

**Statement and Recommendations
by the Co-Chairs of the Panel on Peace and Security
of Northeast Asia (PSNA)**

June 25 2017, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Current Developments in Northeast Asia

We view with grave concern recent developments in Northeast Asia involving further missile testing on the part of North Korea and the deployment of two US carrier groups and two submarines to the region. In addition, there are continuing joint US-ROK military exercises close to the DMZ border (including B1-B Lancer bomb flights), the installation of a THAAD missile defence system in South Korea, and enhanced military engagement by the Japan Self-Defense Forces involving joint JSDF air exercises with US B1-B bombers close to the Korean Peninsula, and the first-ever armed JSDF escort for a US ammunition cargo ship to supply the US carrier groups.

These developments follow North Korea's two underground nuclear tests last year, and its failure to respond to UN Security Council resolutions seeking an end to North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile tests. In the absence of either a resumption of the Six-Party Talks convened by China or direct bilateral negotiations between the affected parties, the recent developments pose major immediate risks of pre-emptive or miscalculated military strikes by either side with catastrophic consequences, and longer-term risks of further nuclear proliferation in the region.

These recent developments highlight the urgent need to pursue diplomatic initiatives to ease tensions and find a negotiated solution to the issues posed by North Korean missile and nuclear testing and the heightened military confrontation of North Korea on the part of the US and other regional states. We note that despite the current military moves, a number of key actors have recently stated a preparedness to engage in dialogue and negotiations. Joseph Yun, the US senior State Department official responsible for North Korean matters, sought to assure South Korean parliamentarians on May 25th that the US is open to "resolving the problem with dialogue", although seeing a need to "impose every possible sanction and pressure" on North Korea to cease its nuclear weapon and ballistic missile program. South Korea's new president, Moon Jae-in has indicated his willingness to visit North Korea "under the right conditions" for direct talks. The Chinese and Russian Foreign Ministers, meeting on May 26th, have called for "resolving the issue through peaceful means including dialogue and negotiations". North Korea, for its part, on July 6 2016, set out five conditions for temporary suspension of its nuclear tests (four of which were previously agreed to by former US administrations), and one of its senior diplomats said in late May that "We'll have dialogue if the conditions are there".

We urge all parties to find ways, formally or informally, of bringing about the necessary dialogue and negotiations, either by way of resumption of the Six Party Talks, either through direct bilateral negotiations, or a combination of

approaches. To fail to engage in substantial dialogue and continue with military escalation and nuclear weapon proliferation in the region risks major destabilization and potential regional catastrophe involving not only a nuclear-armed North Korea, but nuclear-armed allies of regional states, including the US and China.

PSNA Regional Experts' Workshop, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, June 24-25 2017

Drawing upon experts across the region, and from Russia, China, the US, Europe and Australia, the second PSNA Workshop is analysing in depth: recent developments in US nuclear policy and its implications for Northeast Asia; the current UN negotiation of a Convention on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and how it will impact on the Non-Proliferation Treaty review process; issues associated with a future Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, including its scope, and Japanese, Korean and Chinese perspectives on the contribution of such a treaty to regional security and steps towards initiating it; and key policy issues associated with civilian nuclear programs in Northeast Asia.

The work of the Panel, in association with the *Nagasaki Process* Track 2 initiative launched last year by Nagasaki University's Research Centre for Nuclear Weapons Abolition, and the *Ulaanbaatar Process*, initiated in 2015 by the Northeast Asian branch of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (and including North Korean representatives), has already generated a number of key proposals, including a proposal for a more comprehensive approach in negotiations with North Korea. Such a comprehensive approach would involve seeking to pursue a wider framework agreement on peace and security in Northeast Asia. This would involve not only negotiation of nuclear weapon-free zone arrangements but also: a peace treaty to end the Korea War; security assurances to a non-nuclear DPRK, ROK and Japan; and establishment of a Northeast Asia regional security forum and Northeast Asia Energy Cooperation Committee.

UN Negotiations on a Draft Convention on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

We are heartened by the major progress in current UN negotiations on a Draft Convention on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The negotiations were initiated by the 2016 UN General Assembly and the first session held in New York in late March. The second session is currently in progress. The President of the UN Conference has already released a "Draft Convention on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons" (A/CONF.229/2017/CRP.1). If adopted, it will, together with earlier bans on chemical and biological weapons, complete the prohibition of all major types of weapons of mass destruction. We note that the great majority of UN member states have supported such a convention. We call upon the current nine nuclear weapon states (and military allies who may be relying on extended nuclear deterrence ('nuclear umbrellas') to participate in the current negotiations, even if they are not yet ready to forgo nuclear weapons. As often noted, nuclear war, even of a limited kind, has no winners, and would

have catastrophic humanitarian, climatic and economic impacts that go well beyond national and regional borders to affect the whole world. As the new draft Convention notes, “the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons transcend national borders, pose grave implications for human survival, the environment, socioeconomic development, the global economy, food security, and for the health of future generations, and of the disproportionate impact of ionizing radiation on maternal health and on girls”.

Missile Defence Systems

We note with concern the recent US installation of a THAAD missile-defence system in South Korea in the last days of the Park Geun-hye Government, and the further installation of four THAAD interceptor-rocket launchers after the advent of the Moon Jae-in Government, without apparent knowledge and authorization of the new President. While such BMD systems may seem at first sight to be purely defensive, they have an inherent role of accelerating nuclear arms races between adversaries because of a perceived need to overwhelm any BMD system with increased numbers of missiles and/or the need to place multiple warheads on a single missile. In the Northeast Asian region, the THAAD system would have a destabilizing effect both within and beyond the region, since its long-range radar surveillance capability, extends into Chinese territory and is perceived as undermining China’s second strike nuclear capability (China is the only nuclear weapon state to remain committed to a non-first use policy). In the present context, the siting of THAAD in South Korea could well become a major diplomatic obstacle in seeking China’s cooperation on negotiations with North Korea.

Recommendations

- We urge that all sides in the current tensions and developments on the Korean Peninsula show the utmost care and restraint in avoiding actions that could be misperceived and lead to war by miscalculation, and seek an early resumption of either the Six-Party Talks convened by China or bilateral discussions and negotiations.
- We further urge that discussions should not simply be confined to DPRK nuclear and missile programs but should be extended to cover a wider agenda of a peace treaty to end the Korean War, establishment of a Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone treaty with security assurances to a non-nuclear DPRK, ROK and Japan, and the establishment of a regional security forum.
- We welcome some very recent indications of preparedness for dialogue by senior officials or leaders in the US, China, Russia, North Korea, and South Korea’s President Moon Jae-in, and call upon them, as a matter of extreme urgency, to commence such dialogue immediately.
- We urge a more in-depth examination and consideration of all aspects and consequences of the current THAAD ballistic missile defence

system in South Korea, particularly in relation to its wider impacts on the strategic environment in Northeast Asia.

Morton H. Halperin

Senior advisor, the Open Society Foundations, USA

Michael Hamel-Green

Emeritus Professor, Victoria University Melbourne, Australia

Chung-In Moon

Chair, Asia Pacific Leadership Network (APLN),
Professor, Yonsei University, ROK

Hironmichi Umebayashi

Special Advisor, Peace Depot, Inc.,
Former Director, Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition,
Nagasaki University (RECNA)