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Obligations & Roles of the U.S. and Neighboring Countries for the Reunification of Korea

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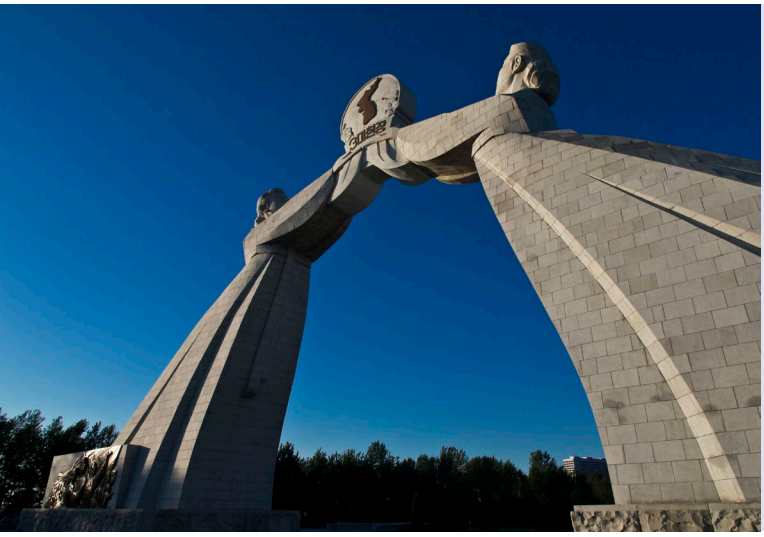

Current developments on the Korean Peninsula necessitate that more steps need to be taken towards reunification. With this aim in mind, Hwang, outlines the responsibility and role that both the U.S. and neighbouring countries have in reunifying Korea. By explaining the history of U.S.-DPRK relations he identifies the best means available to the U.S. to assist in the reunification process. Moreover, he argues that the North-South Agreement is a key tool to achieve this goal.

At present, the Korean peninsula is at a heightened point of intensity. Phrases such as; "preemptive nuclear strike", "special operations", "all-out-war" and "unilateral strike" have moved the tensions to a touch and go level.

Current developments on the Korean peninsula mostly seem to originate from the nuclear standoff between the DPRK and the U.S. However, an in-depth and broader understanding of the original background beneath this confrontation is needed: that is, the division of the Korean peninsula.

The reunification of the Korean peninsula should be solved, of course, by the Korean nation itself. But, since the division of the peninsula was forced and maintained by outside forces, namely, the U.S., they too have their own obligations and role to play. The stability and establishment of durable peace on the Korean peninsula, improvement of inter-Korean relations and reunification model are all of concern to the U.S. and neighboring countries. In this regard, their respective roles are just as important as those of both north and south Korea. This paper will provide such an understanding.

The reunification of the Korean peninsula and the U.S.

The characteristics of the current situation on the Korean peninsula and northeast Asia are as follows:

- The DPRK has developed as an Eastern nuclear power with strategic missiles - a powerful State which can successfully deter the U.S..
- The improvement of the inter-Korean relations

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has become the most urgent demand and desire of the whole Korean nation.

- Strategic confrontation between the neighboring powers on the Korean peninsula is getting tense. Coaxing and wheedling between U.S. and China has reached a fierce level. For example, the Trump administration is reinforcing their strategic assets such as THAAD in south Korea which consequently calls for a strong response from China and Russia.

Recent developments have meant that the U.S. now faces two dilemmas:

1. How to deal with or recognize the nuclear deterrent of the DPRK?

At present, the U.S. is convinced that recognition can never easily work, thus they have leaned on China to press the DPRK through sanctions. The pressure in cooperation with China might be the only workable choice for the U.S. at this moment, but in the long run, it will clash with China's strategic interests.

2. How to deal with South Korea's position in terms of a unilateral military strike against the DPRK?

In April 2017, Trump said that all options are on the table including unilateral military strikes. The Korean People's Army (KPA) avowed solemnly that all the U.S. bases in the Pacific operational theatre are potential targets. South Korean authorities were concerned that the U.S. could perform unilateral strikes against the North without their consent. In turn, they requested that any unilateral strike must be performed only with their consent.

