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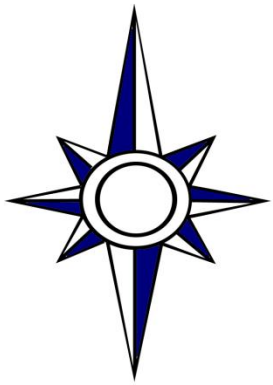

China-Korea Relations:
A Fragile China-ROK Strategic Partnership

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High-level exchanges between China and South Korea's foreign and defense ministries appeared to recover momentum as the two countries marked their 19th anniversary of diplomatic relations on Aug. 24. The first China-ROK "strategic defense dialogue" was held in Seoul on July 27 following talks between Defense Ministers Liang Guanglie and Kim Kwan-jin in Beijing on July 15 and in Singapore on June 4 on the sidelines of the Shangri-La Dialogue. Foreign Ministers Yang Jiechi and Kim Sung-hwan met June 6 ahead of the Asia-Europe Foreign Ministers Meeting in Budapest and held another round of talks July 21 in Bali on the sidelines of ASEAN regional meetings. But efforts to consolidate the China-ROK strategic partnership have exposed policy differences over North Korea and the ROK alliance relationship with the US.

China and North Korea commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in July. Kim Jong Il visited China on May 20-26, holding talks with President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao. He returned Aug. 25-27 and met State Councilor Dai Bingguo in Heilongjiang province on his way back from a meeting in Siberia with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. Kim's May visit was publicly revealed during bilateral talks between Premier Wen and President Lee on the sidelines of the fourth Trilateral China-ROK-Japan Summit in Tokyo. Communist Party of China (CPC) and DPRK counterparts held an unprecedented "strategic dialogue" ahead of the 90th anniversary of the CPC in June. China and North Korea also agreed to strengthen military cooperation during a visit by a Korean Peoples' Army (KPA) delegation to China on Aug. 25-26. China and North Korea's new joint economic projects have raised debate on the prospects for North Korean reform. DPRK denuclearization efforts remain stalled despite apparent increases in regional diplomatic efforts toresume the Six-Party Talks.

China's two Koreas diplomacy

During talks with Kim Jong Il in Beijing on May 25, Hu Jintao proposed five goals for enhancing bilateral ties: (1) strengthen high-level visits and friendship; (2) share experiences on party-building and state governance and promote economic and social development; (3) improve mutually beneficial cooperation to benefit the two peoples; (4) deepen youth-oriented cultural, education and sports exchanges; and (5) maintain coordination on international and regional issues. Kim also met Premier Wen Jiabao, Vice President Xi Jinping, and other members of the Political Bureau Standing Committee of the CPC Central Committee including Jia Qinglin, Li Changchun, Li Keqiang, He Guoziang, and Zhou Yongkang. Kim's week-long visit marked his third summit with Hu Jintao within a year and included a tour of economic projects in industrial production, agriculture, technological development, and trade in Beijing, Heilongjiang, Jilin, and

Jiangsu provinces. His trip to Northeast China on Aug. 25-27 on his return from his first visit to Russia in a decade also included tours of industrial projects.

On the day of the Hu-Kim summit in May, President Lee Myung-bak stated that he "positively evaluate[s] China' frequent invitations for North Korean leaders for the purpose of more field trips and talks," while urging Pyongyang to "act more responsibly" to promote inter-Korean relations. Premier Wen Jiabao told Lee in Tokyo that the purpose of Kim's visit was to learn from Chinese economic experience in a rare public acknowledgment that Kim Jong Il indeed was visiting China. But the Hu-Kim summit was widely believed to have fallen short of each other's expectations on Chinese economic commitments and North Korean commitments to reform and engage in regional dialogue. Within days of the summit, Pyongyang declared it would "never deal with" the Lee government and rejected Seoul's proposal of holding inter-Korean talks.

Prospects for dialogue appeared to improve in late July on the sidelines of ASEAN meetings, with separate talks between People's Republic of China (PRC) Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi and ROK and DPRK counterparts and an inter-Korean meeting of Six-Party Talks envoys that led to "exploratory" talks between Washington and Pyongyang. Although this provided the PRC Foreign Ministry with a new opportunity to promote the Six-Party Talks, these meetings appeared to be insufficient for promoting meaningful dialogue absent closer coordination among the US, China, and South Korea. During talks with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in Washington on June 24, ROK Foreign Minister Kim Sung-hwan stated that "the *Cheonan* incident is a North-South Korean issue, and Six-Party Talks is a denuclearization issue." Despite South Korean efforts to separate the two processes, both are unlikely to move forward given differences with China over Pyongyang's failure to account for the 2010 provocations and its unwillingness to demonstrate "tangible steps" toward denuclearization. In his August meeting with State Councilor Dai Binguo, Kim Jong Il pledged his willingness to resume Six-Party Talks "without preconditions."

