

# Verifying a Denuclearized Korean Peninsula: Current Negotiating Agenda\*

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**T**he nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula caused by North Korea's suspicious nuclear activities has emerged as a critical issue in inter-Korean dialogue and has become a major international concern. Although North Korea signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in December 1985, it had been for six years delaying to sign and ratify a fullscope safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). As the collapse of the Soviet Union and East European Communist regimes created an unfavorable external environment and international pressures to accept the IAEA inspection intensified, Pyongyang signed the IAEA safeguards agreement on 30 January 1992 and ratified it on 9 April 1992. Thus, an international inspection of North Korea nuclear facilities became possible. However the international consensus is that, as evidenced in Iraq, the IAEA safeguards inspection mechanism is not sufficient to deter a nation determined to develop nuclear weapons. Therefore, great attention has been paid both domestically and internationally to the ongoing South-North negotiation for establishing a bilateral inspection system. In this paper, the history of and the ongoing negotiation on the nuclear issue between

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the two Koreas are examined with particular emphasis on verification of a nuclear-free Korean peninsula.

## **The North's NWFZ vs. The South's Denuclearization**

### **1. Proposals on the Nuclear Problem: Before the Beginning of High-Level Talks**

Historically, the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea (DPRK) has strongly denounced the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula while advocating the idea of a nuclear weapons free zone (NWFZ) in the region. The first official record that revealed North Korea's anti-nuclear sentiment seems to be the letter of 7 November 1956 from the Supreme People's Assembly of the DPRK to the members of the South Korean National Assembly and the general public, which accused the South of violating the Military Armistice Agreement and trying to introduce nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula.<sup>1</sup> During the 1960s and 1970s, the North intermittently raised the nuclear weapons issue, and Pyongyang's anti-nuclear campaign intensified with concrete proposals offered in the 1980s.

At the Sixth Congress of the DPRK Workers' Party held in December 1980, when some implementation measures were enumerated for the North's unification formula—the so-called Democratic Federal Republic of Koryo (DCRK)—North Korean President Kim Il Sung proposed the establishment of a nuclear-weapons-free and peace zone on the Korean peninsula.<sup>2</sup> In June 1986, Pyongyang issued a statement proposing a tripartite meeting among South and North Korea and the U.S. to discuss establishing a nuclear-weapons-free and peace zone on the Korean peninsula. In the arms reduction proposal issued on 23 July 1987, Pyongyang called for tripartite talks at the foreign minister level

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1 *Rodong Shinmun*, 8 November 1956.

2 *Rodong Shinmun*, 11 October 1980.

to discuss a four-year process of the South-North mutual force reduction down to the level of 100,000 troops, together with the parallel withdrawal of U.S. forces and nuclear weapons from the peninsula. The updated and more comprehensive proposal made on 7 November 1988 suggesting a three-year timetable, spelled out detailed measures that would take place at each stage of the process. According to the proposal, the U.S. would pull back its forces and nuclear weapons to south of 35° 30' north latitude (a line running between Pusan and Chinhae) by the end of 1989 and a complete withdrawal of U.S. ground forces and nuclear weapons from the Korean peninsula would be carried out by the end of 1990. The proposal also suggested trilateral talks where among other issues verification could be discussed.

In the 1990s, North Korean proposals have taken a more refined and concrete shape. In the "Disarmament Proposal for Peace on the Korean Peninsula" made on 31 May 1990 Pyongyang presented a ten-point proposal for confidence building and arms reduction. Concerning the nuclear problem, the North proposed the following measure:

The North and the South should convert the Korean peninsula into a nuclear-free zone.

- A. Joint efforts should be made to withdraw all the nuclear weapons deployed in South Korea immediately.
- B. Nuclear weapons should not be produced or purchased.
- C. Foreign planes and warships loaded with nuclear weapons should be banned from entering or passing through Korea.

On 30 July 1991 the North Korean Foreign Ministry proposed that the two Koreas jointly declare a NWFZ by the end of 1992, which would be guaranteed by neighboring nuclear weapon states by the end of 1993. The proposal has drawn attention in the sense that there was no request for trilateral talks and the with-

drawal of U.S. forces was implicitly mentioned as a follow-up measure rather than a precondition for the pursuit of a NWFZ.