Having resisted even the strong conservative forces in south Korea, how will the U.S. deal with the next government in Seoul whom are expected to improve relations with the North? The reality today is that the U.S. needs to change its outdated and anachronistic policy towards the DPRK and to make a courageous decision for a new policy.

In this regard, it is necessary to understand why the U.S. is so deeply involved in the Korean peninsula issue. What are its responsibilities, and what are the obligations of the U.S., what kinds of role can it play, and, how can it benefit from this role? We can provide an overview of these responsibilities and roles of the U.S. on the Korean peninsula issue as well as the division and reunification issue.

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The responsibility of the U.S.

First, the U.S. is responsible for dividing the Korean peninsula. After WW2, the U.S. illegally conquered the southern part of the Korean peninsula under the pretext that they were disarming the Japanese military forces below the 38th parallel. Resultantly, the peninsula was divided into two parts.[1]

Secondly, the U.S. is responsible for stopping reunification by maintaining the armistice but constantly refusing to conclude a peace treaty.[2]

Third, the U.S. is responsible for whipping up national estrangement by inciting the anti-reunifica-

tion forces in south Korea, which has resulted in mistrust between fellow countrymen.[3]

Clinton, Bush and Obama

After the June 15 North-South Joint Declaration was signed in 2000, the Clinton Administration agreed to choose peaceful co-existence with the DPRK. Consequently, they announced the October 2000 Joint Communique and to seek a reasonable way for establishing a permanent peace regime on the Korean peninsula through diversified means such as the 4-party talks.

However, the Bush Administration designated the DPRK as existing within the "axis of evil" and listed it as a target for nuclear preemptive strike. Thus, this administration forced the DPRK to develop nuclear weapons. Although the issue of establishing a peace regime on the Korean peninsula was stipulated in the September 19 Joint Statement of 6-party talks, no such talks have ever been convened.

Similar to the Bush Administration, in April 2010, the Obama Administration, listed the DPRK as a target for nuclear preemptive strike. This again revealed Washington's ambition of a nuclear preemptive strike against the DPRK. Since then, the U.S. has made further official statements to this effect by persistently refusing to conclude a peace treaty with the DPRK.

Specifically, after the DPRK suffered a national grave sorrow in December 2011, the Obama Administration initiated a new defense policy towards the Asia Pacific region in early 2012. Its spearhead was directed towards northeast Asia with the DPRK as its prime target. From then on, both the scale and the frequency of U.S.-South Korea joint military exercises have increased dramatically. Before 2012, the joint military exercises involved 400,000 troops and were staged around 30 times annually. However, since 2012, the scale has increased to 500,000 personnel and the frequency to more than 40 times a year. Since 2012, the frequency of U.S. aircraft carrier visits to waters around the Korean peninsula have increased from 1-3 times per year to 3-4 times per year. Special operations targeting the DPRK's supreme headquarters were openly included in the 2012 joint military exercises. In 2013, the U.S. made public, for the first time, the air raid drills for nuclear strategic bombers and the movement of nuclear submarines, thus, imbuing the exercises with the atmosphere of a real war.

The "Tailored Deterrence Strategy", agreed upon by the U.S. and South Korea in 2013 aimed at a nuclear preemptive strike against the DPRK. It was first introduced in the 2014 joint military exercises. The strategy constituted the '4D OPLAN' concept in 2015 and was further broken down into a 'decapitation raid' and 'precision strike' in 2016 and 2017. Indeed, this revealed that the true intent of 'annual' and 'defensive' military exercises are more consistent with attack and aggression. In 2016 and 2017, U.S. nuclear strategic bombers conducted air raid drills just tens of kilometers from DPRK territory. Thus, it is clear that the joint military exercises are designed to constitute a threat to the DPRK.

Also during the Obama administration, the U.S. benefited from the south Korean regime's "Korean peninsula trust-building process" and "northeast Asia peace cooperation initiative". The U.S. were able to effectively exploit the north-south confrontation policy held by the previous south Korean government. Which has helped it towards the Asia-Pacific pivot. The U.S. has concluded the U.S.-south Korea-Japan Agreement for the protection of military intelligence and most recently, deployed "THAAD" into south Korea. The south Korean authorities turned a deaf ear to the DPRK's appeal and sincere proposal to improve inter-Korean relations. Instead, they clung to their policy of sanctions-and-pressure and persisted in clamoring for war. Thus, driving inter-Korean relations towards catastrophe.

