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I. NAPSNet

1. ROK on US Proposal at Six Party Talks

Associated Press ("S KOREA URGES NORTH TO MULL U.S. PROPOSAL", 2007-01-10) reported that ROK renewed a call for the DPRK to seriously consider U.S. proposals before returning to Six Party Talks. The United States has offered security guarantees, a peace treaty and normalization of relations as well as removal from Washington's list of states sponsoring terrorism if it dismantles its atomic weapons program. "I expect North Korea to come to the talks with realistic and positive proposals after seriously reviewing" the U.S. offers, Foreign Minister Song Min-soon said at a regular press conference following meetings last week with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. The ROK and the U.S. will consider taking active and positive steps if the North shows a positive attitude, Song said. The DPRK has yet to make any response to the U.S. proposals.

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2. IAEA on DPRK and Iran Nuclear Programs

Associated Press ("ELBARADEI URGES NEGOTIATED SOLUTION IN STANDOFFS WITH IRAN, NORTH KOREA", 2007-01-10) reported that Mohamed ElBaradei, head of the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog agency IAEA, urged the international community to find negotiated solutions to end the standoffs over Iran and the DPRK's nuclear programs. ElBaradei and representatives of some 45 African countries were in the North African nation on Tuesday for the inauguration of a United Nations-sponsored conference promoting peaceful uses of nuclear technology in Africa. The IAEA chief discussed Iran and the DPRK in talks with Algerian Foreign Minister Mohammed Bedjaoui. ElBaradei also spoke of "creating a climate for bringing the parties concerned to the same negotiating table, in Iran or in Korea," the paper said.

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3. Iran - DPRK Financial Relationship

Yonhap News Agency ("U.S. RAISES CONCERNS OVER NORTH KOREA-IRAN FINANCIAL LINKS THROUGH WMD", 2007-01-10) reported that an Iranian bank designated this week as a proliferator of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) has a financial relationship with the DPRK that is of serious concern to the United States. Announcing a ban on all U.S. transactions with Bank Sepah, the fifth largest Iranian state-owned bank, Treasury Undersecretary Stuart Levey said the bank facilitated business between Iran's Aerospace Industries Organization (AIO) and Pyongyang's missile-related exporter, the Korean Mining and Industrial Development Corp. (KOMID). In 2005, the AIO directed Sepah to transfer well over US\$500,000 to a DPR Korean firm associated with KOMID, he said.

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4. Medical Aid to DPRK

Yonhap News Agency ("SOUTH KOREAN GROUP SENDS ANTI-SCARLET FEVER MEDICINE TO NORTH", 2007-01-10) reported that an RO Korean civic group said Wednesday [10 January] that it provided medicine to the DPRK to help stem the spread of scarlet fever. "We shipped 36 types of medicines such as penicillin and antibiotics worth some 5m US dollars," said Good Neighbours International, a civic organization which provides aid to the DPR Korea. Last month, the Join Together Society, another humanitarian aid group in Seoul, shipped a total of 400,000 injectable doses of penicillin to the DPRK. Scarlet fever is intrinsically not a serious communicable disease, but

if it is not treated properly it could become a serious one like cholera or typhoid.

