

NAPSNET Week in Review 15 November, 2002

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNET Week in Review 15 November, 2002", NAPSNet Weekly Report, November 15, 2002, <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-weekly/napsnet-week-in-review-15-november-2002/>

Korean Peninsula

1. DPRK Nuclear Issue

The DPRK said on Wednesday it would not make the first move to defuse a dispute over its nuclear weapons program, and insisted the US sign a non-aggression pact first. Consul General Ri To Sop, the DPRK's top diplomat in Hong Kong, also told Reuters that any move to halt crucial shipments of oil to Pyongyang would be considered a hostile act. He did not elaborate. "We want the United States to legally guarantee a non-aggression treaty, then our side is ready to address the U.S. security concerns," Ri said in an interview. His statement was a strong reassertion of the DPRK's position ahead of a key meeting on the oil shipments issue on Thursday between the US, the ROK, Japan, and the European Union. At the meeting in New York, the US will try to halt essential oil exports to the DPRK for its admission that it still had an active nuclear weapons program, in abrogation of a 1994 agreement. Asked whether the DPRK would withdraw from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty if oil shipments were stopped, Ri said: "I cannot give you an exact answer but I can say this is another hostile act... the neighboring countries are talking about not stopping."

"DPRK Nuclear Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 13, US)

"DPRK on Non-Aggression Treaty" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 08, US)

2. US on DPRK Nuclear Situation

The DPRK must pay a price for developing nuclear weapons in violation of the Agreed Framework is coordinating with its allies to "impose" that price, a senior US defense official said Friday. US Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith said he and his Japanese counterparts discussed halting shipments of fuel oil to the isolated communist state and stopping the construction of nuclear reactors as possible ways to pressure the DPRK, but hadn't reached any decisions in a series of meetings here. "It's important that the North Koreans understand that there is a price to be paid for violating their commitments and pursuing a capability that threatens the peace and security of the region," Feith told reporters at the US Embassy in Tokyo. "The challenge is devising a way of imposing a price so that diplomacy can work." The undersecretary met with Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi, Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba and other top officials.

"US Tough Stance on DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 13, ROK)

"US on DPRK Nuclear Situation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 08, US)

3. US on DPRK Missile Threat

Senior US defense official said Friday that Japan faced the "danger" of a DPRK missile attack but that the US would not press Japan to build a missile defense shield. Visiting US Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith also said the DPRK should pay a "price" for pursuing a nuclear arms program in violation of the 1994 Agreed Framework. "One does not have to press Japan to recognize that Japan is facing a serious danger of a ballistic missile attack," he said. He denied a newspaper report Friday that the US would urge Japan to take the next step toward building a missile defense shield in response to any threat posed by DPRK. The Yomiuri Shimbun, quoting US defense officials in Washington, said Feith would convey the US view when he meets Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba in Tokyo Friday. The Yomiuri said Feith would try to convince Japan to move closer to developing the system, highlighting the potential threat of the DPRK, including its deployment of around 100 ballistic missiles capable of reaching major Japanese cities. "We are not pressing Japan to do anything. It is not the way we deal with our allies," Feith told reporters in Tokyo.

"US on DPRK Missile Threat" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 08, US)

"Powell on DPRK Regional Threat" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 08, US)

"Japan-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, TOKYO)

4. Japan-US Relations

Japan and the US plan to hold high-level security talks December 16 to discuss the DPRK's nuclear weapons program and a possible US attack on Iraq, Japanese and US sources said. The Japanese and US officials are also expected to discuss the US-led missile defense initiative. The US is expected to increase the pressure on Japan to advance to the development stage in light of the DPRK's ongoing development of long-range missiles and its recent admission about its nuclear arms program. The talks will be the first "two-plus-two" meeting of foreign and defense ministers of the two countries since President George W. Bush took office in January 2001. They held their last security meeting in September 2000. Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi and Defense Agency chief Shigeru Ishiba will attend the talks in Washington with Secretary of State Colin Powell and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

"Japan-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, TOKYO)

