

Policy Forum 97-17: A Russian Perspective on Korean Peace and Security



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Recommended Citation

"Policy Forum 97-17: A Russian Perspective on Korean Peace and Security", NAPSNet Policy Forum, July 30, 1997, <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-policy-forum/napsnet-forum-8-a-russian-perspective-on-korean-peace-and-security/>

NAPSNet Forum #8 -- A Russian Perspective on Korean Peace and Security

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Northeast Asia Peace and Security Network

"A Russian Perspective on Korean Peace and Security"

#8 -- July 30, 1997

The is intended to provide expert analysis of contemporary peace and security issues in Northeast Asia, and an opportunity to participate in discussion of the analysis. The Forum is open to all participants of the [Northeast Asia Peace and Security Network \(NAPSNet\)](#) . As always, NAPSNet invites your responses to this report. Please see "[NAPSNet Invites Your Responses,](#)" below, and send your responses to the NAPSNet Coordinator at: napsnet-reply@nautilus.org .

A RUSSIAN PERSPECTIVE ON KOREAN PEACE AND SECURITY

Essay by Evgueni Bajanov

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A RUSSIAN PERSPECTIVE ON KOREAN PEACE AND SECURITY

I. Introduction

The following essay, "Russian Perspective On A Post-Armistice Order In Korea," was written by Evgueni Bajanov, Director of the Institute of Contemporary International Problems (ICIP) in the Russian Diplomatic Academy in Moscow, Russian Federation. Prof. Bajanov's essay offers a provocative look at Korean affairs from the point of view of the Russian Federation, tracing Russia's historic and contemporary interests in the region, examining the evolution of its relations with the principal countries in the Northeast Asia region, and assessing the role that Russia seeks to play in promoting peace and security on the Korean peninsula. In particular, Prof. Bajanov explains the critical position that Russia has taken toward the US-ROK proposed "four-party" peace talks, and describes the alternative process advocated by Russia which, he argues, would be more effective in solving the problems underlying present tensions and in laying the groundwork for eventual Korean unification. (Readers should note that this essay was written prior to Thursday's statements by Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov, following talks with ROK Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-ha, expressing Russia's qualified support for the four-party formula; see ["Russia Supports Four-Party Talks"](#) in the US section of the July 24 NAPSNet Daily Report.)

Prof. Bajanov's essay continues discussion of the prospects for peace on the Korean peninsula begun in previous NAPSNet Policy Forums . In particular, Prof. Bajanov's articulation of the "Russian proposal" to achieve Korean peace and security, envisioning a normalization of relations among the principal involved states followed by a convening of an international conference with broader participation, bears a distinct resemblance to the proposal discussed by [Robert Bedeski in the](#)

[preceding Policy Forum](#) .

The views expressed and arguments made in the following essay are those of the author. NAPSNet presents the essay as received, except for minor editing. Following the essay, the section ["NAPSNet Invites Your Responses"](#) provides information on how you can respond and participate in the online forum.

II . Essay by Evgueni Bajanov

RUSSIAN PERSPECTIVE ON A POST-ARMISTICE ORDER IN KOREA

by Evgueni Bajanov

My paper is devoted to the analysis of motives, aims, and contents of Russia's policies in Korea; the role Moscow can and wants to play in the ending of the Armistice; and the Russian vision of the post-Armistice regional security arrangements.

The paper is structured into four sections. The first provides a brief historical interpretation of Russia's policies towards Korea. Then I discuss current adjustments in the Kremlin's international strategy and their impact on Moscow's behavior of the Korean peninsula. Section three shows Russia's reaction to the idea of four-power talks. Finally, I explain Moscow's own proposals on the settlement of the Korean problem.

This research is based on a wide range of governmental, scholarly, and journalistic sources (Russian, North Korean and others); however, the sources are identified only when absolutely necessary.

1. The Legacy of the Past

The Korean Peninsula got in the focus of Russia's attention after Tsar Alexander II established in 1860 his rule over Maritime province adjacent to the "Hermit Kingdom." Ever since Russia for various reasons and in different forms participated in the struggle of big powers (Japan, the USA, China) for control in this East Asian nation. Once in a while Russia would slacken its activities on the Korean peninsula only to return there later with a renewed vigor.