Today, the consistent conduct of the U.S.-South Korea joint military exercises are the fundamental reason for tensions on the peninsula. The fact that China have again proposed two moratoriums of joint military exercises in order to halt the DPRK's nuclear tests shows that neighboring countries recognize that joint military exercises encourage tensions. The U.S. divided the Korean nation and forced innumerable pains and disasters to Koreans. Therefore, the U.S. is entitled to compensate for its behavior by acknowledging its

due responsibilities and supporting Korean reunification.

The obligations of the U.S.

First, the U.S. should see clearly that the Korean nation's will for reunification cannot be impeded. They should therefore establish a fair and realistic policy towards the Korean peninsula issue. The U.S. should be well aware of the fact that they cannot bend nor stop the whole Korean nation's aspirations. The hostile American policy towards the DPRK originates from the wrong perception on the reunification of the peninsula. Throughout 70 years of division, the relations have had ups and downs, however, overall the will for reunification has intensified. This is evident in the fact that efforts towards reunification have become more and more frequent. For instance, 27 years after the division of Korea, both sides agreed to the three principles of national reunification, and 20 years later they effected the agreement that reaffirmed these principles. 8 years later, they concluded the June 15 Joint declaration that agreed upon a federation model of reunification, 7 years later they announced the October 4 Declaration, which is the implementation program of the previous declaration.

From approximately 2008 and onwards, the inter-Korean relations suffered frustrations and tensions grew. The improvement of the north-south relationship and reunification became an unavoidable trend reflecting national aspirations. The fact that the previous conservative South Korean government faced impeachment gives reason to the idea that it did not truly express the will of the Korean people. Instead, politicians, who favor the improvement of the inter-Korean relationship and reunification enjoy considerable support from the south Korean people.

Today when the improvement of inter-Korean relations becomes a main issue for the peninsula, the U.S. will be rejected by the whole Korean nation not only the northern side but also from the south. Accordingly, if the U.S. ignores this issue it will lose its status in the Korean peninsula and northeast Asia. Many U.S. observers are concerned of a possible dispute between the Trump Administration and the new south Korean government. During the Bush Administration, the mistrust of the south Korean people towards the U.S. was reflected in their government policy and then the south Korean government's request to hand over the wartime control. This precedent illustrates the possibility that rising anti-American sentiment in south Korea now can also be reflected in their government policy. If the Trump Administration goes against the peaceful reunification will of the Korean nation, it will be dragged into a more miserable and serious dilemma than the previous U.S. administrations.

Second, the U.S. should make the tough decision to eliminate its anachronistic hostile policy towards the DPRK. The Trump Administration is claiming that "the era of strategic patience is over" and "maximum pressure and engagement" will be the policy stance. So, the first possible options the U.S. can take may be conducting unilateral military attacks against the DPRK and the second, may be holding dialogue with the DPRK. However, each option should be considered on the basis of recognition that the DPRK is now a strong Eastern nuclear power.

The DPRK has made clear its position that it can cope with any mode of actions that the U.S. takes including an all-out war. This means that if the U.S. preemptively strikes the DPRK like it did in the cases of Iraq, Yugoslavia, Libya and Syria, it will not be tolerated. Instead, the DPRK will retaliate with a strong nuclear blow or even conduct preemptive a nuclear strike before being hit by the enemy. That is why the DPRK is now strengthening its own preemptive strike capabilities consistently. The KPA recently announced its stand that it will conduct a KPA style of preemptive special operation strikes on land, on sea and in the sky against the Washington's "special operations" and preemptive strike attempts. When the DPRK and the U.S. come back to the table, negotiations will be more balanced since the two countries are nuclear powers.

In short, the U.S. should respect the DPRK as a responsible nuclear-armed state. As it has already declared, the DPRK will not use nuclear weapons first, unless the forces of aggression that are hostile to it violate its sovereignty with their own nuclear weapons. Furthermore, it will faithfully observe its com-

mitments to nuclear non-proliferation which it has made before the international community, and strive for global denuclearization.

