Ministry announced the ROK's National Veterinary Research and Quarantine Service received a telephone message from its counterpart in the DPRK proposing to meet sometime next week in the border town of Kaesong. Expressing gratitude for Seoul's offer to provide humanitarian aid, Pyongyang requested various medical supplies and machinery as well as technical assistance.

[\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap news ("N. KOREA VACCINATES 1.1 MILLION POULTRY TO CONTAIN BIRD FLU", 2005-04-12) reported that the DPRK's quarantine authorities conducted emergency vaccinations of 1.1 million poultry in an attempt to contain a bird flu outbreak, according to the World Organization for Animal Health. In a report dated last week, the Paris-based organization said the vaccinations were carried out in three poultry farms and DPRK authorities undertook further measures, such as quarantine, transportation controls and the disinfection of infected facilities. [\(return to top\)](#)

12. DPRK on USS Pueblo

Agence France Presse ("US NAVY VESSEL REMAINS PRIZED TROPHY FOR NORTH KOREA, 37 YEARS ON", 2005-04-12) reported that in the DPRK's decades-long struggle with the US, it is perhaps the DPRK's favourite trophy. The USS Pueblo, a 53.8 meter-long (176.5 foot-long) ship the DPRK seized in 1968 remains docked in one of the most prominent positions of the Taedong River in Pyongyang. "Although the government of the US submitted the surrender documents, the Pueblo couldn't return to its country, for it is a permanent trophy of the DPRK," the pamphlet says.

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

13. Goethe Institute Center in Pyongyang

Deutsche Welle ("GOETHE INSTITUTE OPENS CENTER IN NORTH KOREA", 2005-04-12) reported that with the opening of its reading room in Pyongyang, Germany's Goethe Institute has become the first Western cultural organization to open shop in the DPRK. Institute leaders believe they can operate free of censorship. The Goethe Institute in Pyongyang comprises of 150 square meters packed with 8,000 books, newspapers, CDs and videos stored in a cultural center in a space located deep in the heart of the city. Under the agreement, 50 percent of the Goethe Institute's literature will focus on science and technology, with the other 50 percent devoted to general media that provides a complete and up-to-date view of Germany.

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

14. DPRK Human Rights

Yonhap news ("NORTH KOREA RESOLUTION PRESENTED TO UN HUMAN RIGHTS MEETING", 2005-04-12) reported that a resolution criticizing the DPRK's human rights conditions was presented to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights here, in a move led by the European Union and Japan. The 53-member UN commission will discuss the resolution against the DPRK for the third straight year, having endorsed two previous ones since 2003. This year's resolution has 45 countries as co-sponsors, three more than last year. The ROK is likely to abstain again, partly due to concern

about its possible adverse impact on inter-Korean relations.

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

15. DPRK Maritime Accident

Kyodo News ("N. KOREAN SHIP WITH 5,600 TONS OF CHEMICALS WRECKED OFF ALGERIA", 2005-04-12) reported that a DPRK cargo ship carrying more than 5,600 tons of chemicals is wrecked on a reef off the coast of Algeria, the PRC's official Xinhua News Agency reported from Algiers. The report quoted an Algerian Press Service dispatch as saying the DPRK-flagged ship, carrying 22 crew members, became stranded on the reef after encountering strong winds and waves. It said one person was rescued while three were missing "and the rest were trapped in the disintegrated cabin."

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

16. DPRK on Japan Textbook Issue

Kyodo News ("N. KOREA SLAMS JAPAN FOR 'BEAUTIFYING' HISTORY OF AGGRESSION", 2005-04-12) reported that the DPRK slammed Japan for "beautifying and justifying" its history of aggression in Asia by recently approving contentious school history textbooks. The official Korean Central News Agency, in a commentary, accused "Japanese reactionaries" of having "totally denied and grossly distorted" history in the eight history textbooks approved in last week's latest round of education ministry screenings.

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

17. PRC on DPRK Defectors

Donga Ilbo ("CHINA REPATRIATES 30 NORTH KOREAN DEFECTORS", 2005-04-12) reported that since the visit of the DPRK's first vice foreign minister, Kang Sok Ju, PRC has repatriated 30 DPRK captives in a prison and stepped up its crackdown on DPRK defectors attempting to cross the border between the PRC and DPRK. Out of the 90 DPRK defectors in the Dabei prison of Changchun city, Jilin province, 30 were abruptly dragged out after finishing remission procedures, and it is almost certain that they were sent back to the DPRK, according to a local source.

