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I. United States

- 1. [DPRK Mixed Signals on Nuclear Test](#)
- 2. [ROK on DPRK Nuclear Test](#)
- 3. [Experts on DPRK Nuclear Test](#)
- 4. [DPRK on Bilateral Talks with US](#)
- 5. [PRC on DPRK Bilateral Talks with US](#)
- 6. [US on Six-party Talks](#)
- 7. [DPRK on Six-party Talks](#)
- 8. [Six-party Talks](#)
- 9. [Experts on Six-party Talks](#)
- 10. [PRC on DPRK Nuclear Issue](#)
- 11. [NPT Conference](#)
- 12. [IAEA on DPRK Nuclear Capability](#)
- 13. [US Nuclear Policy](#)
- 14. [DPRK Food Shortage](#)
- 15. [DPRK International Trade Fair](#)
- 16. [Japan on FIFA Qualifier Relocation](#)
- 17. [FIFA Qualifier Relocation](#)
- 18. [PRC Privatization Test](#)
- 19. [PRC Intelligence Capability](#)
- 20. [PRC on Arms Ban](#)
- 21. [Sino-Japanese History Dispute](#)
- 22. [Taiwan WHO Bid](#)
- 23. [Cross Strait Relations](#)
- 24. [Japan Cyberattacks](#)

[Preceding NAPSNet Report](#)

I. United States

1. DPRK Mixed Signals on Nuclear Test

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA BLAMES U.S. FOR 'FUSS' ON NUCLEAR TESTS", None) reported that the DPRK said speculation it could soon conduct an underground nuclear test were cooked up by the US, but it did not deny outright that one might have been planned. Media reports have said spy satellites show the DPRK has apparently stepped up activity in the north-eastern region of Kilju, the area where it is suspected the DPRK would conduct a test. A commentary by the Korean Central News Agency did not deny the DPRK might conduct a test. It said reports of an impending nuclear test were "U.S. strategic opinions."

[\(return to top\)](#) Joongang Ilbo ("PYONGYANG AIDE REPORTEDLY CALLS TEST INEVITABLE", None) reported that following a meeting with a senior DPRK official last week, Japanese professor at the Osaka University of Economics and Law, Yasuhiko Yoshida quoted the official as saying that a nuclear weapons test by the DPRK was unavoidable. He said that Pak Hyon-gae, the deputy head of the DPRK Institute for Disarmament and Peace, told a Japanese delegation on a visit to Pyongyang, that "a plutonium-based nuclear test is unavoidable" and that the world "would soon know about a nuclear test." However, an ROK diplomat doubted the statement, saying yesterday that the DPRK had from time to time used Mr. Pak as a messenger to the outside world, adding that the professor's visit was most likely a scheme set up by Pyongyang. [\(return to top\)](#)

2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Test

Korea Herald ("SEOUL SEES NO PREPARATION FOR N.K. NUKE TEST", None) reported that the ROK Foreign Ministry said it found no evidence that the DPRK is preparing for a nuclear blast test, saying it has neither detected signs nor received such information from US intelligence authorities. A ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity said ROK and US intelligence authorities have been watching Gilju since a few years ago, where there has been construction of villas, tunnels and movement of trucks. But that such information should not be taken as evidence that the DPRK is ready to conduct a nuclear test.

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

3. Experts on DPRK Nuclear Test

Joongang Ilbo ("SPECULATION RIFE ON POSSIBILITY OF NUCLEAR TEST", None) reported that speculation among experts is rife as to when and where a DPRK nuclear test might take place. Some experts have said that Kilju in the north-eastern part of the DPRK is a possible candidate, but the ROK Defense Ministry recently called that unlikely. In recent days, overseas media have reported tunnel digging and other unusual construction activity in Kilju, quoting US officials who said they were briefed about satellite photos. The news reports linked the work to the possibility of a nuclear test but the ROK has been dismissing the connection. According to the experts to test a nuclear explosive device of 10 to 20 kilotons they would need to carve a vertical, underground tunnel out of base rock that has a width of one to three meters and is 300 meters deep.

