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Korean Peninsula

1. DPRK Threat to US and ROK

US Defense Secretary William Cohen and ROK's Defense Minister Cho Sung-Tae said after annual security talks that the DPRK remains a military threat despite the thaw on the Korean peninsula and both countries must take "substantial" measures to reduce tensions. A joint statement said they welcomed the inter-Korean summit, "however, they note that North Korea's chemical, biological, nuclear and long range missile programs continue to pose a threat to the Republic of Korea, to the United States and regional security."

"DPRK Threat to US and ROK" (Daily Report, September 21, US)

The US Department of Defense released a report to the US House and Senate armed services committees which said the DPRK has made major improvements in its military over the past year, including the placement of large numbers of artillery and rocket launchers near the Demilitarized Zone. The report described DPRK President Kim Jong-il as bent on bolstering his nation's preparedness for war.

"US-DRPK Relations" (Daily Report, September 22, US)

The Economist published an unattributed opinion article which said that the new openness of the DPRK does not decrease its threat to the world.

"Continuing DPRK Threat" (Daily Report, September 22, US)

2. US-ROK Military

The US and the ROK reaffirmed their security alliance as the two Koreas also started military talks in a bid to ease tensions on the DPRK-ROK border. US Defense Secretary William Cohen said ROK President Kim Dae-jung warned of a dangerous power vacuum on the Korean peninsula if US troops left after any formal DPRK-ROK reconciliation. The ROK appears to be sustaining its large military procurement program in spite of the apparent easing of tension between the ROK and the DPRK. One analyst said that most of the weapons systems the ROK is looking to buy are not focused exclusively on the DPRK, but have more strategic applications to defend against a possible PRC or Japanese threat.

"US-ROK Military Talks" (Daily Report, September 20, US)

"ROK-US Talks" (Daily Report, September 20, ROK)

"US-ROK Military Relations" (Daily Report, September 19, US)

"US-ROK Policy on DPRK" (Daily Report, September 19, US)

"US-ROK Military Talks" (Daily Report, September 18, US)

Sources in the ROK government and industry said that the US has imposed a selective ban on the export of its weapons to the ROK. According to the sources, the US Congress has not received notification by the executive branch for weapons exports bound for the ROK since late last year. The US Congress is supposed to act on such notifications within 30 days and no key US weaponry may be exported without this notification procedure.

"US Weapons Sales to ROK" (Daily Report, September 22, US)

3. DPRK Nuclear Issues

US special envoy to the DPRK Charles Kartman revealed that the US and the DPRK will resume talks to discuss each other's interests such as DPRK's nuclear and missile projects and the issue of terrorism. Kartman and DPRK's Deputy Foreign Minister Kim Kye Kwan will participate in the meeting as the senior representatives of the two countries.

"US-DPRK Nuclear Talks" (Daily Report, September 21, ROK)

"US-DPRK Missile Talks" (Daily Report, September 19, US)

IAEA participants are expected to seek DPRK's approval to send a team to the country to inspect the site of two nuclear power reactors being built there by the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO).

"IAEA Inspection of KEDO Reactors" (Daily Report, September 19, US)

4. DPRK-ROK Relations

ROK citizens in Seoul have been perplexed by the sudden discovery of hundreds of propaganda leaflets allegedly made by the DPRK. The handouts are chiefly of two kinds: one severely berating opposition Grand National Party President Lee Hoi-chang and another calling for the withdrawal of US troops from the Korean Peninsula.

"DPRK Leaflets" (Daily Report, September 20, ROK)

The DPRK and the ROK have agreed to hold the first talks between their defense ministers.

The ROK Defense Ministry spokesperson said, "The historic meeting between defense ministers of the two sides will take place on September 25-26 in the Cheju Island." An ROK government source said that the ROK will propose the establishment of a military commission at the inter-Korean defense ministers' talks.

