

Regional Overview:

Multilateralism Sputters Along, as North Korea Continues to Grab the Spotlight

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Several major multilateral gatherings during the past quarter--the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) meeting in Bangkok, the G-8 Summit in Okinawa, and even the much-heralded United Nations Millennium Summit in New York--served more to showcase key bilateral relationships and North Korea's continuing coming out than they did to promote multilateralism. In fact, North Korea managed to grab a large portion of the spotlight at the two summits without even attending. Meanwhile, U.S. preoccupation with Middle Eastern events limited U.S. participation and effectiveness in the two Asian meetings and raised continued doubts in the region about U.S. interest both in Asia and in multilateralism. Within the region, North-South Korea rapprochement continues, but with the emphasis still more on show than substance. Little noted and outside the spotlight, the ASEAN Plus Three (Japan, China, and South Korea) intra-regional multilateral initiative took on a new dimension with its first foreign ministers meeting. This may portend a shift in emphasis from purely economic deliberations to a broader regional security agenda, but is not expected to threaten the ARF process or U.S. interests.

ASEAN Regional Forum

This year's ARF meeting, in Bangkok on July 27, was most notable by its inclusion, for the first time, of the DPRK. North Korea's foreign minister Paek Nam-sun attended the annual, ministerial-level, security-oriented talks and also held historic side meetings with several of his counterparts, most notably U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and ROK Foreign Minister Lee Jong-binn. The meeting with Albright was the highest level official diplomatic contact ever between the two states and was thus significant in its own right. As Albright herself acknowledged, their meeting was "substantially modest, but a symbolically historic step." Paek's meetings with Albright and with his ROK counterpart garnered considerably more international press attention than did the ARF deliberations themselves, which included no earth-shattering events.

Of note, Albright missed the actual ARF meeting--Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott represented the U.S. at the formal session--arriving a day late, primarily for her bilateral meetings with Paek and with Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan. (She also attended the

ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference, where mostly economic and political, rather than security issues are discussed.) This is the third time in seven ARF meetings that Talbott has filled in for his boss (Secretary Albright and her predecessor Warren Christopher previously missed one each, both due to Middle East-related duties). This helps perpetuate the view in Southeast Asia that the U.S. has become less and less enamored with the ARF and with multilateralism in general, despite glowing official statements to the contrary.

(Had President Clinton also skipped the G-8 Summit, as some of his advisors wanted him to do in order to remain engaged in his Camp David Middle East talks, this would have further exacerbated this problem and been a large setback to U.S.-Japan relations as well. Fortunately, Clinton opted not to engage in another episode of Japan-passing, perhaps remembering the degree of damage and negative reaction that followed his decision to bypass Japan during his 1998 visit to China.)

The ARF Chairman's Statement touched upon many of the key security issues confronting the region, with the notable exception of the "internal matter" of China-Taiwan relations, which remains the region's most potentially explosive "non-issue." The ARF rightfully patted itself on the back for continued confidence building efforts, including attempts to deepen discussion on issues like preventive diplomacy and transnational crime. Progress on most of the issues has been excruciatingly slow, however. The voluntary preparation by some members this year of an Annual Security Outlook document also represents a modest but potentially important step toward greater regional transparency. What's needed now, in addition to full participation, is a standard outline, to encourage all states to address the same security aspects.

South China Sea. Of interest, with regard to "the situation in the South China Sea," the ministers encouraged "the promotion of confidence building measures" (along with the usual "exercise of self-restraint") while welcoming the efforts of ASEAN and China to develop a Regional Code of Conduct for the South China Sea. However, detailed discussion on this potentially explosive territorial dispute has generally been kept off the ARF agenda. Lest anyone confuse the Chairman's Statement with reality, when the Thai Chair tried to raise this issue, the Chinese Foreign Minister reportedly slapped down his attempt "brusquely and rudely," stating that China would "never" debate the Spratly issue in this broad multilateral forum.

Beijing has been willing to meet separately with ASEAN to discuss the South China Sea Code of Conduct; the third such meeting took place in late August in Dalian, China. While this effort is seen by some as a Chinese compromise aimed primarily at keeping the South China Sea issue off the broader ARF security agenda, some progress has reportedly been made at these ASEAN-PRC sessions. Nonetheless, significant differences of opinion remain, not only between the ASEAN states and China but even within ASEAN. For example, Vietnam would like to include the Paracels as well as the Spratlys in the discussion, while most of Hanoi's ASEAN brothers are not willing to confront Beijing on this issue. For its part, Beijing has also been quick to point out that the Code of Conduct, when and if promulgated, will merely be a political, rather than a legal document.