Seoul barely responded to Pyongyang's nuclear initiatives. As far as the nuclear issue is concerned, it is quite true that South Korea until recently has shown a lukewarm attitude. Quite contrary to North Korean anti-nuclear proposals, in the mid-1970s, then President Park Chung-Hee even hinted at the possibility that South Korea would develop nuclear weapons in case the United States withdrew its forces. No proposals concerning nuclear issues were since advanced by the South Korean government until 1 August 1991 when a statement was made by the Foreign Ministry saying that the two Korean authorities could discuss military matters including the issue of nuclear nonproliferation in order to reduce tension and build confidence between the two Koreas.<sup>3</sup> There seemed to be many factors behind the South's indecisive position. Among several reasons, the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons beyond the control of South Korean authorities on the Korean peninsula was probably the most important.

## **2. The South-North High-Level Talks: From Round One to Round Four**

During the first three rounds of South-North High-Level Talks which began in September 1990 no nuclear-related proposals were tabled by either side. It was at the Fourth inter-Korean Prime Ministers' Talks held in Pyongyang (22-25 October 1991) that the nuclear issue surfaced as a point of contention. At the meeting, the North proposed a draft of "declaration on establishing a nuclear weapons free zone (NWFZ) on the Korean peninsula" and linked its acceptance of the IAEA safeguards inspection to the withdrawal of U.S. forces and nuclear weapons

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<sup>3</sup> During this period, the only South Korean proposal for establishing a NWFZ on the Korean peninsula was made by the president of the Unification Party, an opposition party, on 16 January 1976.

from South Korea. The nine-point proposal (1) forbids the testing, manufacturing, introduction, possession, and use of nuclear weapons and (2) prohibits the transit, landing, and visiting of nuclear capable aircraft and ships. The proposal also (3) prevents any agreement guaranteeing a nuclear umbrella and allows no deployment or storage of nuclear weapons on either side's territory and (4) bans military exercises involving nuclear weapons. The proposal further (5) demands simultaneous inspections of North Korea's nuclear facilities by the IAEA and South Korea's military bases by the North.

On the other hand, South Korean Prime Minister Chung Won-Shik urged Pyongyang, without any condition, to first stop developing nuclear weapons and accept international safeguards inspection. South Korea's position on the nuclear issue, even though not explicitly declared at that time, was understood to be that even if U.S. nuclear forces were withdrawn, Seoul would need U.S. nuclear protection and therefore would allow U.S. ships and aircraft to pass through or visit South Korean territory including sea and airspace. Therefore, the North's proposal—particularly points (2) and (3)—was directly contrary to the South's position.

In accordance with President Bush's unilateral announcement on eliminating tactical nuclear weapons (27 September 1991) and the reciprocal step taken by President Gorbachev of the former Soviet Union (5 October 1991), South Korean President Roh Tae-Woo made a "declaration on denuclearizing and building peace on the Korean Peninsula" on 8 November 1991 and launched a diplomatic campaign to deter Pyongyang from developing nuclear weapons. The declaration, the first official nuclear policy made by the South Korean government, is as follows:

- (1) The Republic of Korea will use nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes, and will not manufacture, possess, store, deploy or use nuclear weapons.

- (2) The Republic of Korea will continue to submit to comprehensive international inspection of all nuclear-related facilities and materials on its territory in compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty and with the nuclear safeguards agreement it has concluded with the International Atomic Energy Agency under the treaty, and will not possess nuclear fuel reprocessing and enrichment facilities.
- (3) The Republic of Korea aspires for a world of peace free of nuclear weapons as well as all weapons of mass destruction, and we will actively participate in international efforts toward the total elimination of chemical and biological weapons and observe all international agreements thereon.

### 3. The South-North High-Level Talks: Round Five

At the Fifth inter-Korean High-Level Talks held in Seoul (10-13 December 1991) North Korea tabled its previous nuclear weapons free zone (NWFZ) proposal with no change and South Korea put forward a draft of "declaration on denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula" which was an extended version of President Roh's November declaration on denuclearization. At this meeting, the two sides reached a historic "Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation." The 25-point Agreement, as the name suggests, consists of three main parts and provides a framework for improvement of relations between the two countries. The main provisions of the Agreement are:

#### (1) *South-North Reconciliation*

- Both countries agree to respect each other's political and social systems, not to interfere in each other's internal affairs, not to slander or vilify each other, and pledge not to attempt in any manner to sabotage or subvert the other.