At the end of World War II, Stalin's strategy in Korea included three goals: assurance of the USSR's national security; expansion of the sphere of communism's influence; and satisfaction of Russia's traditional great-power ambitions. The Soviet Union, although weakened by the bloody and destructive war against fascist Germany, spared no effort to build and strengthen a loyal regime in the North. (1) Until the end of 1949, Stalin did not plan to extend his control to the South of Korea. Instead he was afraid of an attack from the ROK and tried hard to suppress aggressive moods of North Korean leaders. (2) However Stalin's approach changed in 1950: in April of that year the Soviet dictator officially blessed an invasion of the South. (3) The change was prompted by the victory of the communists in China, the Soviet acquisition of the atom bomb, general aggravation of Soviet relations with the West and a perceived weakening of Washington's will to get involved militarily in Asia.

When Stalin realized that the war in Korea could not be won, his main preoccupation became to avoid a direct large-scale conflict of the USSR with the USA and at the same time to keep Americans tied up in the Korean war as long as possible. According to the Soviet leader, the longer Washington was involved there, the better it was for the overall international situation, for the interests of

"socialism. (4) After Stalin's death, the new Soviet leadership hurried to terminate the bloody conflict on the Korean Peninsula and adopted the policy of a status-quo, a non-violent competition between the North and the South. (5) A huge material and military aid was poured into the DPRK. (6) However, by the beginning of the 1960s, ideological and political contradictions developed between Moscow and Pyongyang. Khrushchev was concerned that the leftist fever that infected Beijing and Pyongyang at the time would set the Far East afire in war. (7) The next Soviet leader, L. Brezhnev, and his administration tried to bring the DPRK back from its "tilt" towards the PRC. North Korea was perceived by the Kremlin as a strategic ally, a Far Eastern outpost in the overall confrontation of the USSR with the USA. Disliking Kim Il Sung's "juche" and "cult of personality," Moscow nevertheless continued to help its ally and to ignore the ROK. (8)

The coming to power of Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985 did not initially change anything in the triangular Moscow-Pyongyang-Seoul relationship. As a matter of fact, the new Soviet leader sincerely did everything to reinforce friendship and cooperation among all "socialist" states, including those (like the DPRK) which had maintained a distance from the Kremlin. Moscow-Pyongyang relations did become warmer and closer in 1985-1986. Such positive tendency did not last long though. Starting in 1987, differences in foreign policy objectives and internal ideological and political developments grew and brought about misunderstandings, frictions, and cooling-off in mutual relations. A drastic reduction in the USSR aid and critical articles in the Soviet press exacerbated the problems. But all these troubles cannot be compared with the infuriation of Pyongyang with the rapprochement of Moscow with Seoul. Normalization of Soviet-South Korean relations was qualified by the DPRK as a "disgusting, vomiting and unseemly" act of betrayal.

The advent of the new, anti-Communist regime in Moscow further complicated matters, as leaders of the democratic movement felt nothing but contempt for communists both inside and outside of Russia; and the DPRK, with its pure Stalinist-type dictatorship, seemed the worst possible case. Such views were shared by most of the Russian media, which mercilessly attacked Kim Il Sung and his "kingdom." A strong belief existed in the Russian capital that all remaining communist regimes in the world were doomed and would soon go down the drain, following the examples of the USSR and Eastern Europe. (10) The argument was advanced in the government that Russia should distance itself from a decaying international pariah so as not to be compromised in the eyes of the world and the future democratic leaders of Korea.

Even less desire existed in the Kremlin to bolster the DPRK economically. Not only did Moscow not want to prolong the Kim Il Sung system but economic cooperation with North Korea was simply not profitable, and crisis-stricken Russia curtailed all the aid that had been provided in the past for ideological and political reasons. Politically, the Kremlin now clearly disapproved of Pyongyang's intransigence in inter-Korean relations and its confrontational foreign policy. Russian democrats did not want to supply the DPRK with weapons and they did not want to be linked to North Korea's security by guarantees or anything else.

