

NAPSNET Week in Review 12 March, 2004

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNET Week in Review 12 March, 2004", NAPSNet Weekly Report, March 12, 2004,
<https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-weekly/napsnet-week-in-review-12-march-2004/>

United States

1. US Missile Shield

Democratic senators Thursday criticized the administration's budget request for the missile defense program, questioning anew whether the system will ever work. Supporters urged continued funding for the program still in development. Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., called the request for \$10.2 billion "truly staggering" - the largest single-year funding request for any weapon system in history. "How will this help keep this country safe from terrorist threats we know exist? How many more billions of dollars should we spend" before knowing whether it will work?" Levin asked.

"US Missile Shield" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-US Nuclear Diplomacy

Despite the DPRK's threat to boost its nuclear "deterrent" after six-party talks made little headway, a senior US diplomat said on Friday the US still wants to strike a deal over aid and diplomatic ties. But Mitchell Reiss, a high-ranking State Department official, also warned the US could use unspecified measures to eliminate a DPRK threat if the DPRK failed to act on the offer.

"DPRK-US Nuclear Diplomacy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 12, 2004)

"DPRK-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

"DPRK-US Diplomacy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 10, 2004)

"DPRK-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 9, 2004)

2. ROK Impeachment Impact on Six-party Talks

The passage of an impeachment motion against ROK President Roh Moo-hyun on Friday that immediately froze his powers will likely have a negative effect on inter-Korean relations. Some government officials say the suspension of Roh's presidential power may lead to the government having a limited role in resolving the international row over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program, an issue that requires the government to be involved in decisions on providing multinational energy aid for the DPRK.

"ROK Impeachment Impact on Six-party Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 12, 2004)

"ROK Presidential Impeachment Session" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

"ROK Presidential Impeachment Motion" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 9, 2004)

3. DPRK on US Presidential Election

The DPRK dismissed any idea it wanted George W. Bush to lose November's US presidential election, saying Thursday the key for the winner -- Democrat or Republican -- would be to change policy toward the DPRK. Analysts say little progress on curbing the DPRK's nuclear programs was now likely before the US presidential elections in November, thus giving the DPRK more time to try to develop a nuclear capability. The DPRK denied it could be stalling in six-way talks over its nuclear ambitions to see whether a more amenable Democratic US president is elected.

"DPRK on US Presidential Election" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

4. US on DPRK-Iran Uranium Enrichment Project?

The US is unaware of a new Iran-DPRK nuclear project reported by a Japanese newspaper but is looking into it, US officials said on Thursday. The Sankei Shimbun, citing an unidentified military source, reported this week that the DPRK and Iran were working on a project to build an underground factory in the DPRK to produce machinery for enriching uranium. "I have not seen anything to substantiate that," one senior US official said of the Sankei Shimbun report.

US on DPRK-Iran Uranium Enrichment Project? (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 12, 2004)

5. KEDO-DPRK Relations

The delegates from a US-led international consortium that stopped building nuclear reactors in the DPRK amid concerns about the DPRK's atomic weapons program arrived in Pyongyang Tuesday, a news agency said. The brief report on the KCNA gave no details of the "high-level" delegation's trip, including its purpose or itinerary.

"KEDO-DPRK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

6. DPRK Nuclear Arsenal

The DPRK's parliamentary leader, Choe Thae Bok, arrived in Prague for talks with Czech leaders and to reopen diplomatic channels between the two countries. "In a situation when the US deployed nuclear weapons in the ROK, we must have our own nuclear arsenal to block the nuclear threat," Choe told reporters through a translator. "The reason for that is to protect our very existence."

"DPRK Nuclear Arsenal" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

7. DPRK on ROK Security Policy

A spokesman for the National Reconciliation Council clarified the principled stand of the DPRK side in a statement issued Friday as regards the ROK authorities' recent release of the "four-point basic security policy strategy". The statement termed the basic strategy as a Cold War-oriented strategy for confrontation with the DPRK as it diametrically runs counter to the June 15 joint declaration to which the DPRK and ROK committed themselves to remain true. "DPRK on ROK Security Policy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 12, 2004)

8. ROK-US Joint Military Exercises

The ROK and the US will stage their annual joint military exercises later this month, the ROK-US Combined Forces Command. The two regular exercises - Foal Eagle and RSOI (Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration) - are to be held for one week from 22 March, said CFC spokesman Kim Yong-kyu. The joint training, aimed at strengthening teamwork of the allied forces under emergency situations, has been denounced by the DPRK as "a war exercise." "

"ROK-US Joint Military Exercises" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

People's Republic of China

1. Taiwan Presidential Election

In the weeks leading up to the March 20 poll, PRC officials have laid out a steady stream of invective against ruling President Chen Shui-bian and expressed an equal distaste for both Taiwan democracy and Taiwan independence. They have also blasted Hong Kong pro-democracy campaigners in a further sign of nervousness that democratic debate on the fringes of the PRC could soon lead to greater calls for mainland political reform, analysts said.