Despite Chinese efforts to promote inter-Korean dialogue as a starting point for the resumption of the Six-Party Talks, South Korean analysts in May warned against the "misconception" of China as "mediator between the two Koreas," criticizing Beijing's "simultaneous diplomacy" as an attempt to "use closer ties with North Korea as a bargaining chip in negotiations with South Korea." The timing of Kim's trip to China in May, made at the same time as Wen Jiabao's meeting with Lee Myung-bak in Tokyo, evinced parallels with Hu Jintao's back-to-back summits with Lee and Kim in May last year amid tensions over the *Cheonan* sinking. South Korean media on June 23 suggested a possible change in China's position by revealing Beijing's alleged pledges to Seoul that "it won't stand by the North if it makes an additional provocation." But in response to South Korea's launching of military exercises near the Demilitarized Zone on July 27, the PRC Foreign Ministry reaffirmed that China "opposes any action" undermining peninsular peace and stability, calling for "parallel and multilateral dialogues" toward the resumption of Six-Party Talks.

The China-South Korea strategic partnership

High-level defense exchanges between China and South Korea have supported the goals of strengthening strategic dialogue mechanisms in the "strategic cooperative partnership" since 2008. During the first strategic defense dialogue in Seoul with Vice Defense Minister Lee Yong-

gul on July 28, Deputy Chief of the PLA General Staff Ma Lt. Gen. Xiaotian pledged to strengthen bilateral military exchanges based on the principles of mutual political trust, mutual economic benefits, and peninsular peace and stability. Ma also met ROK Defense Minister Kim Kwang-jin and Chairman of South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Han Min-koo. The vice-ministerial dialogue mechanism was established during Kim Kwan-jin's first visit to China as defense minister on July 14-17, during which he toured a Chinese air force base in Jiangsu province, and met PRC counterpart Liang Guanglie, Chief of the PLA General Staff Gen. Chen Bingde, State Councilor Dai Bingguo, and Vice President Xi Jinping. The joint communiqué from that visit includes agreements to strengthen defense cooperation on not only peninsular peace and stability but also peacekeeping, disaster relief, humanitarian aid, and anti-piracy.

The intensification of China-ROK defense cooperation suggests the stabilization of security relations following regional tensions in 2010. But it has also underscored the key challenges to the China-ROK security relationship, including China's dissatisfaction with the US-ROK alliance and South Korean worries over China's regional military ambitions. The highlight of Defense Minister Kim's July visit to China was Gen. Chen's public criticisms of US behavior as a "superpower" that channeled his frustrations over the holding of US joint military exercises in the South China Sea with the Philippines and Vietnam, an issue that was raised at Chen's earlier meeting with US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Mike Mullen. This resonated with Chinese Foreign Ministry remarks prior to Lee Myung-bak's summit with Hu Jintao in 2008 that the US-ROK alliance "would not be valid in viewing, measuring and handling the current global or regional security issues" and Lt. Gen. Ma's statement at the 2009 Shangri-La Dialogue that "China opposes the enlargement of the existing bilateral military alliance."

Gen. Chen Bingde's comments sharpened South Korean sensitivities over being caught in a major power competition between China and the US, as suggested when the ROK Foreign Ministry ahead of the July ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) affirmed Seoul's neutral position on the South China Sea. While China's testing of its first aircraft carrier in August raised new suspicions about Chinese naval and territorial ambitions, another source of controversy in South Korea is the construction of a naval base on Jeju Island, which began in January this year. Protestors see the base as serving US regional defense interests against China rather than ROK security needs against North Korea. These developments have heightened South Korea's dilemma over responding to China's military rise while remaining a US ally. This dilemma is likely to be a continuing source of strain in China-ROK relations. South Korean experts attacked Chinese "imperialistic" maritime claims in an Aug. 3 op-ed that stated: "Asia's mistrust of China and fear of Beijing is based on its territorial ambition…. China's ambition should be counterbalanced by the United States as a Pacific partner to Asia-Pacific nations and by a unified Asian alliance." A Korea National Defense University professor also reacted to China's aircraft carrier trials by arguing on Aug. 17 that "Korea can secure military deterrence by reinforcing joint deterrence capacity with the United States." China's sending two naval vessels to North Korea's Wonsan port on Aug. 4-7 to mark 50 years of friendship raised new concerns about China's close military relationship with North Korea that appeared to exacerbate regional debates on Chinese military and territorial ambitions. This visit began immediately after Japanese warnings about the expansion of Chinese naval activities around its waters, and on the same day the Chinese Foreign Ministry warned Tokyo for "irresponsible comments" about China's military threat in its White Paper issued earlier that week.

