



Asia Pacific Leadership Network
for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and
Disarmament

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Co-hosted by Mongolia Development
Strategy Institute

21-23 June 2017

Report of the APLN Northeast Asia Regional Meeting in Ulaanbaatar

Summary

On June 21st-23rd, 2017, the Asia-Pacific Leadership Network co-hosted the APLN Northeast Regional Meeting with the Mongolia Development Strategy Institute. It was participated by 23 experts – 14 of whom were APLN members. The meeting covered a broad range of topics in five sessions: (1) Key national perspectives of North Korea Nuclear Issues; (2) Maintaining the effectiveness of the NPT; (3) Japan, South Korea and the nuclear umbrella; (4) Regional and global non-proliferation and disarmament initiatives; (5) Weighing the options of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula.

This report covers the following aspects of the meeting:

1. Introductions and Opening Considerations
 - Participation, Organization of the Meeting, APLN Matters, Co-Host Opening Remarks
2. Korean Peninsula Nuclear Issues
 - Perspectives of major stakeholders: Mongolia, ROK, Japan, China, Russia, the US
 - General exchange of views directed at assessing recent currents and identifying potential next steps
 - The Chair's tentative conclusions
3. The NPT and the Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty
 - Discussion and the Chair's observations
 - "Mongolia's Nuclear Weapon Free Status" by Amb. Enkhsaikan (Chairman of Blue Banner)
 - Nuclear Weapon Free Zones and Northeast Asia
 - Views on a Northeast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone
 - The Chair's concluding observations

Content



1. Introductions and Opening Considerations

In opening the session Co-Convenor Ramesh Thakur conveyed the regrets of Co-Convenor Chung-in Moon that he was unable to chair the meeting as planned due to commitments in Seoul. He noted with great appreciation that the meeting was taking place in Ulaanbaatar at the initiation and with the vital support of APLN member Nyamosor Tuya. Also, reflecting APLN ambitions to forge closer collaboration between like-minded regional organizations, the meeting was being co-hosted by the Mongolia Development Strategy Institute (MDSI) led by its Executive Director Dashdorj Zorigt, former Minister for Mineral Resources. In addition, it was held back-to-back and in cooperation with the 2nd Meeting of the Panel on Peace and Security in Northeast Asia (PSNA), co-hosted by Blue Banner, Mongolia and the Research Centre for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (RECNA), Nagasaki University, Japan. The synergies of shared participation in each other's meeting were contributing to the effectiveness of all.

Participation

The meeting brought together some 23 eminent and expert participants from across the region: APLN Members from Mongolia: Nyamosor Tuya; ROK: Yongsoo Hwang, Sanghyun Lee, and Sung-hwan Kim; China: Zhao Tong, Pan Zhenqiang, Chen Dongxiao; Japan: Nobuyasu Abe, Toshio Sano, Tatsujiro Suzuki and Hiromichi Umebayashi; Australia: Ramesh Thakur and John Tilemann; APLN Secretariat: Hyung Taek Hong and Jamie Cho. Invited participants included Ambassador Jargalsaikhan Enkhsaikhan, Morton Halperin, Michael Hamel-Green, and Peter Hayes – all of the Panel on Peace & Security of Northeast Asia (PSNA). Guest Observers from PSNA Elizabeth Suh, Jae-Jung Suh, Mark Suh, Jung Min Kang were also present. Despite best efforts of our co-hosts we were not on this occasion able to secure participation from DPRK. The meeting benefited greatly from the participation of our invited expert from Russia, Dr Alexander Vorontsov, Adviser, Center for Energy and Security Studies and Head of the Korean and Mongolian Studies Department, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences. See full details of participants at Attachment 1.

Organization of the Meeting

The meeting followed the Program and Agenda at Attachment 2. Unless otherwise indicated the meeting was conducted according to the Chatham House Rule of non-attribution.

