



Policy Forum 97-14: Arms Control and Peace on the Korean Peninsula



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ARMS CONTROL AND PEACE ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA

Essay by Moon Chung-in

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I. Introduction

The following essay, "Rethinking Arms Control and Peace on the Korean Peninsula: Search for Alternatives," is written by Moon Chung-in, professor of political science and associate director of the Institute for Unification Studies, Yonsei University, Seoul, Republic of Korea. Prior to joining the Yonsei faculty, Prof. Moon taught at the University of Kentucky. He has published over ninety articles in edited books and scholarly journals, and has also published eight books, including "Arms Control on the Korean Peninsula" (1996). The following essay originally appeared in "The Economics of Korean Unification," and was revised for distribution to NAPSNet.

Prof. Moon writes that examining the dynamic interplay of international, regional, domestic, and perceptual variables suggests alternative ways of thinking about peace and stability on the Korean peninsula. The current policy lines of both Koreas that focus on the realignment of external ties, he argues, are not likely to produce major breakthroughs in stalled inter-Korean relations. Neither recent proposals for four-party talks with the United States and the PRC nor the proposed Pyongyang-Washington peace treaty will yield positive dividends until the domestic and peninsular patterns that continue to reinforce inter-Korean differences are addressed.

Prof. Moon's essay continues discussion of the prospects for peace on the Korean peninsula begun in previous NAPSNet Policy Forums, and in particular offers a provocative contrast to the immediately preceding Policy Forum, which featured two essays presenting a DPRK perspective on replacing the Korean Armistice Agreement with a permanent peace treaty. ([Click here for the forum.](#))

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II. Essay by Moon Chung-in

RETHINKING ARMS CONTROL AND PEACE ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA: SEARCH FOR ALTERNATIVES

1. Introduction

The Korean conflict is one of the most protracted and precarious conflicts in the world. Rooted deeply in the structure of the Cold War, it has revealed anomalous features that can be rarely found in conventional inter-state conflicts.¹ The Korean conflict has the beginning, but no termination, fluctuating over time in intensity and frequency. Hyperbolic alterations of crisis and status quo have characterized its volatile dynamics. International, regional, domestic, and perceptual elements have all intertwined in shaping the terrain of the Korean conflict where the demarcation between domestic and external boundaries has become blurred. More importantly, the logic of deterrence has overshadowed other alternatives such as settlement and resolution in its management, perpetuating insecurity of the Korean people. Fear of conflict escalation has been real and acute, yet peace-building and unification have by and large remained the rhetorical gesture.

A new momentum of change came in the late 1980s, however. The demise of the Soviet Union, the German unification, and ultimately the dissolution of the Cold War bipolar system brought about a high hope and anticipation among Koreans that the Korean conflict would soon come to an end too. Being a product of the Cold War, its termination was seen as the prelude to a peaceful resolution of the Korean conflict. The transformation of the international system has indeed entailed positive spill-over effects on inter-Korean relations. The waning of the hegemonic contention between the United States and the Soviet Union and a radical realignment of Chinese foreign policy posture contributed to improving inter-Korean relations. Prevailing mutual distrust and negation notwithstanding, North and South Korea were able to sign the Basic Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-aggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation in 1991. An agreement on denuclearization of the Korean peninsula was also followed.

Nevertheless, the progress in inter-Korean relations suffered a new setback. North Korea's failure to comply with nuclear inspection demands by the International Atomic Energy Agency triggered negative chain reactions, risking a major conflict escalation on the peninsula. The nuclear crisis was aborted with the Geneva Agreed Framework which was signed in September 1994. Yet, it did not thaw frozen inter-Korean relations. While the Geneva settlement served as a vehicle for improving relationships between the United State and North Korea, it did not revive the stalled inter-Korean relations. On the contrary, the deal left South Korea with a new diplomatic burden of fine tuning policy line with the United States on North Korea.² The death of Kim Il Sung, transitional uncertainty of succession politics in the North, and rigid policy stance by both Koreas have all contributed to the continuing stalemate.

The South Korean government has made several efforts to reverse the trend. Despite a formidable opposition from the conservative camp, it shipped rice to the North for humanitarian reasons, and, in so doing, expected that such shipments would pave the way to a breakthrough in inter-Korean relations. But no reciprocal measures were taken by the North, blocking further shipments. More recently, on April 16, 1996, president Kim Young Sam and president Bill Clinton made a joint proposal on the four-party talk in which they invited North Korea and China to join a four-way dialogue for building a peace regime on the Korean peninsula. But North Korea has not shown any positive response to the proposal.