China-DPRK party and military exchanges

China and North Korea exchanged high-level visits on July 9-12 commemorating the 50th anniversary of their bilateral Friendship Treaty, including a visit by PRC Vice Premier Zhang Dejiang to North Korea and a visit to China by Yang Hyong Sop, vice president of the Presidium of the DPRK's Supreme People's Assembly. This exchange followed an unprecedented "strategic dialogue" between the two parties according to the DPRK state media, for which Li Yuanchao, head of the CPC Organization Department and Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee, led a delegation to Pyongyang on June 10-14 and met DPRK counterpart Choe Thae Bok, top legislator Kim Yong Nam, and Kim Jong Il. The Chinese delegation included Secretary of Jilin Provincial Committee of the CPC Sun Zhengcai, PRC Ambassador to North Korea Liu Hongcai, and head of the CPC International Department Wang Jiarui, who held talks with Worker's Party of Korea (WPK) Secretary Kim Yong Il on June 12.

This strategic dialogue marked the first visit to North Korea by the head of the CPC Organization Department in more than a decade and was hailed as an effort to further political and economic coordination following Kim Jong Il's May visit to China. Chinese and DPRK state media reports appeared to refute earlier assessments of Kim's visit by noting its significance in advancing the traditional friendship to a "new" and "higher" stage. The June meeting was followed by a visit to China on July 5-9 by Thae Jong Su, alternate member of the WPK Political Bureau and member of the Secretariat, to meet Zhou Yongkang, member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Political Bureau, during which the two sides agreed to strengthen renewable energy cooperation in line with North Korea's goal to "learn from China's experience." China-DPRK military exchanges in August also focused on North Korean efforts to draw lessons from China. Jon Chang Bok, chief of the General Logistics Bureau of the KPA Armed Forces Department, visited China on Aug. 25-26 and met Defense Minister Liang Guanglie and Liao Xilong, chief of the PLA General Logistics Department, during which Jon pledged to learn from China's "military logistics construction" according to Chinese state media.

China-DPRK economic zones and new hopes for North Korean reform

China-DPRK economic exchanges have highlighted China's progress in economic development as it implements its 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015) and the DPRK priority on improving people's livelihoods under the objective of establishing a strong and prosperous state by 2012. During his meeting with Kim Jong Il on May 26, Premier Wen Jiabao emphasized joint efforts to enhance economic and trade cooperation through various bilateral working mechanisms and locality- and enterprise-driven initiatives. A major outcome of Kim's May visit to China was the establishment of the Rason Economic and Trade Zone and Hwanggumphyong and Wihwa Islands Economic Zone, launched with a ground-breaking ceremony on June 8-9 following the second meeting of the Development Cooperation and Joint Steering Committee in Northeast China led by PRC Commerce Minister Chen Denming and WPK Administrative Director Jang Song Thaek. On June 10, China and North Korea began reconstruction plans on a major logistics road along their border linking Hunchun and Rajin ports.

While Kim's previous visits and "study tours" have renewed speculation in some quarters about the possibility of North Korean reform, one difference in the latest joint economic projects is the support from the central leadership on both sides, which appears to correspond with mutual economic and trade interests at the local level. According to Chinese sources, North Korea on July 4 began allowing Chinese domestic trade cargo to be shipped from northeast to east China via Rajin port, where China secured access rights three years ago as an export route to other countries. North Korea held a four-day international trade fair at the Rason Economic Zone on Aug. 22-25, drawing Chinese and Russian investors to the region. Local leadership exchanges have accompanied the high-level party exchanges in June, including a visit by a delegation of the Pyongyang City Committee of the WPK and a return visit by a Liaoning party delegation led by Gov. Chen Zhenggao, who met DPRK Premier Choe Yong Rim on June 27. North Korea has also boosted tourism cooperation with China's major cities with the establishment of new and expanded flight services to Shanghai and Shenyang.