"DPRK-ROK Defense Ministers' Talks" (Daily Report, September 19, PRC)

"ROK-DPRK Defense Ministers' Talks" (Daily Report, September 18, ROK)

5. Red-Cross Talks

Red Cross officials from the ROK and the DPRK started talks. The ROK Unification Ministry said that talks between the DPRK and the ROK Red Crosses have stalled over differences on plans to hold more reunions of separated families. ROK officials said that the ROK will propose building a public park within the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to use as a permanent reunion center for separated families. In preparation for the upcoming reunions of separated family members, the ROK Red Cross asked the DPRK Red Cross on September 20 to confirm the whereabouts of the DPRK relatives of all 95,000 ROK citizens who have registered for the reunions. ROK's Korean National Red Cross (KNRC) said the 300 candidates for reunions set for next month will be initially selected from some 52,000 applicants aged 70 or over.

"ROK-DPRK Red Cross Talks" (Daily Report, September 20, ROK)

"Red-Cross Talks" (Daily Report, September 21, ROK)

"Reunion of Separated Families" (Daily Report, September 20, ROK)

"Red Cross Talks" (Daily Report, September 18, ROK)

"DPRK-ROK Red Cross Talks" (Daily Report, September 22, US)

"Red Cross Talks" (Daily Report, September 22, ROK)

6. Inter-Korean Railway

ROK President Kim Dae-jung on September 18 inaugurated work on the inter-Korean railway. Critics are raising questions about whether restoration of the inter-Korean railway and the construction of an adjacent highway violate the the Korean Armistice Agreement, which bans all persons from crossing the Military Demarcation Line or entering the Demilitarized Zone without the approval of the UNC. They are also asking whether the ROK earned proper approval from the United Nations Command (UNC) for the historic inter-Korean ventures. The ROK government has decided to narrow the width of the inter-Korean highway amid difficulties in clearing the Demilitarized Zone of landmines.

"Inauguration of Inter-Korean Railway" (Daily Report, September 18, US)

"Inter-Korea Railway Project" (Daily Report, September 21, ROK)

"ROK-DPRK Railway" (Daily Report, September 18, ROK)

Russian Ambassador Evgeny Afanasiev said that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il responded favorably to the proposal by Russian President Vladimir Putin that it begin work on reconnecting the Kyongwon Railway, linking Seoul and its eastern port city Wonsan. Afanasiev said that Russia has an interest in building a railway linking Seoul, Wonsan, Vladivostok and Siberia and that the Russian government wants to participate in the project.

"Inter-Korean Railway" (Daily Report, September 20, ROK)

7. DPRK Foreign Relations

The DPRK has proposed to open diplomatic ties with several European countries. DPRK Foreign Minister Paek Nam Sun recently sent letters carrying the proposal to his counterparts in Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Spain and Britain and the external relations commissioner of the European Commission.

"DPRK Opens Diplomatic Ties with Europe" (Daily Report, September 21, US)

The DPRK will hold working- level negotiations with New Zealand to establish diplomatic ties

"DPRK-New Zealand Normalization Talks" (Daily Report, September 20, ROK)

"DPRK Relations with New Zealand" (Daily Report, September 19, US)

Despite being invited to attend as a special guest, the DPRK has decided not to participate in the annual general meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). DPRK Ambassador to the UN Li Hyong-chol had notified the IMF and IBRD that it would not be able to participate in the conference due to a lack of adequate preparation time.

"DPRK Turns Down Invitations from IMF-IBRD" (Daily Report, September 20, ROK)

8. DPRK Food Aid

The World Food Programme (WFP) appealed to the international community on September 15 for food aid worth US\$100 million to help millions of people at risk of severe food shortages in the DPRK. The Japanese government decided on September 21 to provide the DPRK with more rice than requested by the United Nations' World Food Planning (WFP). The report said that the government may provide approximately to 400,000 to 500, 000 tons of rice to the DPRK.

"DPRK Food Aid" (Daily Report, September 18, US)

"Japanese Rice Aid to the DPRK" (Daily Report, September 22, Japan)

China

1. US Trade Relations

The US Senate passed the Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) for the PRC. Coupled with approval by the US House of Representatives in May, the vote ended the annual Congressional review of PRC's trade status.