In a most recent move, the South Korean government has proposed a more accommodating policy. In a speech celebrating the 51st anniversary of the National Independence Day, president Kim Young Sam announced that the South wants stability in North Korea; it does not intend diplomatic

isolation of the North; and that it would not pursue national unification that is imposed by one side on the other, namely unification by absorption. Kim further emphasized that the South is ready to assist North Korea in overcoming its current food crisis as well as in promoting its economic development. Kim's proposals are not unconditional, but contingent upon the North's acceptance of the four-party meeting.³ Despite its conditional nature, Kim's speech reflects a profound policy realignment.

Would the new policy initiative bring about any immediate breakthrough in the inter-Korean stalemate? Would it serve as a new momentum for building confidence and peace on the Korean peninsula? What alternatives are available for improving inter-Korean relations and crafting a peace regime in Korea? This article explores these questions by looking into the dynamic interplay of international, regional, domestic, and perceptual variables and suggests alternative ways of thinking about peace and stability on the Korean peninsula.

2. The Korean Problem and the United States

The United States is the most important international actor in the drama of Korean conflict both because of its direct involvement through the U.S.-South Korean alliance and the presence of U.S. forces as well as because of North Korea's perception that the United States is the ultimate determinant of war and peace on the Korean peninsula. Therefore, the role of the United States seems most vital in resolving the Korean problem through effective tension reduction, arms control, and peace-building. There are several policy options open to Washington.

First, the United States should take measures to alleviate North Korea's fear and insecurity. Pyongyang is more fearful of the United States than of South Korea, believing that South Korea is still an American puppet. To the extent the United States is seen as the hostile aggressor, there is little point in the DPRK's coming forward on negotiations for peace building with the South. There are several ways to reduce and eliminate the North Korean fear. Continuing suspension of Team Spirit could be a first step.⁴ Establishment of liaison offices and full diplomatic normalization with the North could follow. Although some might view these moves as concessions fully accommodating North Korea's demands, it is also true that they may be exchanged for other benefits and do not in and of themselves provide any tangible benefits to the North. The recent nuclear stalemate demonstrates that isolation and intimidation do not alter North Korean behavior. On the contrary, they offer a good excuse for domestic repression and a hard line stance.

Normalization could resolve several pressing DPRK concerns, viz., recognition of the Kim Jong Il regime, removal of immediate military threats, economic side payments, and improved diplomatic ties with Japan. These steps could, in turn, serve as crucial pre-confidence building measures (CBMs) for inter-Korean CBMs, arms control, and peace-building. The above options should be predicated on North Korea's willingness to pursue inter-Korean talks and to comply with negotiated outcomes. Even if they serve as opening points of discussion, implementation of them need not, and indeed should not, be unilateral or automatic. Implementation should be in stages and should be effected if and as the North responds and complies with negotiated quid pro quos. The simple fact is that the cross-recognition formula and Russian and Chinese normalization with Seoul suggest that these steps are overdue.

The United States and the ROK have already used the suspension of Team Spirit exercises in conjunction with inter-Korean talks progress and, more recently, with the attempt to resolve the nuclear stalemate. It is very possible that continued suspension of Team Spirit can be linked to a favorable outcome to inter-Korean dialogue. In this event, the Team Spirit element might not be available for negotiation. However, like the other elements, decisions on Team Spirit are not

dichotomous. The program could be canceled (to be replaced by some other acceptable arrangements); it could be reorganized; or, modifications could be introduced to its level, timing, location, and nature.

As previous suspensions demonstrate, Team Spirit, which the North has claimed to be decisive as a provocation, is hardly the most important component of the U.S.-ROK security relationship. Other elements of U.S. training of ROK armed forces personnel; the transfer of advanced military technology and weapons systems; the U.S. military presence in and around Korea; and the U.S. commitment to defend the ROK-all these are indisputably more salient elements of the relationship. Policy initiatives that compromise less critical American and South Korean interests in return for tangible and important North Korean behaviors-and do so over time to ensure compliance with negotiated outcomes-can advance the mutual interests of all parties and overcome some of the hurdles currently impeding progress in the specific area of arms control.

