



## **DPRK CLAIMS TO SUPPORT KAESONG AFTER NUKE TEST**

With the North Korean nuclear test on May 25 and the South Korean government's announcement that it plans to fully participate in PSI the following day, relations between the two are expected to deteriorate further. However, on May 26, the newspaper *Chosun Sinbo*, which serves as the mouthpiece for the General Association of (North) Korean Residents in Japan and an unofficial voice of Pyongyang, ran an article stating that the North continued to support the Kaesong Industrial Complex.

The paper ran an article titled "Kaesong Industrial Complex's Basis is Our Nation's Principle," in which it stated that the North Korean position had not changed regarding the industrial zone, and that it still supported Kaesong's development. It went on to state that despite the currently stalled inter-Korean relations, the North was working to invite South Korean officials to renegotiations.

The article indicated that, as the North's previous statement to South Korean officials that "those not acknowledging the June 15 Joint Statement and the October 4 Declaration" could not be recipients of the fruits of those agreements, those who recognize the two declarations could benefit from inter-Korean cooperation.

However, as North Korea sees the South's membership in PSI as an "act of war", the future direction of inter-Korean relations is questionable. In particular, the article warned that the North's announcement that it would adopt a "resolute response" to the South's decision to join PSI could be followed up with more than words, although how that might occur was not



stipulated. Some believe that access to the KIC could be blocked, just as the North had done during the joint U.S.-ROK Key Resolve military training exercise, and that the North could escalate tensions by seeking a naval confrontation near the Northern Limit Line in the West Sea. If the North were to take such actions, the future of the Kaesong Industrial Complex could become much less clear, despite both governments' declarations to the contrary.