The biggest problem with the China-ASEAN Code of Conduct discussions and with the ARF's treatment of this issue is that everyone deliberately avoids one key player, Taiwan, which occupies the largest of the Spratly Islands (Itu Aba) and is thus a claimant in its own right. As Song Yann-huei of Academia Sinica in Taipei warns, "the possibility of Taiwan taking unilateral actions in the disputed area in support of its sovereignty and maritime jurisdictional claims should never be ruled out, given the fact that Taipei . . . was not invited to participate in the process of formulating the ASEAN-PRC Code of Conduct and thus cannot be expected to be bound by it."

Since it is unlikely that Beijing would ever agree to Taiwan participation in the ARF or in governmental PRC-ASEAN deliberations, a way must be devised to gain Taiwan's input and ultimate consent regarding the Code of Conduct process. This could best be handled either through the non-governmental (but quasi-official) Indonesia Workshops on the South China Sea or through the Confidence and Security Building Measures Working Group conducted under the auspices of the track two, non-governmental Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP)--PRC and Taiwan security specialists participate in both forums; I have the honor of co-chairing the latter. Thus far, however, Beijing has kept operational issues of this nature off the Indonesia Workshop agenda and has blocked any discussion of the Spratlys in CSCAP. The Chinese government has even issued demarches aimed (unsuccessfully) at preventing independent think tanks in the region from conducting multilateral discussions on South China Sea confidence building measures. Realistically speaking, however, unless China and ASEAN devise a way to bring Taiwan into the Code of Conduct discussion in some meaningful way, the Code will be ineffective and perhaps even counterproductive or destabilizing. Track two holds the answer.

Non-Proliferation. The ARF Chairman's Statement had its usual endorsement of regional and global non-proliferation efforts, as it carefully "took note of the call for all states to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and accede to the NPT [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty]." It had a particularly weak statement (even for the ARF) regarding nuclear non-proliferation and other destabilizing events in South Asia, merely noting that "the Ministers exchanged views on the situation in South Asia and some expressed their continuing concern." This not only reflects the need for consensus (ARF member India is not known for self-criticism) but also the desire of most members to put India's nuclear tests on the back burner and resume more normal relations with New Delhi. [*Editors' note: See this quarter's guest commentary by South Asia specialist Satu Limaye for more details.*] The same does not hold true for Islamabad, however; a proposal to offer ARF membership for Pakistan was soundly rejected.

Many had hoped that cooperative, as opposed to coercive diplomacy toward India might result in greater flexibility from New Delhi on the CTBT and NPT issues. This was certainly heavy on the mind of President Clinton during his visit to New Delhi last quarter and was likewise a key element behind Japanese Prime Minister Mori's visit to South Asia in August. Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee had an ideal opportunity to validate this approach during his speech at the Millennium Summit; he didn't!

ASEAN Plus Three. The foreign ministers from the ten ASEAN states plus Japan, China, and South Korea took advantage of being in the same place at the same time to hold the first ASEAN Plus Three foreign ministers meeting the day before the ARF meeting. This session, which they agreed to make an annual event, may signal a shift in emphasis from the ASEAN Plus Three's original focus on economic cooperation to a broader regional political/security agenda. While this grouping is comprised of the same members that would have constituted the East Asia Economic Group originally proposed by Malaysia Prime Minister Mahathir, ASEAN Plus Three has not drawn similar objections from Washington. Given the fact that most of its members are more dependent on access to U.S. markets than they are on trade with one another, the prospects of the grouping trying to form an exclusionary trade bloc appear slim.

Even if political or security topics are placed on the ASEAN Plus Three agenda, the odds are high that it will not seriously rival the ARF or move any faster than the broader ministerial grouping, since the biggest ARF footdraggers are all in ASEAN Plus Three. While U.S. endorsement of this effort is appropriate today, it is nonetheless worth watching to see if certain members will attempt to use this forum to pursue positions inimical to U.S. interests. Also of interest, at last November's ASEAN Plus Three summit in Manila, the non-ASEAN three--Japan, China, ROK--held their own separate session over breakfast to discuss economic cooperation. It remains to be seen if the three Northeast Asian leaders will again meet separately at this year's fall summit and, if so, whether the leaders will agree this time to put security as well as economic issues on their agenda. (Last year, Japan and the ROK wanted a broader agenda but Beijing insisted that the discussion be limited to economic issues only.)