Second, constructive engagement should be followed by a prudent realignment of previous policy, which favors "the Korea first". The best way to ensure a viable peace regime in Korea is to insulate the Korean conflict from the regional context. A simple logic of conflict resolution indicates that the larger the number of actors involved, the less likely the resolution of the conflict. In view of this, "one plus one (North and South Korea), namely the Korea First" formula must be better than "two (North and South Korea) plus one (the United States). In a similar vein, "two plus one" is more desirable than "two (North and South) plus two (the United States and China) and "two plus four (U.S., China, Russia, Japan)." How can then the United States craft a milieu conducive to the "Korea First" approach in which North and South Korea would engage in direct negotiations on peace-building?

The "Korea First" approach can be predicated on two possible alternatives as related to the American role.⁵ One is an American pull-out from the South. While U.S. forces are stationed in the South, progress in inter-Korean CBMs and arms control talks can only be very limited due both to the complexities of assessing military strength and readiness and to North's domestic political burden in engaging in negotiations in the presence of American troops in the South.⁶ No matter how gradual in timing and limited in scope and prudently linked to inter-Korean CBMs and arms control, however, the American pull-out will be unacceptable to South Korea. In this sense, North Korea's strategy to foster American disengagement through a peace treaty with the United States would not help inter-Korean confidence-building, arms control, and peace talks. It is so more because the peace treaty itself will perpetuate American entanglement with the Korean conflict, which the United States does not want.

The other alternative is to transform the existing armistice agreement system into the North-South Korean bilateral peace treaty system based on the Basic Agreement while retaining American forces in the South. It enables the United States to get out its entanglement with the Korean conflict by dissolving the armistice agreement system, which implies a de jure, not de facto, disengagement. American forces stay in South Korea not because of its jurisdictional obligations with the armistice agreement, but because of security commitments within the framework of US-ROK bilateral alliance system.

This alternative assumes that the Korean conflict should be resolved by parties directly involved in it, namely South and North Korea. It also assumes that the United States should remain as a significant theater force and a regional stabilizer, keeping Japan, South Korea, and even North Korea under its security umbrella. North Korea would not oppose such an arrangement if the United States guarantees its security assurance to the North. There could be several ways to assure the North of its national, if not regime, security.

One way is to facilitate the signing of the inter-Korean peace treaty within the context of regional security cooperation. The United States could take a leadership in forming an East Asian or Asia-Pacific regional security cooperation regime. The North-South Korean peace treaty, while American forces being retained, can be mediated through the security cooperation regime.⁷ Another way could involve an honest brokerage by the United States. The Camp David formula can also be deliberated in this context.⁸ The United States can bring leaders of two Koreas together and facilitate them to sign a bilateral peace treaty under the American brokerage. In order to cope with possible objections by the North on the American forces in the South, three parties can come up with an alternative arrangement of American forces such as using them as a peacekeeping force. As a fallback strategy, the United States could also consider assuring a symmetry of alliance between the North and the South. In this case, establishing US-DPRK bilateral military cooperation along with diplomatic normalization can be considered. Unlike the past, North Korea is less likely to oppose the latter option.

More recently, the North appears to appreciate the value of the United States not only as a deterrent force against the DPRK, but also as an effective restraint on the ROK's unilateral military action, Japanese military adventure, and China's regional hegemonic ambition. Despite the North's repeated emphasis on the US-DPRK peace treaty and the withdrawal of American forces from the South, the second alternative seems more feasible and desirable. South Korea might face domestic opposition, but it would not impose an insurmountable challenge.

A sequential pursuit of negotiated diplomatic activity followed by policy realignment could fundamentally alter current inter-Korean talks constraints and yield two favorable outcomes. On the one hand, they could facilitate pre-CBMs for CBMs by assuring the North of its regime survival and non-aggression by the most feared adversary. The North would lack rationales for any further delay and avoidance. On the other hand, the United States could alleviate structural impediments in the region (i.e., recurrence of finite deterrence) by remaining as a theater force.⁹ Neither U.S. domestic politics nor regional actors would oppose these two options. In the wake of the Geneva breakthrough, the United States and North Korea have made a substantial progress in bilateral relations. The North's fear of the United States has become much more diluted. Despite fiscal rigidity and defense spending cuts, the United States is likely to maintain its military presence in the South at least for the time being. South Koreans and some conservative elements in the United States might oppose new diplomatic and security ties between Pyongyang and Washington, but the opposition will be overcome if the sequence of the two policy options brings about positive and concrete North Korean behavioral changes.

