

INTER-KOREAN MILITARY AGREEMENT IN 2018: IMPLICATIONS AND OUTLOOK

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I. Reinterpretation from the Perspective of Deterrence Theory

- From Escalation Dominance to Escalation Management
- Upside and downside of Proactive Deterrence and Action-after-Reporting
- ‘How to prevent initial provocation?’ vs. ‘How to prevent escalation?’
- Framework of the Agreement: Minimizing the possibility of confrontations and streamlining communication;
 - Establishment of the Joint Military Committee
 - Cease of military exercises and No Fly Zones along the MDL
 - Withdrawal of GPs within DMZ
 - Demilitarization of the JSA
 - Maritime Peace Zone around the NLL
- A possible loophole: What about exercises outside of the MDL/NLL area?

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2. Pyongyang's Recent Calculus around Short Range Missile Launches

- Securing maximum political space that remains unaddressed and vague
- Short-range missiles might be not in specific violation of the Agreement:
 - “If you considers this to be violation, you should suspend all military exercises as well”
- Cf. Criticism escalated sharply after the failure of the Hanoi summit
- New categorization of strategic & tactical level;
 - Suspension of bombers deployment vs. Suspension of nuclear/ ICBM tests
 - Downscaled joint drills vs. Tests of artilleries and short range missiles
- Calculations concerning “New Tactical Guided Weapon”;
 - Mimicking Russia’s playbook around Europe MD and Iskander in Kaliningrad
 - Similarity with ROK Hyunmoo-2B
- Political draw-a-line for future tests and drills, rather than military threat

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3. **Assessment and Outlook: Escalation Management Revisited**

- “Stalled nuclear talks, no more rapprochement mood like 2018”
- Maintaining a certain amount of tension without going back to 2017
- Possible futures;
 - Exchange of hostile responses: Virtual nullification of the Agreement
 - Sticking to the literal interpretation: Minimum contribution of the Agreement
 - Negotiating further details on the Joint Committee: Stockholm model?
- Importance of the Agreement and Escalation Management posture;
 - Function as a safety valve to minimize any risk during protracted negotiations
 - To harness as an institutional tool to push the North for further details