5. Japan Constitutional Review

More than 90 percent of lawmakers in the ruling bloc who responded to a survey want the Constitution revised, and a majority of them want the war-renouncing supreme law to recognize the Self-Defense Forces (SDF), according to a Kyodo News poll released. Just 225 of the 727 Diet members responded to the survey, which was conducted earlier this month. It found that 80 percent of respondents favoring a constitutional revision said it should be done within five years. Of the 88 respondents from the ruling bloc, which includes New Komeito and the New Conservative Party, 82 said they favor amendments. The survey also shows the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), the main opposition force, is deeply divided over amending the Constitution, with 66 percent of DPJ respondents favoring an amendment. In all, 140 lawmakers, or 62 percent of those polled, said the Constitution should be amended, and 85 lawmakers said it should not. On what should be amended, 60 coalition lawmakers favoring a revision said the Constitution should be changed to give legal standing to the SDF.

"Japan Constitutional Review" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, TOKYO)

6. Japan Military Emergency Bills

A public protection bill now under consideration by the government would give prefectures the right to demand that businesses stockpile goods for rescue operations. According to a draft of the proposed legislation, it would also allow local governments to requisition land and facilities to house evacuees and enable authorities to punish those who ignore such orders. People would be called on to engage in rescue and firefighting activities, help transport the injured and voluntarily participate in disaster relief and prevention organizations. As designated public agencies, broadcasters would be required to air warnings and evacuation orders, while the Japanese Red Cross Society would be called on to engage in medical and rescue activities. The Bank of Japan would be required to keep the financial system under control. The bill is expected to be passed within two years of the enactment of legislation spelling out the scope of responses in the event of a military emergency, a portion of which will be submitted to the Diet during the current session.

"Japan Military Emergency Bills" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, TOKYO)

7. US Bases in Okinawa

Two hundred residents living close to the US Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Ginowan, Okinawa Prefecture, filed a lawsuit calling for night and early morning helicopter flights to and from the base to be suspended. The lawsuit, filed against the national government and Col. Richard Leuking, commander of the base, demands 300 million yen in compensation for noise created by helicopter operations at the airfield. The lawsuit is the first involving the Futenma base. The plaintiffs live in areas around the base where the noise level reaches 75 Weighted Equivalent Continuous Perceived Noise Level (WECPNL) or higher. The suit accuses Leuking of negligence in failing to prevent the noise problem from affecting local residents. In past noise-pollution lawsuits involving the US military, Japanese courts have consistently rejected the plaintiffs' demands on the grounds that the cases are outside the courts' jurisdiction. However, residents in Ginowan are trying to set a new precedent by holding the base commander responsible as an individual. In the lawsuit, the residents are demanding that helicopter operations at the airfield be halted between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m., and that engine tests resulting in a noise level of 55 decibels or higher be banned. They also want engine tests with higher noise levels to be banned at all times. The residents are also calling on the Japanese government to carry out a survey of the noise problem around the base.

"US Bases in Okinawa" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, TOKYO)

8. Japan Domestic Economy

Japanese government on Friday appointed a new minister in charge of economic revival who will set guidelines to assess which troubled companies have a shot at survival and should be bailed out. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi chose lawmaker Sadakazu Tanigaki to head Japan's "industrial rebirth," a new Cabinet portfolio, the Cabinet Office said. No official job title has been announced. Japan has said it is going to get serious about wiping out the huge bad debts at the nation's banks that are stifling economic recovery. The government estimates the bad loans at about 40 trillion yen (\$330 billion), but private analysts say the figure may be three times larger. "Japan Domestic Economy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 08, US)

9. DPRK on Agreed Framework

The DPRK says its 1994 nuclear pact with the US is "hanging by a thread" but that the agreement is still in effect despite its disclosure that it has a new arms program, a former US envoy to Seoul said today. The DPRK admitted to the US last month that it was enriching uranium to support a nuclear weapons program, a breach of the 1994 Agreed Framework that had defused an earlier nuclear crisis. The DPRK had sown confusion about the status of the pact, leading the US to say it believed the DPRK's assertions that the agreement was void. But the United States said it was interested in retaining some elements of the accord while it worked to avert a crisis. Donald Gregg, the former U.S. envoy, told reporters in Seoul that during a private trip to Pyongyang his entourage asked DPRK deputy foreign minister, Kang Sok Ju, how the DPRK's admission that it has a nuclear program had affected the Agreed Framework. "Kang's response was it is hanging by a thread, meaning that it was in a very tenuous state, but that the North Koreans were still supporting it," Gregg said at a news conference.