If and to the extent these approaches lead to progress, the United States must give priority consideration in its future transfers of technology and equipment to the South of the degree to which individual items contribute to or detract from peninsular stability.¹⁰ The regulative behavior should be supplemented by fair and prudent CBMs and arms control-related techniques (especially those on verification) applied to both the North and the South. Should these conditions materialize, the United States can emerge as preferred honest broker of peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula.

3. Peace Building and the New Role of Regional Actors

In deliberating on the Korean question, China, Russia, and Japan, along with the United States, have always been identified as major actors influencing the nature and direction of the Korean conflict. In the new era of post-Cold War regional configuration, however, such a conceptualization seems losing its empirical relevance. As noted before, the United States still remains as the salient actor. But China, Russia, and Japan seem to have limited roles in facilitating inter-Korean CBMs, arms control,

and peace-building. Japan's role is circumscribed by constitutional considerations¹¹ and the security arrangement with the United States, while China and Russia are grappling with the challenges of strategic, political, ideological, and economic realignments. Former alliance ties with the North have withered, and economic incentives have emerged as the new driving forces in regional interactions. In view of this development, regional actors enjoy better positions to ease military tensions and to foster arms control in Korea by providing incentives for arms control talks, regulating the transfer of military hardware, and technically assisting the actual process of CBMs, arms control, and verification.

China can play a crucial role in influencing North Korea's behavior. The China card is valid not only for the nuclear issue in which it is currently much in evidence, but also for conventional arms control in Korea. Since the Beijing-Seoul diplomatic normalization in August 1992, Beijing-Pyongyang relationships have deteriorated. Nevertheless, China is the DPRK's last remaining ally. North Korea relies heavily on China for economic assistance and international diplomatic support. China can effectively utilize this assistance for leverage in inducing the North to engage in arms control and peace negotiations with the South. China may also be able to dissuade the North from venturing further along the nuclear path. As to the regulative dimension, China has been very cautious in military transfers and will likely maintain this policy stance. Given diplomatic normalization and increased economic interactions, South Korea might actively seek Chinese military hardware to further diversify its foreign military acquisitions. China should resist such temptations. One caveat is in order, however. Beijing's long-standing suspicion of, and reluctance to participate in, international and regional arms control regimes could depreciate its role as a persuasive facilitator of inter-Korean arms control and peace talks.

Russia no longer enjoys the influence it once had in Pyongyang, and indeed national as well as personal relationships have frayed substantially as a result of the growing interaction of Russia and South Korea. Moscow can be expected to take a very constructive policy position on arms control in the region, but it will carry little weight. By contrast, Russia continues to be the major military supplier to the North, and Russian economic needs have pushed the federation into a willingness to supply relatively advanced military equipment to buyers around the world-at very attractive prices. Policy circles in Russia are loath to go beyond meeting minimum moral and legal requirements of existing agreements with the DPRK and supplying ammunition and non-advanced equipment. The diffusion of power in Russia limits the degree to which policy on Korea can be imposed on the arms-producing industries, but North Korea's economic straits also limit that country's ability to purchase sophisticated armaments. In sum, the Russian role will be even more limited in the future than in the past.

Japan has been a marginal actor in the equation of Korean arms control and peace building, and in the direct sense retains limited options for action. Indirectly, Japan is a foremost factor in American thinking, and indeed in the thinking of the other major regional powers, China and Russia. Specifically, American, Chinese, and Russian diplomatic strategies relating to the current nuclear issue will all be prominently influenced by concerns about the implications for and impact on Japan's military options. The Americans are committed to providing a nuclear umbrella for Japan, but Americans are acutely aware that Chinese, Russian, and South Korean analysts fear a Japanese nuclear option in the event it becomes clear the North has succeeded in developing and husbanding nuclear weapons and missiles with ranges sufficient to target Japan.

