

Prospects for Denuclearization in Northeast Asia and Policy of Russia

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Specificity of Security Agenda in Northeast Asia

International security agenda in Northeast Asia (and in Asia in general) is slightly different from security agendas in Europe or on American continent. It has different priorities, specific threats and challenges, and lacks collective security mechanisms. The issues of enlargement of NATO, proportional cuts in American and Russian nuclear arsenals, partition of empires and emergence of new independent states are non-issues in this region, at least they are out of focus. Instead, security agenda is filled with issues of migration, drug trafficking, fight against piracy on seas and in straits, status of various islands, delimitation of maritime borders, split nations (China-Taiwan, two reunited Vietnams, two separated Koreas).

Northeast Asia demonstrates that new security agenda already has been shaped, while old traditional security dilemmas are yet not resolved. Those “old” dilemmas include presence of foreign military bases, danger of nuclear war, safety of peaceful nuclear technologies, issue of accumulation of fissile materials, absence of structuralized arms control and disarmament.

Asia in general and Northeast Asia in particular lacks mechanisms of not only nuclear arms control, but as well mechanisms of transparency, data exchange and verified cuts in conventional weapons. Asia lacks universal international security organization (of OSCE type), and role of the United Nations here is visibly weaker than required. While some international organizations and formats like ASEAN, ARF, APEC are developing, they don't assign to themselves functions of international security regulators. As a result, the geopolitical role and projection of interests of global powers, including USA, China and Russia, is higher in Northeast Asia than in many other regions.

Principles for Working Group on NEA Peace and Security Mechanism

Some components of the regional security system for Northeast Asia are very slowly shaping within such frameworks, as Conference on Confidence-building Measures in Asia, Six-party Talks or Asian Regional Forum. Special profile *Working Group on Northeast Asia peace and security mechanism* has been established through the Six-party Talks framework under the chairmanship of Russia. The very concept of this Working group reflects the conviction of Moscow that the task to return North Korea in perspective to non-nuclear status is not an isolated issue by itself – it should be considered within a broader context of creating complex of stable and “all-weather” mechanisms of peace

support, transparency, arms control, disarmament, verification, general security guaranties within the region and between the countries of the region and global powers. Some practical results have already been reached under the auspices of the Working Group – in particular, main directions of the project of “Guiding principles for peace and security in Northeast Asia” have been agreed upon.

Working Group, whose activity was praised by the Secretary General of the United Nations Ban Ki-Moon, may be interpreted as an attempt to “economize” and “humanize” the security dialogue around North Korea and NEA security. American analysts S.Haggard and M.Noland claim that “major task for Northeast Asia peace and security mechanism should be integration of North Korea into Northeast Asian economy”¹. South Korean Annual Diplomatic White paper broadens such an approach stressing that such a mechanism must help to involve North Korea into broad international dialogue by various dimensions.

As Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia specified, “Main task for Asian-Pacific region is to overcome “watersheds” erected in the region, to combine existing “capstones” and “bricks” to build comprehensive “security architecture”, to provide creation of unified space of security and cooperation. Effectiveness of that future security architecture can be assured only when recognition of lawful interests of all states will become a norm of regional life. Asian-Pacific region needs multi-dimensional, multi-layer architecture of security and cooperation that would be based on collective decision-making, equal rights for different states, transparency, recognized principles of international law”².

Russian approach stresses exactly multi-dimensional, multi-layer character of the potential security architecture for NEA. Denuclearization of the region cannot be interpreted as focused only and mainly on the DPRK’s current nuclear capabilities. Path towards denuclearization and to establishing an “all-weather” peace and security mechanism include other important “layers”:

- issue of presence of components of nuclear arsenals of China, Russia and the USA on the geographical territory of the NEA region, including military bases and maritime passage of ships and submarines with nuclear weapons onboard;
- political and economic guaranties towards North Korea assuring end of its international isolation and involvement (under certain conditions) into

¹ <http://www.petersoninstitute.org/publications/pb/pb08-4.pdf>, p. 1.

² «Asian Vector of Policy of Russia and Modernization of the Country». Interview with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia A.N.Borodavkin. – «International Life» Journal (published by the Russian MFA), №8, 2010.

international family of nations (in other words, political and economic compensational stimuli for giving up with nuclear capabilities);

- assurance in any foreseeable future of non-nuclear status of other countries of the NEA region, namely of Republic of Korea and of Japan;
- creation of stable and long term mechanism (or combination of mechanisms) for negotiations, transparency, data exchange, verification between the countries of the region (involving global powers present in the region) to assure continuity and further non-violation of potential denuclearized status of the NEA region.