"DPRK on DPRK-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 13, US)

"DPRK on Agreed Framework" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 08, US)

10. DPRK Japan Missile Tests

The DPRK has warned that it may end its freeze on missile tests, raising the ante in the standoff over US demands that it end its program to make fuel for a nuclear weapon. The warning, carried by the official DPRK news agency, was directed at Japan, which is under pressure by the US to halt recent diplomatic progress toward normalizing ties and extending economic aid to the DPRK. If those negotiations stall over the nuclear issue, DPRK officials are "of the view that [North Korea] should reconsider the moratorium on missile test firings," the Korean Central News Agency said, quoting a Foreign Ministry spokesman.

"DPRK Japan Missile Tests" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 08, US)

11. DPRK-Japan Normalization

The DPRK on Friday accused Japan of sabotaging efforts to establish diplomatic ties between the two countries by demanding the resolution of two key issues - the DPRK's abduction of Japanese citizens and its nuclear weapons program. Calling Japan's concerns "an artificial obstacle" to normalizing bilateral ties, the DPRK blamed stalled negotiations on the "sinister political intention" of hard-line Japanese collaborating with the US, said the state-run Korean Central News Agency in an editorial. Japan and the DPRK resumed normalization talks last week for the first time in two years, but they ended bitterly. Japan says the DPRK must halt its nuclear development program and resolve the fate of five Japanese abducted decades ago by communist spies and their families in the DPRK. A DPRK delegate called the abduction issue "settled." But Japan said the issue would remain unresolved until the five abductees' fates were secured.

"DPRK on DPRK-Japan Normalization" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 08, US)

"Japan-DPRK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, PRC)

12. DPRK-ROK Relations

The ROK's Defense Ministry said on Tuesday a DPRK state media report that the ROK's military had sent warships into northern waters and moved tanks near their border was "completely groundless." The DPRK's official KCNA news agency said the ROK's army had brought military vehicles of various types, including tanks, into the fortified Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) that divides the Korean peninsula this month, most recently on Tuesday. "Such military provocation was openly perpetrated in broad daylight against the backdrop of the dangerous situation where a military clash between the DPRK and the United States may break out on the Korean peninsula any moment due to the U.S. imperialists' moves," KCNA said. The ROK said the reports were not worthy of comment. "The Ministry of Defense will not make a response to those reports," said a ministry spokesman in Seoul. "They are completely groundless," he said.

"DPRK-ROK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, US)

13. ROK-Japan-US Talks on DPRK

Senior diplomats from Japan, the ROK, and the US on Saturday called on the DPRK to dismantle its nuclear program "in a prompt and verifiable manner," as the allies debated how to deal with the possible threat of a nuclear-armed DPRK government. Lee Tae-sik, ROK deputy foreign minister, US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly and Hitoshi Tanaka, the head of the Asian bureau at Japan's Foreign Ministry, were to consider possible penalties against the DPRK, such as halting oil shipments. In a joint statement released by Japan's Foreign Ministry, the three countries said they discussed a range of options available to pressure the DPRK into dropping its nuclear weapons program, but stopped short of issuing ultimatums. Instead, they reiterated "their commitment to seek to resolve this matter peacefully." Their discussions came ahead of Thursday's gathering of the U.S.-led consortium Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization, or KEDO, in New York.

