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I, ROK Weekly Report

1. Introduction

Introduction ("ROK Weekly Report", 2007-08-31) This week's report focuses on the foreign policy prescriptions of the presidential candidates of the United New Democratic Party (UNDP), which comprises former elements of both the current ruling Uri Party and the minor opposition Democratic Party. In their debates, all candidates have shown strong support for continued engagement with the DPRK, although they have sought to differentiate themselves with specific proposals.

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2. Inter-Korean Summit Agenda

ROK Weekly Report ("Inter-Korean Summit Agenda", 2007-08-31) The candidates suggested with one voice that the ROK should discuss the establishment of a peace regime with the DPRK, which is the most important issue, and at the same time they tried to differentiate themselves regarding the specific plans. Candidate Sohn Hak-kyu, former Kyonggi Province Governor, argued that a concrete discussion on changing the Korean Peninsula to a "land of peace" should be held and a peace declaration of the two Koreas, or at least the basic agreement, should be achieved. Also, he added that a practical discussion on economic cooperation should be held, which would lead to better relations among the two Koreas. Candidate Jung Dong-young, former Uri Party chairman, argued that it is important to make progress on the DPRK nuclear issue and to make a new breakthrough in ROK-DPRK relations through economic cooperation such as the railway connection and the joint development of the Han River, peace building in the West (Yellow) Sea, and the peaceful utilization of the DMZ. He also mentioned that this summit should seek to make substantial progress in the economic cooperative areas, such as the second and the third phases of the Kaesong industrial complex. Candidate Lee Hae-chan, former prime minister, stated that establishing a Korean Peninsula peace regime, building an armaments control community for the reduction of security threats, installing an ROK-DPRK liaison department, and making peaceful areas within the DMZ should be discussed in this summit. He argued that this summit should lay the foundation for the four-party peace talks among the ROK, DPRK, the US, and China. Candidate Yoo Si-min proposed that three topics - economic cooperation, the peace regime, and the regularization of future summits - should be the agenda of this summit, and candidate Choo Mi-ae emphasized that it is the most important issue for two-Koreas to have the regular contact at the highest level. Candidate Han Myung-sook, former prime minister, mentioned the normalization of talks between the ROK and the DPRK, the roadmap for the building of the two Koreas' economy community, and radical actions for separated families. Candidates Kim Doo-kwan and Shin Ki-nam pointed to the installation of an ROK-DPRK liaison department, the declaration regarding ending war and establishing peace, and reaffirmation of the principle of denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula. Candidate Cheon Jung-bae proposed building of the economic community to enter into the first step of the three-step unification theory, establishing mutual military trust, enlarging private interchange, and abolishing legal constraints like the National Security Law.

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3. Policy Toward the DPRK and Northeast Asia

ROK Weekly Report ("Policy Toward the DPRK and Northeast Asia", 2007-08-31) Candidate Sohn Hak-kyu mentioned "the 10 year plan of economic collaboration on the Korean Peninsula" as the basic framework of a peace policy for the DPRK and Northeast Asia. This is a Korean Peninsula peace management idea that the two Koreas jointly seek economic prosperity, which would be helpful to both while they respect each other's system during the upcoming 10 years. Candidate Jung Dong-young proposed five core policies such as "the continental peace economy theory"; the "Three Unifications Policy" consisting of the unification of ROK domestic society, the two Koreas' economies, and Northeast Asia; the "three peace pledges" for the early resolution of the nuclear crisis, the completion of the peace declaration and regime, and the accomplishment of Korean national unification; and the "five peace economy projects" including the Seoul-Incheon-Kaesong peace economy complex, the continental train, the connection of the Northeast Asia energy network, the establishment of a peaceful waterway, and the peaceful utilization of the DMZ. Candidate Lee Hae-chan focused on building the foundation of economic unification through the expansion of social

overhead capital (SOC), such as the earlier completion of the Kaesong industrial complex, the construction of four economic regions in the DPRK, the building of expressways in the DPRK, development of transportation links, and the rail connection. Candidate Choo Mi-ae expressed that the economic cooperation between the two Koreas should be separated from aid and used to build the ROK-DPRK economy community. For this project, she said that the ROK has to activate ongoing projects and support the SOC business over the long term. Candidate Yoo Si-min offered two policies; the peace regime building on the Korean Peninsula through the declaration of the end of war, the agreement on peace, and the resolution of the nuclear crisis and the enlargement of economic cooperation. Candidate Han Myung-sook put "five steps for national community cooperation" at the center of her proposal for the realization of the eternal peace regime on the Korean Peninsula and the meeting of all separated families within five years, the building of an economic community, the standardization of industry, the strengthening of energy cooperation, and reforestation. Candidate Cheon Jung-bae, a National Assemblyman, suggested "the Imjin River miracle project" and the five vital points for establishment of economic cooperation, the buildup of experts in the DPRK through building the Kaesong Industrial College, and plans for better communication, traffic, and entry. Candidate Kim Doo-kwan revealed his schemes of the three-step approach for unification and enlargement of the quantity and quality of the two Koreas' economic interchange. Candidate Shin Ki-nam chose the normalization of an economic cooperation organization in the Korean Peninsula and the guarantee of 1% of the national budget to DPRK projects, the enlargement of cooperative economic areas to the continental DPRK, and the reduction of mutual armaments as his main promises.

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4. ROK-US Military Alliance

ROK Weekly Report ("ROK-US Military Alliance", 2007-08-31) Lee Hae-chan and Han Myung-sook said that inter-Korean relations are losing acceleration in the six-party talks and that it is important that a positive circular structure is restored. Lee and Chun Jung-bae argued that it is imperative that we cooperate with international society to find a peaceful solution for the nuclear issue, a stance similar to the current government's. Meanwhile on the issue of transferring wartime operational control, all candidates said that it must be relinquished by 2012.

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5. Northern Limit Line

ROK Weekly Report ("Northern Limit Line", 2007-08-31) Regarding the redrawing of the West Sea Northern Limit Line (NLL), which will likely be discussed in the upcoming second summit talk this October, the candidates maintained a flexible standpoint. Most of the leading presidential candidates had different concepts -- for example, Jung Dong-young's "peaceful economic line in the West Sea"; Han Myung-sook's "peace ranch"; Lee Hae-chan's "Joint Fishing Area" -- yet they all called for peacefully utilizing areas near the NLL on the premise that the present NLL is recognized by the DPRK. Cheon Jung-bae has gained attention by arguing that the "NLL issue may be discussed at the summit talk." However, Candidate Lee concluded his point by saying "the area can be shared for May and June during the time a large number of fish are caught for limited period; however, since the NLL is a national territory issue, it can never be redrawn."

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