"US Grants PNTR to the PRC" (Daily Report, September 20, US)

2. Joint US-Japan-PRC Military Drills

US Defense Secretary William Cohen proposed that the US, the PRC and Japan hold multilateral military drills as a means to ensure greater stability in the Asia- Pacific region. Cohen said multilateral drills in Asia could serve to help build stability in the region, which lacks a solid multilateral security arrangement such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

"Proposal for Joint US-Japan-PRC Military Drills" (Daily Report, September 20, US)

3. PRC-Russian Relations

Li Peng, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People Congress of the PRC, exchanged views about bilateral relations, international, and regional issues with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Li said that Sino-Russian strategic partnership is moving forward, and both sides have reached wide consensus on a series of international and regional issues. "PRC-Russian Relations" (Daily Report, September 19, PRC)

4. DPRK-ROK Relations

The PRC's International Studies published an article by Yu Shaohua focusing on the changing DPRK, the ROK's choice in implementing the June Summit Declaration, and policy adjustment of powers.

"PRC Perspective on DPRK-ROK Relations" (Daily Report, September 19, PRC)

5. Cross-Strait Relations

In response to Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian's most recent call for talks, PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Sun Yuxi said, "The key is upholding the one-China principle." Sun said any formal reply to Chen's weekend offer would come from PRC's Taiwan Affairs Office, which has remained silent so far.

"Cross-Strait Relations" (Daily Report, September 19, US)

6. Taiwan Military Exercise

Taiwan started a large-scale military exercise on September 17 to test the army's preparedness in the event of a war or natural disaster.

"Taiwan Military Exercise" (Daily Report, September 18, US)

Japan

1. DPRK-Japan Relations

Japan is expected to recognize the DPRK as a state soon. Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori said that the move is expected to speed up talks aimed at normalizing relations between the two countries.

"DPRK-Japan Relations" (Daily Report, September 20, ROK)

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori said Thursday that Japan would work closely with the ROK and the US to entrench a new mood of reconciliation on the Korean peninsula.

"Japan-DPRK Relations" (Daily Report, September 21, US)

2. Japan-PRC Relations

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori promised to improve Japan's ties with the PRC, ahead of an October 12-17 visit by PRC Premier Zhu Rongji.

"Japan-DPRK Relations" (Daily Report, September 21, US)

Japan and the PRC held the first working-level meeting in Beijing to discuss a framework for PRC naval activities in the Japanese exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Japan proposed that the area which Japan claims as Japan's EEZ be the middle dividing line between Japan and the PRC, but the PRC did not accept the proposal.

"PRC Naval Activities" (Daily Report, September 22, Japan)

3. Japanese Military Policy

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori said that Japan will consider revising and creating laws to deal with the possibility of armed attack on the country. Japan enacted a law in August to deal with military crises in areas surrounding the country, but has made no progress in revising and creating laws to cope with a military attack.

"Japanese Military Policy" (Daily Report, September 22, US)

The Japanese Defense Agency (JDA) plans to cooperate with the US in a joint study to select technology for installation on a Self-Defense Forces (SDF) next-generation patrol plane to be developed in the midterm defense buildup program from fiscal 2001 to 2005.

"Japanese-US Defense Relations" (Daily Report, September 22, Japan)

Russia

1. Russian Nuclear Forces

Russian Ministry for Nuclear Energy, or Minatom, and the Russian Defence Ministry carried out three subcritical nuclear tests at Novaya Zemlya.

"Russian Nuclear Forces" (NPP Flash, V. 2, N. 31)

Russian Security Council determined that Russia's strategic nuclear arsenal will be reduced to 1,500 warheads. However, the reduction is in part dependent upon progress in START III negotiations, which, if they fail to be initiated, are unsuccessful, or the US proceeds with deployment of a NMD system, the role of the rocket forces is likely to be revisited.

"Russian Nuclear Forces" (NPP Flash, V. 2, N. 31)

2. Russian Military Reform

Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev said the Russian military will be cut by 350,000 soldiers to 850,000 over the next three years. The article reported that observers said these cuts could seriously undermine the country's ability to defend its extensive borders. A report by the Russian newspaper Segodnya which argued that a simple downsizing of the armed forces will not generate significant savings without a restructuring of Russian security policy.