- Both sides agree to work toward a peace treaty to replace the present Military Armistice Agreement that ended the Korean War on 27 July 1953.
- A South-North Liaison Office will be established at Panmunjom on the border within three months of the effective date of the agreement.

(2) *South-North Nonaggression*

- Both sides agree not to use armed forces against each other and to resolve disputes through dialogue and negotiations.
- A hotline will be established between the two sides' military authorities to prevent accidental armed clashes and avoid escalation should any occur.
- In order to guarantee nonaggression, the two sides agree to form a South-North Joint Military Commission (JMC) within three months of the effective date of the agreement. To develop military confidence and realize arms reduction, the JMC is supposed to negotiate and implement the following measures: (1) the mutual notification and control of major military movements and exercises, (2) the peaceful use of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), (3) exchanges of military information and personnel, (4) phased arms reduction including the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and surprise attack capabilities, and (5) verification.

(3) *South-North Exchanges and Cooperation*

- Both sides agree to economic cooperation, including joint development of resources, and joint industrial and commercial ventures.
- Each side will carry out exchanges and cooperation in the various fields of science, technology, education, literature, newspapers, radio and television, and will promote the reunion of divided families and guarantee inter-Korean travel.

- Both sides will reconnect railroads and roads that have been cut off, and postal and telecommunications links will be set up.

Acting on the belief that the two Koreas themselves should inspect each other's nuclear-related installations and materials in order to build confidence in the military area, South Korean Prime Minister Chung proposed the South-North mutual inspection. He also called for simultaneous pilot inspections of one military and one civilian site designated by each other by 31 January 1992 on the condition that the two sides agree first to scrap nuclear reprocessing facilities. South Korea offered to submit Kunsan airbase and one civilian nuclear facility for inspection by the North and proposed Suncheon airbase and the Yongbyon nuclear complex for inspection by the South.

Pyongyang was obviously not prepared to respond Seoul's offer and put off further discussion on the nuclear problem until the later talks. The two sides merely agreed to hold an ad hoc meeting on the nuclear issue in the immediate future.

## **Joint Declaration on Denuclearization**

### **1. After the Fifth Round of High-Level Talks and Denuclearization Declaration**

On 18 December 1991 President Roh declared a nuclear-free South Korea, saying that "there do not exist any nuclear weapons whatsoever, anywhere in the Republic of Korea," which implied that U.S. nuclear weapons had been completely removed from the peninsula. President Roh's announcement was part of Southern efforts to induce the North to abandon its nuclear development program. The international community, particularly the United States, was concerned that the nuclear issue had not been resolved at the Fifth High-Level Talks even though the two Koreas reached a historic agreement. Responding to these concerns, South Korea has pushed Pyongyang to sign and ratify the



IAEA Safeguards Agreement and accept international inspection as early as possible. Seoul even hinted that the annual "Team Spirit" Korea-U.S. joint military exercise might be cancelled depending on the North Korean attitude on the nuclear problem.<sup>4</sup>

The first ad hoc meeting on the nuclear issue was held on 26 December 1991. At the meeting North Korea withdrew its previous position insisting on a nuclear weapons free zone and proposed a draft "joint declaration on *denuclearizing* (emphasis added) the Korean Peninsula," which adopted many points of the South's proposal. For instance, the North Korean proposal forbids the possession of nuclear fuel reprocessing and enrichment facilities. It referred to neither the prohibition of a treaty guaranteeing a nuclear umbrella nor the transit, landing, and visiting of nuclear-capable aircraft and ships.

There has been much speculation as to why North Korea changed its position and virtually copied that of the South. North Korean leaders were well aware of the urgent necessity for normalizing diplomatic ties with Japan and improving relations with the U.S. so as to overcome their economic difficulties and diplomatic isolation. Since the U.S. and Japan have maintained their positions that Pyongyang should settle the nuclear problem and accept international inspection first, the North presumably had to take some positive steps.