APLN Matters

For the benefit of our guests, Co-Convenor Thakur outlined the origins, mandate and working methods of the APLN. He emphasized that the Network's strength lay in the

quality and commitment of its membership and outlined the role of APLN meetings, and of APLN statements/press releases directed to regional policy makers and opinion leaders. Members and guests were invited to contribute to APLN outreach, and to suggest and author items for publication as Policy Briefs (<http://www.a-pln.org/briefings/briefings/>) or as comment for the APLN blog, Nuclear Threats Monitor (see <http://www.a-pln.org/blog/blog/>).

Co-Host Opening Remarks

Sukhbaatar Batbold, former Prime Minister of Mongolia and Chairman of MDSI, highlighted the timeliness of the meeting and relevance of the issues to be considered given the heightened regional security concerns generated by the nuclear and missile threats posed by the DPRK. He outlined Mongolia's responses to its unique strategic situation between two nuclear powers, and the political challenge of dealing with nuclear issues when there is little public understanding of the issues. He recalled that Chinggis Khan had observed that 'conquering the world on horseback was not too demanding a feat; it is much more demanding to manage the world once you dismount'. Similarly, he observed, inventing an atomic bomb was probably a less demanding feat than managing the consequences of its invention: he urged countries 'to dismount the horses packed with nukes, or not to mount them at all'.

2. Korean Peninsula Nuclear Issues

Perspectives of major stakeholders

The discussion was opened with presentations on the perspectives of key regional players on the nuclear and missile threats on the Korean Peninsula and more broadly in Northeast Asia.

In **setting the scene** several observations were made:

- Critical was finding common ground amongst the major players especially US and China.
- Equally ROK has pivotal role to play.
- And many others have stake.
- Force was not acceptable: urgent diplomatic effort needed.
- The Six Party Talk structure should be revived taking account of developments since they last stalled.
- But talks were unlikely to resume while DPRK continues testing.
- Northeast Asia lacks region-wide security arrangements, historical animosities were still at work, and there is a growing mutual wariness.

Mongolia has supported Track 2 and 1.5 meetings with DPRK:

- Mongolia has vital security interests at stake.
- Has opted to develop pragmatic relations with the region.
- Has historical links with DPRK.
- Could offer its experience in transitioning from a closed society to one enjoying the benefits of international cooperation.
- And shares a vital interest in the economic development of Northeast Asia.

In Seoul, the new administration of Moon Jae-in has committed to reopening dialogue with the North:

- Typically it takes a couple of years for policy change to emerge from changes of administrations in Washington and Seoul: but it may occur sooner this time.
- Whether or not there should be preconditions for dialogue with DPRK remains a highly charged issue politically in ROK as in the US.
- Both want the DPRK to open up to outside influences.
- DPRK has mastered the technical aspects of its nuclear and missile systems but it is unclear that they can yet mass produce such systems.
- Negotiations will require give and take across a range of issues: security, weapons systems, and energy infrastructures.
- Decommissioning of nuclear and other weapons programs will be a massive undertaking employing all existing expertise and massive financial and technical support over a long time from governments and NGO experts such as Nautilus.

Japan shares US perspectives on many aspects of the issue and recognizes that pressure is an important element in setting the environment for engagement: this entails costs.

- China and Russia not currently willing to pay the necessary price.
- Japan's approach is complicated by the DPRK abductions of Japanese nationals; and the charges of breaches of promise when abductees visiting Japan did not return to DPRK.
- Japan had little appetite for negotiations with DPRK which did not address the abductee issue.
- And Japan was conscious of the 'Charlie Brown dilemma' – when could Japan (and others) rely on DPRK to deliver on its promises.
- Huge uncertainties remain about the extent of DPRK's WMD activity: this adds to the huge challenges of verifying any freeze
 - o conservatives in Washington and Tokyo would not accept a freeze which was not effectively verifiable.
- And for Japan, extended deterrence umbrella was needed to meet the CW and BW threats posed by DPRK – not just nuclear threats.
- After 20 years of economic stagnation, the Japanese electorate will not be as generous as before.
- Polls suggest Japanese opinion is firmly opposed to the nuclear weapon option, but there may be a 'Trump syndrome' at work whereby polls are not accurately reflecting public opinion; and anti-nuclear activists are no longer taking to the streets, suggesting a dwindling enthusiasm for that cause.