Practical Steps of Russia Towards Nuclear Disarmament and Major Obstacles to Further Progress

First of all, Russia considers full elimination of nuclear weapons in the world scale to be one of paramount directions of strengthening strategic stability and international security. Moscow supports principles of equal and indivisible security for all states without exception. Russia provided in recent decades a practical input into the move towards denuclearization in the following formats:

Under the Treaty on Intermediate and Shorter Range Missiles (INF, 1987) Moscow liquidated above 1800 ballistic and cruise missiles with the range of 500-5500 km and above 800 launchers for them. All in all above 3000 nuclear warheads with combined yield of 500 000 Kt have been deactivated. Currently Russia supports universalization of the INF and suggests other nuclear nations to join it.

Russian Federation fully implemented its obligations under the START-I Treaty of 1991 (implementation finished by 2009) and under the Moscow Treaty of 2002. Russia decreased the quantity of deployed strategic warheads from the level of 9000 down to the level of 1700. It also liquidated above 1600 launchers for intercontinental land-based and sea-based ballistic missiles and, above 3100 ICBMs and SLBMs, about 50 nuclear submarines formerly equipped with strategic missiles, and about 70 heavy nuclear bombers.

On a parallel track to cuts in strategic arsenal, Russia decreased its non-strategic nuclear arsenal in four times, withdrew all non-strategic arsenal from advanced basing and concentrated it in central storages within its national territory. That is what Russia symmetrically requires from other nuclear powers.

Currently Russia is in process of implementation of the START-III Treaty concluded with the United States in 2010³. The Treaty significantly (by one third) reduces combined quantity of deployed nuclear warheads (down to 1550

³ START-III Treaty entered into force on February 5, 2011 and will be in implementation till 2020.

from the ceiling of 2200 permitted by the previous Moscow Treaty), and cuts in more than two times quantity of strategic carriers (down to 700 from the previously agreed level of 1600).

Next downsizing of permitted level for Russian and American deployed nuclear warheads may be settled at 1000 units (or less) for each side (such proposals were discussed both in Russia and in the USA). But, unfortunately, general cooling in Western-Russian relations in connection with recent events around Ukraine blocked (let's hope – temporarily) further dialogue on this direction.

After conclusion of the START-III Treaty in 2010 Moscow slowed down efforts on nuclear disarmament direction. This was connected to recognizing of interrelation between further disarmament and other factors influencing strategic stability. Moscow stresses the following factors that break further denuclearization:

- development of wide range of strategic carriers reoriented from nuclear to conventional but high power and high precision warheads;
- spreading of the US plans for a global ABM system that would deprive other nuclear powers (China and Russia included) from reliable deterring capabilities;
- absence of progress with ratification of CTBT (and respective risk of developing and testing new generations of nuclear weapons);
- refuse of the USA to support Russian and Chinese initiatives on prohibition of nuclear weapons in outer space;
- qualitative and quantitative disbalances in the area of conventional weapons;
- growing risk of further horizontal nuclear proliferation under conditions of visible weakening of NPT regime.

At the same time Russia considers this combination of factors curbing further nuclear disarmament to be of temporal nature. General intension of Russia to move in direction of further nuclear disarmament and fulfilling all its existing disarmament obligations remains intact, even in conditions of Western sanctions against Russia and of current general sharpening of international tensions.

Reaching A Comprehensive Agreement on Peace and Security in Northeast Asia Is A Multi-Stage Process

Experience of Europe (with numerous overlapping security-related institutions and formats) and of Russian–American arms control negotiations throughout decades proves that concrete technical tasks, from one side, and overall political goals, from the other side, hardly could be reached within the same one unified security mechanism. In the last decade Russia put forward initiative of

concluding the comprehensive European Security Treaty (EST), and elaborated draft text of such a binding international document⁴. But the very idea of a binding international treaty of such a broad character and of continental scope didn't get enough support among many (mostly Western) nations. Argumentation elaborated and presented by Western diplomats and political leaders in process of debates over the EST can be readdressed to the proposal (advocated by American scholar M.H.Halperin⁵ and some other supporters) to aim towards elaboration and conclusion of one combined "Comprehensive Agreement on Peace and Security in NEA". Such an agreement, as he advocates, might be elaborated mostly on a bilateral basis between the USA and the DPRK, and then supported by other powers of the region and participants of the Six-party talks, with involvement of out-of-region powers like Mongolia and Canada.

