



## Session 2:

# The Conventional Forces of North Korea and Arms Control in Korean Peninsular: Breaking through the Stalemate

**Du-Hyeogn Cha**



# CONTENTS

- North Korean Military Capability and Its Threats**
- Ongoing Military Confrontation Between the South and the North**
- Arms Control in the Korean Peninsula: The Way too Far**
- Isn't There No Way?**
- Toward the More Peaceful Peninsula and East Asia**

# North Korean Military Capability and Its Threats (1)

- **Continuous Conventional Force Construction Despite Economic Difficulties**
  - ✓ **'Selection & Concentration' in development and deployment of the military force**
  - ✓ **About 70% of ground forces deployed south of the Pyongyang-Wansan Line**
  - ✓ **Long-range artillery aiming Seoul Metropolitan Area and its capability improvement**
  - ✓ **Enhancement of special forces**
  - ✓ **Efforts for acquisition of new submarines, torpedoes, and missile patrol boats**

# North Korean Military Capability and Its Threats (2)

- ✓ Maintenance of missile hovercrafts for amphibious attack
- ✓ 40% of Air Force capabilities deployed to forward bases
- **Myth on the 'Inferior Military Capability of North Korea'**
  - ① ROK's Overwhelming superiority in economic power and defense budget? → considerable hidden military expenditure of North Korea
  - ② Obsolete Weapons/Equipment of KPA? → old modeled, but brand-new

# North Korean Military Capability and Its Threats

## (3)

- ③ Lack of training/exercise? → very long service term of KPA and veteran troops
  - ④ Anachronistic believe in '3:1 advantage of defenders' → modern warfare and the merit of surprise attack
  - ⑤ Ultimate victory of ROK in war by the superiority of 'war sustaining capability?' → deterrence rather than defense
- **Substantial threats from Weapons of Mass Destruction of North Korea**
- ✓ 2,500 to 5,000 tons of chemical weapons

# North Korean Military Capability and Its Threats (4)

- ✓ **Suspected biological weapons as anthrax, smallpox, and cholera**
- ✓ **Wide variety of ballistic missiles**
  - **Scud B/C (300km to 500km range, operationally deployed)**
  - **Rodong (1,300km range, operationally deployed)**
  - **Musudan IRBM (3,000 km range, operationally deployed)**
  - **Taepodong (More than 6,700km range, under development)**

# Ongoing Military Confrontation Between the South and the North (1)

- **Military confrontation and periodic conflicts since Armistice Agreement of 1953**
- **Three major armed skirmishes taken place from 2009**
  - ✓ **Daecheong Naval Campaign (November 10, 2009): navy clash near Northern Limit Line**
  - ✓ **The Sink of Cheonan (March 26, 2010): a ROK patrol corvette was sank by the torpedo of North Korea**
  - ✓ **The Yeonpyeong Shelling: North Korea fired more than 100 shots against Yeonpyeong Island**

# Ongoing Military Confrontation Between the South and the North (2)

- **No reliable institutional mechanism**
  - ✓ **North Korea's refusal of Military Armistice Commission since mid-1990s**
  - ✓ **Stalemate of South-North High-level Military Talks since 2008**
  - ✓ **Suspension of political talks**
- **Domestic politics of North Korea and its implications on military provocation**
  - ✓ **Army-first Politics: a compromise between the supreme leaders and military corps?**

# Ongoing Military Confrontation Between the South and the North (3)

- ✓ **Distorted Party-Military relations: still unstable succession system**
- ✓ **Corporate interests of KPA: provocations as measures for enhancing political position?**
- **Motivation of North Korea on limited provocation Unless 2<sup>nd</sup> Korean War**
  - ✓ **Relatively low political/military burden**
  - ✓ **Appealing its own justification**
  - ✓ **Inducing diplomatic support from some neighboring countries**
  - ✓ **Stimulating the dialogue with the U.S.**

# Arms Control in Korean Peninsula: a way too far (1)

- **So many suggestions, but not realized**
  - ✓ **Despite some preliminary measures, No meaningful progress in real arms control**
    - **Military assurance for inter-Korean crossing in land and sea**
    - **Improvements of the inter-Korean military communications**
    - **Periodic dialogues**
  - ✓ **No fixed negotiation channel for arms control**
  - ✓ **Propaganda, rather than reliable policy (North Korea)**

# Arms Control in Korean Peninsula: a way too far (2)

- **Why so many suggestions have been ‘Much ado about nothing?’**
  - ✓ **Lack of sincerity and political/economic motivation**
  - ✓ **Unrealistic approaches (ex. Mutual disarmament to 100,000 soldiers proposed by the North)**
  - ✓ **Aiming at exploitation of the counterpart’s disadvantage**
  - ✓ **Appliance of European experiences without cautious review**

# Arms Control in Korean Peninsula: a way too far (3)

- **Passive approaches among neighboring countries on peninsular arms control issues**
  - ✓ **Focused on the maintenance of status quo instead of on fundamental policies to alleviate inter-Korea tensions**
  - ✓ **Regional actors have sought the 'hedging strategy' by cultivating a level of cooperation with both the South and the North**
  - ✓ **Relative unconcern on conventional arms control after emerging nuclear issues**
  - ✓ **The lack of the consensus on regional arms control**

# Isn't There No way? (1)

- **Starting from resolution of political distrusts between the South and the North**
  - ✓ **Adopting measures and policies that reflect the real political approval on each other**
  - ✓ **Restoration & institutionalization of political/military dialogue channels**
  - ✓ **Frank discussions on the implementation of existing bilateral agreements including the 'Basic Agreement'**
  - ✓ **Compliance on the agreed or *de facto* ground/maritime boundary including NLL**

## Isn't There No way? (2)

- **Stable armistice system prior to 'Peace Treaty'**
  - ✓ Restoring the mechanisms/institutions that assure the armistice including the Military Armistice Commission and the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission
  - ✓ More active approach on the Peace Treaty, but not adhering to specific option or roadmap
  - ✓ Linkage between economic cooperation/aid and arms control dialogues between two Koreas

# Isn't There No way? (3)

- **Cooperative engagement of neighboring countries**
  - ✓ **Common approaches and messages against military provocation in Korean Peninsula**
  - ✓ **Developing institutional mechanisms for resolving peninsular/regional conflicts (ex. the establishment of East Asia Crisis Management Center within DMZ)**
  - ✓ **Preparing regional arms control options that can corresponds with the South-North arms control, especially on the issues of WMD**

# Toward the More Peaceful Peninsula and East Asia (1)

- **Pursuing step-by-step approach toward the positive changes of North Korea**
  - ✓ **Step 1: Relatively non-hostile North Korea**
  - ✓ **Step 2: Transparent and WMD-free North Korea**
  - ✓ **Step 3: North Korea as a responsible stake-holder for coexistence**
  - ✓ **Step 4: North Korea as a partner in common prosperity era**
  - ✓ **Step 5: North Korea as a partner for peaceful unification**

# Toward the More Peaceful Peninsula and East Asia (2)

- **Supporting North Korean leaders to transform its rational of political legitimacy**
  - ✓ **From military confrontation to coexistence**
  - ✓ **From personal idolization to policy outcomes**
  - ✓ **From 'Army-first Politics' to check & balance among state apparatus**
- **The enhanced multilateral cooperation also needed**