Seen from **Beijing**, the DPRK situation was entering an even more dangerous phase with greater risks:

- Pyongyang has improved its technical nuclear and missile capabilities and the US has increased its regional military presence – the risk of military confrontation has grown.
- At the same time regional security situation has worsened including a growing gap between the perspectives of ROK and China.
- The root source of the crisis was DPRK relations with US.
- DPRK has gained strength from US missteps.
- China has been sending increasingly strong messages to DPRK through UNSC Resolutions and the application of sanctions.
- While promoting denuclearization, Beijing was keeping open links to Pyongyang
 - o China continued to advocate a suspension of nuclear and missile testing for a suspension of ROK-US military exercises.
- All involved states need to help build confidence: but time is not with us – all need to act with a sense of urgency.

Seen from **Moscow**, the situation is one of fundamental trust deficits:

- DPRK was not interested in dialogue for its own sake
 - o and certainly did not want talks premised on its capitulation
 - o DPRK was looking for tangible results.
- Efforts to engage with the US had met with cancelled visas.
- As the US increases pressure, the DPRK will continue testing and the blame game will spiral.
- While DPRK has failed to meet commitments, it can cite with equally good argument broken commitments of US, Japan and ROK
 - o for example on the abductee issue.
- A freeze had been achieved once before
 - o if the commitment was there, this could again be a starting point.
- What to do? Restoration of dialogue, bilaterally and maybe with other Six Party Talks participants
 - o but there is a new reality: the DPRK now has nuclear weapons
 - o key was to establish what the DPRK now wants.
- Need small starting steps: Moscow agreed with China's suggestion that DPRK might freeze its programs in return for a reduction in the number and intensity of exercises in the South. [China and Russia repeated this proposal during the Xi-Putin summit 3-4 July – see <http://www.cnbc.com/2017/07/04/china-russia-ties-reaffirmed-after-xi-jinping-and-vladimir-putin-meet.html> – JT].

Seen from **Washington**, the issue is politically tendentious and complex:

- The position of the Trump administration is still taking shape.
- The collapse of earlier efforts was not entirely because of DPRK failings: changed policies in Washington were also to blame.

- While Trump seems to have rejected the idea of curtailing exercises, he has also indicated that there is no simple military solution.
- Agree it would not resume dialogue with Pyongyang while tests continued.
- US attitudes to exercises should be revisited: exercises could be scaled back and replaced with desk-top exercises and other far less confrontational forms of alliance collaboration, without serious short term loss of allied capability.

General Exchange of views directed at assessing recent currents and identifying potential next steps

A broad-ranging discussion ensued:

- The US and others consider they have a good understanding of the **DPRK's nuclear and missile capabilities**
 - o but have a poor understanding of DPRK **intentions**.
- **New administrations in Seoul and Washington** offer hope for new and creative approaches (but also bring with them some new unknowns)
 - o President Moon's commitment to dialogue brought promise
 - but there had been some ambiguous comment from other senior sources including the ROK military about exercises
 - o at the same time cooperation between Washington and Beijing has seemingly improved with China indicating willingness to be tougher on sanctions if required
 - o President Trump has called on China to take the lead but will he listen to China?
- Concerning the **new administration in Seoul**, some words of caution
 - o the ROK electorate remained quite divided over how to approach security issues
 - o and much had changed since the Kim Dae-jung era of Sunshine policy, requiring different approaches.
- Views differed on the urgency of action
 - o one view was that in a crisis we should slow down – there was no rush and we can play the long game
 - o most however saw the situation only worsening and considered action was required urgently to stop and reverse the damage.
- An assessment needed to be made of the particular **motivations of Kim Jong-Un**
 - o he inherited the nuclear and missile programs, and perhaps is not driven by the same memories as his grandfather and father
 - o the willingness to collaborate in track-2 channels is new
 - o this should be facilitated – isolation is exactly the wrong strategy at this time.
- On the **use or threat of use of force**
 - o general agreement that there was no acceptable military solution (and that the use of nuclear weapons would be suicidal)
 - o but the potential threat of use of force could not be discounted or eliminated and would necessarily underpin soft-power approaches to a greater or lesser extent