Pyongyang reacted to changes in the former Soviet Union with disgust and fear. As a result, Russian-North Korean relations got off to a bad start in 1992; while continuing to develop ties with the ROK, Moscow ignored political contacts with the DPRK. The Russian Foreign Minister declared in the spring that Moscow would stop all military cooperation with the North and put pressure on it to drop its nuclear plans. Yeltsin described the 1961 Soviet-North Korean security treaty as existing only on paper, and Information Minister Poltoranin, while in Tokyo, advised the Japanese not to pay war reparations to the DPRK to prevent prolongation of this repressive, obsolete regime. (11)

2. Factors of Change

The problems, created in Russian-North Korean relations in the late 1980s-early 1990s, still exist. However, a number of important factors have been moving the Kremlin lately to a more positive posture vis-à-vis the DPRK. First of all, it is the internal evolution of the Russian society. Great difficulties with reforms have seriously weakened the democratic, pro-Western camp of Russia. It quite soon lost confidence and unity. Many former democrats have switched to conservative nationalist ranks, or have simply left the political scene. A large number of them have plunged into corruption, privilege-hunting, doubtful business dealings.

As a natural consequence of such developments, the public has grown bitterly disappointed and angry with liberal democrats and their slogans. More than half of the voters twice in 1998 and 1995 supported communists and ultra-nationalists in parliamentary elections. Under internal pressures, President Yeltsin had to move to a more conservative stand in foreign policy. A transformed government, including Foreign Ministry, have absorbed people with a traditional outlook on foreign affairs. If some of the original democrats kept their positions they also had to change colors: voluntarily or because of the necessity. The conservative forces are helped by current developments in the near vicinity of Russia as well as in the world at large: harassment of ethnic Russians in the former Soviet republics, dissatisfaction in Russia with Western aid and the general behavior of the West vis-à-vis Moscow, challenges to Moscow from some Third World neighbors to the South, and growing instability and violence in the world. It is clear that Russian foreign policy has already become less romantic and more down-to-earth, less ideological (anticommunist) and more pragmatic, less internationalist and more nationalist, less pro-Western and more Eurasian, oriented to the East and South. Internal pressures and changing circumstances will be driving the Kremlin back to a more traditional diplomatic line oriented towards security and great-power ambitions.

Security concerns are already coming to the forefront of Russian policy in Asia. Russia's interests are increasingly challenged militarily on the Afghan-Tajik border, and arms races in the region worry Moscow. Awareness grows in the Kremlin of a potential danger of renewed hostilities on the Korean Peninsula, and Moscow wants to resume a more active role in mediating differences between Seoul and Pyongyang. Especially, it has been realized in Russia that the North Korean regime will not necessarily collapse in the immediate future and that its collapse may actually create even greater security risks. Such an approach requires an improvement of relations with the DPRK and a more balanced policy on the peninsula.

Great power ambitions also move Moscow towards North Korea. Russia increasingly tries to regain influence and prestige throughout the region and to show its flag wherever possible. It hopes to forge closer ties with new partners while returning, when possible, to former allies recklessly abandoned earlier. Restoration of links with North Korea is justified on the grounds that Moscow created Kim Il Sung's regime and spent much time and money nourishing it and that, while leaders come and go, people's memories and friendship endure. These feelings are reinforced by the envy towards American activities in the DPRK. It seems to the Russians that the USA is winning Moscow's ally on the American side. It is evident in the attempts of the North to sign a peace treaty exclusively with the USA, in the forthcoming cooperation between the DPRK and the United States in the nuclear field and other moves.

It is argued in Moscow that "the United States are undertaking a broad offensive irrespective of Russian interests aiming at expanding their influence over the Northern part of the Korean Peninsula in order to become the sole master of Korea's destiny. (12) It is also stressed that an active Moscow does not coincide with American national interests. (13)

At the same time, I'd like to note that Washington still keeps basically unchanged security links with the ROK and continues to dominate over its ally in the South. Simultaneously, Russia's prestige and influence in the ROK have diminished lately precisely because of the weakening of Moscow's position in the North. Back in the 1980s, South Korea decided to develop the Soviet connection exactly because Moscow seemed to be able to influence positively the North Korean leadership. However, as soon as the Kremlin and the Blue House formalized mutual relations, Seoul began to pressure Russia against continuation of military and other aid to the DPRK. When Russia did downgrade its cooperation with the North, the South, instead of being satisfied, lost respect for the Kremlin - since it now lacked leverages vis-à-vis the North. So Moscow, taking such reaction of the ROK into consideration, feels that improvement of relations with the DPRK, among other things, will help to restore Russian credibility and prestige in the South.

I think that only by exerting influence over both Korean states can Moscow "stay in the game" and secure its position vis-à-vis a future reunified Korea. A deterioration of relations with the DPRK has "limited Russia's possibilities to positively influence developments in the immediate neighborhood of its border. (14)

China is in its turn cited nowadays in Russia as perfect example of how to manage relations with the DPRK. Indeed, the PRC has been able to develop excellent rapport and close economic cooperation with the South without undermining own positions in the North.