"ROK-Japan-US Talks on DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, US)

"Japan-ROK on DPRK Nuclear Program" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, US)

"US-ROK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, PRC)

14. Inter-Korean Economic Talks

The DPRK and ROK on November 9 reached a six-point agreement after the four-day third meeting of the North-South Committee for the Promotion of Economic Cooperation. Under the agreement, both sides will reconnect the eastern railway and road links in Mt. Kumgang area and western railway and road links in the Kaesong industrial zone as the first phase, so that technical measures may be taken to promote Mt. Kumgang tourism. On the issue of the Kaesong industrial zone, the DPRK will promulgate the law on the Kaesong industrial zone in mid-November to pave way for the construction of the area in the second half of December this year. According to the report, the two sides still agreed to discuss an agreement on cooperation in maritime transportation between DPRK and ROK, and the use by fishermen from the ROK of part of the fishing ground in the east sea under the control of the DPRK. The two sides also agreed to make joint efforts to facilitate the visit to DPRK by the economic study group from ROK, said the report.

"Inter-Korean Economic Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, US)

"DPRK-ROK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, PRC)

"Inter-Korean Economic Situation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 08, US)

15. ROK on DPRK Oil Shipments

The ROK believes the US should continue oil shipments to the DPRK until at least January despite US accusations that the communist nation is violating a nuclear disarmament deal. The ROK statement came one day before a New York meeting by an international group to discuss a possible suspension of US oil shipments to the DPRK. The measure would be a penalty for the DPRK's recent revelation to US officials that it was enriching uranium as part of a nuclear weapons program. "While the United States believes that some measures must be taken against North Korea, our position is that US oil shipments should at least be made until January," Unification Minister Jeong Se-hyun said Wednesday at a forum in Seoul. The ROK and Japan have expressed concerns that halting oil deliveries could give the DPRK an excuse to revive an earlier, plutonium-based nuclear program. The United States has been providing 500,000 metric tons of heavy oil to the DPRK annually under a 1994 deal with the DPRK.

"ROK on DPRK Oil Shipments" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 13, US)

"DPRK Oil Supply " (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 13, ROK)

"DPRK Oil Shipment" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, US)

16. ROK-Russia Military Cooperation

ROK and Russia have signed a treaty on military cooperation, the Ministry of National Defense said Monday. The pact was signed by ROK's Defense Minister Lee Jun and Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov in Moscow. It calls for measures to prevent dangerous maneuvers in military exercises. The two countries would exchange communication at set frequencies if military equipment or weapons accidentally entered the other's territorial waters or air space. The two countries will cooperate against terrorism and on dealing with DPRK's nuclear program, the defense ministry said. They will also work to prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction on the Korean Peninsula.

"ROK-Russia Military Cooperation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 13, ROK)

17. ROK Ratification of the Kyoto Pact

Joongang Ilbo (Ser Myo-ja, "KOREA SENDS RATIFICATION OF THE KYOTO PACT ON UN," Seoul, 11/12/02) reported that ROK government said Monday that it has handed in the instrument of ratification for the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The protocol was approved by the National Assembly last month. Under the framework, which links greenhouse gas emissions and economic development, ROK is required between 2008 and 2012 to draw up and regularly update "national and regional programs containing measures to mitigate climate change and measures to facilitate adequate adaptation to climate change." ROK is not among the 38 developed countries that agreed to limit their greenhouse gas emissions, relative to the levels emitted in 1990 by at least 5 percent. The Foreign Ministry expects that ROK will likely be obligated to make reductions between 2013 and 2017. Since 1998, ROK government commission led by the prime minister has been working on measures to reduce greenhouse gas emission here. "ROK Ratification of the Kyoto Pact" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 13, ROK)

18. Opposition Party's Tough Stance to DPRK

The Grand National Party vowed Tuesday to halt financial assistance to DPRK until its nuclear weapons program is dismantled in a verifiable manner. In a pamphlet outlining 200 campaign pledges by the party's candidate, Lee Hoi-chang, the party said that it would base its DPRK policy on "public consensus," adding that while it would be willing to continue to talk with DPRK, the issue of nuclear and other mass weapons there would be the key to any further financial help. The party platform also said, "We will streamline operations of government offices overseeing the economy in particular. They are now scattered between the Ministry of Finance and Economy, the Financial Supervisory Service and the Financial Supervisory Commission. We will restructure the financial oversight system to make it work more efficiently." A senior party source said, "In order to monitor the soundness of financial institutions, we are considering a plan to merge the Financial Supervisory Service and the Financial Supervisory Commission."

