

APLN Co-Convenors Welcome Forthcoming US–North Korea Summit

The Co-Convenors of the Asia-Pacific Leadership Network (APLN) welcome the Summit between the leaders of the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) proposed for May as an extremely positive development. The Co-Convenors also welcome the Summit between the leaders of the DPRK and the Republic of Korea in April which will be important in its own right and for preparing the ground for the US–DPRK Summit.

The Korean Peninsula is one of the world's most dangerous hotspots. The DPRK's pursuit of nuclear weapons and missile capabilities over many years, in defiance of the international community's repeated calls to stop, has raised tensions across the whole region. Bold and creative steps are needed to restore calm and remove the threat of nuclear war from the Korean Peninsula.

As APLN has stated previously, the problems of the Korean Peninsula cannot be solved by force, and continuing provocations only increase the risk of war. Constructive dialogue is the only way to address the security concerns of both sides. Holding a Summit is a powerful statement of intent by both leaders to address threat perceptions and misperceptions and resolve the long-running tensions between the two countries. While caution is warranted in managing expectations, a successful US–DPRK Summit will be the best way of starting the complex process of engagement needed, and setting this in the right direction.

It is essential for all regional governments to do everything they can to support both the inter-Korea and US–DPRK Summits, and the process of engagement which we all hope will follow. In particular, the other participants in the Six-Party Talks, China, Japan and Russia, should extend full support to the exchanges between the DPRK, the ROK and US, and should stand ready to re-engage in the Six-Party Talks format if that proves useful.

The APLN has been promoting regional dialogue aimed at resolving the situation on the Korean Peninsula. While governments must take the lead, APLN will continue to offer its good offices to facilitate dialogue at all levels.

Seoul, March 22, 2018

Chung-in MOON, Co-Convenor (Republic of Korea)

Ramesh THAKUR, Co-Convenor (Australia)

About the APLN

The Asia-Pacific Leadership Network for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (APLN) has more than ninety members from 16 countries across Asia and the Pacific, consisting of former political, official and military leaders in senior executive positions as well as opinion leaders and shapers from other sectors of society.

As an advocacy group, the APLN aims to inform and energize public opinion, especially high-level policymakers, to take seriously the very real threats posed by nuclear weapons, and to do everything possible to achieve a world in which they are contained, diminished and eventually eliminated.