- if ROK was attacked it would need to respond and be tough – not just look tough (the DPRK only recognizes tough)
 - if there is to be a military conflict, there will be many indicators of preparation and sequencing
 - but currently both sides are being careful to avoid any action which might be mistaken for a signal of impending military attack.
- The use of threats of force and ambiguity by the South and its allies is mirrored in behaviour by the North.
- **Denuclearization** is a moving target
 - removing all nuclear weapons from the Korean Peninsula remained the agreed objective
 - but it was noted that the US now sees denuclearization as a goal not a precondition for dialogue.
- What would '**denuclearization**' entail?
 - DPRK nuclear weapons removed/destroyed? ROK forever non-nuclear? Do missiles go? Does it include all fuel cycle activity? What happens to command and control systems?
 - need to assess what key stakeholders could accept: unlikely for example that Washington could accept nuclear armed DPRK even if missile delivery systems were eliminated.
- US withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons from the region was a significant unilateral **action which would speak louder than words** for DPRK.
- It was necessary to analyse the several possible dimensions that a **freeze** might entail
 - there could be a step by step process from a simple confidence building beginning
 - and moving to more demanding steps such as a freeze on fissile material production.
- Ways had to be found to prevent a repetition of **broken promises**
 - in the case of the US, irreversible legal commitments might protect gains from Congressional action.
- Given the unacceptable risks of military options, more use needed to be made of the **UN Security Council (UNSC)**
 - but the effectiveness of the UNSC was being compromised by the slow decline in its authority.
- **Sanctions** can be problematic
 - they need to be calibrated to apply pressure but not threaten regime change
 - they must take account of humanitarian principles
 - and involve difficult judgments relating to dual use items
 - difficult to enforce when trade is large and relations complex
 - and causal relationships are difficult to establish
 - nevertheless, they have a role and could be further tightened if needs.
- Despite sanctions, the **DPRK economy** has had modest but sustained improvement since 2000
 - so, sanctions are not about to lead to the economic collapse of DPRK.
- On the other hand the **DPRK procurement network** is extremely sophisticated and resilient.