Group of Eight Summit

The primary claim to fame of the July 21 G-8 Summit in Okinawa was its ignoble distinction of being the most expensive meeting in the 26 years of G-7/G-8 gatherings. While Tokyo made a concerted effort to focus attention on the special needs of developing countries in the global economy, "just stay at home, spend the money on debt relief!" heralded many of the region's editorials. This was somewhat unfair, since Tokyo poured a great deal of money to upgrade infrastructure in Okinawa--one of Japan's poorest prefectures--as well as in two other host cities. Even here it was not fully appreciated, however, as some resort owners complained that rooms that would have otherwise gone to freer-spending tourists during this busy season were rented instead, at reduced government rates, to bureaucrats who were attending meetings instead of buying snorkels or suntan oil.

G-8 Achievements. Despite the bad press, Tokyo did introduce several new components to this G-8 meeting that portend shifting regional priorities toward multilateral economic organizations. One is the special emphasis on harnessing information and communications technology (IT) for both industrialized and developing countries alike. The "Okinawa Charter on Global Information Society" may in the end not amount to much, but the task force it sets up to better integrate IT across borders is mirrored in a number of agreements

coming down the pike in the Asia Pacific region. The ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum will both meet in November with priority given to linking IT infrastructure and reducing the “digital divide” among richer and poorer members. It is notable how quickly these “new economy” initiatives are penned while “old economy” reforms, in agriculture, textiles, and auto parts for example, are stubbornly postponed.

Tokyo officials also tried to create a less elitist G-8 Summit, making special provisions for non-governmental organizations (NGO) to take part and having summit officials travel to various localities for public discussions. This innovation to the G-8 builds on earlier efforts by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organization (WTO), and World Bank to make their institutions more responsive to the globalization backlash. This recent attention to extending “new economy” benefits to the grassroots will continue in the upcoming November 2000 APEC meeting. Brunei’s theme for APEC 2000 is “Delivering to the Community,” which stresses providing access to education and skills development to all segments of society. Whether APEC can make a decisive difference in this area remains to be seen, but it is notable that in public pronouncements, leaders are not turning their backs on globalization “from above” nor the needs of their citizens “from below,” but rather are alert to the challenges of managing both.

Putin’s Party. These modest achievements notwithstanding, the Summit was really Vladimir Putin’s show. The Russian leader, making his presidential debut at a G-8 Summit, stole the show and the preponderance of headlines with his announcement about North Korean leader Kim Jong-il’s purported missile deal—an offer to halt satellite launches (i.e., long-range missile tests) if another country (then presumed and later confirmed to be the U.S.) would launch the North’s satellites, at no cost to Pyongyang of course. Putin had visited Pyongyang (and Beijing) immediately prior to the G-8 meeting and his trip report helped to keep the North Korean leader in the international spotlight as well, even if he was not invited to the meeting. The Korean Peninsula received some additional attention at the meeting as well, as a result of a summit declaration supporting the evolving intra-Korean dialogue; an initiative sponsored by Japanese Prime Minister Mori as a friendly gesture to ROK President Kim Dae-jung.

Only Joking? While the missile offer earned international headlines and was not denied by Foreign Minister Paek during the following week’s ARF meeting, its seriousness was subsequently cast into doubt by Kim Jong-il himself. In an interview with ROK media chiefs, Kim is reported to have said “I told Putin that \$200 million to \$300 million is needed to launch a rocket and that if the U.S. launches our satellites into orbit instead, we’ll stop developing them.” But then the mercurial Kim stated, “I made this and other remarks . . . as a passing, laughing matter. Putin did not respond at that time but he later seized on it firmly and things happened like that.” The fact that Chairman Kim said it laughingly does not necessarily make it only a joke, however. The U.S. has taken it seriously enough to send its special Korean emissary, Ambassador Wendy Sherman, to Moscow to discuss the issue. And, Kim Jong-il’s own final words on this issue to the South Korean news chiefs indicate he may indeed be willing to cut a deal (as well as indicating how much Kim enjoys playing

the gadfly role): “I am sure [my proposal] is a headache for the United States. It does not want to give us money, but has to stop our scientific research. That must be a great headache.”

