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Preceding NAPSNet Report

I. United States

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Reuters ("RICE TELLS N. KOREA U.S. CAN DETER ATTACK", 2005-01-19) reported that Secretary of State-designate Condoleezza Rice on Tuesday sent the DPRK a two-pronged message, insisting the US has no plans to invade the DPRK but stressing it does have a deterrent against hostile actions by Pyongyang. "It is important to repeat that North Korea should understand fully that we have a deterrent against any North Korean action or attempts at action," Rice said. She also told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which is expected to approve her nomination on Wednesday: "The United States has no intention to attack North Korea, to invade North Korea."

(return to top) Yonhap ("N KOREA CAN GET MULTINATIONAL SECURITY GUARANTEE FOR NUKES: RICE", 2005-01-19) reported that US Secretary of State-designate Condoleeza Rice stressed Tuesday that the DPRK can receive multinational security assurances if it gives up its nuclear weapons program. Addressing the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Rice said the US has no intention to invade the DPRK but stressed it has a plan of deterrence. (return to top)

2. DPRK on Nuclear Issue

Kyodo News ("N. KOREA HAS NO INTENT TO KEEP NUKE PROGRAMS FOREVER: WELDON", 2005-01-19) reported that US Congressman Curt Weldon said Tuesday that senior DPRK officials told him during his visit to the DPRK last week that Pyongyang does not intend to keep its nuclear development programs forever and does not run a uranium enrichment program as alleged by the US. He told reporters upon his return that he predicts the DPRK may say it plans to return to the stalled six-party talks on its nuclear programs "in the end part of February."

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3. US on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Donga Ilbo ("WHAT RICE HAS PLANNED FOR NORTH KOREAN POLICY", 2005-01-19) reported that the basic framework of DPRK policy for the second term of the Bush administration that was revealed during the testimony by the Secretary of State nominee Condoleeza Rice given at the Senate Confirmation Hearing on January 18 (local time) can be summarized as the following. The

nominee also said, “American diplomacy to help create a balance of power in the world that favors freedom (democracy).” Though it is a hackneyed remark, it reaffirms that the Bush administration will maintain the basis for its DPRK policy for the second term.

(return to top) Agence France Presse ("RICE URGES UNITY TO REIN IN NUCLEAR IRAN, N. KOREA", 2005-01-19) reported that US secretary of state-designate Condoleezza Rice urged united world action to keep Iran and the DPRK from building nuclear weapons, but offered no new proposals to rein in the truculent regimes. Under questioning, Rice could do no more than express hope that Washington's current policies of relying on European mediation with Iran and six-party talks with the DPRK would eventually bear fruit. "We've heard nothing really from North Korea," the outgoing national security adviser said. "And I hope that they will actually act because we found that their words are not always completely reliable." (return to top)

4. Russia on DPRK Nuclear Talks

Itar-Tass ("LAVROV IN FAVOR OF RESUMING 6-NATION TALKS ON NORTH KOREA", 2005-01-19) reported that addressing a press conference here on Wednesday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov expressed the hope that the six-nation negotiations on the DPRK “will be shortly held and will be resultful.”

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5. ROK on US Foreign Policy Team

Korea Herald ("KOREA AWAITS BUSH'S FOREIGN POLICY TEAM", 2005-01-19) reported that the ROK will be watching with the world today as President George W. Bush is sworn in for a second four-year term, focusing with heightened interest on his plans to deal with the DPRK nuclear standoff and his new foreign policy team. "The new (overall administration) lineup is composed of those members that have a true knowledge and understanding of Bush, thus the main offices have now formed a kind of homogeneity," Dr. Jun Bong-geun, head of the Institute for Peace and Cooperation, told The Korea Herald.

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6. US on DPRK Human Rights

The Associated Press ("RICE NAMES 'OUTPOSTS OF TYRANNY'", 2005-01-19) reported that in an echo of President Bush's "axis of evil," Condoleezza Rice on Tuesday named Cuba, Myanmar, Belarus and Zimbabwe as "outposts of tyranny" requiring close US attention. "To be sure, in our world there remain outposts of tyranny and America stands with oppressed people on every continent ... in Cuba, and Burma (Myanmar), and North Korea, and Iran, and Belarus, and Zimbabwe," Rice told a Senate committee considering her nomination to succeed Colin Powell as secretary of state.