Economic considerations are a third driving motive for Russia's activities in the Asia-Pacific region. South Korea continues to figure prominently among prospective partners, and Moscow will keep it high on the agenda. However, there is a certain disappointment - due to low investment activities of the ROK companies in Russia and problems with loans and credits.

As for North Korea, it certainly does not have an equal economic appeal in the eyes of the Russians. Still, Moscow has recognized that the only way to get North Korean debts back is to smooth tensions with the DPRK. It is deemed profitable to continue employing North Korean wood-cutters and other workers in the Russian Far East, to buy DPRK valuable raw materials in exchange for finished goods. Russia may also someday participate in the modernization of the numerous Soviet-built enterprises in the DPRK. Deliveries of nuclear reactors to the North and involvement in the development of the free economic zones in the border areas are mentioned among economic aims of Russia vis-à-vis North Korea. Another argument is that only together with the DPRK it would be possible to realize some of the large-scale Russian-South Korean projects, like a gas pipeline from Yakutia to the ROK.

The ideological factor, that is, spreading the democratic gospel, no longer figures prominently in Russia's policies in Asia and the Pacific. North Korea is no longer abhorred by the ruling elite of Russia as it was a couple of years earlier. As for various groups of the opposition, the DPRK has become their new "darling." The Russian communist party established permanent contacts with the North Korean ruling circles, regularly sending to the North high-level delegations. In joint statements and other documents, the two sides swear to unite "in the struggle for socialism and against reaction." Russian communists use every opportunity to praise *juche* ideology, "great achievements" of the DPRK in the socialist construction and in pursuing an "independent, proud" foreign policy. (15)

The strongest nationalist party, the Liberal-Democratic party, headed by V. Zhirinovsky, is even more eloquent in praising Pyongyang. V. Zhirinovsky says: "The world is now in the grip of unrest and disorder, but Korea is advancing in close unity based on self-reliance and its own political philosophy, thus becoming a country envied even by Russia, which was once strongest power, and an oasis for the world. (16)

On June 4, 1996, during Russia's State Duma hearings on the Korean problem chairman of the Duma's Committee on Geopolitics, Mr. Mitrofanov (Zhirinovskiy's "shadow" foreign minister) roundly denounced the Kremlin's policies in Korea. Mr. Mitrofanov claimed that Moscow had betrayed the DPRK, joined the international anti-Korean chorus, and, as a result, North Koreans who had "loved" Russia and Russians "had had no choice but to consider us as at least an unfriendly country. (17) Mr. Mitrofanov insisted that North Korea was a "strategic ally, who was betrayed for the sake of futile and senseless economic contacts with the ROK. (18) The Liberal-Democratic party harshly criticized South Korea's policies towards Russia as "insulting." From their point of view Russia "had to warn and threaten South Korea with strong actions to make it more respectful. (19) The Liberal-Democrats demand resumption of military cooperation with the DPRK and in fact supported North Korean nuclear programs. A nuclear-armed North Korea is viewed by these people as a contributing factor to the defense of Russia against Washington and its allies. (20)

3. Russia's Reaction to the Idea of Four-Power Talks on Korea

Officials responsible for Kremlin's relations with Asian countries repeatedly criticized the idea of four-power talks on Korea. Russian Ambassador to the DPRK V. Denisov, for instance pointed out: "As can be observed, this plan does not take into account the Russian side. We can hardly agree with this. Because it is a fact that Russia played in the past and continues to play an important positive role in normalization of the situation in Korea and around it. Attempts to remove us from the settlement of a problem, which is directly connected with our interests, cannot be understood by us. (21) Deputy Foreign Minister A. Panov noted: "It remains unclear what kind of problems the four-power meeting will discuss. (22)

I can add to this my personal view that Moscow's opposition to the four-power talks will not soften. Russia has been closely connected with the events in Korea during the whole WW II and post-war period, it is a neighbor of Korea and has there strong security, political and economic interests.