If these two aforementioned approaches are not reliable, the U.S. might follow suit of the previous administration and rely mainly on pressure through sanctions. There are some analysts who believe that the Trump Administration will follow Obama's sanctions only policy. However, what is clear is that when more sanctions are imposed, the DPRK witnesses a greater self-development spirit and its capabilities will be strengthened. This has been demonstrated by its nuclear deterrent becoming firmer and significantly more modernized. No sanctions or pressures can stop the DPRK to further develop and flourish and this reality has been proven for decades.

Whatever options the Trump Administration commits to, if it infringes upon the sovereignty and interests of the DPRK, it will only aggravate tensions on the peninsula. This will result in strong resistance from both north and south Korea. Therefore, it is a wise option for the U.S. to redefine its strategic interests on the Korean peninsula by bravely shifting its policy.

In terms of Korean reunification, since the U.S. originally divided Korea it has obligations rather than options. The Korean nation is not obliged to or responsible for the division forced by foreign powers. Moreover, the north and south have no reason to confront and be hostile to each other because of the differences in ideologies and systems. The DPRK has normalized its relationship with many countries which share different ideologies and systems and maintains diversified cooperation. Similarly, South Korea established "strategic partnerships" with States who enjoy different ideologies and systems. The reunification is a fundamental development right of the whole Korean nation that no one can deny or endanger.

The possible role of the U.S.

The U.S. can support the already agreed format of reunification by the north and the south. This is culminated in the federation/confederation format agreed upon in the June 15 North-South Joint Declaration in 2000. Up until now, the U.S. enjoyed only less than half of the Korean nation's support by advocating a unilateral "unification led by the south". Instead, the U.S. can support the whole Korean nation's will to co-exist and have co-prosperity to enjoy the total Koreans' support when they favor the aforementioned reunification mode.

North South Agreement

In June 15, 2000 the historic North-South Joint Declaration was announced through the North-South Summit Meeting which was held 55 years after the division of the country.[4] In this declaration, both sides reaffirmed the spirit of the three principles of independence and peaceful reunification.

Further, in October 2007, the north and the south adopted another historic Joint Declaration (the Oct. 4 Declaration) at the next Summit Meeting.[5] Both sides confirmed bilateral cooperation in the fields of political trust, peace and security of the peninsula, economic cooperation and humanitarian issues. Were this declaration to be implemented, there would be significant progress in securing peace and security whilst advancing economic development on the peninsula. During the following 10 years, however, this document was violated and nullified by those who only sought confrontation between the north and the south.

What prevented the North-South Agreement from working? The first reason is that whenever there was a regime change in south Korea there was a policy change in terms of north-south relationship. If the north-south agreements are rendered null and void on account of a change in the situation or change of government, no bilateral agreement reached in the future can serve any purpose. If the north-south agreements had been implemented faithfully inter-Korean relations would not have experienced the twists and turns they faced. Rather, great strides would have been made towards carrying out the cause of national reunification regardless of regime change in south Korea. The second and fundamental reason why the North-South agreement failed is that the U.S. have refused to conclude a peace treaty with the DPRK and instead aggra-

vate the situation through joint military exercises.

The Benefits to the U.S. from this Positive Role

First, the U.S. can enjoy strategic supremacy with all Koreans welcoming and supporting the U.S.. This will pave a new way to redefine their own strategic interests in Northeast Asia in a different format. Furthermore, it will offer significant possibilities of upgrading their strategic status in this region without stationing their forces in south Korea. In turn, this would provide the U.S. a greater opportunity to financially benefit. This kind of policy shift means that they would respect the whole Korean nation's reunification will and simultaneously respect the sovereignty of the DPRK. Therefore, the U.S. would have a natural excuse and face saving point of concluding a peace treaty and withdrawal of their forces from south Korea.

Second, the approach of supporting the north-south agreed reunification model will be a silver bullet for the U.S. to the nuclear standoff it's currently facing. The question the U.S. faces now is how it can develop its policy towards the DPRK's nuclear weapons. Even to the U.S., it is clear that the nuclear deterrent possessed by the DPRK can never be touched. This issue can be smoothly resolved through the reunification process. The federal reunification based on different systems for both sides of Korea requires that the reunified state will adhere to an independent and neutral foreign policy. The nuclear weapons possessed by the neutral reunified state will threaten nobody unless the nation is threatened by foreign forces.