(return to top) Donga Ilbo ("THE REALITY OF “OUTPOSTS OF TYRANNY”", 2005-01-19) reported that the six countries—DPRK, Cuba, Myanmar, Iran, Belarus, and Zimbabwe— which were designated as “outposts of tyranny” by the to-be US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice will likely suffer from the US diplomatic policy for human rights in the future. The US Department of State raised a deep concern on the status of human rights in those six nations in a human rights report released in February 2004. Excluding the DPRK and Iran, which are confronting against the US regarding the nuclear issue, the remaining nations are typically indicated as infringing human rights by the US Department of State. (return to top)

7. ROK on DPRK Human Rights

Korea Times ("RICE'S NK RHETORIC PROMPTS CONCERN", 2005-01-19) reported that a senior US official's labeling of the DPRK as an "outpost of tyranny" is likely to draw an angry response from Pyongyang and could hurt the chances of resuming multiparty negotiations over its nuclear weapons programs, experts in Seoul predicted Wednesday. Condoleezza Rice, speaking in Washington during a confirmation session for her appointment as US secretary of state Tuesday, grouped the DPRK along with Cuba, Burma, Iran, Belarus and Zimbabwe as oppressive regimes.

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8. DPRK on US Human Rights

Korea Times ("NK HITS BACK US ON HUMAN RIGHTS", 2005-01-19) reported that the US policies toward Pyongyang entered a dangerous stage as the US plans to appoint an envoy to tackle the DPRK's human rights, the North's Radio Pyongyang reported Wednesday. "After failing to disarm our republic, the US is trumping up the situation on our democracy and human rights in an attempt to use it as an excuse to overthrow our system," the DPRK's media outlet said. The DPRK's Korean Central News Agency also echoed the Radio Pyongyang story on the same day saying that the US troops committed 1,676 crimes in the ROK last year and mistreated Iraqi detainees in Guantanamo Bay.

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9. US - DPRK Relations

Yonhap ("SEVEN OF 10 AMERICANS FAVOR NONAGGRESSION PACT WITH N. KOREA", 2005-0--19) reported that seven out of 10 Americans believe their country should grant the DPRK a nonaggression treaty to resolve the nuclear standoff with the DPRK, a survey has found. Half of the respondents expected the second-term administration of US President George W. Bush would give the DPRK a nonaggression treaty while 44 percent were negative about such a possibility.

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10. DPRK Domestic Dissent

Joongang Ilbo ("ALLEGED VIDEO FROM NORTH IS ATTACK ON KIM JONG-IL", 2005-01-19) reported that a digital video, purportedly shot in the DPRK, shows evidence of dissident activity in the DPRK, an anti-DPRK association said yesterday. If authenticated, the video clip will represent a rare view of organized opposition against the DPRK leader Kim Jong-il. A 13-minute segment of the 35-minute clip is available at an Internet news site specializing in news about the DPRK, www.dailynk.com. The Unification Ministry said it was examining the video footage to determine its authenticity.

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11. ROK on DPRK Domestic Dissent

Korea Times ("EXPERTS PLAY DOWN NK DISSIDENT VIDEO", 2005-01-19) reported that the ROK experts downplayed Tuesday the significance of a videotape purportedly documenting the activities

of an anti-Kim Jong-il dissident group in the DPRK. But DPRK analysts contacted by The Korea Times agreed that the video, showing a defaced poster of Kim, is not sufficient to signal the rise of an organized opposition in the DPRK, as the civic group that released it claims. A DPRK expert, Paik Hak-soon of the Sejong Institute, said the tape is probably genuine but also believed the anti-government movement is not widespread. "There is no truly organized opposition," he said.

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12. Russians on Inter - Korean Summit

Yonhap ("RUSSIA DECLINES TO COMMENT ON POSSIBILITY OF INTER-KOREAN SUMMIT", 2005-01-19) reported that Russia's foreign minister on Wednesday declined to comment on the possibility of the leaders of the ROK and DPRK meeting in Moscow later this year. Speculation arose earlier this week that there may be a second inter-Korean summit in May after it was revealed that both leaders of the Koreas were invited to Moscow for an event marking the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II. "The issue of bilateral contact should be directed at the countries involved," Sergei Lavrov said at a New Year press conference.