"Russian Military Reform" (NPP Flash, V. 2, N. 31)

3. Non-Proliferation Issues

The US and Russia issued a joint statement, the US-Russia Strategic Stability Cooperation Initiative, signed by US President Bill Clinton and Russian President Vladimir Putin. Russian Deputy Atomic Energy Minister Valentin Ivanov said Russia is engaged in research towards building its first close-cycle nuclear reactor. This reactor design is necessary to implement Russian President Vladimir Putin's plan to exclude enriched uranium and plutonium from nuclear power engineering. Alik Galiyev, a former Soviet Union biological weapons scientist, feels that the US has devoted resources to dismantling biological weapons laboratories but has done little to convert factories to peaceful use or provide long-term employment for highly skilled scientists.

"Non-Proliferation Issues" (NPP Flash, V. 2, N. 31)

Missile Issues

1. Perspectives on NMD

Additional commentary on US President Bill Clinton's decision to not deploy NMD is available through the links below. US commentary includes that by: US Senator Thad Cochran, Spurgeon M. Keeny, Jr. in Arms Control Today, Retired Colonel Daniel Smith, Chief of Research at Center for Defense Information, Joseph Cirincione, Director of the Non-Proliferation Project at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Foreign commentary includes that by: Camille Grand in Arms Control Today and PRC Ambassador Hu Xiaodi.

"US Perspectives on NMD Decision" (NPP Flash, V. 2, N. 31)

"Non-US Perspectives on NMD Decision" (NPP Flash, V. 2, N. 31)

"PRC and Russian Criticism of NMD" (Daily Report, September 21, US)

"PRC View on NMD" (Daily Report, September 19, PRC)

Increased coverage of sea-based and boost-phase intercept alternatives to the national missile defense program being specifically pursued by US President Bill Clinton's administration.

"NMD Alternatives" (NPP Flash, V. 2, N. 31)

2. US Military Strategy in Asia

US Department of Defense released a News Briefing of Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen (Aboard USS Germantown, Sembawang Pier, Singapore, 9/17/00) which said US Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen promoted US proposals to complement bilateral relations with greater multilateral activities involving the US and Asian countries.

"US Military Strategy in Asia" (Daily Report, September 19, US)

Los Angeles Times carried an opinion article by Paula J. Dobriansky, vice president and Washington director of the Council on Foreign Relations, which said a new Sino-Russian international partnership has emerged but few people in the US seem interested or concerned. While the PRC and Russia do not see eye to eye on all issues, they do share several key strategic concerns which should be watched.

"Effects of Sino-Russian Relations on the US" (Daily Report, September 19, US)

South Asia

1. India Nuclear Policy

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace released a Non-Proliferation Project briefing on India's nuclear program which stated that further "nuclear-device" testing will be required before these can be converted into usable military weapons. India should therefore take this opportunity to pause its program.

"South Asia Nuclear Policy" (NPP Flash, V. 2, N. 31)

In a joint India-US statement, India reaffirmed that it will continue its voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing until the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty takes effect. Harvard University and Trinity College professor Amartya Sen discussed his view of the role of nuclear weapons in South Asia, particularly whether the development of nuclear weapons is ethical or prudential.

"Nuclear Weapons" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.1, #35)

India's prediction that the international protests against the country's nuclear tests two years ago would be short-lived have been proven right by the visits of Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori and US President Clinton.

"South Asia Nuclear Policy" (NPP Flash, V. 2, N. 31)

2. Indian PM's US Visit

Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee spoke before a joint session of the US Congress and met with US political leaders. Vajpayee touched on issues such as terrorism, economic investment in India, and the future of India-US relations in his meetings. The US Congress passed a resolution urging the removal of remaining sanctions against India. The Commander-in-Chief of the US Navy's Pacific Fleet, Admiral Dennis C Blair, began a visit India on September 20. US officials and Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf stated that a stronger US-India relationship does not affect the US relationship with Pakistan.

"Indian PM's US Visit" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.1, #35)

"India-US Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.1, #35)

"Pakistan-US Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.1, #35)

3. Military Hardware

Scientist Samar Mubarak Mand stated that Pakistan had the Shaheen II multi-stage missile ready for testing. The Shaheen II is believed to have a range of 2,500 km. AQ Khan, a chief scientist in the Pakistani nuclear program, stated a claim that Pakistan could reach all major Indian cities using Ghauri missiles.

"Military Hardware" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.1, #35)

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Nautilus Institute

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

nautilus@nautilus.org