Amid conflicting reports on the humanitarian situation inside North Korea, DPRK state media on July 31 announced that the Chinese government and the Red Cross Society of China have offered emergency flood relief materials to Pyongyang. South Korean media in August revealed that Kim Jong Il in May also secured China's agreement to provide 200,000 tons of free fertilizer to boost food production and 500,000 tons of corn at discount prices in exchange for rights to North Korea's natural resources. A Korea Rural Economic Institute report in August also showed that North Korea imported less rice and more corn and other cheaper grains from China during the first half of 2011 compared to the same period last year, suggesting an increase North Korea's food shortages and lack of foreign cash. Media reports on June 21 that North Korea has imported increased amounts of anti-riot gear from China fueled speculation about the DPRK leadership's growing concerns over internal stability. Other reports have indicated the pressures of cross-border instability facing both Chinese and North Korean authorities, including China's arrest of 14 North Koreans in the border area in May and North Korea's enhanced security measures along the China-DPRK border in August in an effort to contain defection. Local maritime authorities of Dandong city in Liaoning province and DPRK counterparts of Pyongan Bukdo on June 15 launched their first joint patrol on the Yalu River following a maritime cooperation agreement reached last April on managing the river.

Conclusion: coordinating North Korea policy

South Korea has traditionally prioritized its economic partnership with China, which accounted for 20 percent of its total foreign trade in the first half of 2011 compared to a historic low of 9 percent for the US. However, China's growing economic leverage in the relationship has led to increased attention on the China-ROK strategic relationship. The launching of a new diplomatic exchange program between junior Foreign Ministry officials in May made South Korea the third country to have such a program with China after North Korea and Mongolia and suggested South Korea's future importance to China as a strategic partner. But this exchange also revealed key differences over relations with North Korea and the United States despite "shared long-term goals" such as Korean unification.

At the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore on June 4, PRC Defense Minister Liang Guanglie stated that "the work we have done with North Korea is much more than what the outside world

may expect," warning that "the foundation remains fragile" on the Korean Peninsula. But critics in South Korea argued that "China should do more for regional stability" following the defense ministers meeting in July, which left South Koreans largely disappointed with what was called a "watered-down" joint statement that failed to mention how to jointly address North Korean provocations despite pledges to strengthen the China-ROK strategic partnership. While PRC and ROK envoys have continued to coordinate on the resumption of Six-Party Talks, China's push for inter-Korean talks to promote regional dialogue has conflicted with China's perceived siding with North Korea in the management of inter-Korean issues.

Trends in the China-ROK partnership have stirred internal South Korean debates on Seoul's diplomatic strategies under the Lee government. The appointment of Lee Kyu-hyung as the new ROK ambassador to China in May suggested renewed efforts to strengthen bilateral relations with Beijing. At the same time, Lee's naming of former ROK Ambassador to China Yu Woo-ik as unification minister on Aug, 30 has raised questions over a possible softening of Seoul's North Korea policy ahead of South Korea's presidential election in 2012.

Chronology of China-Korea Relations
May – August 2011

May 4, 2011: Chinese, ROK, and Japanese counterparts hold talks on the sidelines of the 11th ASEAN Plus Three meeting of finance ministers in Hanoi.

May 12, 2011: *Xinhua*, *Yonhap*, and *Kyodo* agree to jointly cover the Trilateral China-ROK-Japan Summit through a single website in their first such cooperation project.

May 16, 2011: President Lee Myung-bak gives credentials to new ROK Ambassador to China Lee Kyu-hyung.

May 16-20, 2011: A delegation of the Chinese People's Consultative Conference (CPPCC) led by Chen Zongxing, vice chairman of the CPPCC National Committee, visits North Korea and meets Kim Yong Nam, president of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly.

May 17, 2011: The PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson cites positive signs on the Korean Peninsula and calls for the resumption of Six-Party Talks.

May 20-26, 2011: Kim Jong Il visits China, touring Heilongjiang, Jilin, and Jiangsu provinces before meeting President Hu Jintao in Beijing on May 25.

May 21-22, 2011: Premier Wen Jiabao, President Lee, and Prime Minister Kan Naoto visit earthquake-stricken Fukushima and hold the fourth Trilateral China-ROK-Japan Summit in Tokyo. Wen and Lee hold bilateral talks on the sidelines.

