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I. NAPSNet

- 1. [US-DPRK Relations](#)
- 2. [Hill on Six Party Talks](#)
- 3. [Russia on Six Party Talks](#)
- 4. [Japan on Six Party Talks](#)
- 5. [Inter-Korean Naval Relations](#)
- 6. [Drug Addiction in the DPRK](#)
- 7. [ROK-EU Trade Relations](#)
- 8. [Japan Earthquake](#)
- 9. [US-Japan Missile Defense Cooperation](#)
- 10. [US-Japan Air Drill](#)
- 11. [Shanghai Cooperation Organization Agreements](#)
- 12. [PRC Environment](#)

[Preceding NAPSNet Report](#)

I. NAPSNet

1. US-DPRK Relations

Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR TALKS START AMIABLY", 2007-07-17) reported that the chief U.S. nuclear envoy huddled with his DPRK counterpart in a series of meetings Tuesday as the two sides tried to chart the next course following the shutdown of Yongbyon. Just after arriving

in Beijing, the DPR Koreans went to the U.S. Embassy for talks, after which Christopher Hill, the U.S. assistant secretary of state, and DPRK vice foreign minister, Kim Kye Gwan, shared lunch, showing that the negotiations were starting on an amiable note in the wake of the Saturday reactor closure.

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

2. Hill on Six Party Talks

Itar-Tass ("US READY TO CONSIDER N KOREA EXCLUSION FROM TERROR SPONSORS-HILL", 2007-07-17) reported that US chief negotiator at the six-party talks Christopher Hill said the United States is ready to start the consideration of the issue of exclusion of the DPRK from the list of countries supporting international terrorism. The list is compiled by the US Department of State. Hill noted in this connection that Washington expects Pyongyang to take the next step in dismantling its nuclear facilities. He also mentioned the possibility of the beginning of talks on security in Northeast Asia.

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

3. Russia on Six Party Talks

Interfax ("RUSSIA "CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC" ABOUT UPCOMING N. KOREA CONSULTATIONS - RUSSIAN SPECIAL ENVOY", 2007-07-17) reported that Moscow is approaching the six-party talks with cautious optimism. "We are heading towards the talks with cautious optimism. We deem the resumption of the talks important and are determined to work to promote them further. Patience and consistency are important for implementing the tasks set," Russian special envoy Vladimir Rakhmanin said in an interview with Interfax on Monday. "This will be the Russian delegation's guiding principle," he said.

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

4. Japan on Six Party Talks

Kyodo News ("SASAE AFFIRMS COOPERATION WITH CHUN, HILL ON N. KOREA DENUCLEATION PROCESS", 2007-07-17) reported that Japan's top nuclear negotiator, Kenichiro Sasae, reaffirmed cooperation with his ROK and U.S. counterparts on dealing with the DPRK denuclearization process when he met separately with them on Tuesday, the eve of a meeting of chief delegates to the six-party talks. Sasae told reporters he is not yet scheduled as of Tuesday evening to hold bilateral talks with his DPRK counterpart Kim Kye Gwan, but noted that he is "ready anytime" for such talks.

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

5. Inter-Korean Naval Relations

Yonhap ("N. KOREA PROPOSES SETTING JOINT FISHING ZONE NORTH OF NLL", 2007-07-17) reported that the DPRK has proposed that the two Koreas establish a joint fishing zone in waters near the disputed maritime border in the West Sea, a military source here said Sunday. The ROK, however, is not in a position to accept the proposal, since the de facto sea border between the two Koreas was set unilaterally by the United Nations Command at the end of the three-year Korean War in 1953.

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

6. Drug Addiction in the DPRK

Daily NK ("DRUG ADDICTION WORSENS AMIDST TRADESMEN", 2007-07-16) reported that the use of drugs among DPRKoreans is on the rise. Surprisingly, consumers are among the growing class of "nouveaux riches". Considering the DPRK's cost of living, people who are falling into the trap of drugs are among those who earn more than 100,000won per month.

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

7. ROK-EU Trade Relations

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA REMOVES RICE FROM EU FTA TALKS", 2007-07-17) reported that the ROK has sent a draft proposal on free trade talks to the EU, promising to remove or phase out import tariffs on cars over seven years, the government said. Seoul has also decided to exclude rice from its list of markets subject to opening, but it may agree to open up its agricultural market, including beef.

[\(return to top\)](#) Joongang Ilbo ("TARIFF TIMELINES STALL NEGOTIATIONS FOR EU TRADE PACT", 2007-07-17) reported that the ROK tariff proposals upset negotiators for the European Union as free trade talks continued for a second day in Brussels. EU representatives were not satisfied with the ROK's proposal for tariff reductions and demanded a broader opening. Unlike the EU, which offered to phase out all tariffs within a period of no more than seven years, the ROK left tariffs in place for more than 250 items, including agricultural goods and the financial and investment sectors. [\(return to top\)](#)

8. Japan Earthquake

BBC News ("JAPAN ADMITS MORE NUCLEAR LEAKS", 2007-07-17) reported that Japanese officials have confirmed further leaks of radioactive material from a nuclear power plant following Monday's earthquake in central Japan. In addition to a leak of radioactive water, drums containing nuclear waste burst open and radioactive gases escaped into the atmosphere. Officials at the plant are keeping all seven of its reactors closed while further inspections are carried out.

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

9. US-Japan Missile Defense Cooperation

McClatchy Newspapers ("U.S. HELPS JAPAN DEPLOY MISSILE-DEFENSE SYSTEM", 2007-07-17) reported that Washington has quietly worked with Japan to deploy a costly defense network to protect major Japanese cities from a ballistic-missile barrage. The missile-defense system ostensibly is designed to protect Japan from attack by the DPRK, but legislators quietly acknowledge that the PRC is the nation's real concern. "We regard it as a bigger threat than North Korea," said legislator Katsuei Hirasawa.

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

10. US-Japan Air Drill

Kyodo ("JAPAN, U.S. BEGIN 4TH JOINT F-15 DRILLS IN MISAWA", 2007-07-17) reported that Japan

and the US began the fourth round of their joint dogfight drills in Misawa, Aomori Prefecture, in line with the relocation of F-15 fighter jet drills from the US Kadena Air Base in Okinawa Prefecture to Japanese Air Self-Defense Force bases. The latest drill is being held at Misawa base, jointly used by Japanese and U.S. forces, following two training sessions at the ASDF's Tsuiki base in Fukuoka Prefecture and one at Komatsu base in Ishikawa Prefecture.

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

11. Shanghai Cooperation Organization Agreements

Xinhua ("SCO TO SIGN MAJOR PACTS NEXT MONTH: KYRGYZ PRESIDENT", 2007-07-17) reported that Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Bakiyev said Friday that a host of major pacts will be signed during the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Bishkek next month. The six members of the SCO -- the PRC, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan -- have pledged to enhance security, trade, military, judicial and cultural cooperation.

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

12. PRC Environment

The Associated Press ("CHINA FACES RISING COSTS FROM POLLUTION", 2007-07-17) reported that the PRC's smog-choked cities and contaminated waterways are leaving many people sick and unable to work, in turn fomenting unrest and threatening the country's economic growth, an international think-tank said in a government-requested report. Concluding an 18-month review, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development said the PRC's severely polluted environment has caused "significant damage to human health," hurting the country's prospects for continued economic expansion.

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

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