In terms of inter-Korean relations, the north's nuclear capacity cannot be a danger to the south. South Korea has maintained an alliance with a nuclear power for more than 60 years. It has established "strategic partnerships" with nuclear powers whom it had hostile relationships with before.

Responsibilities of Neighbouring Countries

In order to have an informed understanding of the Korean Peninsula issue, two major questions relating to neighboring countries must be asked:

1. How to tackle U.S. policy towards the reunification issue?
2. How to define their respective policy in regards to the inter-Korean relationship?

Foremost, neighboring countries should reject the policy of the U.S. and its followers. At present, the U.S. is dealing with the Korean peninsula issue with only their interests in mind. This has resulted in many hurdles for reunification and increased tensions. Japan has actively joined the U.S.-led tripartite alliance which openly includes the Korean peninsula into its military operational sphere. If Japan is to play a positive role in the international system it must not place obstacles in the way of Korea's reunification.

The neighboring countries should actively reject U.S. policy which counters Korea's interests towards reunification. Because of this, U.S. policy not only arouses tensions on the Korean peninsula and northeast Asia continuously but also threatens the strategic interests of adjacent countries. The U.S. has praised China for pressuring the DPRK. However, the true intention of this encouragement is to ease China's reaction toward the deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD). China and Russia are now convinced that the deployment of THAAD in south Korea will directly target them.

However, the U.S.-south Korea joint military exercises are increasingly more offensive and aggressive. The main goal is to stifle the DPRK and deploy THAAD along the Yalu and Tuman rivers. These rivers are strategically significant since they are boundary rivers between the DPRK and neighboring countries. In this sense, neighboring countries should not ignore U.S. hegemony and its effect on increasing tensions whilst also criticizing the self-defensive measures of the DPRK. Such a stance will only worsen the long-term interests of neighboring countries. Following this reasoning, neighboring countries are strongly recommended to oppose the U.S. hostile policy against the DPRK. Further, they should press the U.S. not to hinder Korea reunification by eliminating hostile policy.

Likewise, neighboring countries are encouraged to respect the DPRK's sovereignty. The sanction adopted by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) against the DPRK violates the UN Charter which is

based on respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples. They are inhumane because they are aimed to suffocate the DPRK and its people. Rather, neighboring countries are requested to condemn the U.S. hostile policy that severely threatens the peace and security of the Korean peninsula.

Support the Existing Inter-Korean Agreements

If foreign countries including neighbors are to hold a more reasonable and fair position on the Korean peninsula issue, they must support the inter-Korean agreements and avoid supporting one-sided policy. The recently impeached anti-reunification forces in south Korea proclaimed so-called "unification policy" under the names of "trust building" and "peaceful cooperation". Unfortunately, some countries blindly welcomed this "policy". In doing so, they invited north-south confrontation and accelerated the danger of military conflicts and war. Encouraged by these kinds of "support", anti-reunification forces fell into a one-sided "south Korea-led unification model" and pushed a hard-line policy of confrontation towards the north. Their "unification policy" was fabricated by Choe Sun Sil who fooled south Koreans. In sum, this "policy" was based on the false judgment about the stern reality of the peninsula and the powerful might of the DPRK. Those countries who were in favor of that version of "unification policy" are entitled to feel culpable for their wrong doings.

The Future Geo-political Status of the Korean Peninsula post-Reunification

The future of the Korean peninsula issue mainly relates to the geo-political status of the peninsula. Currently, THAAD deployment in south Korea forces it to rely more on the U.S., thus, becoming a nuclear target of neighboring countries. This clearly shows that if the peninsula leans towards a single big power, a war could easily ignite within the region. When north and south Korea join hands and establish an independent and neutral reunified state, the peninsula will become a place that can prevent war and conflicts within the region. This process will also pave the way in eliminating the Cold War confrontation format and build a new security cooperation architecture in the region. Further, it will strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation between the whole of Korea and its neighbours.

Sweden in particular have a role to play since they adhere to neutral policy. Indeed, they can contribute positively to ensuring neutrality within the Korean peninsula and will play a special role on this issue. Neutralization of the Korean peninsula will result in federal reunification. This means implementation of the inter-Korean agreements and establishment of a peace regime and a cessation of all kinds of dangerous military activities. So far, Sweden's possible role in resolving the Korean peninsula issue can be studied in this context and it will be appreciated by all Koreans.