National Missile Defense. Putin’s implied message that the North Korean missile threat could be easily bought off played nicely into his efforts at the G-8 Summit and elsewhere to rally support against the U.S. national missile defense (NMD) plan. Several of the European G-8 leaders have made no secret of their own objection to Washington’s unilateral approach toward NMD, so Putin had a ready and willing audience. (Not surprisingly, a condemnation of NMD also figured prominently in the joint communiqué issued after Putin’s en route meeting with Chinese President Jiang Zemin in Beijing.) Only Tokyo, which is itself less than enthused about NMD, given its potential adverse consequences for the future of arms control efforts, managed to express “understanding” for the U.S. position. Clinton’s shortened itinerary gave Putin an additional edge in making the anti-NMD case.

While President Putin continues to lead the charge against NMD and seems eager to increase his profile in Asia in general and on the Korean Peninsula in particular, it is interesting to note that he did not seize the opportunity to offer Russian satellite launching services to Pyongyang. This seems to be a relatively low cost way of gaining international points and improving Russian influence with Pyongyang, while at the same time denying NMD advocates their most convenient excuse.

President Clinton’s subsequent announcement, on September 1, that he was going to defer the decision to develop and deploy NMD to the next administration has helped to somewhat defuse this issue. For example, Putin unexpectedly downplayed the issue at the following week’s UN Millennium Summit. But, regardless of who wins the U.S. elections in November, NMD is sure to remain a contentious issue between Washington and both Moscow and Beijing. It will also continue to give Russia common cause with many U.S. allies, who will be watching closely to see how the next U.S. president handles this sensitive issue.

North-South Korea: Atmospherics Good, but Little Reciprocity

North and South Korea continue to bask in the afterglow of the historic June summit between ROK President Kim Dae-jung and North Korea’s supreme leader Kim Jong-il in Pyongyang. This unprecedented attempt at South-North rapprochement was rightfully praised at the ARF and the G-8 Summit, and frequently during the UN Millennium Summit as well. Foreign Minister Paek’s meeting with his counterpart during the Bangkok ARF, and several high-profile visits to South Korea by North Korean emissaries, including the DPRK Defense Minister, maintained the momentum, as did the dramatic, highly emotional August 15 exchange visits between 100 each North and South Korean families separated since the Korean War.

Millennium Mishap. The UN meeting promised to be a high profile event for the DPRK’s ceremonial head of state Kim Yong-nam, until fate, in the form of security conscious

American Airlines employees in Frankfurt, intervened. Airline employees are required to pay special attention to visitors from countries on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism and North Korea, much to its dismay and despite continuing protests, remains on this list. The Kim entourage blamed the insulting behavior and the delay it caused for its decision not to continue on to New York, thereby gaining even larger headlines by not attending the meeting. While it is unlikely (although not impossible) that Pyongyang preplanned its overreaction to the vigorous security screening, it has certainly tried to capitalize on the incident, demanding that Washington immediately remove North Korea from its terrorist sponsor's list. For its part, Washington has reportedly made it clear what steps Pyongyang must take if it wants to be removed--expulsion of Japanese Red Army terrorists being a prime condition--but Pyongyang has not responded positively to U.S. conditions.

Defense Ministers Meet. The most anticipated North-South event of the quarter was the first ever meeting between ROK Defense Minister Cho Sung-tae and DPRK Defense Minister Kim Il-chul in Cheju, South Korea on September 25. One of the major criticisms of the North-South sunshine effort has been the lack of dialogue on security issues. Many in South Korea hoped that the defense ministers' meeting would provide a breakthrough in this area; most were disappointed by the results. North Korean spokesmen made it clear before the meeting that they were coming to discuss only one topic--the opening of the North-South railroad line through the demilitarized zone--and that was all Minister Kim was willing to discuss. The ROK had hoped that they could at least make some progress in establishing a North-South military hotline--originally a North Korean proposal--but the North Koreans retained their single issue focus.

The discussions apparently centered on the operational and administrative details involved in opening up the heavily mined former rail corridor in order to reinstate rail and road traffic between the two capitals. Not surprisingly, South Korea is expected to fund the bulk of the project. Most disturbingly, there was apparently little or no discussion of the security implications of such a move. At a minimum, before landmines are removed and roads are constructed or paved, one would expect that some type of passive monitoring devices would be agreed to in order to ensure that the rail and roadway are used strictly for peaceful purposes.