Applying pressure on Seoul to reconsider its four-power talks proposal the Russian side elaborates a number of arguments. It is stressed that there is no other country besides Russia with which South Korean national interests coincide to such a degree. Russia, as diplomats and politicians insist, is virtually the only power honestly desiring unification of Korea. The Kremlin needs a strong Korea to balance off Japan and China, while Tokyo and Beijing for various reasons are not anxious to see Korean nation unified. Americans may also lose if the split in Korea is overcome - their troops most probably will be asked to leave the peninsula. Russians stress as well that with the stabilization of their economy South Korea will find in Russia the biggest market for investments, exports of consumer goods and imports of raw materials.

I believe in the need to apply three basic principles for a successful solution of the Korean problem. The first one is recognition of the fact that six states are equally involved in the settlement on the Korean peninsula: the ROK, the DPRK, China, the USA, Russia, and Japan. The Korean problem combines internal and external aspects which are interconnected. Consequently, no matter how justified are demands of the two Korean states to other parties not to interfere into the affairs of the peninsula, the four powers-China, the USA, Russia, Japan will still be connected with the process. Any attempt to push any of the six participants away from the scene or to exclude them from the settlement completely will only slow down and disrupt the process itself.

The second principle presupposes that each member of the "six" approves normalization of relations among all other five states. Seoul does not like that Washington and Pyongyang are building up a

bilateral dialogue while North Korea attempts to ignore South Korea. I consider Seoul's reaction unjustified and near-sighted. The cross-recognition idea on the Korean peninsula was developed by Americans and supported by the ROK and Japan. However after at first the USSR and then China established diplomatic relations with the South, Washington and Tokyo did not make similar steps towards the North. Moreover, numerous preliminary conditions have been advanced which Pyongyang must meet before the recognition may take place.

Now the DPRK is in a much weaker position internationally as well as economically, militarily, and socially. Under such circumstances the North will never agree on a meaningful dialogue and rapprochement with the South. At first it has to obtain stronger international position, to get more guarantees and support from the big powers involved in the Korean settlement. Even if Pyongyang aims at isolating Seoul by promoting a bilateral dialogue with the USA, the ROK should not be overly concerned. Americans are not about to abandon the South for the friendship with the communist North. Besides, the DPRK in the process of opening up to the United States and Japan, and will start changing. As a result, it will become ready to a constructive relationship with the ROK. Russia should also welcome rapprochement between Washington and Pyongyang, and China must not object to the normalization of North Korean-Japanese relations. Seoul should react more reasonably to a potential improvement in Moscow-Pyongyang relations.

The third principle is non-interference of the "six" in the internal affairs of each other. I acknowledge that lately both Seoul and Washington have been underlining their resolve not to undermine the communist regime in the North. Nevertheless, Pyongyang has reasons not to trust those statements. It is not surprising since just a few years ago, when communist governments in Eastern Europe were falling, the South Korean elite openly strove for the demolition of the opponent's regime in the North. As for Americans, they seriously contemplated in 1992-1993 a "preventive strike" against the DPRK's nuclear installations. To be sure, the fears of North Korean leaders could not be dispersed so quickly, especially under conditions of a progressing weakness of the DPRK in all spheres.

4. Russian Proposal

Only if three above-mentioned principles are applied and consistently observed by the six sides, the real prospects for détente on the Korean peninsula may open up. On the basis of this reasoning the Kremlin advances the proposal to hold a multinational conference with the purpose of creating a mechanism for the overall settlement of the problems of the Korean peninsula.

Russia believes that besides the "six," it is advisable to invite to the conference all remaining permanent members of the UN Security Council (France and Britain) as well as the Secretary General of the United Nations and General Director of the IAEA. Observers from other interested parties (like ASEAN) can also attend the conference. Here is the essence of the Russian proposal.

The Conference schedule. The Conference starts at the level of Foreign Ministers. They will approve the agenda and schedule of the conference and will also set up working groups according to the agenda.

Working Group on the Improvement of DPRK-ROK Relations. The subject of the discussions can become all those proposals, which have been so far advanced by the two sides. The main purpose is to work out a set of measures on the creation of stable, multi-faceted dialogue and contacts between the North and the South. As an initial step the North and the South can reach an understanding on the realization of provisions of the agreement on reconciliation, non-aggression, cooperation and exchanges.

These measures may include: establishment of a direct telephone line between military commanders and exchange of information, development of economic cooperation, restoration of transport communications, opening of free movement and contacts of people, of telephone and post office links, reunion of divided families.

The agreement on creation of a Permanent Commission on military issues and a Commission cooperation and exchanges should be realized as well. Besides, it is advisable to reach an agreement on regular summits, negotiations between heads of governments and ministers, on propaganda policies.