- **Counter proliferation** measures have had an uncertain impact
 - o attempts are assumed to have been made to sabotage or otherwise disrupt DPRK nuclear and missile programs – cyber or otherwise
 - o but the jury is out on impacts
 - o simpler explanations exist: DPRK technology is artisanal, and independent of cyber networks; items recovered from missile tests have been ‘crude’.
- DPRK will not give up on the issue of **normalization of its relations with US** – and its demand for binding negative security assurances (NSA)
 - o The US must treat DPRK as a ‘real country, with real people’.
- Over the last decades various **incentives** have been on the table, political, strategic and economic
 - o but were they incentives or simply bribes, and was there any realistic prospect of achieving the desired end-state, the removal of the DPRK nuclear threat?
 - o in such an uncertain environment every agreed action (by the DPRK) had to be carefully measured and weighed for credibility
 - o and amongst the various DPRK stakeholders, the Korean People’s Army (KPA) needs to see some benefit – Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) and Kaesong project had not given the KPA a strong stake in the process.
- The DPRK attitude to **international law** is conflicted by its continued state of war with the US
 - o it arguably observed the NPT withdrawal (Article X) provision
 - o but happily engages in international drug and currency crime
 - o normalisation of its international standing could result in broader adherence to international legal norms.
- North and South Korea **should be talking**, but experience is limited; we don’t know what Kim Jong-un is thinking; and there is no trust
 - o DPRK is **likely to ask high prices** and there should be a willingness to pay
 - o DPRK must wonder why China was willing to recognize ROK without requiring reciprocal US recognition of DPRK
 - o DPRK is still in Cold War mode, being subjected to the **shifting relations between Washington, Moscow and Beijing**
 - we need to be alert to any hint that the major nuclear powers are sleepwalking into crisis
 - o DPRK fails to understand that their nuclear weapons only add to regional tensions and are not contributing to their security
 - o **China, US and Russia** will all need to offer strong **security guarantees** if the DPRK is ever to give up its nuclear weapons.
- There are **two parallel sets of interests** at work
 - o the US and others want to remove the DPRK nuclear threat: the DPRK wants security guarantees
 - o hence China’s moratorium proposal linking to both issues
 - o however DPRK still has a vital interest in ensuring the reliability of its deterrence capability, so a moratorium on testing would be seen as a very high price.

- That said, the interests of the two sides need not be incompatible: the **Iran model of parallel initiatives** might offer a way forward.
- One tool of statecraft when facing logjam is to **broaden the range of issues** on the table
 - o and the range of players at the table – engaging DPRK as an equal player, with common standards applying
 - o a key will be the proper **sequencing** of steps.
- The absence of any **regional architecture** for addressing Northeast Asian nuclear and security issues was a major concern
 - o not least because of the need for mechanisms to manage the risk of accidents, potentially nuclear
 - o on the other hand it was observed that the DPRK (and ROK) were very careful to avoid the unexpected
 - o any serious escalation of military preparedness would be immediately evident.
- Any resumption of the **Six Party Talks** would have to overcome the crippling lack of trust that ended previous efforts, and also take account of the new realities
 - o DPRK capabilities have grown
 - o the positions of China and Russia have become much closer (Russia leading on Iran and leaving lead to China on DPRK); but historically China is the much bigger player.

The Chair suggested that the following tentative conclusions might be drawn from the discussion:

- A new effort is required to understand the DPRK security calculus and what would be the required incentives/disincentives structure for it to curb/stop its nuclear and missiles programs
 - o we should be careful not to lose sight of this core issue
 - o the technicalities of implementation will follow once a clear course is identified.
- In understanding DPRK motives we have to look at the lessons of Yugoslavia, Iraq and Libya
 - o and the reality that while calling on DPRK to disarm, the existing nuclear powers are ‘modernizing’ and/or growing both their nuclear capabilities and conventional capabilities.
- The old playbooks needs to be revisited, and a new consensus forged on feasible sequencing of first steps
 - o with clearer and consistent signals.
- The scope of the problem continues to grow
 - o on the one hand DPRK demonstrates ever greater command of nuclear and ballistic missile weapons systems
 - o on the other, US and allies increase their military presence in the region including the deployment of anti-missile systems.
- There is no good military option
 - o diplomacy and engagement are necessary but not sufficient.

- Historical issues continue to bedevil regional relations.
- The 'nuclear latency' of Japan and ROK continues to be a reminder of the perils of allowing the regional security dynamic to continue its current drift
 - Japan and ROK will continue to perceive their security requiring US extended deterrence.
- Proposals for a freeze, suspension or pause would entail very significant verification and compliance issues.
- Proposals for incentives (benefits and concessions) and disincentive (sanctions) would impact unevenly on different regional players; burden sharing/balancing is required.
- A balance is needed between pressure and engagement
 - raising issues of sequencing of control measures and rewards – with the Iran deal a possible model.

