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1. Introduction

ROK Weekly's 'SIX PARTY TALKS', 2007-07-27) The recently completed round of six-party talks in Beijing elicited a range of commentary in the ROK, with some analysts deriding lack of progress on setting a date for disablement of the DPRK's nuclear facilities or the list of past nuclear activities, while others expressed optimism that the nuclearization process would lead to regional peace. Questions regarding a new peace regime for the peninsula dominated much of the discussion. Some commentators criticized the DPRK for adding new demands before acting on disablement, while others criticized ROK politicians for using the talks to promote their election chances.

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2. General Analysis

Yonhap ('THE GAINS AND LOSSES OF SIX-PARTY TALKS', 2007-07-21) wrote that the six-party talks was not a great success but still not a bad one, because although the due date for denuclearization was not set, the necessity to set a date and have further discussions was agreed to and therefore secured momentum. It added that from six different points of view, the DPRK was smooth on the promise to denuclearization but hesitant on the details, and made sure the other nations involved in the six-party talks were still willing to support the DPRK with previously promised resources while agreeing to the necessity to set a due date. The U.S., although it failed to set a due date, secured the momentum to carry on to the next round of talks and was able to grasp the DPRK's intentions, while the Bush administration had the opportunity to recover from their failures of hard-line foreign policies. China, since the BDA issue, has played an important role by creating the atmosphere and place to hold the six-party talks. Japan, because of the DPRK's smooth reaction to the denuclearization, could not bring the kidnapee issue to the table, and was criticized for the passive role they were playing, but this talk was not a total failure since Japan and the DPRK have agreed to hold a meeting some time next month to discuss about the relationship between the two countries. Finally, Russia, although their role was not outstanding, came up with new ideas on how to deal with the energy issue in the DPRK, and the fact that Russia is the only country the DPRK really trusts helped Russia play an important role in the talk.

[return to top](#) Changho Weekly ('FUTURE TASKS OF THE SIX-PARTY TALKS', 2007-07-24) wrote that although this round of talks failed to set a reporting list and due date for denuclearization, they have agreed to carry out this planned action-for-action through five different administrative groups and agreed to draw a roadmap and plan the next talk. It also wrote that in the next round (to be held in September), the detailed time plan could be set and followed, especially if the next round becomes a success. There is a big possibility Condoleezza Rice, the US Secretary of State, might visit DPRK, and once DPRK starts denuclearizing, the U.S. could take the DPRK off of the terror list and work to normalize the relationship between the two countries. Finally, it stressed that denuclearization of the DPRK is the most important issue related to their regime and economic reconstruction, and therefore it is important to take every action step-by-step carefully, and also make sure the ROK will not be excluded in any way from the establishment of peace and denuclearization. [return to top](#) JoongAng Ilbo ('OPTIMISTIC SIX-PARTY TALKS', 2007-07-23) wrote that the six-party talks were evaluated optimistically because through this talk, the U.S.'s change on the DPRK policies became clearer. The expectation the U.S. has on the six-party talks seems bigger than ever. The next round, expected to be held next September, is also being progressed by the U.S., and on the table. Rice, the Secretary of the State will reassess the safety of DPRK's regime and economic support according to DPRK's effort for denuclearization. If every plan flows smoothly as expected, late this year the six-party talks could come to an end and peace established. [return to top](#) KyungYang Shunnam ('THE OPTIMISTIC ATMOSPHERE OF THE TALKS MUST BE CONTINUED', 2007-07-21) wrote that although the result of the six-party talk was not as hoped, after going through a long tunnel as BDA issue, the current result of the talk still deserves praise. It added, although there were no detailed outcomes, the talk overall was carried on in a smooth environment, because of the change of attitude in the U.S. and DPRK. However, the problem starts from now, since the real details are to be discussed in the future, and we must be prepared to carry on the optimistic atmosphere any way possible. [return to top](#) JoongAng Ilbo ('FAVORABLE SIX-PARTY TALKS, STILL MUST BE CAUTIOUS OF OBSTACLES', 2007-07-20) reported that the DPRK is said to be willing to fulfill the 2.1.3 agreement whenever the conditions are met in these talks. It means that they do not want to have needless delays caused by coming up with unreasonable demands. This all corresponds to recent effort by the US for dialogue, which will likely continue unless extreme changes are made. However people must be cautious. First, people must not loosen their pressure to prevent giving excuses for the DPRK to act against the meeting's basis. That is why a close relationship among member nations is necessary besides US-ROK cooperation. The action-for-action principle has meaning only if there is progress in the DPRK's abandonment of nuclear programs. Also, in order to accelerate the abandonment of nuclear programs, US must control its hardliners and slowly make the DPRK policy more progressive. If Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo keeps on holding the overly hostile DPRK policy, it will negatively influence the whole 6-party talks. It is obvious that the ROK should take an active role in this process. The ROK is to plan the overall timeline and lead the discussion. South-North relations and the discussion on the peace structure must still be treated with much caution and attention. In the big picture, the Korea Peninsula has just begun its way to denuclearization. [return to top](#)

