

Policy Recommendations for the G20 Countries

The Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and Advancing the Peace Process

Issue background

During the second session of the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Buenos Aires in May 2018, "North Korea's nuclear and missile development issues" were discussed.

On 27 April 2018 the "Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula" (27 April 2018) was signed by the heads of state of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). On 12 June 2018 a joint statement resulted from the 2018 North Korea-United States Singapore Summit. According to the statement that resulted from the Summit, President Trump has promised to give North Korea a security guarantee, and Kim has reaffirmed his firm and unwavering commitment to the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. "President Trump committed to provide security guarantees to the DPRK and Chairman Kim Jong-un reaffirmed his firm and unwavering commitment to complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula." Expectations are growing for progress in terms of the process of "denuclearization and peace on the Korean Peninsula."

There have been no major developments since then except for the Hanoi Summit in February of this year (2019), the Panmunjom meeting in June, and the working-level talks in Stockholm in October.

The situation at present is one in which the "process of denuclearization and peace on the Korean Peninsula" is entrusted with the progress of the US-North Korea talks. In order to move forward beyond the stalemate, it is hoped that the G20 states and international society will give [the US and the DPRK] a strong push.

Our recommendations

- 1. The G20 countries should seek from the U.S. some realistic negotiations that lead to step-by-step solutions in U.S.-DPRK negotiations**

Reuters reported that at the February meeting in Hanoi, the US side focused on the policy of handing over all nuclear weapons and fuel (i.e., the Libya model, Reuters, 29 March 2019). This seems to be the reason why the meeting ended unsuccessfully.

In an interview in Yonhap News on October 16th, the US State Department Special Representative for North Korea Policy Joseph Yun expressed the opinion that instead of forcing North Korea to hand over their nuclear weapons, this problem should be resolved step by step; that it would take a long time to complete all the stages of denuclearization; and that it should be clear that the US can also be

flexible regarding denuclearization and sanctions. This statement means that denuclearization that is not step-by-step is not realistic. We agree with this opinion. We feel that what is now required of the U.S. is a realistic response through U.S.-led steps.

2. The United States and the G20 countries should propose to lift economic sanctions against Korea, when these sanctions have impeded the progress of U.S.-DPRK talks.

We feel that it is necessary to reconsider the enforcement of sanctions on Korea that are based on United Nations Security Council resolutions. We have the following reasons.

1. It is somewhat understandable and convincing that the DPRK sees other countries' making an issue out of missile-launching technology as violating their right as a sovereign state to protect themselves.
2. Since 2006, UN Security Council sanctions resolutions have been made 10 times. The sanctions were carried out for 11 years on the basis of prohibiting all tests using nuclear tests and ballistic missile technology (Security Council resolution 1718, 2006). However, the goal of lasting stability throughout Northeast Asia has not been realized.
3. The sanctions resolution states that the DPRK rejects the pursuit of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles rather than social welfare when the needs of the nation's citizens are not met. But the reality of sanctions goes beyond cutting off funds for missiles and nuclear programs.
4. Economic sanctions threaten the lives of North Korean citizens.
5. Within the Security Council resolutions, there is a provision that allows for sanctions to be strengthened, amended, retained, or lifted as necessary in light of DPRK compliance. Currently, the DPRK has suspended the ICBM launch and nuclear tests, and we think it is possible to review the sanctions in light of this provision.

Above all else, lifting the sanctions would be proof of ending the hostile policy. We think that it would also be a step in guaranteeing the security of the DPRK.

3. It is necessary to stop military pressure from neighboring countries on the Korean Peninsula.

Ever since May of this year, the DPRK has repeatedly launched short-range ballistic missiles, but one could consider that behind this, there is a backlash against US-ROK joint exercises and the deployment of F35 and the unmanned reconnaissance aircraft Global Hawk in the ROK. Military pressure has hindered peace and disarmament in the Northeast Asia region. Currently, the DPRK is implementing the ceasing of ICBM launches and nuclear tests, and Chairman Kim has said that the deadline for the US-DPRK negotiations is the end of this year, so we hope for quick progress in US-DPRK talks. We think it is important to lay the groundwork for dialogue now.

4. The Northeast Asia Non-Nuclear Weapon Zone Plan should be considered at the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

So far, the “Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Plan” has been proposed by Japanese civil society. The concept is for the ROK, the DPRK, and Japan would form a nuclear weapons free zone (NWFZ), and the United States, China, and Russia would promise not to attack with nuclear weapons. This is a realistic response to the challenges of building trust in the Northeast Asian region and denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula.

[End]

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