After intense negotiations, the two sides finally came to an agreement on the "Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula" at the third ad hoc meeting on 31 December 1991. The six-point declaration contains eight principles of denuclearization and South-North mutual inspection:

- (1) The South and the North forbid testing, manufacturing, production, receipt, possession, storage, deployment, and use of nuclear weapons.

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4 *The Hankook Ilbo*, 17 December 1991.

- (2) The South and the North confirm uses of nuclear energy for only peaceful purposes.
- (3) The South and the North ban the operation of nuclear reprocessing and enrichment facilities.
- (4) In order to verify denuclearization, the South and the North carry out inspections of objects that will be chosen by the other side and agreed upon between the two sides.
- (5) The South and the North establish a South-North Joint Nuclear Control Commission (JNCC).
- (6) The declaration enters into effect after being ratified respectively.

The eight principles of denuclearization can be categorized into two major parts. The first part, the ban on testing, manufacturing and production of nuclear weapons, should focus on the control of manufacturing nuclear materials and developing sensitive nuclear technologies. Thus, verification can be undertaken by locating and monitoring civilian nuclear installations such as nuclear reactors and nuclear fuel enrichment and reprocessing facilities. The second part, the ban on receipt, possession, storage, deployment, and use of nuclear weapons should concentrate on the detection of the existence of nuclear weapons. Therefore, compliance with these principles can be verified by examining whether North Korea is deploying at its military bases nuclear weapons that could have been made by the North itself or clandestinely introduced from the outside.

## **2. North Korea's Signing of the Safeguards Agreement**

At the nuclear ad hoc meetings, North Korea promised to sign the IAEA Safeguards Agreement in the near future, and on 7 January 1992 at a news conference North Korean Ambassador to Vienna made it clear that North Korea would sign the Safeguards Agreement by the end of January. On the same day, the South

Korean Ministry of National Defense announced that the U.S. and South Korean governments had called off the 1992 annual "Team Spirit" military exercise.

North Korea finally signed a fullscope Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency on 30 January 1992. The long-awaited signing was welcomed by South Korea and elsewhere. Unfortunately, however, Pyongyang showed no indication of early ratification of the Agreement. For example, North Korea's Ambassador to the UN Pak Gil-Yon said at a press conference on 3 February 1992 that the North would ratify the Safeguards Agreement within six months. South Korea demanded the North's ratification before the beginning of the Sixth Prime Ministers' Talks, that is, before 19 February 1992.

Meanwhile, the spokesman for the Southern delegation to the High-Level Talks made it clear that whether or not North Korea fulfills its obligation with respect to the nuclear problem would have definite influence on the overall South-North relations including a summit meeting between South Korean President Roh Tae Woo and his North Korean counterpart.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, he listed three specific issues upon which to focus at the Sixth High-Level Talks: North Korea's ratification of the Safeguards Agreement and agreement to form a Joint Nuclear Control Commission at earlier dates; and the prompt implementation of the South-proposed pilot inspection.

### 3. The South-North High-Level Talks: Round Six

At the Sixth High-Level Talks, the two Koreas formally brought into effect the "Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation," the "Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," and the "Agreement on the Formation of Subcommittees of the South-North High-Level Talks."

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5 *The Chosun Ilbo*, 14 February 1992.

In spite of these developments, however, the nuclear controversy could not be settled. A separate meeting was held on the nuclear problem, but the gap between the two sides' positions was too wide to be bridged at the meeting. Arguing that the nuclear issue is a litmus test of the North's determination to implement the inter-Korean agreements, the South pressed its counterpart to reach an agreement on the formation and administration of the Joint Nuclear Control Commission. Seoul also reiterated in its proposal its request for early implementation of the pilot and mutual inspection. On the other hand, Pyongyang manifested its refusal of Seoul's inspection scheme and maintained that inspection of the Yongbyon nuclear complex should be traded for nuclear inspection of all U.S. military bases in South Korea. In addition, North Korea tabled another issue. North Korean Prime Minister Yon Hyong-muk, in his keynote speech, warned of a recent Japanese nuclear build-up and proposed that the South and the North take some joint action. The two sides failed to reach a consensus but did agree to continue discussion of the issue at the truce village of Panmunjom on 27 February 1992. Regarding ratification of the IAEA Safeguards Agreement, North Korean roving Ambassador Choe U-Jin, who is also a delegate to the Prime Ministers' Talks, hinted that the IAEA Safeguards Agreement would be ratified at the Supreme People's Assembly to be held in early April 1992.