3. The NPT and the Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty

Co-Convenor Thakur outlined the state of **multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations**. The fundamental issue was the frustration felt by most NPT parties at the lack of movement on nuclear disarmament. No negotiations are currently underway between the nuclear weapon states and no other measures are in prospect. The promised steps identified by the NPT review processes had not been realized. Thus the drive for a negotiation of a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons, supported by an overwhelming majority of NNWS. But the NWS and the NNWS 'umbrella' states (those relying on extended nuclear deterrence), with notable exception of Netherlands, were declining to participate. The NWS had advanced several arguments against the negotiation – most of which can be easily dismissed: however one argument, the potential for damage to the NPT, did raise concerns. The NWS and 'umbrella' states had been negligent by not participating and in seeking to ensure the coherence of the global nuclear control framework – even if in the end they could not have agreed to support the resulting treaty. For their part, the participants in the ban negotiation had been absolutely clear in their support for the NPT and the intention to strengthen not weaken its authority.

Nevertheless, there are several measures that need be taken to ensure the **health of the NPT regime**:

1. Progress on issues agreed upon at earlier NPT reviews and requiring P5 action.
2. Bridging the emerging gap between the 'umbrella' states and other NNWS.
3. Ensure the Ban Treaty supports and not hinders the NPT regime.
4. US and Russia need to restore mutual trust; and resume practical cooperation on reducing their stockpiles, lowering alert levels and fostering other disarmament issues.
5. A united effort is needed to address the challenge posed by DPRK withdrawal from the NPT; and steps must be taken to stop Middle East WMD issues blocking consensus at the 2020 NPT Review conference.

Discussion ranged over the following issues:

- Participants from the regional **'umbrella' states** outlined the (differing) characteristics of extended deterrence relationships
 - o some comprised formal legal commitments
 - others consisted of declaratory statements which had not been refuted and therefore taken to constitute a commitment
 - o there were also differences in how extended deterrence played into national approaches to nuclear disarmament – many 'umbrella' states had historically been strong advocates of arms control and disarmament measures
 - and arguably still had the obligation and capacity to contribute.
- It was argued that the humanitarian consequences campaign had reduced its credibility by misunderstanding/ignoring the role **nuclear weapons** still play **in the security** of some countries.
- The absence of the 'umbrella' states (apart from Netherlands) from the ban negotiation had made it possible to side-line that reality.
- It was noted that **extended nuclear deterrence** had historically helped to contain proliferation pressures
 - o the NPT had been very much about the proliferation threat posed by Germany and Japan
 - o the balance of support in favour of the NPT could be tipped if the security commitments it embodies are jeopardized
 - o if nuclear weapons are becoming increasingly unusable/useless, then why upset existing balances.
- It needed to be remembered that the **NPT admitted the existence of nuclear weapon states**: the ban treaty on the other hand sought to prohibit such weapons: there was therefore some tension if not contradiction between the two instruments.
- Some participants expressed concern that the **ban treaty** represented a loss of faith in the NPT
 - o others however pointed to the strong expressions of support for the NPT during the ban negotiations
 - o and the very large measure of consensus which emerged from successive NPT reviews – despite the inability of some to achieve an agreed final document.
- The ban treaty would be different to the models offered by the BWC and CWC which had resulted in substantial short term reductions of global WMD weapon stocks: the nuclear ban treaty would not produce such returns at least in the short term
 - o nor would it provide the necessarily very stringent verification/enforcement system that would be required for nuclear disarmament (nor deal with its very significant costs)
 - o the failure to require the Additional Protocol as the safeguards standard was unfortunate
 - o nevertheless, the goal of strengthening the taboo on the use of nuclear weapons was clearly worthwhile.