"Taiwan Presidential Election" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 12, 2004)

"Taiwan-PRC Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

"PRC-Taiwan Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 9, 2004)

2. PRC on US Role in Cross-Straits Relations

Political wrangling between the PRC and Taiwan spilled over to the US this week when the PRC urged members of the US Congress not to sign a statement supporting a controversial Taiwan referendum. In an e-mail to lawmakers, the PRC Embassy expressed "grave concern" over the statement circulated by two congressmen and said Taiwan's referendum, to be held along with a presidential election on March 20, "has nothing to do with democracy and everything to do with abusing democracy." The statement being circulated in the US Congress, which urges members to "support democracy! support Taiwan!," is sponsored by Reps. Peter Deutsch, a Florida Democrat, and Dana Rohrbacher, a California Republican.

"PRC on US Role in Cross-Straits Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 12, 2004)

3. PRC-US WTO Trade Relations

The PRC accused the US of having excessively protectionist trade policies and said the US was failing to conform to the spirit and agreements of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The criticisms are contained in the PRC's first ever report, commissioned by the Ministry of Commerce, assessing US trade policy. Its publication in the PRC Daily Friday comes only a day after the US threatened to use take action at the WTO against the PRC for allegedly not complying with global trade rules and adopting discriminatory tax policies.

"PRC-US WTO Trade Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 12, 2004)

"US-PRC WTO Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

4. PRC-Pakistan Nuclear Plant

The PRC is on the verge of agreeing with Pakistan to build a second nuclear plant for civilian use. The 300 megawatt nuclear power plant at Chashma, in the central Pakistani province of Punjab, will be built next to the first PRC supplied plant, which became operational in 1999.

"PRC-Pakistan Nuclear Plant" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 9, 2004)

5. PRC-Dalai Lama Relations

Forty-five years after the Dalai Lama fled Tibet in fear of his life, the PRC's communist leaders show little sign that he will be allowed back any time soon, fearing his return would spark separatist activism. While the PRC says they are prepared for talks, they also regularly accuse Tibet's spiritual leader of "secessionist activities" and strict conditions are attached to any unlikely homecoming. The Dalai Lama has said he is willing to do almost anything to settle the issue of Tibet, even if it means going to the PRC personally.

"PRC-Dalai Lama Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 9, 2004)

Japan

1. Japan War Time Cooperation Bill

Japan's cabinet approved a set of bills, including measures to authorize US-Japanese military cooperation in case of an attack on the country, a government official said. The government will shortly submit the seven bills to parliament, in order to be enacted into law before the current session ends on June 16, the official said. The bills are part of Japan's efforts to acquire its first legal framework for responding to military attack since World War II.

"Japan War Time Cooperation Bill" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 9, 2004)

2. Japan Iraq Troops Dispatch

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and visiting French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin agreed that the two countries should cooperate on reconstructing Iraq. They emphasized the importance of consorted international efforts as well as the involvement of the UN in the Iraq effort, Japanese officials said. The French minister also told Koizumi that France "understands" Japan's position on the DPRK issues, including the abductions of Japanese in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

"Japan Iraq Troops Dispatch" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 12, 2004)

"Japan Iraq Troops Dispatch" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

3. Japanese Participation in the Peacekeeping Operation

Japan has tried to get more involved in international peacekeeping operations. Japan has dispatched SDF members to the 30-year UN mission in the Golan Heights since 1996. The operation now has about 1,200 multinational members, including those from such countries as Austria and Canada. Of them, 45 are from the SDF. In 2001, the GSDF surveyed its members on whether they wanted to participate in peacekeeping operations. Forty-eight percent said yes, while 39 percent said they would if ordered to do so. Only 7 percent answered no. The percentage of those who hoped to work in peacekeeping is up from 46 percent, according to a 1999 survey.