In his luncheon meeting with South Korean delegates, North Korean President Kim Il Sung issued a statement in response to President Roh's announcement that the South would faithfully abide by the agreements reached, while urging the North to do the same. In his statement, President Kim denied that North Korea is seeking to manufacture nuclear weapons and renewed a call for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Korea. The following is an excerpt from Kim Il Sung's statement:

There no longer exists the need for foreign troops to remain on the Korean peninsula. There can also be no excuses for the presence of foreign bases. I think the time has come now for us

to make a decision on that matter. The nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula should also be resolved. There is no way for us now to be sure whether nuclear weapons still exist in the South or not. This situation does not eliminate our grave concerns about the nuclear weapons that have threatened us for 30 years. As for our position on the nuclear issue, as already manifested, we possess no nuclear weapons, and we neither plan nor feel the need to produce them. We cannot afford a nuclear confrontation with the surrounding big powers. We can never imagine that we would develop nuclear weapons that could annihilate our brethren.

On 27 February 1992 South and North Korea held a working-level meeting to discuss the formation and administration of the Joint Nuclear Control Commission. The South proposed that the two sides carry out the first mutual nuclear inspection under the Joint Declaration in late April or early May after working out regulations by mid-April 1992. Seoul also demanded that the pilot inspection be implemented at an earlier date. The North rejected both points and said that mutual inspections should be made after the two Koreas adopt a separate agreement on the implementation of the first three articles of the Declaration on the Denuclearization. Furthermore, Pyongyang demanded joint efforts to cope with nuclear threats from outside and an international guarantee on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The two sides have held 8 meetings at the JNCC but no visible results have been obtained.

## **Verifying A Denuclearized Korean Peninsula**

### **1. North Korea's Resistance to Openness**

Before discussing the verification issue, it is important to pay close attention to the fact that North Korea is basically opposed to the concept of openness. Considering the North's signing and advocating the fulfillment of the "Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation," some may

argue that North Korea's secretive attitude will not be a significant impediment to the ongoing inter-Korean dialogue. Unfortunately, however, this argument turns out to be too optimistic. There is a good example of how strongly Pyongyang feels against the idea of opening its system to the outside. In the nonaggression part of the Agreement, both sides decided to organize a Joint Military Commission (JMC) to discuss and implement five measures including mutual notification and control of major military movements and exercises. But not a single provision mentions the "exchanges of observers." Without even observing military exercises and movements at an initial stage of the arms control process, it is doubtful how notification and control can be successfully verified.

Of course, South Korea originally insisted on mutually observing each other's major military exercises and movements. But North Korea objected strongly. North Koreans, having maintained a closed totalitarian system for more than 40 years, may be just overly sensitive to opening their system. They may not want to reveal their poorly fed and equipped soldiers, either. One argument worth our consideration is that for North Korean soldiers, it is unthinkable to show their exercises to officers of the U.S. imperialists' puppet regime (South Korea).<sup>6</sup>

Such resistance to openness has undoubtedly led North Korea to take a passive attitude toward verification. Pyongyang has not mentioned verification except to say, at the First Prime Ministers' Talks, that "The North and the South verify the implementation of agreed arms reduction measures through mutual on-site inspection of the other side." On the other hand, Seoul has demanded a permanent monitoring system to verify the implementation of measures guaranteeing nonaggression since the first round of High-Level Talks. Verification was, in principle, accepted at the Fifth High-Level Talks as one measure to guarantee nonaggression. But South Korea had to abandon its previous

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6 Private communication with a North Korean defector.

demand of establishing permanent monitoring posts due to North Korean opposition. It is expected that North Korean resistance to openness will make it more difficult to negotiate the details concerning verification in the future.

