

[SPARK]

Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is possible if the Biden Administration abandons its military coercion policy against North Korea.

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At the 2018 North Korea–US Singapore Summit, the two leaders signed a joint statement agreeing to establish new US–DPRK relations, build a peace regime, and carry out the ‘complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.’ At the 2019 Hanoi summit, however, President Trump rejected Chairman Kim Jong-un’s offer to dismantle the Yongbyon nuclear facility in exchange for lifting five UN sanctions against North Korea. As a result, negotiations have stalled, and a dark cloud looms over prospects for denuclearization.

The denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is achievable. But the Biden administration’s policy of military coercion against North Korea obstructs any way forward for true denuclearization.

North Korea’s position that it wishes to denuclearize the Korean peninsula through dialogue and negotiation has not changed. However, the failure of the Hanoi Summit has led North Korea to rethink its approach to the goal of denuclearization. North Korea now requires the U.S to abolish its hostile policies toward North Korea instead of merely lifting sanctions in order to move forward with denuclearization measures. In addition, North Korea renounced its moratorium on ICBM testing and may conduct another nuclear test. North Korea’s actions are rooted in its demand for the US to cease its hostile posture toward North Korea.

Negotiations will resume if the Biden administration reduces its coercive military policies against North Korea, such as by lifting sanctions or halting U.S-ROK combined military exercises. However, despite claims by the Biden administration that they wish to engage in dialogue and negotiations, the administration has instead chosen to

strengthen sanctions and military coercion against North Korea. Despite its claims, the actions of the Biden administration demonstrate that it wishes to force North Korea to make concessions without offering anything in return. Let us remind ourselves that the sole motive for North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons is to obtain security guarantees from the US. Washington's hostile policies will lead North Korea to conclude that its only option is to strengthen its nuclear capabilities. Biden's stance toward the DPRK thus only serves to impede denuclearization.

The U.S-ROK combined military exercises have been a key issue in determining the outcome of dialogue and negotiations over the past 30 years. Dialogue and negotiations progressed or fell through depending on the resumption or suspension of the U.S-ROK combined military exercises. Whereas the Trump administration suspended these joint military exercises, the Biden administration resumed them, with a significant increase in frequency, scale, and intensity. In addition, Washington is establishing a new operational plan/OPLAN, which includes an illegal pre-emptive attack against North Korea, and is also selling ultra-offensive weapons to South Korea, such as the F-35 stealth bomber. These actions only serve to intensify military confrontation on the Korean peninsula.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration has not only reaffirmed its 'First Use' policy, but it has also lowered the threshold for use of nuclear weapons by deploying so-called "low-yield nuclear weapons" such as the B61-12 and W76-2. These actions have the sole impact of increasing the probability of preemptive attacks and use of nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula.

Another tactic employed by the Biden administration to increase military pressure against North Korea is its efforts to expand NATO into the Asia-Pacific and to establish the US-ROK-Japan Alliance. NATO's expansion eastward will strengthen the encirclement and blockade against North Korea and China and introduce a new Cold War in Asia and the Pacific. As a result, Korea, and broadly Northeast Asia are becoming the most acute battleground for the new Cold War. If this were to occur, there

would be no room for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

The Biden administration must carry out the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula by concluding a peace treaty and establishing a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula.

The continued existence of the ROK-US alliance is incompatible with the conclusion of a peace treaty and the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The US provision of extended deterrence and the nuclear umbrella to Korea under the pretext of the ROK-US alliance underpins the US's hostile policy toward North Korea. It is the direct cause of North Korea's nuclear weapons program. Extended deterrence violates Article 2(4) of the UN Charter, which prohibits the threat or use of force. Therefore, the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is achievable only if the US abolishes its hostile policy including extended deterrence, and provides institutional security guarantees for North Korea through the conclusion of a peace treaty.