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5. Inter-Korean Mining

Mining Journal (UK) ("NORTH & SOUTH KOREA TO DEVELOP ZINC MINE", 2007-01-09) reported that the Koreas could join forces to develop three mines in the north, including what could be the largest zinc mine in Asia. As part of the agreement to boost economic cooperation, Korea Resources Corp (Kores), RO Korea's state-owned explorer, will carry out feasibility and environmental studies on zinc and magnesite (magnesium carbonate) mines in Hamgyong Province in the northeast of the DPRK. The two governments agreed to develop the DPRK's natural resources during a meeting on economic cooperation in 2005. The zinc mine holds an estimated 300 Mt of ore, which would make it the largest in Asia, said Kang Shin Young, a spokesman for Kores in Seoul, while one of the two ultramafic magnesite mines could hold 3,600 Mt of the mineral which is used in steelmaking and the production of synthetic rubber. According to Mining Journal's country report for North Korea, Samcheolri Corp, the the country's state-owned resource provider, has a lead-zinc ore-processing complex in Komdok in Hamgyong Province which has a current ore capacity of 15 Mt/y and the capability to produce 100,000 t/y of zinc metal. Under the JV proposal between Samcheolri and Kores there is also an agreement to mine graphite at Yongho with Kores providing machinery and equipment with annual sales of 9,000-10,000 t of graphite to South Korea envisaged. Anthracite is the country's most abundant mineral resource, with reserves estimated at some 1,800 Mt, while reserves of iron ore in are estimated at some 400 Mt with mines located at Musan, Unryul, Songhung, Komdok, Toksong, Tokhyon, Chaeyong, Hason, Tokonsong and Sehaeri.

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6. Inter-Korean Relations: Sports

Associated Press ("N. KOREA PROPOSES JOINT MARCH WITH S. KOREA AT WINTER ASIAN GAMES", 2007-01-10) reported that the DPRK proposed that the two Koreas march together at the opening and closing ceremonies of the upcoming Winter Asian Games in China. The ROK plans to accept it, said Paek Sung-il, an official of the Korean Olympic Committee. Paek said the ROK will provide uniforms for the North's delegation for the joint march at the Jan. 28-Feb. 4 event in the Chinese city of Changchun.

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7. US-ROK Security Alliance

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA WILL BE ON ITS OWN IN SECURING ARMISTICE: USFK CHIEF", 2007-0-10) reported that US Forces Korea Commander Gen. Burwell Bell suggested that the ROK will be on its own in maintaining the armistice on the Korean Peninsula, which is the role of the nominal UN command, once Seoul has full control of its troops. Bell said once the US hands wartime operational control of ROK troops to Seoul, the UN commander "will have no command authority over any" ROK forces, with the Korean military "commanding the demilitarized zone and sea patrol in the Northern Limit Line (NLL)." He stressed the ROK military "will have the command authority of all forces in potential contact with an enemy".

[\(return to top\)](#) Reuters ("U.S. SENDS STEALTH FIGHTER PLANES TO SOUTH KOREA", 2007-0-09) reported that the United States is deploying a squadron of stealth fighters to the ROK amid

speculation that the DPRK may be ready to test a second nuclear device. As US Forces Korea spokesman said the United States is sending about 15 to 20 of its F-117A Nighthawk fighters to the ROK. "This is a routine deployment," said Kim Yong-kyu. "It is a regular operational matter. The U.S. military has sent the radar-evading fighters regularly to the RO Korea for stays of a few months over the past few years. The DPRK has criticized previous deployments as preparations for invasion and nuclear war. [\(return to top\)](#)

8. ROK Presidential Term of Office

Chosun Ilbo ("ROH'S PRESIDENTIAL TERM PLAN DIVIDES LAWMAKERS", 2007-01-10) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun said he will invoke his right to propose a constitutional revision to change a president's current single five-year term to a four-year term, renewable once. The opposition Grand National Party immediately slammed the proposal, which came in a special televised statement, saying the idea is politically motivated and an attempt to fool the public. The minor opposition Democratic Labor Party and People First Party, whose support the ruling party would need, took a wait-and-see attitude.

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9. ROK-PRC-Japan Relations

Joongang Ilbo ("ROH PLANS A TRILATERAL MEETING WITH ABE, WEN", 2007-01-10) reported that President Roh Moo-hyun is cutting his trip to the Philippines by a day and won't meet one-on-one with Japan's prime minister, the Blue House spokesman said. However, Mr. Roh and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will meet this weekend together with PRC Prime Minister Wen Jiabao, on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Plus Three, Mr. Yoon said. The three leaders will discuss establishing a joint council with each other dedicated to establishing policies.