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

4. DPRK on Bilateral Talks with US

Agence France Presse ("NORTH KOREA REMOVES HURDLE TO 6-PARTY TALKS", None) reported that the DPRK has apparently lifted its demand for separate direct talks with the US, one of its preconditions to resuming negotiations to end the nuclear standoff. "We have never requested the DPRK-US talks independent of the six-way talks," a foreign ministry spokesman said in a statement published by the official Korean Central News Agency.

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

5. PRC on DPRK Bilateral Talks with US

Xinhua ("CHINA WOULD BE PLEASED IF US, DPRK HAVE DIRECT CONTACT", None) reported that according to PRC foreign ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao the PRC will be "pleased" if the US and DPRK have direct contact in any form. Liu told a routine press conference, "China is in support of any proposals, measures and steps that are conducive to achieving a nuclear-weapon-free Korean Peninsula, to easing the tension there and to the early resumption of the six-party talks." However, he added, the conditions required for the direct contact between DPRK and the US depends on the two parties themselves instead of on the PRC. Liu said that any party in the six-party talks should only say or do things conducive to continuing the six-party talks or easing the situation. The PRC hopes all relevant parties show flexibility, pragmatic spirit and sincerity and push for the resumption of the six-party talks.

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

6. US on Six-party Talks

Reuters ("US REASSURES N.KOREA ON SOVEREIGNTY, DIRECT TALKS", None) reported that the US sought to coax the DPRK back to the negotiating table on Monday by saying it viewed the nation as sovereign and would hold direct talks as part of six-party nuclear negotiations. It is significant that the US position was repeated one day after the DPRK said it wanted clarification on both points before deciding whether to resume talks about ending its suspected nuclear arms program. The US sees the six-party talks as the best way to persuade the DPRK to give up nuclear arms in exchange for US security guarantees and economic incentives from others. A US State Department Official speaking on condition of anonymity said, "We want them to get back to the talks ... and acknowledging positive statements is part of that process."

[\(return to top\)](#) Kyodo News ("RICE ASSURES N. KOREA THAT U.S. IS NOT PLANNING TO ATTACK IT", None) reported that US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice reiterated Monday that the US recognizes the DPRK as a "sovereign" state and has no intention of attacking or invading it to urge the DPRK to return to the six-party talks on its nuclear ambitions. Rice's comments were made during a nationally televised interview with CNN from Moscow. [\(return to top\)](#)

7. DPRK on Six-party Talks

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA SENDS CONFLICTING SIGNALS ON SIX-WAY NUCLEAR TALKS", None) reported that the DPRK criticized the US harshly on Tuesday, calling it a "fire-wielding villain" and vowing not to give in to outside pressure to give up its nuclear weapons program. The DPRK also said through its media that it would not be surprised if the US takes its nuclear issue to the UN Security Council for possible sanctions. The DPRK's main newspaper Rodong Sinmun said in a

commentary "Even though someone say something or apply any pressure, we will go straight forward without vacillation along the path we've taken." The DPRK's media rhetoric often does not conform with its official policy but tensions have increased sharply in recent weeks over the country's intransigence against the six-way talks on its nuclear program.

[\(return to top\)](#) International Herald Tribune ("NORTH KOREA HURLS TAUNTS AT BUSH", None) reported that the DPRK intensified its nuclear confrontation with the US on Tuesday, calling President George W. Bush "Hitler, Junior," while the ROK warned the DPRK against taking "extreme measures," in an apparent reference to a nuclear test. Chun Young Woo, ROK deputy minister for policy planning, stressed the alliance between the ROK and US and said the countries would work together on the DPRK nuclear issue. "The militaries might be preparing for all contingencies, but it's the presidents who make the decision" on a possible military attack, Chun said. "Given the alliance between the United States and South Korea, such a thing is impossible without prior consultations between the allies." [\(return to top\)](#)