General intention to broaden conditions discussed between DPRK and its Six-party Talks partners from pure denuclearization of DPRK towards general political assurances of no hostile intent and cooperative mechanisms of mega-regional scale is by itself right and deserves support. But ability to pack several lines of negotiations on general security guaranties, establishing regional nuclear-weapons-free zone, technicalities of nuclear weapons dismantlement, further verification and transparency into one agreement is doubtful.

Moscow considers that move towards overall denuclearization of Northeast Asia (with reestablishing non-nuclear status of the DPRK as one element of this broader process) involves many step-by-step processes and layers of negotiations, such as:

- Preservation and stabilization of the overall Non-Proliferation regime in world scale, including coordinated policy of P5 powers (and that is a non-guaranteed task in current conditions of new wave of Western-Russian geopolitical contradictions and mutual sanctions);
- Definitive progress in world-scale denuclearization (first of all deep cuts under START-III in nuclear arsenals of the USA and Russia that still possess together about 95% of world nuclear weapons);
- Timely preparation of next nuclear arms cuts treaty following START-III (that will end in 2020);

⁴ Text of Draft for the «European Security Treaty» has been distributed in November-December 2009 to all UN-member states and is available at the Internet-site of the Russian President (<http://eng.kremlin.ru/news/275>).

⁵ «A Comprehensive Agreement on Peace and Security in Northeast asia: An Approach to Break the Gridlock». Papers by Morton H.Halperin presented at RECNA Workshops in Nagasaki, December 2012 and Tokyo, September 2014.

- Non-violation of already reached and/or implemented agreement in nuclear disarmament, such as INF Treaty;
- Expansion of Russian-American limitations onto the intermediate and shorter range nuclear missiles onto other nuclear states (universalization of the INF);
- Promoting of Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) finally enter into force (from countries belonging to or represented at the NEA region the USA, PRC and DPRK belong to the group of designated 44 states whose signing and ratification of the CTBT is mandatory for its entering into force);
- Progress towards conclusion of Fissile Materials Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT)
- Applying to Asia (and specifically to Northeast Asia) an arsenal of transparency, trust and verification measures that have been elaborated and applied in other continents, for example, involving countries of the NEA region (China, first of all) into the Open Sky Treaty with its transparency and inspections procedures;

Only when all or at least a significant part of above mentioned steps will be implemented in Northeast Asia, then combination of two interconnected processes may take place:

- Providing wide range of political and economic guaranties of survival and normal development for DPRK in case of giving up nuclear capabilities, as well as reassuring political security guaranties for all countries of the region that restrained from obtaining nuclear weapons;
- Negotiations on establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Northeast Asia (of broader or narrower configuration discussed further in this article) with respective binding Treaty and Protocol of Guaranties on the side of P5 nuclear powers.

Some Components for the Multi-Dimensional Security Mechanism for NEA Region

Several practical observations in connection with above listed steps towards comprehensive regional peace and security mechanism.

CTBT Treaty is a strong mechanism of prevention of “vertical” (qualitative) proliferation of nuclear weapons, emergence of their tested new types and varieties. Currently 183 states signed the Treaty, while 162 ratified it. Stands of remaining 8 states (including the USA, China, DPRK) belonging to the so called “list of 44 states” whose ratification is mandatory for enter of the Treaty into force depend upon serious political considerations. The key to the CTBT enter into force is in the hands of the US Senate. If the USA would at any moment

ratify the Treaty, China would for sure immediately follow. PRC may even go ahead of the US ratification procedures if it would be sure in the US ratification.

In 2013 the PRC reached agreement with the Organization of the CTBT regarding passing the data from 12 Chinese seismic stations to the International monitoring system (that allows now to trace nuclear explosions with the yield of less than 1 Kt with probability of 90 percent). As for now, information has been transmitted only from one Chinese station out of 12.

After DPRK conducted on February 12 of 2013 the third nuclear test, it is difficult to hope for North Korea joining the CTBT by its own initiative. But some experts suggest that the CTBT should be discussed within the Six-party Talks. It should be constantly used as a factor of pressure onto the Korean side, but as well vice versa, any positive stride in general talks could be used as additional motivation for DPRK to change its position regarding the tests and the CTBT.