"Opposition Party's Tough Stance to DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 13, ROK)

People's Republic of China

1. PRC Domestic Politics

The PRC marked the first major step in a generational change of leaders when a new elite Communist Party committee was provisionally elected without President Jiang Zemin and other elderly bosses. Jiang, 76, was among six of the PRC's current seven top leaders not returned in an initial vote for the party's new Central Committee, to which all leaders must belong. "Those six people are not on the new Central Committee list. They were not on the candidates' list," said one delegate from an eastern province, who asked not to be named. The departing leaders, also including Premier Zhu Rongji and party number two Li Peng, both 74, form virtually all the PRC's currently seven-member top ruling body, the party's Politburo Standing Committee. Hu Jintao has been widely expected to take over as party head at the end of the Congress on Thursday, and then as president at the annual meeting of PRC's parliament next spring, when other leaders would also give up their state positions.

"PRC Domestic Politics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 13, US)

"PRC Domestic Politics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 08, US)

2. PRC-US Talks

A US envoy said Wednesday he had a "very good exchange of views" with PRC diplomats during talks that he hinted included how to deal with Iraq and create a unified approach to the DPRK's nuclear-weapons program. US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly concluded a day of meetings with the PRC government as a stand-in for his boss, Secretary of State Colin Powell, who canceled an Asia trip after the UN Security Council vote on Iraq. "No negotiations - just a very good exchange of views," Kelly said at Beijing's Capital Airport, where US Ambassador Clark T. Randt saw him off. Asked whether he discussed the issue of nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula, Kelly said, "We had very good talks. We discussed all the issues." Powell had been scheduled to make the trip but canceled because the Iraq issue was coming to a head in the United Nations after weeks of debate, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said. He said Powell wants to coordinate Iraq policy with other countries.

"PRC-US Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 13, US)

"PRC-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, US)

3. PRC-Japan-ROK Relations

PRC Prime Minister Zhu Rongji, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and ROK Prime Minister Jim Suk-soo held an informal meeting on November 4 on the sideline of the ASEAN 10+3 summit. The report said that the three leaders agreed that their meeting helped enhance understanding and trust among the three countries and is conducive to the advancement of the 10+3 cooperative mechanism. Both Koizumi and Kim supported Zhu's suggestions and expressed their deep concern over the nuclear issue with the DPRK, and Zhu explained to them PRC's principles and stance on the issue. The three nations all agree that the Korean Peninsula be nuclear-free, peaceful and stable and that the existing problems be settled through peaceful dialogue, said the report.

"PRC-Japan-ROK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, PRC)

4. PRC's Military Diplomacy

Military contacts and exchanges between PRC and US have been in the spotlight again since the two nations agreed to resume bilateral military contacts on October 25. After the summit of PRC and US, the two nations planned to hold defense consultations at vice-defense ministerial level and other exchange programs. Observers noted that as an integral part of PRC diplomacy, military links have played an ever increasingly important role in PRC's foreign relations, the article said. Statistics show that PRC has formed military diplomatic ties with 146 foreign countries and has placed the consolidation and enhancement of military ties with neighboring countries at the top of its agenda. PRC, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan held discussions for strengthening mutual trust and disarmament along border regions which eventually led to the founding of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), with the "Shanghai Spirit" featuring as "mutual trust and benefits, equality, coordination, respect for diversified civilizations, and the pursuit of common development."

"PRC's Military Diplomacy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, PRC)

5. Taiwan Military Developments

Taiwan has stepped up air and naval patrols off the east of the island amid reports that the PRC is increasing its military operations there, Taiwan's defense minister said. "The defense ministry has ordered the air force and navy to increase their patrols as part of our efforts to keep a close eye on the area," defense minister Tang Yao-ming told the parliament. But he said Taiwan would not be able to check PRC operations if it does not buy Kidd-class destroyers from the US. "The navy's combat capability would be boosted fivefold once it is joined by the fleet of Kidd-class destroyers," Tang said. The parliament's defense committee last month approved the budget for four second-hand Kidd-class destroyers from the US, with the arms sale pending the parliament's final approval. The 9,600-tonne destroyers would be armed with Standard II-3A surface-to-air missiles, which have a range of 144 kilometers (90 miles) and vastly outperform Standard I missiles currently installed on Taiwan's Perry-class frigates.