8. Six-party Talks

Chosun Ilbo ("NATIONS SOFTEN TO SAVE SIX-PARTY TALKS", None) reported that nations involved in the six-party talks adopted a more conciliatory stance after recent heated rhetoric produced no results. While the US repeated it recognizes the DPRK as a sovereign nation, the ROK called a press conference to say it was unconvinced that activity observed by spy satellites in Kilju, North Hamgyeong Province was preparation for a nuclear test. After a US-Russia summit on Monday, White House National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley reconfirmed the importance of the six-nation talks, while US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice again stressed on CNN that her government "recognizes that North Korea is sovereign." The State Department said separately the US could hold bilateral talks with the DPRK (a long-standing DPR Korean demand) so long as they happen within the six-party template. It appears that more belligerent US plans like referring the dispute to the UN Security Council have been put on the back burner after a series of summits with the ROK, PRC and Russia.

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

9. Experts on Six-party Talks

Korea Times ("6-WAY TALKS STILL ALIVE: SURVEY", None) reported that of a panel of 14 DPRK watchers canvassed by the newspaper 71 percent believed participating nations should stick with the six-party negotiations. Only four said the talks have failed and should be abandoned. The result comes amid signs that the talks are on the verge of collapse, with US officials hinting that other options will have to be considered if the DPRK does not return to the bargaining table soon. While most of the scholars, selected mainly from US and ROK institutions, said the multilateral framework should be kept, a wide variety of other possible measures were put forward to help break the standoff. 54 percent of the panel favoured pressuring the DPRK marginally over luring it with incentives. The respondents also favoured the US offering to hold direct discussions with the DPRK either within or separate from the six-party talks.

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

10. PRC on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Interfax ("CHINA AGAINST PUTTING PRESSURE ON NORTH KOREA FOR MORE TALKS", None) reported that the PRC is opposed to putting any pressure on the DPRK to resume the six-party talks

on its nuclear program, according to the PRC Foreign Ministry on Tuesday. The PRC is against putting pressure on and sanctions against the DPRK and considers them ineffective, PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao told a briefing.

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

11. NPT Conference

Boston Globe ("THE DIVIDE IS WIDE AT UN NONPROLIFERATION TALKS", None) reported that the US is seeking to use the UN conference on nuclear nonproliferation to highlight the dangers of the DPRK and Iran, but it has been undermined by allegations from some countries that the US itself has backtracked on commitments to reduce its nuclear arsenal, according to UN diplomats and delegates at the conference. One week into the four-week conference delegates have failed to agree on an agenda. While the US insists on focusing on the threat of rogue states and terrorist groups and developing countries insist on talking about unfulfilled US pledges. Many delegates say the treaty is in jeopardy, as member states wrestle with how to handle Iran, which is suspected of trying to develop a military nuclear program, and the DPRK, which pulled out of the treaty in 2003 and could be preparing for its first nuclear test.

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

12. IAEA on DPRK Nuclear Capability

Donga Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA MAY HAVE AROUND SIX NUCLEAR WEAPONS", None) reported that it is generally presumed that the DPRK may have six to eight nuclear warheads. The US currently has a total of 10,350 nuclear weapons, however the New York Times recently concluded that the threatening powers of the two countries' weapons are similar. The newspaper pointed out that the logic that was prevalent in the Cold War era when power and authority used to depend on the size of a nation's "nuclear arsenal" no longer applies to the present time. From this point of view it said, the DPRK's six to eight nuclear warheads have as much power as the US nuclear arsenal. It added that if the DPRK succeeds in testing a nuclear device it would increase the political weight of the rest of its nuclear arms. On May 8, in response to the question of whether the IAEA estimates the number of DPR Korean nuclear weapons to be six to eight, Mohammed ElBaradei, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), stated in an interview with CNN, "Those numbers are close to our estimates."

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

13. US Nuclear Policy

Associated Press ("BLIX CRITICIZES U.S. NUKE POLICY, BOLTON", None) reported that the US isn't taking "the common bargain" of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty as seriously as it once did and as a result global support for the US campaign to shut down the DPRK and Iran nuclear programs is dimming, according to Hans Blix, former chief UN weapons inspector. The Swedish arms expert and chairman of the Swedish-sponsored Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission said during a conference to review the treaty, "There is a feeling the common edifice of the international community is being dismantled."