Reciprocity is the Key. The word that is heard more and more frequently in the ROK in discussions on North-South Korean affairs is reciprocity. Some are more willing than others to accept asymmetrical reciprocity, but even the most ardent supporters of the Sunshine Policy toward North Korea are becoming concerned with the increased perception that rapprochement is a one-way street. Many South Koreans are also becoming concerned about the costs of engagement. The first divided families visit reportedly cost Seoul millions of dollars, as did its sponsorship of a visit to the ROK of a North Korean symphony orchestra. As the Pacific Forum's James Kelly has noted, "everyone knew the cost of reunification was prohibitive, but no one knew just how expensive peaceful coexistence would be."

While ROK opposition parties pay lip service to the Sunshine Policy and praise the summit as the ground-breaking event that it is, Kim Dae-jung is becoming more and more vulnerable politically as a result of the high costs involved in playing suitor to the North, especially in light of the perceived lack of genuine reciprocity. Some ROK critics also allege that President Kim's legacy has become so attached to progress on North-South issues that he is too willing to give Pyongyang the benefit of the doubt and has squandered the leverage that the South should enjoy, given the North's growing economic dependence on Seoul's largesse.

North Korea's Smile Diplomacy. Elsewhere on the diplomatic front, Pyongyang's international smile diplomacy continued apace. North Korea entered into consultations and later relations with Canada, normalized ties with the Philippines and New Zealand, sought promises of improved ties with the European Union, and received an offer of facilitation from Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo. In late September, Pyongyang reportedly made additional overtures by letter to Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain, Britain, and the European Commission. Normalization talks between Japan and North Korea also resumed but made only limited progress, despite Prime Minister Mori's oft-stated desire to hold his own summit with Kim Jong-il.

Policy Implications

All in all, it has been a generally positive quarter for North-South relations, but concern is growing in many quarters in the ROK about the perceived one-way nature of North-South relations. I would argue that the current North-South momentum cannot be sustained without some genuine gestures of reciprocity by the North, including some progress on military confidence building measures.

As far as U.S. policy is concerned, Asians appear to be looking past the current administration while watching closely for signals from the candidates, and after November 7, from the new president-elect, regarding the future direction of U.S. policy in Asia. Both major candidates have made it clear that they will seek to engage, not contain China and that America's alliance-based strategy will continue; it is less clear how either will approach regional multilateral initiatives. How the next president handles the NMD issue will also have a great bearing on U.S. relations with allies and potential antagonists alike.

Regional Chronology

July-September 2000

July 4-8, 2000: Australia's ambassador to China, who also serves as ambassador to the DPRK, visits North Korea.

July 5, 2000: U.S. Marine stationed in Futenma is arrested for molesting a 14-year old girl in Okinawa.

July 5, 2000: Russian President Putin and PRC President Jiang meet separately in Dushanbe, Tajikistan during "Shanghai Five" forum with Central Asian states.

July 7, 2000: U.S. and China open arms talks in PRC.

July 8, 2000: U.S. Under Secretary of State John Holum tells PRC that the U.S. will not rule out providing Taiwan with theater missile defense (TMD).

July 10, 2000: New Russian foreign policy doctrine names China and India as priority countries in Asia, urges Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty signature by India and Pakistan.

July 10-12, 2000: Australian Prime Minister John Howard visits India.

July 10-12, 2000: U.S. and DPRK resume missile talks.

July 11-14, 2000: Defense Secretary Cohen visits China.

July 12, 2000: North Korea and the Philippines sign agreement formally reestablishing diplomatic ties.

July 13, 2000: U.S. and Vietnam sign trade agreement.

July 14, 2000: Assistant Secretary of State Einhorn meets informally with South Korean foreign ministry officials to discuss the ROK's entry to the Missile Technology Control Regime.

July 14, 2000: Sino-ROK agreement is reached resolving trade dispute over Chinese garlic exports to South Korea.

July 15, 2000: Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) Convention decides not to change "Republic of Taiwan" plank in DPP charter.

July 16, 2000: Over 6,000 Okinawans protest against U.S. military presence.

July 17-18, 2000: President Putin visits Beijing, holds first summit meeting with President Jiang; a joint communiqué is issued condemning U.S. development of national missile defense.