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10. Japan on UNSC Expansion

Kyodo ("ABE, MERKEL MEET TO REAFFIRM COOPERATION ON BIDS FOR UNSC SEATS", 2007-01-10) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and German Chancellor Angela Merkel held talks in Berlin Wednesday to reaffirm continued cooperation to realize both countries' bids for permanent seats on the U.N. Security Council and discuss East Asian security issues.

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11. Japan-PRC East Sea Gas Dispute

Kyodo ("JAPAN, CHINA TO RESUME EAST CHINA SEA GAS TALKS FRI.", 2007-01-10) reported that officials from Japan and the PRC will meet Friday in Beijing to resume talks on a dispute over gas exploration rights in the East China Sea, a Japanese Foreign Ministry official said. The one-day meeting will be the first since the last round held in July last year in Beijing. In the upcoming talks, the officials will focus on legal issues in a bid to break the impasse, the official said.

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12. Japanese Defense Policy

Associated Press ("JAPAN RAISES MILITARY PROFILE; DEFENSE AGENCY GETS FULL MINISTRY STATUS, CITING NORTH KOREA", 2007-01-10) reported that Japan's government upgraded the Defense Agency to a full ministry, in line with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's push to give the military a greater profile. The upgrading of the Defense Agency, formerly under the Cabinet Office, passed Parliament last month without significant opposition, propelled by deep concern in Japan over DPRK missile and nuclear-weapons development. The move is also part of an agenda that, through such moves as recently requiring schools to teach patriotism and attempting to revise the constitution, has raised concerns for some about the state of Japan's post-World War II pacifism.

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13. PRC on Japanese Defense Policy

Japan Times ("CHINA HOPES JAPAN WILL KEEP TO PACIFIST PATH WITH ADVENT OF DEFENSE MINISTRY", 2007-01-10) reported that the PRC hopes Japan will keep to a path of peaceful development regardless of structural changes in the government, a PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman said after Japan upgraded its Defense Agency to a ministry. "We believe that firmly maintaining the direction of peaceful development serves the fundamental interests of Japan itself," Liu Jianchao told a press conference.

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14. Sino-Israeli Relations

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA ASSURES ISRAELI PM ON IRANIAN NUCLEAR BOMB ", 2007-0-10) reported that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, midway through an official visit to Beijing, said he received a candid assurance from the PRC that it opposes Iran having a nuclear arsenal. On Thursday Olmert will meet President Hu Jintao and attend a special concert marking 15 years of diplomatic ties between the countries before heading back to Israel.

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15. PRC Leadership

Reuters ("HU URGED TO CEDE CHINA PRESIDENCY TO RIVAL: SOURCES", 2007-01-10) reported that PRC leader Hu Jintao has been urged to cede the presidency to a rival-turned-ally, sources said, a step that would sweep aside two decades of established practice and let him focus on extending Communist Party power. Political allies of Vice President Zeng Qinghong have urged that he be promoted to state president at parliament's annual session in 2008, the sources with close ties to the top leadership said. "There are voices in the Party that it is no longer necessary for one person to hold all three positions," one source told Reuters, referring to the presidency and the top Party and military jobs -- all currently held by Hu.

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16. PRC Environment

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA FAILS TO MEET ENVIRONMENTAL TARGETS ", 2007-01-10)

reported that the PRC failed to meet government targets for improving energy use and cutting pollution last year as the nation's environmental woes worsened, a senior official said. "The year 2006 was the most serious year for China's environmental situation," Pan Yue, a vice minister of the State Environmental Protection Administration said in a statement on the watchdog's website. "Environmental problems have already become the major bottleneck constraining China's economic and social development."

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17. PRC Bird Flu Outbreak

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA REPORTS FIRST HUMAN BIRD FLU CASE IN SIX MONTHS ", 2007-01-10) reported that the PRC has reported its first human case of bird flu in six months, but the farmer who fell ill made a full recovery and the World Health Organisation said there was no cause for alarm. The 37-year-old man from the eastern province of Anhui showed symptoms of the potentially deadly H5N1 strain of bird flu on December 10 and was released from hospital on Saturday, the health ministry said in a statement.

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