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

18. DPRK World Cup Match

Kyodo News ("JAPAN-N. KOREA QUALIFIER MAY BE HELD WITHOUT SPECTATORS", 2005-04-12) reported that Japan's World Cup qualifier against North Korea in Pyongyang on June 8 is clouded with uncertainty following an outbreak of violence during a match in March in the capital between Iran and the DPRK. Sports sources said there is a possibility that the upcoming match will be held either in a third country, or at a stadium with no spectators, irritating sports officials, travel agents and supporters. The decision will be made by the Federation of International Football Associations.

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

19. US-ROK Relations

Choson Ilbo ("IS RICHARD BOUCHER SET TO BECOME NEW U.S. AMBASSADOR TO KOREA?",

2005-04-12) reported that with US ambassador to the ROK Christopher Hill's formal assumption of the position of Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, the US ambassador's chair in Seoul is now empty. In Washington, State Department spokesperson Richard Boucher is considered the No. 1 candidate to replace Hill. Conjecture that Boucher has been tentatively named the next ambassador to the ROK has strengthened with former White House National Security Council spokesman Sean McCormack being named the new State Department spokesman and Boucher's future course not yet announced.

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

20. ROK-US Military Alliance

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA, U.S. TO REDRAW MILITARY ALLIANCE BY END OF YEAR", 2005-04-12) reported that the ROK and the US have decided to divide the future security environment on the Korean Peninsula into three or four levels including full unification and use them to draw up a new blueprint for their military alliance. The Defense Ministry said Monday the two nations agreed to the plan in principle. Pending confirmation, the levels include "reconciliation and cooperation", "peace and coexistence" and "unification." Military experts say the ROK is likely to put up the bulk of the deterrent against the DPRK, and the new military alliance will define roles and relationships between the ROK and US militaries in conflict zones outside the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia.

[\(return to top\)](#) Korea Times ("USFK ROLE EXPANSION NEEDS SEOUL'S CONSENT: EXPERT", 2005-04-12) reported that a US foreign policy expert warned the US against expecting the ROK to act as a base for possible future military conflicts with the PRC. The ROK has every right to deny the US the use of its facilities if it opposes a military action, Michael O'Hanlon, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, told a forum. "The US needs to be very careful to presume that South Korea could ever be asked to allow us to use military bases on its territory in operations against China," he said. [\(return to top\)](#)

21. ROK on Balancer Doctrine

Joongang Ilbo ("BALANCER' POLICY TILTS POLITICIANS", 2005-04-12) reported that Uri Party lawmakers and Grand National Party lawmakers confronted each other yesterday in the National Assembly over the issue of the security alliance with the US in a debate over the direction of government policy. Grand National Party members expressed concern over President Roh Moo-hyun's view that the ROK can play a "balancing role" in East Asian geopolitics. Grand National lawmakers criticized the government, saying that the policy had damaged the ROK's security relationship with the US.

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

22. Japan, PRC, ROK Meeting

Agence France Presse ("DIPLOMATS FROM JAPAN, CHINA, S KOREA TO HOLD TALKS IN BEIJING AMID ROWS", 2005-04-12) reported that senior officials from Japan, the PRC and the ROK will meet in Beijing this week amid simmering rows between Tokyo and its two East Asian neighbors, the foreign ministry said. The meeting on Wednesday and Thursday is due to exchange views on ways to enhance trilateral cooperation and regional cooperation in East Asia, the ministry said in a statement.

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

23. PRC on Japan UNSC Bid

The Associated Press ("CHINA ISSUES STATEMENT AGAINST JAPAN", 2005-04-12) reported that in the strongest stand so far against the Japanese bid for a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council, the PRC's premier told Japan to face up to its World War II aggression before aspiring to a bigger global role. It was the strongest hint yet that the PRC might exercise its veto as one of the council's five permanent members to block Japan. "Only a country that respects history, takes responsibility for history and wins over the trust of peoples in Asia and the world at large can take greater responsibilities in the international community," Premier Wen Jiabao said during an official visit to India.

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

24. ROK on UNSC Bid

Joongang Ilbo ("ASSEMBLYMEN SEEK ALLIES TO CONFRONT JAPAN", 2005-04-12) reported that ROK lawmakers, hoping to block Tokyo's bid for a permanent UN Security Council seat, say they will try to assemble an alliance with other Asian countries to oppose Japan. When the current session of the National Assembly ends, the governing Uri Party said it will send representatives to the PRC, Vietnam and the Philippines to gather support for a broad diplomatic movement aimed at ending Tokyo's ambitions at the UN.

