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#### Session 4: Sustainable security in East Asia beyond nuclear extended deterrence

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For a “sustainable security in East Asia beyond nuclear extended deterrence” to be realized, there has to be a significant reduction of military tension and an atmosphere of peace has to be generated in the region. Such reduction of tension and the generation of peaceful atmosphere will also help realize the reduction and elimination of the dependence on extended nuclear deterrence. To this end we have to work on many fronts but given the limited time available let me raise just three of them.

The first front is the Korean Peninsula. For a sustainable security without extended nuclear deterrence to be achieved on the peninsula the nuclear issue of North Korea has to be settled. I do not go into the discussion of the issue as I suppose it is fully discussed in the previous session. But, suppose the nuclear issue has been already settled for a certain degree of satisfaction, for a sustainable non-nuclear deterrence security, still a number of things have to be achieved. One of them is the disengagement of conventional forces across the DMZ. Even this is agreed somehow, the verification and the supervision of such disengagement may be quite challenging. We may learn from the experience of the UN-assisted disengagement on the Golan Heights. The disengagement will also help reduce the chance of such provocative actions as the shelling of the Yongpyong Islands.

The other question is that of chemical and biological weapons. Steps should be taken to bring North Korea to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Steps should also be taken to verify North Korean compliance with the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. Again, the verification of the compliance will be quite challenging. Chemical weapons should be verifiably dismantled in accordance with the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention. But when it comes to biological weapons, even the Convention itself has been struggling with the idea of having a system of verification for so many years. So, the challenge may be formidable. But we should not be giving up on this challenge if we are to achieve a sustainable security without nuclear deterrence.

The second front is the number of territorial issues in the region including the Northern

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Territories between Japan and Russia, Takeshima/Dokdo between Japan and South Korea and Senkaku Islands between China and Japan. Let me leave Paracel and Spratly Islands for the moment because they may not be in “East Asia.”

As long as these territorial disputes exist, they remain as triggers for regional tension and, worst come, military confrontation. First, there should be a regional understanding to be established that no one should try to settle these disputes through forceful means. The next step may be a set of mutual understandings to bring the issues to the International Court of Justice so that the issues can be settled by legal experts on the basis of legal merits without inciting political and emotional upheaval.

The third front is Taiwan. Leaving all the political and legal arguments aside, there is no denying that there is a military tension across the Taiwan Strait and both sides are competing to strengthen their military capability there. It is also true that China with its fast growing economy can now afford to devote significant amount of financial and military resources and Taiwan has difficulty matching it. In a way, therefore, the cards are very much in the Chinese hands now. I know that any kind of formal arrangement here is difficult to attain given the political and historical context. But, if China shows a degree of self restraint, that will definitely help reduce the tension across the Strait. If China keeps on building up its military capability across the Strait, Taiwan will have to meet it desperately and the tension is bound to rise.

This is exactly the dilemma we face. A defensive measure one side takes is sometimes taken as an increased threat from the other side and contributes to a rising tension. This may also apply in the Korean context and in other places. Therefore, I should say, a prudent and deliberate pace of defense modernization may help bring better security environment regionally. The U.S.-Japan effort to build a theatre missile defense is taken by China as a threat to it. The Japanese intention remains to be very much defensive, defense against the missile and nuclear threats from North Korea. But from Chinese perspective it may be seeing it differently. That is one reason why the kind of missile defense build-up should be at deliberate and modest pace. I am afraid, given the technical challenge and the growing budget constraints will anyway work as a significant constraint to this missile defense effort.

I should perhaps touch upon the idea of establishing a regional security framework since so many people talk about such an idea whenever they discuss East Asian regional security for future. A typical argument is the proposal to establish something similar to OSCE or its precursor CSCE in East Asia because that seemed to be the overall framework for Europe to ease the tension and stabilize the Europe under the Cold War environment. Such a regional framework may help provide a framework to generate the kind of efforts to work on specific sources of tension that I have just

mentioned. But I have to caution that the framework for the sake of just having dialogue does not by itself guarantee firm security. We have seen such examples in the former Yugoslavia and in Georgia and other former Soviet Union Republics. I may also remind you that the original Helsinki accord had a human rights basket in it. From the Japanese perspective the human right aspect is definitely something that we cannot overlook when we think about a regional dialogue.

Lastly, let me add my perspective of a Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone. In my view, it now has a new perspective and possibility that is different from the past. To be honest the concept of a Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone was regarded by Japanese conservatives and realists as a naïve leftist idealist idea that lacked the balance and reality check. This is because the idea only suggest for Japan and South Korea to commit legally to denuclearize while only asking North Korea to accept the same commitment leaving the nuclear weapons of China and Russia untouched. This seemed to be one-sided from the Japanese point of view. The only thing that Japan was supposed to receive in return from China and Russia under this idea was “negative security assurance” from them, i.e. not to use nuclear weapons against Japan. Again, this is an idea that conservatives did not very much buy because there was a general mistrust about the concept of a mere verbal commitment not to use nuclear weapons. They preferred physical evidence of extended nuclear deterrence to such a non-verifiable commitment.

Now that North Korea has shown to have nuclear devices that can detonate the scene has changed. For the kind of Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone to be achieved, now North Korea has to dismantle its nuclear weapons program and the nuclear devices it has produced so far and commit itself to denuclearize while Japan and South Korea only have to legally commit their non-nuclear status. So, now the bargain may not be so bad from a Japanese perspective. Therefore, at least theoretically, it is now an idea even the conservatives can endorse.

Indeed, for this Nuclear Weapons Free Zone to materialize, North Korea has to give up its nuclear program. Therefore, the chance or the difficulty of its realization is equal to that of denuclearizing North Korea that this workshop had already discussed extensively.

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