3. Setting a Date for Disablement

Sege Ilbo ('SIX-PARTY TALKS END WITHOUT SETTING A DUE DATE TO DENUCLEARIZATION', 2007-07-21) wrote that although the time plan of future talks was discussed, it is very disappointing that the due date for denuclearization could not be set at the end of this year. It wrote that the U.S.'s promise to support the DPRK with enormous amount of resources is a great plus for the DPRK, but first the DPRK must completely give up their nuclear program, and that is the only way to reach goal of the six-party talks.

[return to top](#) Seoul Shimmun ('DUE DATE FOR DPRK'S DENUCLEARIZATION MUST BE SET ASAP', 2007-07-21) wrote that although it is disappointing that the due date was not set, the fact that overall atmosphere of the talks was optimistic and they have all agreed to have the next talk soon is a big achievement. At the beginning of the talks, the DPRK declared to finalize the denuclearization in 5 to 6 months, and had the world's hopes up, but the result of this talk did not meet those hopes. As the next talk is held, through five different administrative groups, the time plan, reporting list, and its method must all be discussed, and the DPRK must be deleted from the terror list. If the roadmap to denuclearization is finalized through the next six-party talk, the end of the Korean War could be declared, and the door to peace could be wide open. It urged the DPRK to be more flexible and the other 5 nations to put more effort into it. [return to top](#) JoongAng Ilbo, Seoul News ('KOREA PENINSULA DENUCLEARIZATION SHALL BE THE DEFINITE BEGINNING POINT ON THE WAY TO NORTHEAST ASIA PEACE STRUCTURE', 2007-07-13) carried a commentary by a professor at Sungkyunkwan University, who said that the representatives of the six parties have failed to set a timeline for the disablement of the Yongpyong reactor. It is also doubtful if there was agreement on the concept of disablement as making the facilities totally unusable ever again. The meeting ended up being held once again without actual fulfillment regarding the DPRK nuclear programs. When examining the discussion itself, the main issues of the whole conversation were the disablement of the Yongpyong nuclear facilities and following remuneration for the DPRK. As the political and economic compensation for the DPRK is clearly being done, so shall be the agreement on the exact period of disablement and contents that are to be reported. The denuclearization of the Korea Peninsula will certainly be the beginning point on the way to a Northeast Asia peace structure. From now on, people must think about the six-party talks that will approach to the root of DPRK nuclear issue's problem as close as possible. [return to top](#)

4. Korean Peninsula Peace Regime

Changwon ('TERMINATION OF THE WAR WILL BE DISCUSSED ONCE US-DPRK FOREIGN MINISTER MEETING IS HELD', 2007-07-23) reported that Kim Sang-gu of the National Advisory Council on Unification, speaking on the occasion of the 54th anniversary of the armistice agreement, claimed that as President Bush said, the ROK, the DPRK, and the US should be the subjects of declaring termination of the Korean War. He also noted that since there has been an agreement that the Peace Treaty will be discussed in the framework of the 6 party talks, including the ROK, DPRK, US, and China, alleging that only the US and DPRK are the parties to the agreement is not persuasive. He also forecast that if the 6-party foreign ministers' meeting and US-DPRK meeting take place, normalization of US-DPRK relations and declaration of termination of war will be discussed.

