



## Online Series

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# Peace-Making on the Korean Peninsula: Building New Framework for Peace on the Korean Peninsula

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The Korean Peninsula has ushered in a new era of peace with the announcement of the Panmunjom Declaration, leaving behind an era marred by the division and the Cold War relic. Article 3 of the Panmunjom Declaration sets forth tasks for a peace settlement as non-aggression, phased disarmament, the declaration of an end to the Korean War, and the establishment of permanent peace. It also specifies the need to build a virtuous cycle, under which those key issues can be interlinked and implemented in parallel with one another. The remaining tasks for the establishment of a peace regime would be to have a phased approach from the declaration of an end to the war to the conclusion of a peace treaty while working out the details, such as types of the talks, contents of the declaration of an end to the war and a peace treaty, and the process of signing a peace treaty.

The Inter-Korean Summit was evaluated to be meaningful in that the two Koreas have laid a groundwork for peace and prosperity and created a new framework for the advancement of inter-Korean relations under North Korea's prevailing nuclear threat. A historic opportunity has arrived at the peninsula to remove the dark clouds of war that were even

a few month ago hanging over our head and to start planting a tree of peace.

The Summit has built a cornerstone in dismantling the Cold War structure of the Korean Peninsula and that of Northeast Asia. The root of North Korean nuclear issue lies in the division of the Korean Peninsula and the Cold War structure. The Summit has made possible a synchronous implementation of denuclearization, a transition to a peace regime, and advancement of inter-Korean relations, thereby dismantling the legacy of the Cold War and alleviating deep-rooted mistrust prevalent on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia.

### **Implications of Efforts for Peace Settlement on the Korean Peninsula**

There have been three attempts of establishing peace on the Korean Peninsula thus far. First, in 1992, the two Koreas set out to simultaneously resolve issues of denuclearization and peace. The second attempt was made in the form of North Korea's nuclear talks with the U.S. and the four-party talks. Third, denuclearization and the transition to a peace regime were discussed at the six-party talks held after North Korea's 2<sup>nd</sup> nuclear crisis.

Some implications can be drawn when looking back on the past three negotiations. First, nuclear issue and the transition to a peace regime have become closely linked. Second, attempts to resolve denuclearization issues through economic cards, such as economic rewards or sanctions, had failed in negotiations. As a result of that, a consensus was built that denuclearization issues should be addressed through security cards of the transition to a peace regime and normalization of relations. Third, it has become necessary to newly combine the two Koreas' leading role with neighboring countries' cooperation for the peaceful resolution of the Korean Peninsular issues.

## New Road to Peace Settlement

Article 3 of the Panmunjom Declaration stipulates that establishing peace requires non-aggression, phased disarmament, the declaration of an end to the war, the conclusion of a peace treaty, and denuclearization. The Declaration proposes a virtuous circle of relations, under which those key issues are interlinked and implemented in parallel with one another.

There are several considerations for establishing a peace regime in the future. First, a phased approach is needed to conclude a peace treaty after declaring an end to the war. Many obstacles still remain to settle complicated problems involving multiple actors at once. Therefore, it is necessary to gain momentum for a discussion of peace on the Korean Peninsula through the declaration of an end to the war. In doing so, the route can be secured leading to the peace settlement.

Second is about a format of talks. The Panmunjom Declaration (Article 3, Paragraph 3) stipulates that the three-party talks (South Korea, North Korea, and the U.S.), or four-party talks (South Korea, North Korea, the U.S., and China) will discuss a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula. Depending on how the situation unfolds in the future, the declaration of an end to the war could be adopted at the inter-Korean summit, and trilateral summits of the South, the North, and U.S. With another inter-Korean summit scheduled this fall, leaders of the two Koreas can declare an end to the war in that summit. Or leaders of both Koreas and the U.S. could jointly adopt the declaration of an end to the war at other occasion.

A peace treaty on the Korean Peninsula should be rightly discussed at the four-party talks, which also involve China. It is because the four-party talks of the past had addressed this issue before. In addition, a consensus was already made that the Peace Forum on the Korean Peninsula, which was described in the Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks, should take place in the form of the four-party talks.

Third is about contents of the declaration of an end to the war and a peace treaty. The declaration of an end to the war, by nature, is similar to Gentleman's

Agreement that carries a political and symbolic message rather than legally replacing the armistice agreement. The declaration of an end to the war would include measures of ending the war, seeking non-aggression, and building a peace treaty. The peace treaty will include bringing an end to the current state of armistice, setting boundaries, adopting peace management mechanism, and controlling military forces.

Fourth is about how the peace treaty should be concluded. Since the peace treaty involves multiple issues and concerned parties, it may be possible to conclude either issue-based or involved party-based agreement. For example, the South and the North could sign an inter-Korean peace treaty, for North Korea and the U.S., a non-aggression agreement, and for South Korea and China, a non-aggression agreement. Each signed agreement can be collectively put into one package and adopted as one document. ©KINU 2018

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