The group could start discussion of unification principles, taking as a basis principles, fixed in the Joint Statement of the North and South of July 4, 1972. In accordance with the Joint Statement the reunification must be achieved, first of all, by Koreans, without outside interference, second, by peaceful means, third, on the basis of "national consolidation."

On the basis of the Joint Statement the two sides could start activities of the Coordination Committee. The Committee will strive for creation of conditions for peaceful unification of the country, large-scale exchanges among political parties, social organizations and individuals, cooperation in the fields of economy and culture. The Committee would consist of five subcommittees: political, military, diplomatic, economic and cultural. The Committee would be entrusted with the examination of proposals of the North and the South aimed at the unification of the country.

As it is known, the DPRK has advanced the idea of creation of the North-South confederation in the form of the Democratic Confederative Republic Koryo. The idea allows preservation of the two existing social political systems. At the same time a unified national government will be formed with equal participation of the DPRK and ROK representatives. Under the leadership of the unified national government the North and the South will practice self-government.

A Permanent Confederative Committee, established in the framework of the Supreme National Confederative assembly with the equal representation of the two sides will act as a unified government. The unified government could tackle foreign affairs and defense issues coordinating activities of the two regional governments (the North and the South), and assure wholesome economic, social and cultural development of the country, cooperation between the North and the South.

The regional governments in the limits agreeable with national interests, will conduct independent from each other policy trying at the same time to overcome mutual differences.

ROK proposals are also known. In 1989, Seoul advanced the concept of "a Korean Commonwealth." It included creation of the Council of the two Korean states, formation of the Council of Ministers with two Prime Ministers and ten Ministers from each side. This body was supposed to concentrate on solution of the reunification problem of 10 million members of divided families and the problem of lessening of a military-political confrontation. A Council consisting of 100 parliamentarians from each side was proposed to work out a Constitution of a unified Korea.

Proposals of the two sides significantly differ in the forms and stages of the unification process. However it seems to be possible to find an acceptable compromise concept on the basis of those proposals. When the North and the South reach agreements, other conference participants will approve those agreements and agree to become their guarantors.

Working Group on Replacement of the Armistice with a Peace Structure. This group may include

not only countries which signed the Armistice but also countries-members of the Commission of neutral states performing control functions over implementation of the Armistice agreement. Naturally, representatives of the United Nations, states, participating in the conference, will equally participate in the group activities.

It is obvious that termination of the Armistice agreement will require cancellation of appropriate UN resolutions. Among others the group will have to solve the question of utilization by the American troops in the ROK of the flag and symbols of the United Nations.

As a temporary measure before creation of a new peace structure on the Korean peninsula, the group can examine a possibility of replacing American troops in the neutral zone with troops of neutral states troops. I may remind that back in 1987, Pyongyang proposed to set up special military units of the states performing control functions over implementation of the Armistice agreement- Poland, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Switzerland-to observe the situation in the demilitarized zone.

On this basis, decisions could be taken on gradual demolition of military structures in the demilitarized zone, withdrawal of troops of the two sides from the zone for a considerable distance

Working Group on Confidence-Building Measures on the Korean Peninsula. This group could concentrate efforts on working out confidence-building measures in the military field as well as radical cuts of armed forces and armaments.

Among such measures I can mention:

- invitation of observers to military maneuvers
- banning of maneuvers with the number of participants above a certain level
- exchange of data on the military forces of the two sides
- creation of joint groups for exchange of views on the military situation on the peninsula

I believe it is also necessary to discuss simultaneously American military presence in Korea. As it is well-known, the United States repeatedly planned to reduce their military presence in the ROK. Thus, the Nixon doctrine called for a gradual withdrawal of a portion of American armed forces from the South. One American division was withdrawn. However, the total withdrawal of the army units planned for 1975 did not materialize. After defeat in Vietnam Washington resumed its strategy of a permanent military presence in the ROK.

The Carter administration had a five-year withdrawal plan for American armed forces in Korea. With the completion of the plan only 18,000 military personnel (mainly Air Force Units) would have been left on the peninsula. And yet this plan was not realized-due to the resistance of the ROK, American military, and right-wing political circles.

The Bush administration for its part promised to implement a 8-stage reduction of American troops in the South. During the first stage (three years), the reduction was supposed to be 7,000; in the second stage (from three to five years) -depending on the progress in a dialogue the DPRK-ROK - further reduction; during the third stage (from five to ten years) -reduction to the minimal deterrence level.