[return to top](#) Hankook Economics ('ABANDONMENT OF DPRK NUCLEAR PROGRAMS MUST BE FINISHED BY THE END OF THIS YEAR', 2007-07-20) reported that just by looking at the result of this 6 party talks after the stoppage of the nuclear facilities in Yongpyong has been confirmed, it would probably make sense to view that the prospect of DPRK nuclear abandonment is promising. The most important thing is to keep the principle of clearly verifying future methods and procedure of nuclear abandonment and that of providing the DPRK with energy as compensation to what extent it is fulfilled. The DPRK must recognize that winning credits from international society by accelerating the abandonment rate is the best way to rebuild its economy and stability in system. What must not be forgotten is the fact that abandonment of nuclear weapons in the DPRK is only at its beginning. Therefore, the ROK government agreeing to early opening of ROK-DPRK general-level meeting in which the governments will talk about the Korea Peninsula peace structure was hasty. The primary task currently is to completely finish the nuclear abandonment. [return to top](#) JoongAng Ilbo, Pressian ('WHAT DOES KIM JONG-IL MEAN BY 'KOREAN PENINSULA SITUATION BEING ALLEVIATED'?', 2007-07-16) wrote that, drawing a conclusion from what all the DPRK officials in Pyongyang said, North Koreans believe that only if US-DPRK relations are normalized will a Korean Peninsula Peace structure through denuclearization in the 6 party talks come to pass. Keeping this in mind, the DPRK has in some sense succeeded in turning the 6 party talks structure to US-DPRK talks structure through the Berlin meeting. What the DPRK means by a Korean Peninsula peace structure in US-DPRK relations, because the DPRK believes that US treating DPRK as an enemy caused an unstable atmosphere, including the DPRK developing nuclear programs. One of the characteristics of current situation is that unlike in the past, the US and DPRK have begun an action-for-action approach to build up the credit. Especially recalling that there will be nuclear-facility disablement and peace structure negotiation by this year, this 6 party talks are viewed with more attention and expectation than ever. [return to top](#)

5. Political Electioneering

Sangye Ilbo ('POLITICAL PARTIES AND SECURITY', 2007-07-23) wrote that, although the 6-party talks are finished, there still exists differences of interpretation concerning to what extent the disablement will be activated and also until when the nuclear abrogation will be done is not sure. There are still much to be done before the actual denuclearization, and there seem to be many problems. As the ROK presidential election is approaching, political parties without much planning are suggesting sensitive issues including a South-North summit meeting, Korean Peninsula peace vision, peace structure, or declaration of termination of war. These crude suggestions are made hastily, seeking political gains, by politicians concerned with the upcoming election. These plans induce false hope, and as a result, do not only hinder progress in the six-party talks, but also possibly endanger the prospect of the nation. If politicians are truly willing to prevent nuclear weapons and war, they must speak up to actually root out such threats. [return to top](#) JoongAng Ilbo, Donga Ilbo ('FOUR WHO ARE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THE 'SHOW' THAN ABANDONMENT OF DPRK NUKES', 2007-07-16) wrote that, about the August North-South meeting, Christopher R. Hill, the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, and Alexander Vershkov U.S. Ambassador to South Korea, have mentioned that such an event has possible political intentions. It is obvious that the North-South meeting the US opposes so much is intended to affect the election, considering that it is crucial for the ROK to cooperate with US to successfully solving the nuclear issue after 6 party talks. It is time to do the best on cooperation for denuclearization. [return to top](#)