Universalization of the INF Treaty also could be a supportive factor in the move towards nuclear-free Northeast Asia. Currently, after the USA and Russia destroyed their arsenals of weapons of range between 500 and 5500 Km, only 7 states on the globe remained as possessors of land-based ballistic weapons of medium range: China, DPRK, India, Pakistan, Israel, Iran, Saudi Arabia. Aside from that missiles of operational-tactical range (of less than 1000 km) are acquired (additionally to mentioned “lucky seven”) by South Korea, Egypt, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Turkey. As we may see, three of the mentioned states (China, DPRK and South Korea belong to the Northeast Asian region, and two of them possess nuclear weapon capabilities. That makes the whole issue of limitation of the mid-range missiles and sub-strategic warheads relevant for the NEA context.

Lessons For the Establishing Northeast Asian NWFZ From Practices of Southeast Asian and Central Asian NWFZs

Let's analyze the practice and lessons from establishing other Nuclear-weapons-free zones to see what kind of obstacles stay on the way of combining negotiations on NEA NWFZ with general security treaty.

In past decades Nuclear-weapon-free zones were established in Antarctic region, whole of Africa (Treaty of Pelindaba), Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco), South Pacific, South East Asia (Treaty of Bangkok), Central Asia (Semipalatinsk Treaty). Mongolia created a precedent by announcing a kind of a NWFZ on the territory of one country. Prospects for establishing three more NWFZs are in process of international debates: NWFZ in the Middle East (this old time proposal got into constant NPT Review agenda in recent years), NWFZ in the Arctic region and NWFZ in the Northeast Asia.

Existing treaties on NWFZs establishing have a record of lengthy time intervals (lasting many decades) between signing the basic treaty and signing and

ratifying Protocol of guaranties by each of P5 powers. Bangkok Treaty establishing NWFZ in Southeast Asia (nearest analog to Northeast Asia NWFZ) was opened for signing on 15th December 1995 after about 25 years of discussions and negotiations. Initially idea of SEA NWFZ started to be discussed in early 1970s in ASEAN framework as a part for broader idea for a "Zone of peace, freedom and neutrality". Later two principal ideas have been split. Actual negotiations on NWFZ lasted since Jakarta ASEAN meeting in 1984 till 1995 (11 years). But until now, for another 20 years, Protocol of guaranties of the nuclear powers remain unsigned. Main problem – configuration of the borders of the zone. It includes (and thus creates a first precedent) not only territory of the regional countries and their territorial waters (12 nautical miles according to Maritime Law Convention), but a much broader 200-miles Special Economic Zone of each member-state and continental shelf of each country. P5 countries, first of all, UDSA, Russia and China) consider that unacceptable, as far as it limits their ability to move military fleets and submarines in the international waters of the region. Another difficulty is that continental shelf of some countries (and in cases of islands and archipelagos, which are numerous in this region, exact borders of overlapping Special Economic zones) is not fully clarified, and that makes borders of the zone unclear. Especially China, while accepting principles of the Treaty, objects inclusion of regions of South China Sea that are in dispute with other SEA countries.

USA also insist on interpretation that inclusion of broader Special Economic zones and of continental shelf should be binding for signatory countries of the region, but not for P5 signatories of the Protocol, thus not limiting ability of the USA and other P5 powers to potentially launch nuclear weapons from naval ships and submarines situated inside the zone against targets outside the zone.

France and UK have their own reservations: they stress that special economic rights within Special Economic zones and on the continental shelf do not mean any special political rights (and control of presence of nuclear weapons of other powers in their Special Economic zones is a political right) – such a political control would be a violation of the Maritime Law Convention.

Russia traditionally insist on exception that limitations of the Russian nuclear activities in the zone will not act in case if Russian territory or armed forces are under attack (Russia applied such an exception to all previous NWFZ protocols and will apply it to any future NEA NWFZ). New aspect of the Russian position on a Protocol to the SEA NWFZ Treaty is that this time Russia mean conditions of attack not only on its own territory and armed forces, but as well onto the territory and armed forces of any government or state that is bind with Russia by treaty on common defense or possess Russian security guaranties. Russia also forwarded a condition that in case if any other nuclear power will undertake transit of nuclear weapons through territory of countries-members of the zone,

Russia would consider itself free from binding obligations of the Protocol to the Treaty⁶. That is a point with yet unclear mechanism of implementation, because transit of nuclear weapons through somebody's territory or territorial waters is difficult to prove for sure, sometimes it can be suspected, proves by national technical means may be doubtful or debated. This condition may work for sure only if the legitimate organ of the Treaty (Commission on the NWFZ that should be established according to the Treaty) would, after consideration, confirm the violation of the zone.