July 19, 2000: Putin visits Pyongyang for meetings with Kim Jong-il. Putin later announces that Kim will eliminate missile program if another country launches satellites for North Korea.

July 20, 2000: Tokyo hosts meetings with the leaders of South Africa, Algeria, Nigeria, and Thailand in preparation for the G-8 Summit.

July 21-23, 2000: G-8 Summit in Okinawa, Clinton meets with Japanese PM Mori and with Putin.

July 25, 2000: Philippine President Joseph Estrada begins ten-day working visit to the U.S., meets with President Clinton.

July 27, 2000: At World Trade Organization meeting, PRC proposes Taiwan accession as a “separate customs territory of China;” U.S. objects.

July 27, 2000: Senior inter-Korean talks in Seoul.

July 27, 2000: ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) meeting in Bangkok. North Korea joins.

July 28, 2000: Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan and DPRK Foreign Minister Paek Nam-sun meet separately with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in Bangkok; ROK-DPRK Foreign Ministers meet.

July 30-31, 2000: Secretary Albright visits Japan.

Aug. 2, 2000: ROK President Kim and PM Mori confer via telephone on inter-Korean summit and ARF.

Aug. 2-3, 2000: South Korea and the U.S. conduct Status of Forces Agreement negotiations.

Aug. 2-5, 2000: USS Chancellorsville visits PRC port of Qingdao, the first visit since the Belgrade bombing.

Aug. 4, 2000: Taiwan makes its (soon to be unsuccessful) eighth bid for a UN seat.

Aug. 5, 2000: Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien visits Pyongyang.

Aug. 5-12, 2000: South Korean media executives visit North Korea, interview Kim Jong-il.

Aug. 9-10, 2000: U.S. and DPRK hold missile talks in Pyongyang.

Aug. 12, 2000: Russian nuclear submarine, Kursk, goes down in the Barents Sea.

Aug. 12, 2000: Kim Jong-il confirms DPRK missile sales to Iran and Syria, refers to the missile-satellite offer as a “joke.”

Aug. 13, 2000: Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian in L.A. for “transit stop” en route to Central America.

Aug. 14, 2000: North and South Korean liaison offices re-open in Panmunjom.

Aug. 15-18, 2000: North-South Korean family reunions.

Aug. 16, 2000: FM Nguyen meets with ROK FM Lee in Seoul.

Aug. 18, 2000: A seven member Chinese military delegation visits Delhi, the first such exchange since India’s nuclear tests in 1998.

Aug. 19, 2000: Taiwan President Chen says unification is not Taiwan’s only option.

Aug. 20, 2000: DPRK team of negotiators arrive in Japan.

Aug. 21, 2000: Scaled-back U.S.-ROK annual military drill, Ulchi Focus Lens, begins.

Aug. 21-25, 2000: PM Mori of Japan visits South Asia, first visit by a Japanese PM in 10 years.

Aug. 22-24, 2000: Talks resume in Tokyo on reestablishing diplomatic relations between Japan and DPRK.

Aug. 28-29, 2000: U.S. delegation led by Ambassador Wendy Sherman meets with senior Russian officials in Moscow to discuss DPRK missile offer.

Aug. 28-31, 2000: Japanese FM Kono meets with President Jiang, Prime Minister Zhu, and FM Tang in China.

Aug. 28, 2000-Sept. 4, 2000: ROK General Cho Yung-kil makes the first-ever visit to China by a Chairman of the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Aug. 29, 2000: PM Mori and Indian PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee meet in New Delhi.

Aug. 29-31, 2000: Second round of inter-Korean ministerial talks is held.

Aug. 31, 2000: Kim Jong-il meets with ROK Unification Minister Park Jae-Kyu in Pyongyang.

Sept. 1, 2000: U.S.-ROK-Japan Trilateral Coordination Oversight Group (TCOG) meeting in Seoul.

Sept. 1, 2000: President Clinton announces that the decision on national missile defense will be deferred to the next administration.

Sept. 1, 2000: Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir begins a three-day visit to the U.S.

Sept. 2, 2000: 63 DPRK prisoners of war are returned to the North from the ROK.

Sept. 3-5, 2000: President Putin meets with PM Mori in Japan.

Sept. 4, 2000: Deputy Mayor of Taipei makes unofficial visit to China.