**2. South vs. North Korean Positions on Nuclear Inspection**

**Table 1. South and North Korean Positions on Inspection**

North Korea		South Korea
civilian nuclear facilities	-----	civilian nuclear facilities
military bases	-----	military bases

----- Southern (symmetric) proposal  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Northern (asymmetric) proposal

As shown in Table 1, South and North Korea show sharp discrepancies on how to determine the objects for inspection. As a condition for accepting the IAEA safeguards inspection, North Korea has been demanding simultaneous inspection of South Korea's military bases to see for themselves whether American nuclear weapons are removed. Since the South has already been adhering to the fullscope IAEA Safeguards Agreement for more than 16 years and the North has not, Pyongyang's position of asymmetric inspection is simply absurd to Seoul. South Korea, in turn, argues that it should be able to inspect North Korean military bases as shown in the pilot inspection proposal by South Korean Prime Minister Chung at the Fifth High-Level Talks. The South's argument for symmetric inspection is believed to be based on the fact that an inspection object should be chosen depending on whether the object has already been open to the outside world. Therefore, the South stresses that civilian facilities already opened (or in case of the North, will be so in the near future) cannot be traded for military bases.

At the Fifth High-Level Talks, South Korean Prime Minister Chung proposed a South-North mutual inspection separate from the IAEA inspection of all nuclear-related materials, places, and civilian and military facilities of both sides. As a starting measure, he proposed a simultaneous pilot inspection by 31 January 1992 of the North Korean Yongbyon nuclear complex and Sunchon airbase and the South Korean Kunsan airbase and one civilian facility designated by the North.

The motivation behind the South's pilot inspection proposal is Seoul's obvious belief that the negotiation for mutual inspections is filled with difficulties. In order for mutual inspections to be carried out, the two sides need first to form a Joint Nuclear Control Commission (JNCC). Then, they have to negotiate at the JNCC details concerning how to determine the objects of verification, and methods and means for verification. Seoul, which not only expects much controversy during the negotiation but also realizes the urgent necessity for inspecting the Yongbyon nuclear installations, had to propose implementation of the pilot inspection in advance. So far, there is no indication that Pyongyang has taken this matter seriously nor demonstrated its interest in Seoul's offer.

### **3. Nuclear Inspection Between the South and the North: Some Suggestions**

In this section, some suggestions will be offered with policy measures that can be taken for pursuing mutual and pilot inspections between the two Koreas in civilian nuclear facilities and military bases, respectively.

#### *(1) Inspection of Civilian Nuclear Facilities*

Iraq's evasion of IAEA safeguards inspections and development of nuclear weapons in secrecy demonstrate that inspections between the two Koreas will have to be carried out more comprehensively and in such a way that the South-North inspection complements the current IAEA inspection system and, more-



over, overcomes its limitations. Several measures can be considered.

First, considering that the IAEA inspectors have limited access only to the facilities where nuclear materials are reported to be present, in the case of South-North inspections, inspectors' access must be extended to such installations as control room, annex buildings, and others which the inspecting team wants to visit.

Second, since North Korea is reported to have significant amounts of natural uranium depots and run a uranium refinery, uranium mines and mills should also be included for inspection.<sup>7</sup>

Third, in order to build confidence between the South and the North, mutual nuclear inspections should allow enough time for inspection with a minimum notification period.

Fourth, in order to locate undeclared nuclear facilities and materials, effective intelligence collection methods should be available. Since the South and the North have virtually no technically advanced means of collecting intelligence, both sides may need to agree on an Open Skies agreement which is undoubtedly a significant confidence-building measure.

Finally, when a reprocessing installation operates, the IAEA inspectors are normally at the facility full time. Considering that North Korea has already built a nuclear fuel reprocessing facility at the Yongbyon complex, continuous inspection should also be required in the South-North mutual inspection until the North completely dismantles the facility.

## (2) *Inspection of Military Bases*

In the case of inspecting military bases, the two sides will face many more difficulties. First, as mentioned above, the positions of the South and the North on how to include military facilities

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7 According to one report, North Korea discovered 4 million tons of uranium deposits and is operating one uranium mill. See Leonard Spector and Jacqueline Smith, *Nuclear Ambitions: The Spread of Nuclear Weapons 1989-1990*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), pp. 121, 139.

for nuclear inspection are different: the South's symmetric inspection vs. the North's asymmetric inspection. Second, nothing has been discussed on the details of inspection. The two sides have to agree upon which military bases are to be inspected; what they are going to see at each site and how intrusively; and what the details of the inspection procedures are.