So, the issue of reduction of American military presence is not new and stages of its possible reduction have been already examined by the American side.

Working Group on the Non-Nuclear Status of the Korean Peninsula and Creation of a Zone Free from All Types of Mass Destruction Weapons. The North Korean nuclear problems, though temporarily "closed," are not however fully settled. IAEA continues to perform its functions of control over the North Korean nuclear program. Besides, the idea of securing the non-nuclear status of the Korean peninsula remains on the agenda. This is a rather old idea. The Soviet Union many years ago proposed to create a nuclear-free zone on the Korean Peninsula.

The USSR suggested the following obligations for the nuclear powers:

- Restraining from own actions and from inciting other states to violate the non-nuclear status of the zone.
- Restraining from utilization or threats of utilization of nuclear weapons against participants of the treaty on the non-nuclear zone.
- Restraining from assistance in the development, production or acquisition of nuclear weapons as well as in training of troops in the nuclear field of the treaty participants.
- Restraining from transfer in a direct or an indirect form of nuclear arms or other nuclear explosion devices to the treaty participants.
- Restraining from deploying or keeping means of delivery of nuclear weapons on the territory of the non-nuclear zone.
- Follow the ban on the transit of nuclear weapons through the territory of a non-nuclear zone with the understanding that it will not undermine freedom of navigation in the high seas, the right of peaceful passage through territorial waters and the regime of straits used for international navigation.

The Russian side believes that all these obligations can be examined at an international conference and will really help to settle once and forever the issue of nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula.

The main purpose of this working group is to bring to implementation the Joint Declaration of the North and the South on denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, including repudiation of testing, production, possession, introduction, keeping and deployment of the nuclear weapons as well as realization of the Agreed Framework between the DPRK and the USA.

In order to achieve these purposes the following measures should be worked out:

- promotion of the Joint Declaration between the North and the South on denuclearization of the Korean peninsula
- promotion of the Agreed Framework between the DPRK and the USA
- securing guarantees by nuclear powers of a non-nuclear status of the Korean peninsula
- assisting the Organization on the energy development on the Korean peninsula
- assisting utilization of spent fuel and deliveries of diesel fuel.

In the framework of this group the United States and the DPRK may confirm their adherence to the Geneva accords of October 1994. The United States may confirm absence of American nuclear weapons in South Korea and take an obligation not to introduce these weapons into the ROK. The

USA, the ROK and the DPRK may express readiness to conduct international inspections of military facilities on the territory of both parts of Korea with the purpose of confirming absence of nuclear weapons.

The group could equally examine questions, connected with the ban on production, deployment and acquisition by the North and South of chemical and biological weapons, long-range missiles.

The DPRK and the ROK will ratify the Convention on chemical weapons, will join the international regime of control over exports of missiles and missile technology.

Working Group on Normalization of Relations between All State Participants of the Conference: DPRK-US, DPRK-Japan. The group examines issues connected with solution of problems obstructing a full normalization of relations.

Since all the groups work under one "roof" of an international conference it seems feasible to conduct joint meetings of a number of groups to discuss corresponding problems and to find multi-faceted compromises

Recommendations of working groups are sent to the conference sessions at the ministerial level for approval.

5. Notes

(1) For details, see Natalia Bazhanova. *Between Dead Dogmas and Preotloal Requirements*. Seoul: The Korea Economic Daily, 1992, pp.19-169 (Korean language).

(2) Natalia Bazhanova. "Samaya Zagadochnya voyna XX stoletia. ("The most mysterious war of the XX century"). *New Times*; Moscow, 1996, N 6, p.30.

(3) See Evgueni Bajanov. "Assessing the Politics of the Korean War, 1949-1951." *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, Winter 1995-1996, issues 8-7, pp.54,87.

(4) See Natalia Bajanova. "Assessing the conclusion and outcome of the Korean War." Paper at the conference "The Korean War," Washington D.C., July 24-25, 1995, p.?.

(5) *Ibid*, pp.3-10.

(6) See Natalia Bajanova. *Vneshneconomioheskie svyazi KNDR (DPRK's Foreign Economic Relations)*, Moscow: Vostochnya Literatura, 1993, pp.8-99.

(7) Nikita Khrushchev. *Memuary (Memories)*. Moscow: Mezhdunar'odnye otnoshenia, 1991, pp.842-345.