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13. DPRK Economic Training

Yonhap ("N. KOREANS TO RECEIVE ECONOMIC TRAINING IN SWITZERLAND IN FALL", 2005-0--19) reported that senior DPRK officials are scheduled to receive courses on multilateral diplomacy and market economy in the fall in Geneva, a nonprofit Swiss group said Tuesday. The six-week program, financed by the Swiss government, is to teach DPRK officials how to respond to the challenges of the 21st century, according to the Geneva-based Center for Applied Studies in International Negotiations (CASIN).

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14. ROK on DPRK Abductees

Joongang Ilbo ("MAN INDICTED IN PASTOR'S ABDUCTION", 2005-01-19) reported that a Korean-Chinese man was indicted yesterday for kidnapping a ROK church leader on orders from the DPRK. Prosecutors said Ryu Yeong-hwa had been hired to abduct Reverend Kim Dong-shik and several others. The DPRK paid for the kidnappings with antique pottery. The activist pastor disappeared while doing missionary work in Yanji, PRC, in January 2000. Ending its investigation of Mr. Ryu, the Seoul Central Prosecutors Office said yesterday he was a member of a nine-member team, including agents from the State Safety and Security Agency of the DPRK who worked with four other Korean-Chinese collaborators.

(return to top) Chosun Ilbo ("N. KOREA ABDUCTED 40 FROM 1999 TO 2001", 2005-01-19) reported that the DPRK squad behind the kidnapping of the Rev. Kim Dong-shik in 2000 abducted another 40 people in some 20 operations from 1999 to 2001, it was revealed Tuesday. Among others, a 61-year-old Japanese woman who had settled in the DPRK but later fled was bundled back to the country along with three family members. The squad, which operates out of the city of Hoeryong, North Hamgyeong Province under the State Safety and Security Agency, is tasked with kidnapping defectors as well as some ROK figures. (return to top)

15. PRC on DPRK Abductees

Chosun Ilbo ("BEIJING TURNS BLIND EYE TO N. KOREAN KIDNAPPINGS", 2005-01-19) reported that there was shock in the ROK Wednesday at the revelation that the DPRK runs a kidnapping squad that freely crosses the Sino-Korean border and raids safe houses on PRC territory, often in the guise of PRC security forces, and apparently with the tacit consent of the PRC. By contrast, PRC authorities habitually imprison ROK activists who operate in the PRC's border areas trying to help DPRK defectors.

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16. Sino - DPRK Relations

Yonhap ("NORTH KOREA SHUTS DOWN CASINO IN BORDER AREA: REPORT", 2005-01-19) reported taht the DPRK has closed a casino in a free-trade zone near its border with the PRC, yielding to continued pressure from its closest ally, a PRC Internet newspaper reported Wednesday. The Emperor Casino in the northeastern city of Rason stopped operating Saturday for the first time since it opened five years ago, the online newspaper Sina.com said.

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17. US Troops in the ROK

Kyodo ("U.S. MAY DEPLOY TROOPS IN S. KOREA FOR EXTERNAL CONTINGENCIES", 2005-01-19) reported that the US Defense Department plans to position troops in the ROK which can be deployed for contingencies outside the Korean Peninsula, mainly to deal with the PRC's increasing military power, Pentagon sources said Friday. The move is part of a new US military strategy for East Asia, and is also likely to affect the ongoing strategic talks between Washington and Tokyo over the realignment of US forces in Japan.

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18. US - ROK Military Alliance

Yonhap ("S. KOREA, U.S. FAIL TO COMPROMISE ON TROOP FUNDING", 2005-01-19) reported that the ROK and the US ended two days of talks Wednesday with no agreement on Seoul's demand to cut its funding of US troops stationed here, the Foreign Ministry said. The allies will meet again in the US next month to resolve their differences, said a ranking ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity. "We made a request for the US to show a favorable position on reducing our funding for a period of time" in view of a US plan to withdraw and realign its troops in the ROK, the official said. "Despite its troop relocation plan, the US insisted the combined defense capability should be bolstered and thus South Korea's funding should be raised," the official said.