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

14. DPRK Food Shortage

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA FACES WORST FOOD SHORTAGE AMID NUCLEAR STANDOFF", None) reported that the DPRK could face its worst food shortage if its nuclear issue is not solved soon according to Kim Woon-keun head of the Korean Peninsula Agro-fishery Policy Research Institute. "(Without a quick resolution of the nuclear problem), the North could experience extreme food shortages as seen in 1997," he said. Kim also said the DPRK problem will become worse if the ROK decides to stop its fertilizer aid to the DPRK. The ROK is reviewing the DPRK's request for 500,000 tons of fertilizer aid this year, after having given 1.55 million tons of free fertilizer since 1999. The DPRK is also estimated to require 1.65 million more tons of food aid to feed its 23 million people, according to the ROK's intelligence agency. Annually, it needs 6.45 million tons of food, but the current food supply is just 4.8 million tons.

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

15. DPRK International Trade Fair

Korea Times ("INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR IN PYONGYANG", None) reported that the 8th International Trade Fair is opening next week in Pyongyang. The event will be hosted for three days (May 16-19) by the DPRK Ministry of Foreign Trade and Korea International Exhibition Corporation. Pyongyang Trade Fairs usually draw dozens of companies from friendly nations such as China, Syria, Thailand, Romania, Germany, Italy, Britain, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Malaysia and sometimes Taiwan. Despite the friendly relations between the DPRK and Russia, no Russian companies express interest. American and South Korean companies are not expected to be present for political reasons. Fairs like this are designed to attract the attention of DPRK government officials, company decision-making managers, engineers, scientists, traders and developers.

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

16. Japan on FIFA Qualifier Relocation

Associated Press ("JAPAN ACCEPTS FIFA DECISION ON QUALIFIER", None) reported that Japan's soccer association accepted FIFA's choice of Bangkok as the new venue to play the June 8 World Cup qualifier against the DPRK. FIFA made the decision after receiving no appeal against judgement made last month ordering the DPRK to play the match in a neutral country and with no spectators. This move came as punishment for crowd trouble during DPRK home defeats to Bahrain and Iran in March. FIFA also fined the DPRK soccer association \$16,770.

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

17. FIFA Qualifier Relocation

Bloomberg ("NORTH KOREA ORDERED TO PLAY WORLD CUP MATCH VS JAPAN IN BANGKOK", None) reported that the DPRK's World Cup qualifying match against Japan next month will be played in an empty stadium in Bangkok as punishment for crowd trouble at games in Pyongyang in March, soccer ruling body FIFA said. FIFA ordered the DPRK to hold the June 8 match at a neutral venue after fans threw chairs and bottles during a March 30 game against Iran at Kim Il Sung stadium. FIFA also cited violence in a match against Bahrain four days earlier. Sunil Senaweera, FIFA's commissioner at the match, said in an April 2 interview that holding the Japan game in Pyongyang would be dangerous unless security was bolstered.

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

18. PRC Privatization Test

International Herald Tribune ("CHINA PLANNING SMALL TEST OF ITS PRIVATIZATION PROGRAM", 2005-05-10) reported that in a policy trial, the PRC will release untraded stock in four state-controlled companies to the market, hoping to gauge the impact before freeing a much greater amount of state-owned holdings over time. The announcement on Monday by the Securities Regulatory Commission followed another one quietly made last week. In that statement, the government said it would aim to eventually place all its nontradable stockholdings - about \$300 billion at current prices - on the market. Such a move would, in effect, privatize all of the PRC's listed companies. On Monday, however, the regulators started with only a small parcel of stock on an experimental basis.

