



Sixth Meeting of the Asia–Pacific Leadership Network for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (APLN), Jeju, Republic of Korea, 24 May 2016

Co-Convenors' Statement

Asia Pacific nuclear policy leaders, meeting this week at Jeju in the Republic of Korea, have highlighted the substantial threats that continue to be posed by the existence of nuclear weapons, the growth in their numbers, and the possibility of their proliferation in a region faced with multiple conflicts and land and maritime border disputes.

They deplored the fourth nuclear test and continued ballistic missile provocations by North Korea since the fifth meeting of the APLN in Hiroshima in August 2015.

The APLN again calls on global and regional policymakers to urgently re-energize the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament agenda. The core issues remain:

- the challenge of regional nuclear and ballistic missile proliferation;
- rising nuclear weapon numbers in the Asia Pacific;
- the continued heavy reliance on nuclear deterrence in national security policy by the nuclear 'haves', and of those protected by nuclear umbrellas;
- nuclear security in an age of terrorism; and
- nuclear safety as key regional countries seek energy security.

The **world's stockpile of 15,000 nuclear weapons puts an increasing focus on the Asia Pacific**. Despite the reduction in total stocks since the height of the Cold War, the United States and Russia still account for about 95% of the world's nuclear weapons stockpiles – which still have the destructive power of over 100,000 Hiroshima sized bombs. China, India, and Pakistan all are having significant and **growing arsenals**, and the breakout state of North Korea continues to build its weapons and delivery capability.

No other region of the world has to manage the complexity of so many nuclear actors in one geopolitical space. Yet the Asia-Pacific region has little experience and lacks any institutions for managing nuclear threats. Indeed we confront the contradictory situation that while nuclear weapons are assuming an ever-increasing prominence in regional strategic doctrines, nuclear issues apparently fail to appear on the agendas of bilateral or multilateral meetings of the region's political leaders.

The meeting warmly welcomed the imminent **visit of US President Obama to Hiroshima** and expressed the hope that President Obama will make a clear statement there acknowledging the horrifying humanitarian impact of any nuclear weapons, and reaffirming his 2009 Prague vision of a world free of the existence and threat of use of nuclear weapons as an achievable objective.

We reaffirm the recommendations made in our 2015 **Hiroshima Declaration** for:

- major further reductions in the stockpiles of nuclear weapons in US and Russian arsenals;
- a freeze in the numbers of Asia-Pacific and other nuclear weapons-possessing states;
- no development or deployment of battlefield tactical nuclear weapons;
- dramatically reducing the role of nuclear weapons in security policies across the region, including through commitments of 'no-first use' and the provision of unequivocal 'negative security assurances' that no non-nuclear weapon state would ever be attacked with nuclear weapons;
- for Russia and the US to reduce and eliminate numbers of nuclear weapons on dangerously high alert and for no other country to put any of their nuclear weapons on high alert;
- to avoid the stability-degrading effects of ballistic missile defence and conventional prompt global strike developments;
- progress in bringing into force the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

Our ultimate objective must be a comprehensive and universal Nuclear Weapons Convention prohibiting nuclear weapons, backed by effective verification and enforcement.

We call on the nuclear armed states to lead by example. We also call on those states sheltering under the umbrella of a nuclear power to back their professed commitments to nuclear disarmament by taking steps to minimise their reliance on nuclear deterrence, in particular by making it clear that they will not rely on nuclear weapons to respond to non-nuclear threat contingencies.

Asia Pacific states must work to denuclearise the Korean peninsula by a combination of strategies to contain and deter while being open to opportunities for dialogue and negotiation. Recalling the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action to successfully address Iran's nuclear program, the APLN calls for a similar structure of incentives that combines inducements with penalties in a negotiated process to engage with and end North Korea's nuclear weapons program and activities.

The 4th Nuclear Security Summit in Washington on 1 April charted several new directions for continued **international efforts to deny terrorists access to nuclear materials** that might be used for nuclear weapons or radiological devices. The APLN urges all Asia Pacific countries to:

- join as soon as possible all relevant international legal instruments governing the protection of nuclear materials
- improve national nuclear theft and sabotage precautions, and
- avail themselves of international support services and peer reviews.

Nuclear power is expanding more rapidly in Asia than elsewhere, meeting an ever-growing demand for energy. This year marks the 30th anniversary the tragic accident at the



Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in Ukraine, and the 5th anniversary of the powerful earthquake and tsunami to hit Japan which triggered the disaster at the **Fukushima Daiichi** nuclear power plant. The **safe management of all aspects of the nuclear fuel cycle** will remain critical. APLN encourages the adoption by all countries in the region of international best-practice nuclear safety standards.

The Asia Pacific continues to grow as the world's economic powerhouse. But it is also a region of rapidly growing military assets, including most regrettably nuclear arms. We urge the **ARF Ministerial Meeting and the EAS summit** process to demonstrate new thinking on how to reduce regional nuclear risks by effective and collaborative action to freeze and reduce the numbers of nuclear warheads; minimize doctrinal reliance on, and deployment practices of, nuclear weapons; stigmatize the role of nuclear weapons; and build steps to their ultimate abolition.

The members of the APLN rededicated themselves to the tireless pursuit of these goals through engagement with regional governments and civil society, and through producing targeted publications and research.

Background

The 6th meeting of the APLN was held in Jeju, R.O.K. on 24 May 2016, co-chaired by the Co-Convenors:

- Chung-in Moon, Professor of Political Science at Yonsei University and Editor-in-Chief of *Global Asia*
- Ramesh Thakur, Professor and Director of the Centre for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, Australian National University, former Vice Rector/Senior Vice Rector United Nations University (1998–2007) and UN Assistant Secretary-General

The list of participants and agenda for the meeting are attached.