Japan's direct role is much more limited, but it can contribute to enhancing Korean arms control and peace building in two important ways. First, Tokyo can use diplomatic recognition and developmental assistance to foster inter-Korean arms control and peace talks. By linking diplomatic normalization and development assistance to the North's defense spending and arms control

behavior (including the nuclear issue), Japan might be able to encourage the North in the direction of restraint and arms control with the South. North Korea's desperate economic situation increases the importance of Japan's potential influence in this regard. Second, Japan can also contribute to fostering inter-Korean arms control talks as a supplier of hardware related to inspections and verifications of military CBMs and arms control to both Koreas. As long as Japan adheres to the Peace Constitution, it will not adversely affect North-South Korean military balance by transferring military hardware.

Though limited, China, Russia, and Japan can play a role in regulating inter-Korean arms races and facilitating arms control and peace talks. They also share an interest in peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. However, structural uncertainties in East Asia, which are deeply embedded in the logic of finite deterrence, could defy individual intentions and easily derail the path to Korean arms control and peace-building. Japan's remilitarization, China's regional hegemonic ambition, and the resurgence of Russian nationalism and assertive military posture in the Far East could individually or severally complicate the East Asian security system.

In order to manage this situation and enhance the prospects for arms control and peace building on the Korean peninsula, three inter-related policy options need to be considered. First, the United States should continue to shoulder responsibilities as the principal regional stabilizer. However, the United States alone cannot bear the burden of ensuring regional stability. Secondly, then, collective efforts should be taken by regional actors. Such efforts can take the form of collective security, as Moscow has proposed under both "old" and "new" thinking. The collective security formula, which should include both North and South Korea, may deter the military ambitions of individual actors in the region.¹² However, forming a collective security regime among old and new friends and foes might not be easy. Finally, as a fallback strategy, a regional or multilateral arms control regime can be considered. It should be a multilateral arms control regime encompassing the entire Asia-Pacific region.

4. Domestic Structure and Realigning Inter-Korean Relations

The greatest barrier to inter-Korean arms control and peace talks is endogenous, not exogenous. Preoccupation with regime survival and regime contestation have politicized the process of arms control and peace negotiations, turning them into protracted stalemates. As long as the current pattern of ambiguous division continues, regime contestation and politicization of CBMs, arms control, and peace negotiations cannot be avoided. As the Basic Agreement stipulates, both Koreas should recognize each other's political, territorial, ideological, and institutional autonomy and integrity. The empty rhetoric of national unification should not mislead the objective reality of the division which has lasted almost half a century. As long as ideas such as unification by absorption or unification by Vietnamization are not abandoned, CBMs, arms control, and peace building are virtually impossible. In other words, full-fledged recognition of the Kim Jong Il regime by the South, and vice versa, are necessary prerequisites to real progress. The prescription could be tantamount to turning two separate regimes into two separate states. In order to resolve the conflict and ensure peace in Korea, the interim situation of two states and two regimes should be accepted as fait accompli. Otherwise, inter-Korean arms control and peace building efforts will be inevitably intertwined with domestic politics, blocking chances for ultimate conflict resolution and national unification.

The blurred demarcation between arms control, peace-building and national unification poses another fundamental barrier. As the South sees in arms control a preliminary step toward peaceful

unification, the North views disarmament essential as a unification prerequisite. Both neglect the fact that CBMs, arms control, and disarmament are techniques of conflict regulation, which could open new venues for conflict resolution and peace. The resolution of the Korean conflict could lead to several modus vivendi-only one of which is complete unification. Confederation or even perpetual division are other potential outcomes. However, both Koreas treat arms control and disarmament as instruments of unification. Unification is an extremely emotional and politicized subject, and arms control issues, once made a subset, are bound to be politicized. Complete unification is not the only possible modus vivendi. Eradicating the fear of war and mass destruction, and ensuring national survival, even in division-these are more urgent than unification. Consequently, CBMs, arms control, and disarmament are far more important as instruments of conflict management than pursuing national unification. Thus, both Koreas should downsize or avoid unification rhetoric, which can send wrong signals to each other and breed unwarranted threat perceptions. At the same time, conflict management including arms control should be decoupled from the rhetoric of national unification.

CBM, arms control, and peace negotiations require technical expertise and knowledge. Political common sense alone is not sufficient to facilitate them. Both Koreas, especially the North, suffer from an acute shortage of arms control experts, and experts' involvement in arms control policy-making process has been very limited. Both Koreas should expand their pools of relevant expertise to facilitate effective negotiations. Greater negotiator power and autonomy in actual negotiations would probably also contribute to progress. In addition, arms control policy and inter-Korean peace negotiations should be insulated from domestic political tinkering and bureaucratic spoilage to the maximum extent possible until they produce a major breakthrough for a viable arms control and peace regime. If the political rationale of regime survival and popularity continues to dictate the shape of inter-Korean arms control and peace negotiations, tangible outcomes will be hard to come by.