The Supreme Leader of the DPRK, Chairman Kim Jong Un illustrated, "When reunified, our country will demonstrate its grandeur as a dignified world power with an 80 million population and enormous national strength, a nation with an advanced civilization that is superior to others thanks to its indomitable national spirit and unexcelled resourcefulness, and a nation of justice playing the leading role in ensuring peace in Northeast Asia and the rest of the world."

Endnotes

[1] The division of the Korean peninsula was resulted by the line which the US military had drawn on the Korean map and was fixed as a kind of boundary through the military interim government on the southern part of the peninsula. Some historians say that Japan, predicting its defeat, had attached its armed forces above the 38th parallel to the Guandong Army(the forces in Manchuria) and those below the 38th parallel to general staff forces based Tokyo, which explains Japan had already intended to divide the peninsula before liberation after the Yalta Meeting. After the division of Korea, the US calculated that they could suppress the DPRK by cooperating with the Kuomintang if they were victorious in the Chinese civil war. However, the Chinese Communist Party emerged victorious while the Kuomintang was driven to Taiwan. In June 1950, the US failed to cooperate with the Kuomintang to conquer the whole Korean peninsula. Resultantly, they US unleashed the Korean War so as to threaten the northeastern side of China and lead their strategic attention to the Korean peninsula while preventing the PLA's operation to liberate Taiwan.

[2] Since the U.S. could not achieve its goal through the Korean War, it could do nothing but sign the Armistice Agreement. But after that it checked the reunification of the Korean peninsula and fixed the division by maintaining the armistice which is a violation of the Agreement itself. The U.S. has claimed that the U.S.-south Korea "mutual defense treaty" is a "legitimate reason" for stationing its troops in south Korea. The U.S. temporarily signed this treaty just ten days after and concluded 64 days after the conclusion of the Armistice Agreement. This is in contradiction to the Armistice Agreement which stipulates that a higher level political talk should be convened within three months after signing to discuss peaceful settlement of the Korean issue. This discussion would include the withdrawal of all foreign forces. For this reason, the aforementioned "treaty" has been illegally concluded and violates the Armistice Agreement. Moreover, since 1974 the DPRK has proposed that the U.S. should replace the Armistice Agreement with a peace treaty. However, it has been continually refused by the latter until recently. In September 2015, when the DPRK proposed to the U.S. to discuss a formal peace treaty and the U.S. reiterated that denuclearization had to be part of any such discussion. The U.S. has insisted on a policy of "denuclearization first, peace treaty next". The key question however remains, why did the US choose not to conclude a peace treaty when the DPRK was denuclearized in 1970s, 1980s and 1990s when the DPRK was denuclearized. During those periods, the US insisted that the north and the south should be the parties of peace treaty. But it is crystal clear that south Korea neither was a party to the Agreement, or can be a party of peace treaty to replace the Armistice Agreement. Even if the U.S. assertion had been acknowledged, the U.S. should have handed over command control of south Korean military forces to south Korean authorities and withdrawn its troops from south Korea. However even when the DPRK, in consideration of Washington's assertion and the reality that south Korea maintains its own forces in south Korea, proposed tripartite talks of the DPRK, U.S., and south Korea, it was also rejected by the U.S. Furthermore, the America's request was satisfied by the adoption of the north-south non-aggression agreement in 1992. Even at this juncture, the U.S. paid no attention to the peace treaty instead dragged south Korea again into joint military exercises. These exercises involve the US conducting a nuclear preemptive strike against the DPRK, deny the issue to be resolved through a peace treaty whilst using the nuclear issue as an excuse. This response is aimed at disarming the DPRK, and thus only invites a hard line position towards the U.S. Another issue is the presence of the UNC (United Nations Command) in South Korea. The US has maintained the armistice by keeping the illegal and anachronistic "UNC" in south Korea. Conversely, the U.S. has agreed to the Armistice Agreement whereby they consented to work out peaceful resolution of the Korean issue on a higher level political talk, not through the UNC. Further, they dispatched its own government representatives to the Geneva talks in 1954. These facts give credence to the argument that the biggest hurdle in towards signing a peace treaty is none other than the U.S. itself.