May 25, 2011: President Lee, during a meeting with unification advisors at Cheong Wa Dae, positively evaluates Kim Jong Il's frequent visits to China.

May 29-June 4, 2011: Eleven ROK diplomats tour Beijing, Shanghai, and Xinjiang's Urumuchi as part of a new diplomatic exchange program between Chinese and ROK Foreign Ministries.

May 31, 2011: The PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson calls for inter-Korean dialogue in response to North Korea's May 30 statement vowing to "never deal with" South Korea's Lee Myung-bak government.

June 2, 2011: The PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman reiterates China's call for a peaceful solution to the Korean Peninsula issue in response to North Korea's June 1 statement rejecting South Korea's proposal of holding three inter-Korean summits.

June 3, 2011: Major trade organizations of China, South Korea, and Japan call on their governments for early conclusion of trilateral free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations.

June 4, 2011: PRC Defense Minister Liang Guanglie and ROK counterpart Kim Kwan-jin hold talks on the sidelines of the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore.

June 6, 2011: PRC Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi and ROK counterpart Kim Sung-hwan hold talks in Budapest ahead of the 10th Asia-Europe Meeting of foreign ministers.

June 7-9, 2011: China and North Korea hold the second meeting of the Development Cooperation and Joint Steering Committee in Liaoning and Jilin on the Rason Economic and Trade Zone and Hwanggumphyong and Wihwa Islands Economic Zone.

June 8, 2011: Shandong's Qindao, Yantai, Rizhao, and Wihai Ports sign a strategic alliance with South Korea's largest Port of Busan aimed to integrate mutual logistics cooperation.

June 8-9, 2011: ROK nuclear envoy Wi Sung-lac visits China to meet counterpart Wu Dawei.

June 10, 2011: Copyright Protection Center of China and Copyright Commission of the ROK sign online copyright protection agreement at the seventh Sino-ROK Workshop on Copyright in Beijing.

June 10-14, 2011: A CPC delegation led by Li Yuanchao, head of the CPC Organization Department, visits North Korea for a "strategic dialogue" with DPRK counterparts, meeting Kim Yong Nam, president of the Presidium of the Supreme People's National Assembly, Choe Thae Bok, chairman of the Supreme People's Assembly, and Kim Jong Il.

June 15, 2011: PRC and DPRK maritime authorities launch first joint patrol on the Yalu River.

June 16, 2011: ROK media reports that China arrested 14 North Koreans in the border area in May as Beijing and Pyongyang intensified their crackdown on defectors.

June 17, 2011: The PRC Foreign Ministry states that China and Russia have agreed to deal with the DPRK nuclear issue only within the six-party framework, following talks between Hu Jintao and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev on June 16.

June 21, 2011: Media sources report that North Korea has recently imported increased amounts of anti-riot gear from China.

June 23, 2011: A delegation of the Pyongyang City Committee of the WPK led by Ri Yong Sik, chief secretary of the Phyongchon District Committee of the WPK, arrives in China.

June 24-28, 2011: Chen Zhenggao, deputy secretary of the Liaoning Provincial Committee of the CPC and governor of the Liaoning Provincial People's Government leads a delegation to North Korea and meets DPRK Premier Choe Yong Rim in Pyongyang.

June 28, 2011: China sends the first 120 government-brokered migrant workers to South Korea.

June 28, 2011: The PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman expresses China's opposition to any act undermining Korean Peninsula peace and stability in response to South Korean plans to conduct five-day military drills near the Demilitarized Zone.

June 30, 2011: Kim Jong Il sends a congratulatory message to President Hu Jintao on the 90th anniversary of the CPC.

July 1, 2011: A Shanghai tourist group led by Shi Quanxing, chief of the CPC branch of Shanghai Kumgang Tours Co. arrives in Pyongyang via the new Shanghai-Pyongyang air route.

July 2, 2011: A DPRK Red Cross Society delegation led by Paek Yong-ho, vice chairman of its Central Committee, arrives in Beijing to attend a meeting of Red Cross national organizations.

July 4, 2011: North Korea allows China's domestic trade cargo to be shipped from northeast to east China via Rajin port.

July 4, 2011: Sohn Hak-kyu, chairman of South Korea's opposition Democratic Party, meets Vice President Xi Jinping in Beijing.