Sept. 5, 2000: North Korea delegation to the UN summit cancels trip because of airport searches by U.S. airline employees in Frankfurt.

Sept. 5-8, 2000: Nine Philippine Senate members visit the DPRK.

Sept. 6-8, 2000: UN Millennium Summit in New York.

Sept. 6-8, 2000: Fourth ARF Heads of Defense Colleges meeting is held in Beijing.

Sept. 6-16, 2000: PM Vajpayee visits the U.S., attending the UN summit and going to Washington.

Sept. 8, 2000: Presidents Clinton and Jiang exchange views on Sino-U.S. relations and on issues of common concern in New York. Jiang also gives a luncheon address to American top business executives and leading foreign affairs experts.

Sept. 8, 2000: Kim Dae-jung proposes to reactivate the Four-Party Talks involving the two Koreas, U.S., and China in “two-plus-two” format to pursue North-South peace agreement endorsed by the U.S. and PRC.

Sept. 10, 2000: Cambodian King Norodom Sihanouk meets with President Jiang in Beijing.

Sept. 10-15, 2000: Vietnamese PM Phan Van Khai visits Moscow.

Sept. 11, 2000: Vice Premier Qian states, in an on-the-record interview with overseas media, that “there is only one China, the Mainland and Taiwan both belong to one China, China’s sovereignty and territory cannot be divided.”

Sept. 11, 2000: Philippine President Estrada cuts short a visit to Hawaii as Philippine offensive begins against Abu Sayyaf.

Sept. 11-14, 2000: DPRK official Kim Yong-sun meets with Kim Dae-jung in Seoul.

Sept. 12, 2000: Secretary Albright and FM Kono sign agreement to reaffirm five more years of host nation support for U.S. troops in Japan.

Sept. 12, 2000: Japanese Defense Minister Torashima meets with Defense Secretary Cohen at the Pentagon.

Sept. 13, 2000: Secretary Cohen begins a ten-day trip to the Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, South Korea, and Japan.

Sept. 15, 2000: North and South Korea march under unification flag at Sydney Olympics.

Sept. 15-18, 2000: Indian navy ships visit China.

Sept. 16, 2000: Li Peng, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the PRC National Peoples Congress, meets with President Putin in Moscow.

Sept. 18, 2000: Assistant Secretary Einhorn visits Seoul for missile talks.

Sept. 18, 2000: ROK government withholds permission for the Dalai Lama to visit Seoul on November 16. Buddhist groups indicate they will seek public support to overturn the decision.

Sept. 18, 2000: DPRK Ambassador to the UN Li Hyung-chol and ROK Foreign Minister Lee meet in New York.

Sept. 19, 2000: U.S. Senate approves permanent normal trade relations with China.

Sept. 19, 2000: Defense Secretary Cohen proposes that the U.S., PRC, and Japan hold multilateral military drills as a means to ensure greater stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

Sept. 19, 2000: New Zealand delegation arrives in Pyongyang to discuss bilateral ties.

Sept. 20, 2000: U.S.-ROK Security Consultative Meeting begins in Seoul.

Sept. 21, 2000: Secretary Cohen and ROK Defense Minister Cho meet, call on DPRK for “substantial measures” to reduce tensions.

Sept. 22-24, 2000: President Kim meets with PM Mori in Japan.

Sept. 23-26, 2000: Singapore Senior Minister Lee Kwan Yew visits Chen Shui-bian in Taiwan.

Sept. 25, 2000: Vietnamese PM Pham Van Khai visits Beijing at Premier Zhu's invitation.

Sept. 25, 2000: PRC's *China Daily* reports that Japan's growing military is a threat to global security.

Sept. 26, 2000: U.S. federal judge rejects WWII enslavement lawsuits against Mitsui and Mitsubishi, stating that the San Francisco Treaty of 1951 settled all disputes.

Sept. 26, 2000: William Perry resigns as DPRK policy coordinator, Wendy Sherman is appointed as Perry's replacement.

Sept. 26-27, 2000: DPRK and Canada hold negotiations on diplomatic normalization in Beijing.

Sept. 27, 2000: U.S. and North Korea resume missile talks.

Sept. 27, 2000: DPRK's *Rodung Shinmun* calls for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Korea.

Sept. 27-28, 2000: North and South Korean Defense Ministers meet in Cheju, ROK.

Sept. 28, 2000: North and South Korea agree to set up a joint economic consultation body.