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19. ROK on ROK - Japanese Relations

Asahi Shimbun ("S. KOREA URGES DISCLOSURE", 2005-01-19) reported that the administration of ROK President Roh Moo Hyun has made public diplomatic documents concerning normalization talks with Japan, and also has begun responding to calls from ROK citizens for compensation for

damages suffered during Japan's colonial rule. Roh's moves apparently aim to boost his administration by skillfully using resolutions made in the past to improve his image.

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20. ROK - Japanese Relations

Donga Ilbo ("JAPAN COURT RULES 1.2 MILLION YEN COMPENSATION FOR EACH SOUTH KOREAN ATOMIC VICTIM", 2005-01-19) reported that ROK victims of forced labor who were victimized by the US atomic bombing of Hiroshima during the Pacific War won their damage lawsuit against the Japanese government and a Japanese company. The 40 ROK citizens, including Lee Geun-mok (78), had filed a damage suit against the Japanese government and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and requested unpaid wages, but it was thrown out by a district court. The Hiroshima high court overturned the ruling and ordered Wednesday that the Japanese government should pay 1.2 million yen (about US$ 12,000) in compensation to each plaintiff.

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21. Sino - ROK Relations

Agence France Presse ("SOUTH KOREA CAPITAL CITY WANTS NEW NAME IN CHINESE", 2005-01-19) reported that Seoul's city government asked the PRC to change its name for the ROK capital, still known to Chinese by its ancient name of Hancheng. The new name combines two Chinese characters that produce the sound "Shouer," similar in pronunciation to the ROK name Seoul, officials said. At present Chinese refer to Seoul as Hancheng (Hanseong in Korean), the Chinese name the city was known by in past centuries.

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22. Russia on Pacific Pipeline

The Vladivostok News ("WHAT WILL PIPELINE BRING TO PACIFIC?", 2005-01-19) reported that oil for Japan, cash for Moscow, economic boom to Primorye, headache for ecologists. The Russian government in December gave its final approval to the idea of the Pacific pipeline, which is expected to increase export opportunities throughout East Asia and to the US. Russia accepted Japan’s argument that the Pacific route would enable it to export oil to several countries, including many in Asia as well as the west coast of the US. The original plan to pipe oil to Daqing, the PRC’s traditional energy centre in the north-east, was much shorter, and cheaper but would have locked Russia into the PRC market.

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23. Japan on Israeli Arms Sales

Agence France Presse ("JAPAN PRESSES ISRAEL TO STOP ARMS SALES IN FAR EAST", 2005-0--19) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura urged Israel to stop selling weapons to countries in the Far East during top-level talks in Jerusalem, an Israeli official said. The Japanese diplomat said he had also asked Russia and the European Union to do the same thing, during a joint news conference with Shalom.

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24. Fischer Case

The Associated Press ("FISCHER BACKERS SEEK HIS RELEASE IN JAPAN", 2005-01-19) reported that American chess champion Bobby Fischer should be freed immediately and allowed to leave Japan for Iceland rather than face deportation to the US, his supporters said in a court filing Wednesday. Japan has ordered Fischer, 61, deported to the US to faces charges of violating international sanctions against the former Yugoslavia, for playing chess there in 1992. The reclusive chess master has been in jail for six months, after his arrest at the Tokyo airport for trying to board a plane to the Philippines with an invalid US passport, and his immigration case has stalled.

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25. Sino - Japanese Relations

The New York Times ("THE JAPAN-CHINA STEW: SWEET AND SOUR", 2005-01-19) reported that like many Japanese businessmen these days, but particularly as co-chairman of the 21st Century Committee for Japan-China Friendship, Yotaro Kobayashi is worried about the state of affairs between Asia's two most powerful nations. On one hand, since the committee was formed in October 2003 under an agreement between the countries, Mr. Kobayashi, 71, who is also chairman of Fuji Xerox, has watched political relations fall to their lowest point in years. On the other hand, economic ties have continued to deepen, and the PRC's rise has kept buoying up the Japanese economy.