Since the High-level Political Talks were initiated, both Koreas have relied heavily on formal channels of communication and negotiation. Yet, the informal and personalized nature of Korean politics, and the fact that in the past most breakthroughs have resulted from informal channels and negotiations, suggest strongly that the formal approach is unlikely by itself to produce a turnaround. Both Koreas should maintain dual channels of communication. Direct links between the Blue House in the South and the Party Center in the North are particularly critical. Since the inauguration of the Kim Young Sam government, such high-powered, informal contacts are known to have been severed. A productive arms control interaction will almost certainly require the restoration of these informal channels. The concentration of policy-making power in both Koreas underscores this reality. The domestic political repercussions of inter-Korean arms control and peace negotiations necessitate preliminary talks through informal channels to fine tune differences before formal negotiations grapple publicly with the major issues.

Mutual recognition of the two political regimes, abandonment of unification rhetoric, and insulation of arms control negotiations from contending social and bureaucratic pressures are politically risky. They also require extensive deprogramming of the minds of people in North and South Korea, which have been indoctrinated to assume that unification is the only avenue to national survival and prosperity. Delegating more power to negotiators in the North and exercising executive leadership to foster bureaucratic unity in the South are impossible without firm commitment from the political leadership. Succumbing to the instinct to bolster short-term political popularity or immediate regime survival can undermine political leadership, driving inter-Korean negotiations back to the old pattern of stop-and-go stalemate. Domestic constraints on inter-Korean arms control and the resolution of the Korean conflict cannot be removed or scaled down without vision, persuasion, and commitment on the part of the political leadership. North-South Korean summit meetings provide a valuable venue to offer major turning points in inter-Korean relations. However, inter-Korean summit

meetings designed to placate domestic discontent amidst weak leadership and faltering legitimacy could aggravate, rather than ameliorate, the peninsular climate. Given the domestic political structure of both Koreas, inter-Korean arms control and peace negotiations might have a better chance of success if a summit meeting placed them at the top of its agenda and decided to implement them first.

5. Forming an Epistemic Community

Perhaps the most important task is how to form a suitable Korea-wide epistemic community. No matter how improved the external security environment and domestic political structure are, if negotiators from both parties do not share some common knowledge and expertise, arms control and peace negotiations are bound to encounter a dead end. There are three possible avenues to promote the formation of the epistemic community.

First, organizing arms control workshops in neutral states should be deliberated on. The most immediate barrier to forming an epistemic community is the asymmetry of knowledge and expertise in CBMs, arms control, and disarmament. South Korean experts are relatively well exposed to both arms control and disarmament paradigms. However, North Korean counterparts appear to lack knowledge and expertise in the arms control paradigm. Thus, it is essential for them to be exposed to, and acquainted with, the paradigm. One approach is to organize a series of workshops for North Korean policy-makers, negotiators, and related personnel. Ideally, North Korea should initiate, organize, and hold them in Pyongyang, but political, ideological, and logistic reasons appear likely to prevent this. The second best option is to organize them in neutral states acceptable to the North, and to invite North Korean officials and train them. Norway and Sweden might be ideal; Australia could be another candidate. These countries have internationally active peace research institutes which can host such workshops. International organizations such as the United Nations could also support initiating this kind of workshop. The workshops can feature such topics as the intellectual origins of CBMs, arms control, and disarmament; the European experiences in CBMs and conventional arms control; technical aspects of monitoring and verification; the contributions of advanced technology to arms control; and other related topics.

Second, both Koreas should make endeavors to create information networks. North Korea is fundamentally constrained in its access to current and comprehensive information and literature on recent developments in arms control, CBMs, and international affairs. In the course of its negotiations on the nuclear issue, North Korean officials have revealed this phenomenon. As a matter of fact, some North Korean officials, who frequented international conferences, demonstrated both that they suffer from an information shortage and that they desire to acquire relevant and necessary information. Two options are available. One is that international organizations, neutral states, or private foundations could initiate a campaign to raise funds to acquire and send an extensive collection of literature on international security, CBMs, arms control, disarmament, and peace movements. The other is that computer networks could be established at key research institutions in Pyongyang, such as the Institute on Peace and Disarmament, and be fed up-to-date information on a daily basis. This approach could be very effective in allowing the North to detect overall international public opinion and to trace information flow on the nuclear issue, for example.

