

The Korean Peninsula: Sustaining Momentum in Implementing the 13 February Joint Document

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The joint document on denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula released after the fifth round of the Six-Party Talks on February 13, 2007 is a great progress with its historic significance. If we regard the 19 September agreement as the “Statement of principles,” the 13 February agreement should be seen as the “commitments of action.” They have demonstrated all parties' political will to achieve denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. For the reasons known to all, the 60-day deadline for the initial actions of the joint document has passed for nearly one month and the Six-party Talks has been stalled. The DPRK did not shut down its nuclear reactor in Yongbyon on time, nor has it invited the IAEA officials back to the country. The US has not been able to meet its obligations on the issue of the DPRK-related funds in the Banco Delta Asia, Macau, China. Currently, all parties concerned are having consultation over this technical problem of DPRK's fund in the BDA. They all have reaffirmed their commitments of the joint statement. My presentation intends to assess the development after the release of the 13 February joint document.

**The First Point: Fully evaluate the 19 September and 13 February
Joint Documents**

Four features:

- 1 From Multilateral framework to bilateral dialogue within this multilateral framework;
2. Pragmatism replacing rhetoric in the negotiating process, pursuing word-for-word and action-for-action principle; moving towards pragmatic commitments by action from diplomatic maneuvers by word;
3. Denuclearization negotiation in parallel with diplomatic normalization, with North-South interaction and exchange and DPRK-US and DPRK-Japan diplomatic normalization
- 4 combine the crisis management and conflict resolution with the creation of the future security mechanism

We can conclude that the current six-party talks have gone beyond the four-party talks and the 1994 framework agreement, from freeze to dismantle the nuclear facilities and all the nuclear weaponization programs, and from compensation approach to creating permanent peace mechanism.

The Second Point: Progress We Have Made

According to the February document, within 30 days of the document release, the US Treasury will review and partially lift financial sanctions imposed in late 2005 to punish DPRK for alleged counterfeiting and other illicit activities, while the US will help finance an initial shipment of 50,000 tonnes of heavy fuel oil (HFO) to DPRK. The US will also start the

process by which DPRK can be removed from its list of state sponsors of terrorism. If DPRK fully cooperates and disables the nuclear facility, the other five countries will provide another 950,000 tons of heavy fuel oil for a grand total of 1 million tons.

DPRK has reaffirmed its commitment to shutting down its Yongbyon nuclear facility and full declaration of its nuclear facilities and programs, and invitation of the IAEA personnel back to the country.

The parties will create five working groups to work out outstanding issues with DPRK, including its total denuclearization, normalization of diplomatic relations with Japan and the US, and a peace treaty putting a formal end to the Korean War and creation of a new regional security mechanism. Some working groups have held their first meetings. US-DPRK bilateral meetings at Berlin and New York have gone smoothly. The US Delegations have been invited to the DPRK for this purpose. The first Japan-DPRK meeting was held at Hanoi. The South-North ministerial meetings have resumed.

The Third point: Road Blocks We Have to Remove

In the process of implementing the initial actions, we do encounter difficulties and vicissitudes. The DPRK has demanded that its funds in BDA should be transferred via an account of a third country. There remain some technical problems before we come to a complete solution. We all know that it takes time to solve the funds transfer issue technically after

political decision has been made. Relevant parties have been conducting close consultation and making arduous efforts to resolve this issue. China has kept close coordination and communication with relevant parties. We hope that this issue could be resolved appropriately while taking all parties' concern into consideration so that the initial actions could be implemented. We are optimistic that the parties concerned are mature enough to overcome the difficulties and push forward the talks process.

That agreement broke down for another question that remains unanswered in this joint document. DPRK's program for developing warheads with highly enriched uranium. Hill's predecessor, James Kelly claimed after visiting Pyongyang in October 2002 that North Korea had acknowledged the program after he and members of his team showed maps and other evidence picked up by US satellites. North Korea has strongly denied the existence of any uranium program. DPRK's refusal to talk about the uranium program will probably complicate the future talk process until it is clarified.

The Last Point: Patience and Perseverance Will Win the Race

Looking back the path we have taken since the early 1990s, tensions and crises notwithstanding, we should feel fortunate that we have successfully avoided a possible war like the one in today's Iraq under the agreed framework and the four-party talks led to the successful North-South Summit in 2000. Since 2002, the claims on axis of evil,

outpost of tyranny, and regime change notwithstanding, we have been able to keep the war distant from this region. We have created the multilateral six-party talks as the platform for denuclearizing the peninsula and maintaining peace and stability and persevered in the diplomatic process. We have achieved the two important agreements. We have reasons to be confident for our efforts to sustain the momentum:

Along the course of adherence to the following principles:

1. Our final goal is to denuclearize the Korean peninsula;
2. we must maintain peace and stability on the path to this goal;
3. we must insist on the diplomatic means for achieving this goal;
4. The six-party talks is the best platform for working together and achieving regional peace and stability;
5. we need the support of the international community, including the Asean.

Finally, we clearly understand that these achievements are only the first concrete steps toward nuclear disarmament in exchange for aid and normalized relations which marks a long-awaited diplomatic breakthrough. However, there is a long way to go for achieving our final goal. We should move forward with Confidence and working together as responsible stakeholders with each taking into account the other's concerns, I believe that patience and perseverance will win the race for a peaceful and denuclearized Korean Peninsula!