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

25. Japan India UNSC Bid

Financial Times ("SIX COUNTRIES OPPOSE BIDS BY JAPAN AND INDIA FOR PERMANENT UN SECURITY COUNCIL SEATS", 2005-04-12) reported that Japan and India faced a further hurdle in their bids to gain permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council yesterday, as a group of six countries was due to meet in New York to oppose the move. The six - led by Italy, the ROK and Pakistan - called the meeting in an attempt to thwart the hopes of not only Japan and India, but also Brazil, Germany and two African countries to gain permanent seats. The group, calling itself United for Consensus, also includes Argentina, Mexico and the PRC.

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

26. ROK-Japanese Relations

United Press International ("S. KOREA LAWMAKERS VISIT JAPAN IN PROTEST", 2005-04-12) reported that a group of ROK lawmakers left for Tokyo to protest Japan's claim over disputed islets and its approval of a controversial history textbook. The multi-party delegation will protest the Japanese government's involvement in "distorting" Tokyo's wartime history and reinforcing its claim to the Dokdo islets in a newly revised school textbook. The book includes a photo of the islets with a caption stating they are "illegally occupied by South Korea," parliamentary officials said.

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

27. Sino-Japanese Relations

Kyodo News ("CHINA'S TANG DENIES GOV'T SUPPORT FOR ANTI-JAPAN PROTESTS", 2005-04-12) reported that PRC State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan denied the view the PRC government supported a series of anti-Japan demonstrations last weekend, calling the accusation a "grave distortion" of the facts. In a meeting with Kyodo News President Toyohiko Yamanouchi, Tang also strongly warned Japan against allowing Japanese companies to start test-drilling for resources in disputed waters in the East China Sea. Tang also said there is a need to "solve the fundamental problem of why they took place," a comment believed to be urging Japan to address the PRC's concerns over Japan's militarist past.

[\(return to top\)](#) Kyodo ("KOIZUMI DISMISSES CHINA'S CLAIM OVER PROTESTS", 2005-04-12) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi dismissed Beijing's claim that Tokyo's "wrongful attitude" toward history was behind the violent anti-Japanese protests over the weekend in the PRC. Japan's view on the protests is "different" from the PRC's, Koizumi told reporters after PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang made the comments. Koizumi countered these arguments saying, "The Chinese side has the responsibility to ensure the safety of Japanese people" so that their businesses can operate freely in the PRC. [\(return to top\)](#)

28. Sino-Indian Relations

Washington Post ("INDIA, CHINA HOPING TO 'RESHAPE THE WORLD ORDER' TOGETHER", 2005-04-12) reported that India and the PRC announced a new "strategic partnership" Monday, pledging to resolve long-standing border disputes and boost trade and economic cooperation between two rising powers that together account for more than a third of the world's population. The announcement came after a summit between Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his PRC counterpart, Wen Jiabao, who began a four-day visit to India with a weekend stop in Bangalore, the center of India's booming information-technology sector.

[\(return to top\)](#) The New York Times ("INDIA AND CHINA AGREE TO RESOLVE DECADES OF BORDER DISPUTES", 2005-04-12) reported that the PRC and India agreed to resolve a decades-old border dispute and let trade flourish between the countries. Promising a new era of "peace and prosperity" between the world's two most populous countries, the announcement came during a four-day visit to India by Prime Minister Wen Jiabao of PRC. It signaled an end to a protracted dispute over several patches along the 2,200-mile border between the countries, stretching from Kashmir to Myanmar. [\(return to top\)](#)

29. PRC Military

Washington Post ("CHINA BUILDS A SMALLER, STRONGER MILITARY", 2005-04-12) reported that a top-to-bottom modernization is transforming the PRC military, raising the stakes for US forces long dominant in the Pacific. Several programs to improve the PRC's armed forces could soon produce a stronger nuclear deterrent against the US, soldiers better trained to use high-technology weapons, and more effective cruise and anti-ship missiles for use in the waters around Taiwan, according to foreign specialists and US officials.

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

30. PRC Religious Freedom

The New York Times ("CHINA SAID TO STEP UP RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION OF MINORITY IN ITS WEST", 2005-04-12) reported that the PRC has stepped up a campaign of religious persecution against its minority Uighur population in the western region of Xinjiang even though the government has already eliminated any organized resistance to Beijing's rule there, two leading human rights groups said in a joint report to be released. The groups, Human Rights Watch and Human Rights in China, quoted secret Communist Party and government documents as detailing a range of new policies that tighten controls on religious worship, assembly and artistic expression among Xinjiang's eight million Turkic-speaking Muslims, including strict rules on teaching religion to minors.

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

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