"Taiwan Military Developments" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 13, US)

6. PRC on Taiwan Economic relations

The PRC warned other countries Wednesday that they could face "political trouble" if they seek official trade relations with rival Taiwan, even as Beijing tried to reassure Asian neighbors that they have nothing to fear from China's growing economic might. "China is totally against any country having diplomatic relations with China to develop official relationships with Taiwan," said Trade Minister Shi Guangsheng. "Otherwise, it will create political trouble for that country." Shi, speaking at a news conference, appeared to be reacting to a recommendation by a US Senate committee last month that the US start free-trade talks with Taiwan.

"PRC on Taiwan Economic relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 13, US)

"Cross-Straits Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 08, US)

7. Cross-Straits Direct Transport Links

The PRC's foreign trade minister urged Taiwan on Wednesday to start the ball rolling on opening direct air and shipping links with the mainland. Shi Guangsheng also warned of unspecified "serious political trouble" if the PRC's diplomatic allies entered into free trade agreements with Taiwan. "Let's not talk about it anymore. Let's do it," Shi told a news conference on the sidelines of 16th Congress of the Communist Party, referring to direct trade, transport and communication links. "It's a domestic issue, a cross-strait issue. Let it be done on a non-governmental and business level. It should be free from any political interference," he said. The PRC and Taiwan are split over whether direct flights should be considered domestic or international and whether talks should be official or non-governmental. Last week, PRC president and party chief, Jiang Zemin, called for the two sides to put aside their differences and return to the negotiating table. Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian has called repeatedly for direct links with the PRC, but has dragged his feet for fear of Taiwan becoming an economic hostage to the PRC.

"Cross-Straits Direct Transport Links" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 13, US)

"Cross-Straits Direct Links" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 08, US)

8. PRC-Canada Relations

The Canadian government said on Thursday that the PRC had apologized for sending secret agents to Canada under false pretences in a bid to contact alleged smuggling kingpin Lai Changxing. Lai, who is attempting to remain in Canada as a political refugee, is currently under house arrest in the Pacific Coast province of British Columbia. The PRC has accused Lai of running a smuggling ring that brought billions of dollars of goods into that country in the mid-1990s and bribed dozens of government officials to avoid paying taxes and duties. Canada's foreign ministry said it had protested to the PRC after learning that the PRC secret agents had obtained visas with the help of PRC's ministry of foreign trade. "The Canadian embassy in Beijing registered strong displeasure at the misrepresentation of facts by the ministry," said foreign ministry spokeswoman Kimberly Phillips. "The Chinese authorities have expressed regret over the incident. This can be characterized as an apology." "PRC-Canada Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 08, US)

9. PRC DPRK Food Aid

The UN World Food Program on Monday asked the PRC, where economic reform has produced a string of bumper harvests, to donate some of its surplus to feed hungry people in the DPRK, Afghanistan and elsewhere. WFP Executive Director James T. Morris made the appeal to Agriculture Minister Du Qinglin during a visit to Beijing, the agency said. Du said "that when circumstances permit, he would do his utmost to try to help us," though he noted that the PRC has 30 million poor people of its own who need help, said WFP spokesman Gerald Bourke. The WFP said it doesn't have all the food it needs for key emergency programs in the DPRK, Afghanistan and elsewhere. "PRC DPRK Food Aid" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, US)

Japan

1. Japan-US Relations

Japan and the US plan to hold high-level security talks December 16 to discuss the DPRK's nuclear weapons program and a possible US attack on Iraq, Japanese and US sources said. The Japanese and US officials are also expected to discuss the US-led missile defense initiative. The US is expected to increase the pressure on Japan to advance to the development stage in light of the DPRK's ongoing development of long-range missiles and its recent admission about its nuclear arms program. The talks will be the first "two-plus-two" meeting of foreign and defense ministers of the two countries since President George W. Bush took office in January 2001. They held their last security meeting in September 2000. Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi and Defense Agency chief Shigeru Ishiba will attend the talks in Washington with Secretary of State Colin Powell and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. "Japan-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, TOKYO)