6. Denuclearization First Step to Regional Peace

Noct News ('KOREA PENINSULA DENUCLEARIZATION SHALL BE THE DEFINITE BEGINNING POINT ON THE WAY TO NORTHEAST ASIA PEACE STRUCTURE', 2007-07-27) carried a commentary by a professor at Sungkyunkwan University, who said that the representatives of the six parties have failed to set a timeline for the disablement of the Yongpyong reactor. It is also doubtful if there was agreement on the concept of disablement as making the facilities totally unusable ever again. The meeting ended up being held once again without actual fulfillment regarding the DPRK nuclear programs. When examining the discussion itself, the main issues of the whole conversation were the disablement of the Yongpyong nuclear facilities and following remuneration for the DPRK. As the political and economic compensation for the DPRK is clearly being done, so shall be the agreement on the exact period of disablement and contents that are to be reported. The denuclearization of the Korea Peninsula will certainly be the beginning point on the way to a Northeast Asia peace structure. From now on, people must think about the six-party talks that will approach to the root of DPRK nuclear issue's problem as closely as possible. [return to top](#)

7. Moving toward Denuclearization

Busan Ilbo ('STOPPAGE OF NUCLEAR FACILITIES MUST BE THE STEPPING STONE FOR TOTAL DENUCLEARIZATION', 2007-07-16) wrote that on the 14th, the DPRK finally began to stop the Yongpyong nuclear facilities. It has much meaning in that nonnuclear commitment has been performed, yet it is only the beginning. The same failure after the Geneva conventions might recur. Until the 'disablement' whose basic concepts are yet to be established, there are many problems to be solved. Whether the denuclearization will be successful or not will depend on the 6 party talks. The new prospect in US-DPRK relations must be established before the Bush administration's tenure is over. To achieve the goal, member nations should all be more truthful. [return to top](#) JoongAng Ilbo, Seoul Newspaper ('KOREAN PENINSULA MUST ACCELERATE THE DENUCLEARIZATION DISCUSSION SPEED', 2007-07-17) reported that the 6 party talks should act as the steppingstone for beginning the disablement issues. Other members should focus on coming up with the specific roadmap for the original goal of completing the disabling process by this year. Coming up with extra conditions that might harm the 2.1.3 conventions should be avoided. In that sense, DPRK suggestions for military talks with the US and claims that the ROK possesses US nuclear weapons are observed with antipathy. The DPRK must not forget that the nuclear issue being solved is the crucial condition for the peace structure it wants. We ask DPRK that it pay greater attention to nuclear disablement conventions. [return to top](#)

8. DPRK Adding Conditions

Sangye Ilbo ('DPRK SHOULD HONESTLY SUBMIT THE NUCLEAR PROGRAM LIST', 2007-07-17) wrote that the six-party talks is seen to have difficulties considering the DPRK asking for removal from the list as a terrorist nation before the actual talks. It is asking for the removal of US's economic sanctions and stoppage of the Japanese government's oppression of Cheongryon pro-North Korea residents' league in Japan beforehand. The DPRK's request is much different from the ROK-US position. Both the ROK and US are clearly willing to change their treatment of the DPRK and provide them with security incentives depending on the degree to which the DPRK follow the non-nuclear commitment. The DPRK must not give the conditions and ask for the return first. Rather it should first faithfully deal with compromise in the 6 party talks' main points of dispute: reporting nuclear programs and disablement of nuclear facilities. [return to top](#) JoongAng Ilbo, Moocheon Ilbo ('DPRK UPPING CONDITIONS AS IT PERFORMS THE FIRST COMMITMENT AFTER 2.1.3 CONVENTIONS', 2007-07-16) wrote that the DPRK nuclear issue is just at the beginning. The DPRK, without even completing the list in the 2.1.3 conventions, is asking for the delaying of its as terrorist nation as condition for the disablement. The ROK believes that the reporting of the list can be a more difficult task than the disablement itself, issues such as HEU, the basic concept of disablement, and a light-water reactor forestall the future difficulties. However, President Roh, on July 15th noted, "The DPRK is asking for returns and the 3 member nations are aiming for disablement". He also said "There is a solution that will satisfy both DPRK and US regarding the disablement issue." If he meant the possibility of extra support for the DPRK - coming up with new conditions after each compromise which has been done after every step in the process - it would not be a proper attitude with which the ROK must treat the whole issue. [return to top](#)

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