July 5-9, 2011: A WPK delegation led by Thae Jong Su, alternate member of the WPK Political Bureau and member of the Secretariat, visits China and meets Zhou Yongkang, member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC.

July 9-12, 2011: PRC Vice Premier Zhang Dejiang leads a delegation to North Korea to attend events marking the 50th anniversary of the signing of the DPRK-China Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance.

July 9-12, 2011: Yang Hyong Sop, vice president of the Presidium of the DPRK's Supreme People's Assembly, leads a delegation to China and attends a reception on July 10 hosted by Ji Jae Ryong, DPRK ambassador to China, and attended by PRC State Councilor Dai Binguo.

July 14-17, 2011: ROK Defense Minister Kim Kwan-jin tours a Chinese Air Force base in Jiangsu province and meets PRC counterpart Liang Guanglie, Chief of the PLA General Staff Gen. Chen Bingde, State Councilor Dai Bingguo, and Vice President Xi Jinping in Beijing.

July 17-21, 2011: Chung Ui-hwa, deputy speaker of the ROK National Assembly, attends the sixth China-ROK inter-parliamentary meeting in China and holds talks with Wu Bangguo, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress.

July 21-23, 2011: PRC Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi and ROK counterpart Kim Sung-hwan attend the ASEAN Plus Three Foreign Ministers Meeting in Bali on July 21, EAS Foreign Ministers Consultation on July 22, and ARF Foreign Ministers meeting on July 23, holding bilateral talks on the sidelines on July 21.

July 22, 2011: Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi and DPRK counterpart Pak Ui Chun hold talks on the sidelines of the ARF in Bali. The PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson expresses support for bilateral talks held on the sidelines between ROK and DPRK envoys of the Six-Party Talks Wi Sung-lac and Ri Yong-ho.

July 25, 2011: Korean Air Lines Co. and Asiana Airlines Inc. launch direct flight services between Seoul and Huangshan, the first international flights to the city.

July 27-8, 2011: PRC Deputy Chief of General Staff Lt. Gen. Ma Xiaotian visits Seoul to hold the first China-ROK defense strategic dialogue with ROK Vice Defense Minister Lee Yong-gul and meets ROK Defense Minister Kim Kwang-jin and Chairman of South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Han Min-koo.

July 31, 2011: *Korean Central News Agency* announces that Beijing and the Red Cross Society of China have offered emergency flood relief materials to Pyongyang.

Aug. 4-7, 2011: Chinese Navy fleet visits Wonsan, North Korea, where Vice Adm. Tian Zong, commander of China's northern fleet, is received by DPRK Rear Adm. Kim Myong Sik.

Aug. 9, 2011: DPRK's Air Koryo expands flight service between Pyongyang and Shenyang.

Aug. 13, 2011: ROK Trade Minister Kim Jong-hoon at an ASEAN trade ministers meeting in Indonesia says that South Korea and China are considering negotiations on a bilateral FTA.

Aug. 16, 2011: South Korean retailer Lotte Mart Co. announces plans to expand its number of stores in China from 82 to 300 by the end of 2018.

Aug. 16, 2011: *Yonhap* reports that North Korea has installed surveillance cameras and barbed wire in border areas with China in an effort to contain defection.

Aug. 19, 2011: *JoongAng Ilbo* reports that Kim Jong Il during his May visit to China secured China's agreement to provide 200,000 tons of free fertilizer and 500,000 tons of discounted corn.

Aug. 22-25, 2011: North Korea holds an international trade fair at the Rason economic zone.

Aug. 25-27, 2011: Kim Jong Il visits Northeast China following his Russian tour and meets State Councilor Dai Binguo in Heilongjiang province on Aug. 26.

Aug. 25-26, 2011: Jon Chang Bok, chief of the General Logistics Bureau of the KPA Armed Forces Department, leads a Korean People's Army delegation to China and meets Liao Xilong, chief of the PLA General Logistics Department, and Defense Minister Liang Guanglie.

Aug. 25, 2011: ROK nuclear envoy Wi Sung-lac meets counterpart Wu Dawei in Beijing.

Aug. 28, 2011: China and South Korea agree to conduct a joint environmental study on the Yellow Sea.

Aug. 30, 2011: Lee Myung-bak names former chief of staff and Ambassador to China Woo Yoo-ik as new ROK unification minister.

Aug. 31-Sept. 2, 2011: The sixth China-ROK-Japan feasibility study meeting on a trilateral FTA is held in Changchun.