- Concern was expressed that some nuclear possessor states were considering or re-considering deployment of **tactical nuclear weapons**
 - o this could be an issue for all nuclear armed states to address jointly with a view to reversing the drift
 - o it was noted for example that Russia had ruled out use of tactical nuclear weapons as a matter of national policy
 - o and that the US had failed to find any militarily justifiable use for them
 - o however, very worrying was the apparent commitment of Pakistan to the deployment of tactical weapons.
- 'Umbrella' states should assess their **extended deterrence 'needs'**: Japan for example had no need to incite US Congressional support of 'modernization'
 - o US would almost certainly use conventional rather than nuclear response in fulfilling its deterrence obligations (though the US is recorded as having undertaken to keep the nuclear option open in relation to the defence of Japan).
- Why were some nuclear weapon states resisting progress on '**no first use**' undertakings?
 - o such undertakings can be tricky – they are contingent on confidence in the commitment and can't be verified
 - o more fundamentally, some states use this ambiguity as a response to imbalances in conventional forces.
 - o while there is scope for improved no first use commitments, NSAs might also be helpful.

In winding up the discussion the Chair offered some concluding observations:

- The nuclear ban treaty represented deep unhappiness with the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament.
- The way forward needed to observe the principle of undiminished security for everyone.
- Support for the NPT had to be maintained.
- The 'umbrella' states had a particular stake in the NPT regime which had allowed them not to proliferate – and accordingly special responsibility to work for effective disarmament measures.
- Step by step progress on nuclear disarmament needs to be realized – including further cuts to stockpiles, lower alert status for all nuclear forces, bringing the CTBT into force, and enhanced NFU commitments (building on offers of China and India) and NSAs.
- The ban treaty itself would point the way to the eventual disarmament – first capping, then reducing and finally eliminating weapon stocks.
- It would help stigmatize nuclear weapon possession, use and doctrines based on threat of use, and also strengthen the normative boundary between nuclear and conventional arms.
- These outcomes would not be welcomed by the NWS, and explains why they had sought to stymie the ban negotiation.
- The treaty would also delegitimize deterrence without banning it: creating discomfort for 'umbrella' states.

- The NWS and ‘umbrella’ states might yet regret that they had not taken the opportunity to participate in and influence the outcomes of the ban negotiations: and some might argue that it was contrary to the spirit if not the letter of Article VI of the NPT for them not to have participated.

Box

Mongolia’s Nuclear Weapon Free Status

In several interventions during our meeting, and in the remarks of our special official dinner guest speaker Damdin Tsogtbaatar, MP and Member of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Foreign Relations Committee of the State Great Hural of Mongolia, our hosts offered background to Mongolia’s initiative to turn itself into a ‘single-state nuclear-weapon-free zone’.

Enkhsaikan, former Ambassador-at-Large in charge of Multilateral Issues has written:*

“During the Cold War Mongolia was allied with one nuclear-weapon state and hosted its military bases. As such it was held hostage to the tense relations between nuclear-weapon states and could have easily been drawn into their armed conflict.

After the Cold War, when circumstances have changed, it abandoned the policy of relying on such alliance and has opted to ensure its security primarily by political and diplomatic means, in line with the logic and imperatives of common security.

Thus, in 1992, it declared its territory a single-State nuclear-weapon-free zone (NWFZ). As a result of consistent and persistent policy as well as broad international support, today Mongolia enjoys an internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free status.

In 2012, in their joint declaration, the five nuclear-weapon states (P5) pledged to respect the status and not to contribute to any act that would violate it. The joint declaration is a Mongolia-specific assurance reflecting its geopolitical location. It ensures that Mongolia would not be used as a pawn in future geopolitical nuclear rivalry.

In practical terms it means that its vast territory of 1.5 million square kilometers will be a zone of confidence and stability and not a “gray zone” or a destabilizing factor. This

demonstrates the potential role of each member of international community in strengthening national and regional security. The almost two dozen states and territories that due to geographical or some other factors cannot form part of existing or new NWFZs could benefit from such experience and avoid becoming “gray zone”. Therein lies the practical importance of Mongolia’s contribution and experience.