"Japanese Participation in the Peacekeeping Operation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 12, 2004)

4. Japan Military Emergency Bills

Japan and the US government signed an amendment to a bilateral agreement governing reciprocal provision of logistics support, supplies and services between the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) and the US forces stationed in Japan. The amendment to the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) allows the SDF and the US forces to share ammunition for the first time, though the provision is limited to cases in which they jointly defend Japan from a foreign attack. The government had excluded ammunition and weapons from the list of goods that can be shared between the SDF and the US for fear that it could violate Japan's self-imposed ban on arms exports, a rule the Japanese government introduced under its Constitution.

"Japan Military Emergency Bills" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

5. Realignment of the US Forces in Japan

The US has asked Japan to consider becoming home to Army headquarters in charge of Asia and the Pacific, sources said. Currently, the headquarters, the US Army's I Corps, is located in Fort Lewis in the western state of Washington. If carried out, I Corps could administrate US Army forces now serving in the ROK from Japan. So far, the Japanese government has not warmed to the idea, saying the transfer would go beyond the limits of the Japan-US Security Treaty, which is aimed only at protecting Japanese territory and maintaining security in the Far East. "Realignment of the US Forces in Japan" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 12, 2004)

6. The 50th Anniversary of the "Bravo" Test

Survivors and peace activists on March 1 marked 50 years since 23 crew members of the Japanese trawler Fukuryu Maru No. 5 and residents of Rongelap Island were irradiated by the blast from a US hydrogen bomb test at Bikini Atoll in the South Pacific. Braving chilly weather in the morning, about 2,000 people marched 2 km from Yaizu Station in Shizuoka Prefecture to the grave of Aikichi Kuboyama, chief radio operator of the Fukuryu Maru, and laid his favorite red roses and offered incense. Kuboyama died six months after the March 1, 1954, blast at age 40. His dying wish was, "Please make sure that I am the last victim of a nuclear bomb."

"The 50th Anniversary of the 'Bravo' Test" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 12, 2004)

"The 50th Anniversary of the 'Bravo' Test" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

7. Japan's Refugee Recognition

The Japanese immigration authorities recognized 10 asylum seekers as refugees in 2003, the smallest number since 1998, officials said. Eight of the 10 are from Myanmar, the Justice Ministry's Immigration Bureau said. The bureau refused to grant refugee status to 298 applicants while 23 asylum seekers rescinded their application for refugee recognition. Of the 298 who were denied refugee status, 16 have been allowed to stay in Japan considering the situation in their home countries and from a humanitarian viewpoint, bureau officials said. "Japan's Refugee Recognition" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

8. Joint DPRK-Japan Abduction Panel

The DPRK proposed establishing a joint committee with Japan to investigate the cases of Japanese people believed abducted to the DPRK, the Kyodo News agency said Tuesday. The DPRK made the unofficial proposal in January, prior to talks in Pyongyang in mid-February and asked Japan to pay for the cost of setting up and running the committee, Kyodo said, citing Japanese government sources. Japan later called for a joint committee to be set up, but the DPRK is believed to have given no clear response, Kyodo said. "Joint DPRK-Japan Abduction Panel" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

9. DPRK-Japan Relations

Japan hopes to resume bilateral talks with the DPRK on its abduction of Japanese nationals before the launch of a working group of six-nation talks on the DPRK's nuclear ambitions, Senior Vice Foreign Minister Ichiro Aisawa said Thursday. "The government is waiting for a response from Pyongyang (on the resumption), but Japan's stance is to resume them prior to the launch of the working group," Aisawa told reporters. "DPRK-Japan Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 11, 2004)

Russia Federation

1. ROK Russian Tank DMZ Deployment

The ROK will deploy a battalion of Russian tanks and armored vehicles for the first time along the border with the DPRK, military officials said. The deployment of T-80 U tanks and BMP-3 combat vehicles will bolster the ROK's capability to deter any aggression by the DPRK, which relies on Russian-built weapons for its ground forces, the defense ministry said. "This will be the first deployment of Russian weapons in front-line areas," a ministry official stated. "ROK Russian Tank DMZ Deployment" (NAPSNet Daily Report, March 9, 2004)
[\(return to top\)](#)

View this online at: <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-weekly/napsnet-week-in-review-12-march-2004/>

Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org