[3] When the north and the south agreed to the three principles of national reunification through the July 4 Joint Statement in 1972 and the international community including the UN General Assembly supported this Statement and demanded pullout of US troops in south Korea and conclusion of peace treaty, the U.S. started to conduct the "Team Spirit" joint military exercise with the south Korean authorities. These exercises not only aggravated tensions on the peninsula but also elevated inter-Korean confrontation. When the north and the south concluded non-aggression agreement in 1992, the U.S. restarted already suspended "Team Spirit" to induce inter-Korean military tension and mistrust. Entering the new century, whenever the north and the south announced historic joint declarations, the US has always consistently designated the DPRK as an "axis of evil" and included the DPRK in the list of nuclear preemptive strike. They have also claimed the "strategic patience" which incited more confrontation and conflicts between the north and the south.

Key Documents

[4]*North-South Joint Declaration*

True to the noble will of all the fellow countrymen for the peaceful reunification of the country, Chairman Kim Jong-il of the National Defence Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and President Kim Dae-jung of the Republic of Korea had a historic meeting and summit in Pyongyang from June 13 to 15, 2000. The heads of the North and the South, considering that the recent meeting and summit - the first of their kind in history of division - are events of weighty importance in promoting mutual understanding, developing inter-Korean relations and achieving peaceful reunification, declare as follows:

1. The North and the South agreed to solve the question of the country's reunification independently by the concerted efforts of the Korean nation responsible for it.
2. The North and the South, recognising that a proposal for federation of lower stage advanced by the North side and a proposal for confederation put forth by the South side for the reunification of the country have elements in common, agreed to work for the reunification in this direction in the future.
3. The North and the South agreed to settle humanitarian issues, including exchange of visiting groups of separated families and relatives and the issue of unconverted long-term prisoners, as early as possible on the occasion of August 15 this year.
4. The North and the South agreed to promote the balanced development of the national economy through economic cooperation and build mutual confidence by activating cooperation and exchanges in all fields, social, cultural, sports, public health, environmental and so on.
5. The North and the South agreed to hold dialogues between the authorities as soon as possible to implement the above-mentioned agreed points in the near future. President Kim Dae-jung cordially invited Chairman Kim Jong-il of the DPRK National Defence Commission to visit Seoul and Chairman Kim Jong-il agreed to visit Seoul at an appropriate time in the future.

June 15, 2000

Kim Jong-il , Chairman of the National Defence Commission, DPRK
Kim Dae-jung, President of the Republic of Korea

[5]*Declaration on the Advancement of North-South Korean Relations, Peace and Prosperity*

In accordance with the agreement between Chairman Kim Jong Il of the National Defense Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and President Roh Moo-hyun of the Republic of Korea. President Roh visited Pyongyang from October 2-4, 2007.
During the visit, there were historic meetings and discussions. At the meetings and talks, the two sides have reaffirmed the spirit of the June 15 Joint Declaration and had frank discussions on various issues related to realizing the advancement of North- South relations, peace on the Korean Peninsula, common prosperity of the Korean people and reunification of Korea. Expressing confidence that they can forge a new era of national prosperity and unification on their own initiative if they combine their will and capabilities, the two sides declare as follows, in order to expand and advance North-South relations based on the June 15 Joint Declaration:

1. The North and the South shall uphold and endeavor actively to realize the June 15 Declaration. The North and the South have agreed to resolve the issue of unification on their own initiative and according to the spirit of "by-the-Korean-people-themselves." The North and the South will work out ways to commemorate the June 15 anniversary of the announcement of the North-South Joint Declaration to reflect the common will to faithfully carry it out.
2. The North and the South and have agreed to firmly transform inter-Korean relations into ties of mutual respect and trust, transcending the differences in ideology and systems. The North and the South have agreed not to interfere in the internal affairs of the other and agreed to resolve inter-Korean issues in the spirit of reconciliation, cooperation and reunification. The North and the South have agreed to overhaul their respective legislative and institutional apparatuses in a bid to develop inter-Korean relations in a reunification-oriented direction. The North and the South have agreed to proactively pursue dialogue and contacts in various areas, including the legislatures of the two sides, in order to resolve matters concerning the expansion and advancement of inter-Korean relations in a way that meets the aspirations of the entire Korean people.
3. The North and the South have agreed to closely work together to put an end to military hostilities, mitigate tensions and guarantee peace on the Korean Peninsula. The North and the South have agreed not to antagonize each other, reduce military tension, and resolve issues in dispute through dialogue and negotiation. The North and the South have agreed to oppose war on the Korean Peninsula and to adhere strictly to their obligation to nonaggression. The North and the South have agreed to designate a joint fishing area in the West Sea to avoid accidental clashes. The North's Minister of the People's Armed Forces and the South's Minister of Defense and have also agreed to hold talks in Pyongyang this November to discuss military confidence-building measures, including military guarantees covering the plans and various cooperative projects for making this joint fishing area into a peace area.
4. The North and the South both recognize the need to end the current armistice regime and build a permanent peace regime. The North and the South have also agreed to work together to advance the matter of having the leaders of the three or four parties directly concerned to convene on the Peninsula and declare an end to the war. With regard to the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula, the North and the South have agreed to work together to implement smoothly the September 19, 2005 Joint Statement and the February 13, 2007 Agreement achieved at the Six-Party Talks.
5. The North and the South have agreed to facilitate, expand, and further develop inter-Korean economic cooperation projects on a continual basis for balanced economic development and co-prosperity on the Korean Peninsula in accordance with the principles of common interests, co-prosperity and mutual aid. The North and the South reached an agreement on promoting economic cooperation, including investments, pushing forward with the building of infrastructure and the development of natural resources. Given the special nature of inter-Korean cooperative projects, the South and the North have agreed to grant preferential conditions and benefits to those projects.

6. The North and the South have agreed to create a "special peace and cooperation zone in the West Sea" encompassing Haeju and vicinity in a bid to proactively push ahead with the creation of a joint fishing zone and maritime peace zone, establishment of a special economic zone, utilization of Haeju harbor, passage of civilian vessels via direct routes in Haeju and the joint use of the Han River estuary. The North and the South have agreed to complete the first-phase construction of the Kaeseong Industrial Zone at an early date and embark on the second-stage development project. The North and the South have agreed to open freight rail services between Munsan and Bongdong and promptly complete various institutional measures, including those related to passage, communication, and customs clearance procedures. The North and the South have agreed to discuss repairs of the Kaeseong-Sinuiju railroad and the Kaeseong-Pyongyang expressway for their joint use. The North and the South have agreed to establish cooperative complexes for shipbuilding in Anbyon and Nampo, while continuing cooperative projects in various areas such as agriculture, health and medical services and environmental protection. The North and the South have agreed to upgrade the status of the existing Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation Promotion Committee to a Joint Committee for Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation to be headed by deputy prime minister-level officials.
7. The North and the South have agreed to boost exchanges and cooperation in the social areas covering history, language, education, science and technology, culture and arts, and sports to highlight the long history and excellent culture of the Korean people. The North and the South have agreed to carry out tours to Mt. Paekdu and open nonstop flight services between Seoul and Mt. Paekdu for this purpose. The North and the South have agreed to send a joint cheering squad from both sides to the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. The squad will use the Gyongui Railway Line for the first-ever joint Olympic cheering.
8. The North and the South have agreed to actively promote humanitarian cooperation projects. The North and the South have agreed to expand reunion of separated family members and their relatives and promote exchanges of video messages. To this end, the North and the South have agreed to station resident representatives from each side at the reunion center at Mt. Kumgang when it is completed and regularize reunions of separated family members and their relatives. The North and the South have agreed to actively cooperate in case of emergencies, including natural disasters, according to the principles of fraternal love, humanitarianism and mutual assistance.
9. The North and the South have agreed to increase cooperation to promote the interests of the Korean people and the rights and interests of overseas Koreans on the international stage. The North and the South have agreed to hold inter-Korean prime ministers' talks for the implementation of this Declaration and have agreed to hold the first round of meetings in November 2007 in Seoul. The North and the South have agreed that their highest authorities will meet frequently for the advancement of relations between the two sides.

Oct. 4, 2007
Pyongyang

Kim Jong Il
Chairman, National Defense Commission
Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Roh Moo-hyun
President
Republic of Korea