The conclusion of a peace treaty on the Korean Peninsula is an old task for the parties to the Armistice Agreement, as specified in Article 60. Since the 1954 Geneva Conference failed to agree due to disagreement over inter-Korean reunification, the signing of a peace treaty has remained unsettled. The US is the most responsible for the failure to conclude a peace treaty at the time. The US rejected the minimal demands from North Korea and China to set a date for the next meeting, and evaded its responsibility to bring the Korean War to a complete political, legal and institutional end. Resuming this meeting as soon as possible and concluding a peace treaty and converting hostile relations between the parties into peaceful ties, are essential preconditions for denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula.

The US is currently establishing a new operational plan that is aimed at preemptive attack and regime change. Some people suspect that North Korea will want to permanently possess nuclear weapons as a safer means to security assurance rather than choosing a peace treaty. Most bureaucrats and experts in the West are mostly

confident that this may be the case. However, North Korea's position for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula has remained consistent, which is for the US to end its hostile policies against North Korea. The western allegations and assumptions about North Korea's ambitions to permanently possess nuclear weapons in actuality cloak the real intentions of the West. The real intention is to prevent the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula by pursuing a nuclear confrontation with North Korea and to continue its coercive policies. Regional military conflicts and crises enable the US to justify its intervention and continue to retain hegemonic power over the region. The denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is an unprecedented and challenging task as the goal is to dismantle North Korea's already existing advanced nuclear weapons. But this is by no means impossible. The US must establish diplomatic ties with North Korea, help establish a peace regime, and provide security assurances to North Korea. The US has already agreed to all of these steps in the Singapore joint statement. And these steps can happen simultaneously with North Korea abandoning its existing nuclear weapons and nuclear programs.

Let us achieve denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula and use this as a foundation for establishing a North East Asia nuclear-weapon-free zone!

The path to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula should be a simultaneous, phased process. The US must abolish its hostile policies against North Korea in phases, alongside which North Korea will dismantle its nuclear weapons in phases. Abolition of hostile policies against North Korea is comprised of the US lifting its sanctions, conclusion of a peace treaty, establishing diplomatic relations, and signing a non-aggression treaty. In this way, the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula becomes inclusive of dismantling the US nuclear umbrella over South Korea and providing negative security assurances to North Korea.

A NEANWFZ should guarantee - negative security assurance without reservation ; abandonment of US first strike policy between nuclear powers, especially providing legally binding No First Use by US for China ; exemption of china from targets of US

SIOP(Single Integrated Operational Plan) for strategic preemptive strike ; alleviating hair trigger alert status, that is, the separation of warhead and missile ; abolishment of missile defense as well as military alliances in NE Asia. If not, then any form of NWFZ will be unfairly more advantageous militarily for the US. As just one example, the prevention of ships or aircraft carrying nuclear weapons from making port calls or passage territorial waters of the countries that are part of the NWFZ will actually be much more disadvantageous for China and Russia than for the US. A Northeast Asia NWFZ can provide a decisive impetus for nuclear disarmament and the realization of a Nuclear Weapon Free World.

For the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and the establishment of a Northeast Asia NWFZ, South Korea, and Japan, as well as the US and China must join the TPNW. It is rather absurd that Japan and South Korea, the two countries that suffered the most from the Atomic bombings, have not joined the TPNW. North Korea must also join the TPNW and return to the NPT system, creating a more favorable environment for denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula and ultimately contributing to a nuclear-free world.

North Korea is the only nuclear state that has a stated position of wishing to dismantle its nuclear weapons. North Korea's persistent position to denuclearize, in fact, is more advanced and encouraging compared to the attitude of the current nuclear weapon states in the NPT system. These countries avoid their responsibility for nuclear disarmament and total elimination and insist on the current "threat or use of nuclear weapons" language as legitimate and justified. Considering the unwavering position of North Korea, the prospect of denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is promising.

If the US truly wants to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, 1. lift the sanctions against North Korea, 2. end the US-ROK joint military exercises, 3. resume dialogue and negotiations with North Korea. We demand prompt and sincere actions from the Biden Administration.