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26. US on Sino - Iranian Relations

The Associated Press ("BUSH ORDERS SANCTIONS AGAINST CHINESE FIRMS FOR MISSILE PROLIFERATION", 2005-01-19) reported that President Bush said Tuesday that the PRC government heard the US "loud and clear" after sanctions were imposed against eight PRC companies for helping Iran with its missile programs. "To the extent that other nations are proliferating into this closed country, that represents a significant problem as well," Mr. Bush told Fox News Channel. "That's why we're dealing with the Chinese firms and that's why we're mindful of making sure the proliferation efforts are stopped at their source."

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27. PRC on the Death of Zhao Ziyang

Washington Post ("CHINA RESOLUTE ON TIANANMEN", 2005-01-19) reported that the PRC government on Tuesday firmly defended its decision 15 years ago to order a military assault on pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square and oust the Communist Party leader who objected, turning down appeals to reassess the crackdown and rehabilitate Zhao Ziyang a day after his death. "The political disturbance and the problem of Zhao himself has already passed. What happened in 1989 has reached its conclusion," Kong Quan, the Foreign Ministry spokesman, said at a regular briefing. Citing the rapid growth of the PRC economy since the Tiananmen massacre, he added: "The past 15 years have shown China's decision was correct."

(return to top) The New York Times ("BEIJING SPEAKS ILL OF FALLEN CHIEF, BUT PRIVATE MOURNING IS ALLOWED", 2005-01-19) reported that PRC officials restated their scathing condemnation of the fallen leader Zhao Ziyang on Tuesday, making clear that the government has no plans to mourn the death of the man who presided over the government and the ruling party for

much of the 1980's. Although even relatively low-ranking PRC officials are often given elaborate state funerals, Kong Quan, the spokesman for the Foreign Ministry, said he knew of no plans to hold one for Mr. Zhao, a former Communist Party chief who was deposed for opposing the violent suppression of democracy protesters in 1989. (return to top) Los Angeles Times ("CHINA PLAYS DOWN DEATH OF EX-LEADER", 2005-01-19) reported that ordinary Chinese easily could have missed the death this week of a purged Communist Party leader who sympathized with the students during protests that led to the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. That's because the government has done everything it can to make sure his passing is a nonevent. Analysts believe that it's all part of an orchestrated effort to prevent Zhao from becoming a catalyst in a country with a history of turning the death of a public figure into a cause for mass protest. (return to top)

28. US on the Death of Zhao Ziyang

Agence France Presse ("US HAILS PURGED ZHAO AS REFORM CHAMPION", 2005-01-19) reported that the US hailed the late PRC leader Zhao Ziyang, who was purged after opposing the crackdown of pro-democracy demonstrators in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, as a "champion of reform" and "man of moral courage. The US State Department recollected how Zhao had gone to Tiananmen in 1989 to talk to protestors on their demands for democracy, praising him for his "unique style of leadership."

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29. PRC Environmental Protection

The Associated Press ("CHINA SUSPENDS 30 BIG PROJECTS", 2005-01-19) reported that the PRC government has ordered construction at 30 big projects, including two at the massive Three Gorges Dam, to stop due to alleged violations of environmental protection regulations and other concerns. Twenty-six of the projects are power plants being planned in 12 different provinces, part of a rush to boost the nation's generating capacity amid severe electricity shortages. The administration official who announced the decision said that some might be allowed to resume but that others would be canceled.

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30. PRC Environment

Agence France-Presse ("CHINA SAYS DEFORESTATION STILL A MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM", 2005-01-19) reported that deforestation continues to be a major problem facing the PRC's environment, despite efforts to plant trees and expand forest cover, government officials said. "The ecological status of our country has come into a key stage, of which management and devastation are major conflicts," Lei Jiafu, vice head of the State Forestry Administration said. "Excessive logging is still a major problem," Lei said in a statement given to journalists.

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31. PRC on Iraq Kidnapping

Agence France Presse ("CHINA SCRAMBLES FOR RELEASE OF EIGHT NATIONALS KIDNAPPED IN IRAQ", 2005-01-19) reported that the PRC was scrambling to secure the release of eight of its nationals taken hostage and threatened with execution in Iraq as family members anxiously waited for news. The foreign ministry said it was "taking all measures" to win their freedom and was

contacting the Iraq Muslim Presbytery which helped in the release of seven Chinese kidnapped in the war-torn country last year. "China is deeply concerned over this event," spokesman Kong Quan said. "We hope they will be safely released as soon as possible."

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