



**(U) International Incident Avoided, Thanks to Intelligence**

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Combating Proliferation, High-Interest Cargo Branch (S2G23)  
Run Date: 05/30/2006

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*(TS//SI//REL) US intelligence regarding a North Korean ship convinces Israelis not to board, thereby averting a politically sensitive incident. Israelis feared the ship was carrying missile-related cargo to Syria or Iran.*

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(S//SI//REL) In early October 2005, several vessels were observed loading cargo at the Secured Storage Area (SSA) in the Songnim Port Facility, North Korea. Why was this news? Since the SSA is known to support Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and military-related cargo shipments, the Intelligence Community pays special attention to vessels which depart that facility. In this case, based upon SIGINT reporting and supporting imagery, we began to track and report on one of the vessels, the Song Hoa 1.



*(U//FOUO) North Korean ship Song Hoa 1*

(TS//SI//REL) As of late November, while this vessel was in the Suez Canal waiting to transit, our Israeli SIGINT partner (ISNU) approached us through the Foreign Affairs Directorate (FAD) asking about the nature of the cargo on board the Song Hoa 1. It became clear that the Israelis had intelligence suggesting that the vessel was carrying missile-related cargo, and that they were prepared to board the vessel based upon their intelligence source. The Israelis were determined not to allow this cargo to reach the intended recipients, either Syria or Iran, if it was in fact missile-related.

(TS//SI//REL) Working with various entities, we were able to arrange for the Egyptians to inspect the cargo on Song Hoa 1 while it was in the Suez Canal. We then worked closely within the Intelligence Community, and with the full support of the National Security Council, to provide feedback to the Israelis. Subsequent SIGINT convinced us that there was no cargo worthy of a boarding and the potential international incident that would follow.

(S//SI//REL) **While part of the success story was averting an unwanted international event, the perhaps more far-reaching success story was the cooperation that existed** as this vessel was tracked from North Korea to eventually Syria. We worked extremely closely with CP SIGDEV\*, the Maritime Analysis Support Team (MAST) in Denver, and NSOC\*. In addition, coordination across product lines, in particular between CP and MENA\*, as well as with the Cryptologic Center in Georgia helped enhance the SIGINT picture.

(TS//SI//REL) The NSA, CIA, ONI\*, and NGA\* team was complemented by our new relationship with ISNU. In fact, **a result of this incident may be the further sharing of critical WMD proliferation data among international partners.** Our ability to work with key Intelligence Community partners continues to improve, and our relationships with 2nd and 3rd party partners is expanding and providing extra benefits to our consumers.

(TS//SI//REL) The Song Hoa 1 event is a very good example of SIGINT leading the way, and providing key policymakers with the right information to take the proper action. In fact, the close cooperation between NSA and the ISNU on Song Hoa 1 was cited as a success story in discussions between DIRNSA and his ISNU counterpart.

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\*(U//FOUO) Notes:

CP SIGDEV = Combating Proliferation SIGINT Development

NSOC = National Security Operations Center

MENA = Middle East/North Africa  
ONI = Office of Naval Intelligence  
NGA = National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency

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TOP SECRET // SI / TK // REL TO USA AUS CAN GBR NZL  
DERIVED FROM: NSA/CSSM 1-52, DATED 08 JAN 2007 DECLASSIFY ON: 20320108