Finally, while the first two steps are being taken, neutral third parties, affiliated neither with international organizations nor with government agencies of regional actors, can organize international conflict resolution workshops specifically designed for the Korean conflict. Assuming both parties possess adequate knowledge and expertise in CBMs, arms control, and disarmament, the workshops invite policy-makers and negotiators from both Koreas and provide for unbiased and

uninterrupted dialogue and communication with the facilitation of neutral, but leading experts on international conflict and arms control issues. This type of workshop is similar to the idea of opening informal contacts between the North and the South, but substantively different in that communications between the two Koreas are assisted by neutral third-party facilitators so as to eliminate negative perceptual traps. Given that the Korean conflict is not concerned with interests arising from control over scarce resources, but over values, identity, recognition, and security needs which are all in unlimited supply, track two diplomacy workshops aimed at controlled communication could be very useful in making breakthroughs in the current inter-Korean arms control stalemates. Such workshops proved to be effective in other conflict settings.¹³

6. Conclusion

In view of the above discussion, the current policy lines of both Koreas that focus on realignment of external ties are less likely to produce major breakthroughs in the stalled inter-Korean relations. Neither the four-party talk proposed by the South nor the Pyongyang-Washington peace treaty proposed by the North will yield positive dividends to peace building on the Korean peninsula. Although the international structures creating and sustaining the Korean conflict have been fundamentally transformed, perceptual, domestic, peninsular, and regional patterns continue to reinforce inter-Korean differences. These and procedural hurdles prevent significant progress toward achieving meaningful arms control and peace regime in the Korean context. It is impractical to consider or focus efforts on modifications to regional political patterns, since these patterns reflect interests more salient to most of the actors than is the problem of arms control and peace building on the Korean peninsula. However, it is equally true that no single party seeks to perpetuate the tension and conflict potential that currently characterize the situation. Indeed, solutions should be sought at all levels involving international, regional, domestic, and perceptual factors.

This article has suggested modest -- and in a few cases, not-so-modest -- steps quite within the basic framework governing regional and international relations in Northeast Asia that could facilitate arms control and peace on the Korean peninsula. We have also indicated specific approaches that are available to Korean and third parties to deal with procedural problems that impede progress at present. Fundamentally, however--and in this respect the Koreas are exactly like all other cases--the responsibility for generating and sustaining a meaningful and ultimately effective arms control and peace dialogue will depend upon the political leadership of North and South Korea. In this regard, the barriers are significant: they must not only overcome mutual distrust and suspicion, but in addition have the vision to modify structures and processes and domestic political survival techniques to achieve a higher objective.

7. Notes

1. For a comprehensive understanding of the Korean conflict, see Seoksoo Lee, *The Anatomy of the Korean Conflict* (Lexington, Ky: Univ. of Kentucky, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, 1992).
2. See Chung-in Moon, "The North Korean Problem and the Role of South Korea," in Thomas Henriksen and Jongryn Mo (eds.), *North Korea after Kim Il Sung: Continuity or Change?* (Stanford: The Hoover Institution Press, forthcoming).
3. For the full text of Kim's speech, see the *Korea Herald*, August 16, 1996.