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

19. PRC Intelligence Capability

The Associated Press ("CHINA EXPANDS SPY SYSTEM AS ITS MILITARY POWER GROWS, U.S. SAYS", 2005-05-10) reported that the PRC is improving its far-flung system of human spies, recruits, sleeper agents and electronic eavesdropping in tandem with its buildup of conventional military power, according to a new Pentagon report and analysts. The PRC since the mid-1980s has developed the world's third- largest capability, after the US and Russia, to intercept conversations and messages, according to the "Intelligence Threat Handbook" distributed to Pentagon personnel. "The more they have an advanced intelligence capability, the more concern there is about China's military and weapons," said Jeffery Richelson, author of "The US Intelligence Community," which is in its third edition.

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

20. PRC on Arms Ban

The Associated Press ("CHINA URGES END TO EU ARMS EMBARGO, REJECTS LINK TO HUMAN RIGHTS", 2005-05-10) reported that the PRC on Tuesday urged the European Union to lift its 15-year-old arms embargo against Beijing, rejecting any link between such restrictions and its human rights record. The arms embargo and friction over the PRC's mounting textile exports to the EU are likely to dominate the agenda during a visit due to begin Wednesday by Jean Asselborn, the foreign minister of Luxembourg, which holds the rotating EU presidency. Asselborn said last week during a visit to Japan that lifting the embargo would bring with it a code of conduct requiring the PRC to comply with stricter standards on arm sales, human rights and other issues. Beijing apparently disagrees.

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

21. Sino-Japanese History Dispute

The Los Angeles Times ("LIKE JAPAN'S, CHINESE TEXTBOOKS ARE ADEPT AT REWRITING HISTORY", 2005-05-10) reported that when Li Xuanyao, a student at Beijing's No. 55 Middle School, wants to learn about the Great Leap Forward, she has her work cut out for her. Mao Tse-tung's disastrous 1950s policy, which saw 30 million Chinese die of starvation, is relegated to a few paragraphs in her 163-page history textbook. Although Xuanyao's history teachers have taught her a

lot about Japanese atrocities, she said, they are reluctant to talk about the Great Leap Forward. And they never mention the deadly Tiananmen Square protests of 1989. The PRC has criticized Japan in recent weeks for whitebring its militarist history, focusing in particular on a junior high school textbook recently approved by Tokyo. A close look at the PRC's corresponding textbook, "Chinese History — Textbook for Junior High School," however, finds several areas where the PRC's official history appears to have gaps of its own.

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

22. Taiwan WHO Bid

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN LAUNCHES NINTH BID TO JOIN WHO", 2005-05-10) reported that Taiwan is launching its ninth bid to join the UN World Health Organization as an observer, with few signs that rival PRC will drop its objections, the island's government said Tuesday. Taiwan's previous attempts were blocked by opposition from Beijing. Last month, the PRC's President Hu Jintao promised Lien Chan, a visiting Taiwanese opposition leader, that Beijing would help with the bid, but island officials have said there is little evidence that the promise will amount to anything.

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

23. Cross Strait Relations

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN OPPOSITION LEADER VISITS CHINA", 2005-05-10) reported that a Taiwanese opposition leader called Tuesday for closer ties between rival PRC and his self-ruled island as he prepared to meet with PRC President Hu Jintao. "We all have a common responsibility to advance cross-Taiwan Strait ties," James Soong said in a speech at Hunan University in southern PRC. "All of the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation are watching to see if we can shoulder this responsibility." Soong's visit — the second within a month by a Taiwanese opposition leader — comes amid PRC efforts to contain activists who want the island to make its de facto independence permanent.

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

24. Japan Cyberattacks

Washington Post ("ANTI-JAPANESE HOSTILITIES MOVE TO THE INTERNET", None) reported that over the past several months, a series of attacks believed to have originated in the PRC and ROK have hit dozens of key public and private Web sites hosted in Japan. Authorities describe it as the heaviest assault ever perpetrated on the nation's computer systems from overseas. Although the violent street protests in Beijing and Shanghai in recent weeks are the most visible face of resurgent anti-Japanese sentiments in the region, quieter Internet-based hostilities remain a source of national concern. Industry sources and analysts said the attacks have caused financial losses and disrupted work at government agencies, businesses and religious centers.

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

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Nautilus Institute

2342 Shattuck Ave. #300, Berkeley, CA 94704 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org