Recent development in the field of NWFZs is a signing by P5 recently (in May 2014 "on the margins" of the Third session of the NPT PrepCom) of the Protocol of Guaranties to the Semipalatinsk Treaty on establishing a NWFZ in Central Asia⁷. Remarkable are the special conditions and exceptions that P5 countries imposed onto signing the Guaranties Protocol – they (in combination with conditions discussed in connection with SEA NWFZ) show exactly what would be limitations and exceptions that same P5 countries would insist on if Northeast Asian NWFZ would be negotiated.

Russian Federation, while signing the Protocol on CA NWFZ, forwarded special condition that it will not consider itself restricted by the Treaty obligations if attack occurs onto the Russian Federation, its armed forces, onto its allies, or onto the state that is connected with Russia by common security obligation of nuclear and non-nuclear state, or in case of allying responsibilities towards such a state. Also Russia will not consider itself restricted by the Treaty in cases if any member-state of the Treaty would allow visit to its ports or landing in its airports of carriers with nuclear weapons onboard, or any kind of transit through its territory of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

United Kingdom also imposed several conditions, including a new one: first time it expanded reason for exceptions from appearance in the zone of nuclear weapons of other countries to include chemical and biological weapons as well. The last clause is procedurally doubtful and unclear, as far as system of inspections and verification in the field of biological weapons is not elaborated, and even definitions of what belongs to modern biological weapons are not fully agreed upon.

⁶ After specifying these conditions Russian official MFA representative M.Ulyanov in 2013 confirmed that «in Russia all internal procedures of preparations to the signing of the Protocol to the SEA NWFZ Treaty are fully finalized» and «Protocol is ready for signing by nuclear powers» (http://papersmart.unmeetings.org/media/1268712/RUSSIAN_FED.pdf)

⁷ Central Asian Nuclear-weapon-free zone involves Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan. Treaty has been signed on September 8, 2006, entered into force in 2009. Protocol of Guaranties to the Treaty is signed by P5 states on May 6, 2014.

Both France and UK specified that under no circumstances the presence of old obligations under other treaties can be interpreted as permitting any actions that contradict to the rules and goals of establishing of the NWFZ. For the case of potential Northeast Asian NWFZ that is important as far as, if applied to NEA NWFZ, would nullify some of the older obligations of the USA, including components of the “nuclear umbrella”, towards protection of Japan and of Republic of Korea.

All in all, experience of negotiations around Southeast Asian and Central Asian Nuclear-weapon-free zones allow to draw some lessons towards potential establishment of the Northeast Asian NWFZ.

While the actual and immediate goal for establishing NEA NWFZ from the point of view of many powers is prevention of continuation of nuclear status of North Korea, in fact establishing such a zone would involve and require a broad range of obligations from other regional and out-of-region states.

Geographical boundaries of the NEA NWFZ already is and will remain a subject for debates, interpretation and alternative approaches.

- First of such approaches (“minimal zone”) supposes that NWFZ may be limited to Korean peninsula only. It will bind two Koreas, while not imposing obligations towards China, Russia or USA to move any existing nuclear bases. Limitations of movement of nuclear weapons of global powers in the regions would be restricted to Korean territory and territorial waters (and, may be, Korean continental shelf and 200-miles Special Economic zone area around Korean peninsula).
- Second approach (it could be nicknamed as “tailored zone”) supposes that broader-than-peninsula configuration can be agreed upon for inclusion into the zone for more multilateral involvement of regional states, while it still will be far from covering all region. For example, there were proposals to mark a circle of 1,000 km, 1,500 km or more in radius with the ground zero on the border point between two Koreas (or square area symmetrically expanding to the north and to the south from the border onto the agreed depth) and limit the zone to such an area. Principal idea here is to cover not only two Koreas, but involve adjacent territories of China, Russia, Japan, still on such a way that it will politically involve them into the obligations under the zone, but would not require to expensively move any Russian (Vladivostok area) or Chinese shore existing bases.
- Third approach (“full region”) supposes involving of all Northeast Asia in its geographical sense and full scale into the nuclear-weapon-free zone with all respective limitations and obligations. It will require “forever non-nuclear” guaranties from Republic of Korea and from Japan, and serious limitation of nuclear (including maritime) activities of Russia,