2. Japan Constitutional Review

More than 90 percent of lawmakers in the ruling bloc who responded to a survey want the Constitution revised, and a majority of them want the war-renouncing supreme law to recognize the Self-Defense Forces (SDF), according to a Kyodo News poll released. Just 225 of the 727 Diet members responded to the survey, which was conducted earlier this month. It found that 80 percent of respondents favoring a constitutional revision said it should be done within five years. Of the 88 respondents from the ruling bloc, which includes New Komeito and the New Conservative Party, 82 said they favor amendments. The survey also shows the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), the main opposition force, is deeply divided over amending the Constitution, with 66 percent of DPJ respondents favoring an amendment. In all, 140 lawmakers, or 62 percent of those polled, said the Constitution should be amended, and 85 lawmakers said it should not. On what should be amended, 60 coalition lawmakers favoring a revision said the Constitution should be changed to give legal standing to the SDF.

"Japan Constitutional Review" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, TOKYO)

3. Japan Military Emergency Bills

A public protection bill now under consideration by the government would give prefectures the right to demand that businesses stockpile goods for rescue operations. According to a draft of the proposed legislation, it would also allow local governments to requisition land and facilities to house evacuees and enable authorities to punish those who ignore such orders. People would be called on to engage in rescue and firefighting activities, help transport the injured and voluntarily participate in disaster relief and prevention organizations. As designated public agencies, broadcasters would be required to air warnings and evacuation orders, while the Japanese Red Cross Society would be called on to engage in medical and rescue activities. The Bank of Japan would be required to keep the financial system under control. The bill is expected to be passed within two years of the enactment of legislation spelling out the scope of responses in the event of a military emergency, a portion of which will be submitted to the Diet during the current session.

"Japan Military Emergency Bills" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, TOKYO)

4. US Bases in Okinawa

Two hundred residents living close to the US Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Ginowan, Okinawa Prefecture, filed a lawsuit calling for night and early morning helicopter flights to and from the base to be suspended. The lawsuit, filed against the national government and Col. Richard Leuking, commander of the base, demands 300 million yen in compensation for noise created by helicopter operations at the airfield. The lawsuit is the first involving the Futenma base. The plaintiffs live in areas around the base where the noise level reaches 75 Weighted Equivalent Continuous Perceived Noise Level (WECPNL) or higher. The suit accuses Leuking of negligence in failing to prevent the noise problem from affecting local residents. In past noise-pollution lawsuits involving the US military, Japanese courts have consistently rejected the plaintiffs' demands on the grounds that the cases are outside the courts' jurisdiction. However, residents in Ginowan are trying to set a new precedent by holding the base commander responsible as an individual. In the lawsuit, the residents are demanding that helicopter operations at the airfield be halted between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m., and that engine tests resulting in a noise level of 55 decibels or higher be banned. They also want engine tests with higher noise levels to be banned at all times. The residents are also calling on the Japanese government to carry out a survey of the noise problem around the base.

"US Bases in Okinawa" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 12, TOKYO)

5. Japan Domestic Economy

Japanese government on Friday appointed a new minister in charge of economic revival who will set guidelines to assess which troubled companies have a shot at survival and should be bailed out. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi chose lawmaker Sadakazu Tanigaki to head Japan's "industrial rebirth," a new Cabinet portfolio, the Cabinet Office said. No official job title has been announced. Japan has said it is going to get serious about wiping out the huge bad debts at the nation's banks that are stifling economic recovery. The government estimates the bad loans at about 40 trillion yen (\$330 billion), but private analysts say the figure may be three times larger. "Japan Domestic Economy" (NAPSNet Daily Report, November 08, US)

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

View this online at: <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-weekly/napsnet-week-in-revi-w-15-november-2002/>

Nautilus Institute

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

nautilus@nautilus.org