(8) E'rgueni Bajanov. "Soviet Policy towards South Korea under Gorbachev." *Il Yung Chung* (edit). *Korea and Russia*. Seoul: The Sejong Institute, 1992, p.63.

(9) For details on the deterioration of Soviet-North Korean relations under Gorbachev see Natalia Bajanova. "North Korea and Seoul-Moscow Relations." *Il Yung Chung* (edit). *Korea and Russia*, Op.oit., pp.328-346. See also E.Bajanov and N.Bajanova, "Soviet Views on North Korea." *Asian Survey*, Vol. XXXI, N 12, December 1991, pp. 1123-1138.

- (10) For details see Yevgueni Bazhanov. *Russia's Changing Foreign Policy*. Cologne, Germany: BIOSI, 1996, N 30, pp.12-15.
- (11) See Evgueni Bazhanov and Natasha Bazhanova. "The Evolution of Russian-Korean Relations." *Asian Survey*, Vol.XXXIY, N 9, September 1994, pp.792-793.
- (12) Evgueni Baj anov (edit). *Rossiisko-Severokoreiskie otnoshenia (Russian-North Korean Relations)*. Moscow: ICIP, 1996, p.20.
- (13) *Ibid.*, p.21.
- (14) *Ibid.*, p.23.
- (15) *Ibid.*, pp.25-26.
- (16) KNCA, Pyongyang, Oct.4, 1994, quoted from: SAS FE/2 D/4, October 5, 1994.
- (17) *The DPRK Report*. May-June 96, Moscow: ICIP, p.3.
- (18) *Ibid.*
- (19) *Ibid.*
- (20) R.Ivanov, "Koreiisky factor" (*The Korean Factor*). *Patri* August 10, 1996, p.3.
- (21) E.Bajanov (edit). *Problemi Obespeohenia Bezopasnosti severo-vostoohnoi Azii (Problems of Security in the North-Asia)*. Moscow: ICIP, 1996, pp.23.
- (22) *Ibid.*, p.16.

III. NAPSNet Invites Your Responses

The Northeast Asia Peace and Security Network invites your responses to this essay. Below are a few questions that some readers may find useful in putting the issues raised by the essay into a critical light. Please send responses to: napsnet-reply@nautilus.org . Responses will be considered for redistribution to the network only if they include the author's name, affiliation, and explicit consent.

- * Prof. Bajanov discusses Russia's long history of involvement in Korean affairs. Does this history justify the greater role in current events that Russia seeks and Prof. Bajanov supports?
- * Prof. Bajanov notes that recent efforts by Russia to revive its historically close relations with the DPRK are motivated in part by "envy towards American activities in the DPRK." Does Russia have a legitimate basis to fear growing US hegemony over the Korean peninsula, or is there a contradiction between such "envy" and Russia's continuing efforts to build political, economic and even military ties with the ROK?
- * Prof. Bajanov argues that Russia actually will help improve its relations with the ROK by restoring close ties to the DPRK, thereby regaining leverage over the DPRK that the ROK values. Is this a wise policy prescription?
- * In the wake of the DPRK's agreement to attend a "preliminary" four-party peace talks meeting, Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov on July 24 indicated that Russia now supports the four-

party formula, while still maintaining that a role for Russia in negotiations is vital to the achievement of peace on the Korean peninsula. [See "[Russia Supports Four-Party Talks](#)" in the US section of the July 24 NAPSNet Daily Report.] Does Primakov's position represent a tactical retrenchment from or a genuine abrogation of Prof. Bajanov's observation that "Moscow's opposition to the four-power talks will not soften"?

* Prof. Bajanov observes that the ROK's interests coincide with Russia's more than with any other great power's because Russia "is virtually the only power honestly desiring unification of Korea." Is this assessment correct? If so, does it imply that the ROK should be advocating a greater Russian role in current negotiations than it is?

* As noted in the introduction, Prof. Bajanov's articulation of the "Russian proposal" to achieve Korean peace and security, envisioning a normalization of relations among the principal involved states followed by a convening of an international conference with broader participation, bears a distinct resemblance to the proposal discussed by [Robert Bedeski in the preceding Policy Forum](#) . Does the convergence of these analyses suggest that the four-power formula alone is too limited in scope to resolve fully the issues generating conflict on the Korean peninsula?

Produced by The Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development
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