China and the USA. Though obviously being a maximalist option, this approach doesn't go much farther than proposals of Arctic NWFZ (that will require relocation or elimination of numerous military and nuclear objects of the USA and Russia in the Arctic), or of Middle East NWFZ (that requires full determination of Israeli nuclear arsenal and bases). At the same time, application of the vast geographical notion of "Northeast Asia" leaves many uncertainties regarding its actual boundaries. It could be applied, as well as previous "tailored region" option, in "territorial waters only" mode, as well as in broader "territorial waters plus continental shelf and special economic 200-miles zone" mode. In the last case it will bring into debates all problems that are observed in process of defining Southeast Asia NWFZ. And besides, as far as the USA are not a member-state of the Maritime Law Convention (though mainly follow its most rules), they can debate the very criteria of inclusion "territorial" or "special economic zone" waters, as far as these criteria are tied to the Maritime Law Convention.

UN-based Conference on Disarmament coordinated elaboration of general principles for establishing of nuclear-weapon-free zones. That was one of the not so many relative successes of the CD. At the same time, variability in definitions and list of requirements between zones remains. Zones could differ not only in approaches to defining its *geographically*, but as well in approaches to what *functionally* must be included into obligations of the states-members of the zone and obligations of the nuclear states-guarantors.

Normally, on the functional side, any NWFZ restricts development, production, acquiring nuclear weapons, nuclear testing, locating of own or somebody's nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices, burying fissile materials on its territory, etc. This functional list of prohibited activities also has variable or sometimes unclarified items. For example, which depth of dismantlement and decommissioning of former nuclear infrastructure is required if this or that country or part of the country becomes a part of NWFZ? France possess formerly used nuclear testing site in the Pacific, Russia has frozen (unused for decades) former nuclear testing site in the Arctic (Novaya Zemlya), North Korea has undercovered testing sites on the territory of potential NEA NWFZ. Criteria of decommissioning and dismantlement for former storages, laboratories, testing grounds so that they would start to qualify for the NWFZ restrictions yet need to be agreed between partner states.

World Initiatives Towards Full Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

In recent period relatively wide campaign towards full elimination of nuclear weapons takes place in the world. In the United Nations circles a draft of the

Convention on prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons is under lobbying. State of Kazakhstan extended an initiative to adopt through the UN General Assembly by voting the UN Resolution “On Comprehensive Declaration on Nuclear-Free World”. So called “Hoover Initiative” towards “Global Nuclear Zero” was supported by Evans-Kawagutee Commission (now it ceased operation). Many European politicians discussed steps towards nuclear-weapon-free world under the auspices of the “Luxemburg Forum on Preventing Nuclear Catastrophe” (numerous sessions in 2010-2014).

Idea of full nuclear disarmament is promoted by the Non-aligned Movement (NAM, about 60 states grouped in the UN and in other formats). Group of such countries as Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Poland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates extended the “Initiative on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament”. Another group of countries known as “New Agenda Coalition” (Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa) advocates ideas of non-nuclear world already for a while. Initiative of “de-alerting” (decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear complexes and refuse from “launch-on-warning strategy” has been put forward by the group of states including New Zealand, Chile, Malaysia, Nigeria and Switzerland. This concept is considered as one of intermediate steps towards full refusal from the possession and use of nuclear weapons.

Thus, denuclearization of the Northeast Asia should not be perceived as a task of resolving North Korean “nuclear puzzle” *per se*. It is a component of much broader trends and processes of nuclear arms control and disarmament in a global scale. Regional peace and security mechanism cannot be much better than already existent universal UN-based, or multilateral all-European, or bilateral Russian-American security and disarmament mechanisms. NEA peace and security mechanism realistically could be established as a combination and regional projection of existing world practices (of multilateral arms control treaties, nuclear-weapon-free zones, sets of transparency and confidence-building measures). Such a mechanism cannot be established once and forever. It will be built brick-by-brick, in stages, and would require constant repair, further efforts and support of global powers.