Since military bases are going to be dealt with at the Joint Military Commission as well, they can possibly be grouped into two categories depending on whether the military unit at a base is equipped with weapons that could load nuclear warheads. Such units consist of missile, air force, and artillery units. Thus, the Joint Nuclear Control Commission is to be provided the authority to monitor these units. The JNCC can inspect them to see whether they have deployed nuclear weapons. If an agreement on some operational or structural conventional arms control measures is reached in the JMC, the JNCC can verify the implementation of these measures as well.

In view of the deep-seated mistrust and suspicion prevailing between the two Koreas, implementing the second part of the "Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation" will be much more difficult than the other two. A hotline between the two military authorities may be established and some exchanges of high-level military officials can be realized in the near future. This observation is based on the assessment that these measures will not demand serious openness of the North and have only minor influence on its society, if any. However, other steps requiring more openness on the part of Pyongyang will face more difficulties.

Keeping these circumstances in mind, mutual visits to military bases and units may be relatively more easily accomplished at an initial stage than direct inspections and searches. The latter steps may quickly raise a harsh debate and contribute to increasing tension between the two sides. All details such as determining the objects of visits, visiting procedures and periods can be decided by the inviting side. When confidence is gradually built

up and suspicions are diminished through such informal visits, more formal inspections can be carried out. If it is difficult to agree on all the data of each other's military forces, several more important units and bases can be selected and inspected first rather than wrangling over the database.

## Conclusion

This paper has reviewed the nuclear problem on the Korean Peninsula and suggested some measures to be taken for overcoming the limitations of the present civilian inspection system and for facilitating verification of military bases related with nuclear weapons. Although South and North Korea signed the "Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," implementation of the Declaration is facing difficulties.

One important issue that could possibly complicate the ongoing negotiation in this regard is that the U.S. may want to participate directly in the South-North inspection. The U.S. wish to play a role in the inspection was expressed more clearly by Undersecretary of State Arnold Kanter in his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee. Mr. Kanter gave an affirmative answer in the hearing to Senator Alan Cranston's question about whether the U.S. was willing to form a joint inspection team with South Korea.<sup>8</sup>

In case the U.S. bases in South Korea are open for inspection by North Korea, the U.S. may have legal rights to demand its own participation. However, the U.S. participation is so politically sensitive that its feasibility and possible consequences should be thoroughly examined. The following problems can be expected.

First of all, North Korea may not allow the U.S. to search any part of its territory. President Kim Il Sung, in his New Year Address, put a particular emphasis on the principle of independence. He

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8 *The Han-Kyoreh Shinmun*, 13 February 1992.

argued that "It was due to the coercion of the foreign forces that our country (was) divided, and our struggle for national reunification is aimed at putting an end to the foreign domination and achieving national identity."<sup>9</sup> Given the North Korean attitude reflected in Kim's address, it is difficult to imagine that Pyongyang will welcome American inspectors.

Second, the North may use the U.S. demand of its participation in the South-North inspection as a bargaining chip to obtain more concessions from both the U.S. and South Korea, which will make the ongoing negotiation less favorable to Seoul.

Third, if the U.S. is allowed to participate, the North may take advantage of the matter and launch a propaganda campaign to criticize Seoul's dependence on the U.S. imperialists, which will inflict political damage on the South Korean government.

Finally, the U.S. participation will lead to acceptance of the idea of trilateral talks which for many years North Korea has been pursuing but the U.S. rejecting.

In addition to these negative consequences that may arise, the South Korean general public and even some key policy makers have reservations on direct U.S. involvement in inter-Korean nuclear inspections. Given these considerations, it would be advisable for the U.S. to provide assistance to South Korea in carrying out effective on-site inspections by giving all the necessary intelligence and technologies rather than insisting on direct participation.

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9 *The Pyongyang Times*, 1 January 1992.