4. ROK forces can still exercise with the United States elsewhere (e.g., in the United States). Alternatively, the United States and the South can bargain with the North over the types of exercises (amphibious, etc.), the location of exercises, the duration of exercises, and the level (size) of these maneuvers. The DPRK has refused to observe the exercises on the grounds that this constitutes "condoning" them, but there are other ways of measuring the North's perceptions besides a yes-or-no observation.
5. On this issue, refer to Chung-in Moon, "Restructuring of International Order and Reassessment of North-South Korean Relations," *Tongil Gyungje* Vol. 5 (May 1995), pp.56-70.
6. One of the complexities involves whether to include American forces stationed in the South in an inter-Korean arms control negotiation agenda. The South argues for the separation of inter-Korean arms control talks and U.S. troops, while the North has traditionally called for the resolution of the American troops problem before both parties engage in the actual negotiations. Given the lack of the South's command and control over U.S. troops stationed there, bean counting as well as actual reduction might be very difficult. Thus, North Korea's assertion that the issue of U.S. troops should be resolved prior to inter-Korean CBMs and arms control has some valid aspects. Furthermore, North Korea's long-standing anti-American position, which is directly related to regime security, might make it hard for its political leaders to engage in arms control talks with the South without resolving the issue. Since May 1990, however, North Korea has shown a more flexible attitude on the question of American forces in the South.
7. The "two plus four" formula can replace the proposed regional security cooperation regime in the Northeast Asian context since the formula features all the major regional actors. However, it must be noted that the formula can undermine the letter and spirit of the "Korea First" approach. Thus, it seems more desirable to deliberate on peace regime in Korea within the context of a broadly defined multilateral security cooperation regime rather than a Korea-focused temporal arrangement such as "two plus four." See Pauline Kerr, Andrew Mack, and Paul Evans, "The Evolving Security Discourse in the Asia-Pacific," in Andrew Mack and John Ravenhill (eds.), *Pacific Cooperation: Building Economic and Security Regimes in the Asia-Pacific Region* (St. Leonards, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1994), pp.233-255.
8. For a detailed account of the Camp David formula, see William B. Quandt, *Camp David: Peacemaking and Politics* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings, 1986).
9. On the issue of finite deterrence, see Chung-in Moon, *Arms Control on the Korean Peninsula: International Penetrations, Regional Dynamics, and Domestic Structure* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1996), chapter four.
10. Rationalizing military transfers to South Korea on the criterion of stability will be a major challenge in an environment in which (1) U.S. arms manufacturers (and the U.S. government) are promoting sales to boost stagnant American employment and (2) South Korea is trying to upgrade its military capability to cover areas America has assumed responsibility for in the past (e.g., anti-submarine warfare). The prevailing logic of deterrence and the power of the military-industrial complex in both countries are a major impediment to the regulative dimension.
11. It is worth noting that while Washington has encouraged Japan to interpret constitutional restrictions less rigidly so that Japan can assume greater responsibilities for regional security (such as in the participation in international peacekeeping activities), other regional powers, including Russia and Japan as well as the Koreans, do not share this American view. They see each increment of added Japanese military capability (or "responsibility" from the American point of view) and added Japanese interventionist sentiment (or "maturity" from the American point of view) as a grave threat

to regional and national security.

12. The Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation of the University of California, San Diego (Director: Susan Shirk) has recently initiated a multilateral workshop to explore the possibility of developing cooperative security in East Asia.

13. See Edward Azar and John Burton, eds., *International Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice* (Sussex: Wheatsheaf, 1986); John W. McDonald, ed., *Conflict Resolution: Track Two Diplomacy* (Washington, D.C.: Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State, 1987).

IV. NAPSNet Invites Your Responses

The Northeast Asia Peace and Security Network invites your responses to these essays. Below are some questions that some readers may find useful in putting the issues raised by the essays into a critical light. Please send responses to: napsnet-reply@nautilus.org (preferably using "response to forum #5" as the subject). Responses will be considered for redistribution to the network only if they include the author's name, affiliation, and explicit consent.

* Prof. Moon argues that the US "should take measures to alleviate North Korea's fear and insecurity." Does Prof. Moon's argument answer the potential charge that appeasement of the DPRK might only exacerbate tensions on the Korean Peninsula?

* Prof. Moon argues in favor of a "Korea first" approach that would "insulate the Korean conflict from the regional context," and favor direct ROK-DPRK negotiations over more multilateral formulas, including the proposed "four-party" peace talks proposal. Is this strategy sound? Why?

* Prof. Moon asserts that the US is still central to Korean affairs, but that Russia, Japan and the PRC now have much more "limited roles" to play. Is this a correct assessment of the political situation? How does this assessment accord with Patrick Norton's discussion of the legal dimensions of the Korean Armistice Agreement (NAPSNet Policy Forum Online #2)?

* Prof. Moon identifies the greatest barrier to Korean peace as "endogenous" political circumstances, and calls for the two Korean governments to recognize each other's "autonomy and integrity." Is the explicit abandonment of the goal of Korean unification entailed by this move feasible and desirable?

* Prof. Moon calls for the creation of a "Korea-wide epistemic community" to create the common knowledge and expertise that he views to be the most important prerequisites to arms control and peace negotiations. What kinds of activities might this focus in practice entail?

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