Mongolia’s legislation: Mongolia’s nuclear-weapon-free status is not only a political understanding and arrangement with the P5. It is based on its national interest and national legislation. Thus, in 2000, Mongolia adopted a legislation that defined the status at the national level and criminalized acts that would violate the status. The government regularly informs the Parliament on its implementation. Based on such reports, in 2015 the Parliament passed a resolution aimed at making the status an integral part of a regional security arrangement”.

* Extracted from: <https://akipress.com/news:581956/?embed&pack=136>

See also:

- Nyamosor Tuya, ‘Mongolia’s Nuclear-Weapon-Free Status: Recognition vs. Institutionalization’, Brookings Institution Visiting Fellow, August 2012; and
- <http://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/nuclear-weapon-free-status-mongolia/>.

Nuclear Weapon Free Zones and Northeast Asia

As noted in the box above, the meeting had the benefit of the experience and wisdom of the architects of Mongolia’s campaign for recognition as a Single-State Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone. This provided rich background to the consideration of the scope for nuclear weapon free zones to further contribute to the security of Northeast Asia.

In introducing the item the Chair observed that whereas existing nuclear weapon free zones are essentially tools for reinforcing non-proliferation norms, the creation of such a zone in Northeast Asia (and in the Middle East) would necessarily involve, or be built on, arrangements to remove or destroy existing WMD arsenals.

Views on a Northeast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone

- The zone would be dealing with a region of the world with uniquely complex nuclear (and non-nuclear) infrastructures and historical elements.
- Would be different to the Pelindaba Treaty in that South Africa had unilaterally disarmed before the African NWFZ was created.
- In Northeast Asia the situation involved a country still uniquely concerned with threats of regime change/decapitation: and the need for self-defence capability.

- RECNA's comprehensive study [www.recna.nagasaki-u.ac.jp/recna/bd/files/Proposal_E.pdf] involves several elements:
 - o the principal nuclear issues
 - o ending the Korean War
 - o a halt to war games by ROK and allies
 - o energy cooperation, perhaps safeguarded nuclear energy
 - o a Northeast Asia security mechanism to implement the framework
 - o suggestions on how to start talks: moratoria on tests and exercises and possible additional sanctions.
- It was pointed out that Mongolia's experience suggested it will be wise to be hard-headed about what is achievable
 - o need to consider the needs of others who might be impacted
 - o the P5 might seek to show a common front but inevitably have important differences that have to be managed.
- Consideration of a zone might need to bring in energy and other strategic economic cooperation to make for a viable sustainable mechanism.
- Fundamental issues raised included membership: the broader the membership the greater the security challenges
 - o the core of non-nuclear weapon states involved would be North and South Korea and Japan; others would be invited to lend assurance to the arrangements
 - o but, it was noted, the inclusion from the outset of Japan would raise immediate questions about the status of Japan's deterrence arrangements
 - o and where would Russia's eastern forces fit into the schema?
- Would the treaty assume NPT membership– or could it draw on the Tlatelolco model and provide acceptable non-NPT based assurances?
- Garnering regional political support would be important: Southeast Asian countries were open to sharing their experience with their SEANWFZ, the Treaty of Bangkok
 - o on the other hand Australia's Foreign Minister Julie Bishop had inexplicably rejected any notion of NEANWFZ.
- In response to a question raised during the discussion, the Chair subsequently wrote an op-ed explaining the likely benefits to Japan of a NEANWFZ: <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/06/27/commentary/japan-commentary/regional-nuclear-free-weapon-zone-can-benefit-japan>

In concluding the session the Chair observed:

- APLN applauded the intellectual input and advocacy of RECNA and others working to find frameworks for the management and elimination of regional nuclear threats.
- Existing NWFZs including the Mongolian model offered a range of ideas that could be helpful.
- Our discussion has suggested that any framework would need to be broadly based in terms of the issues addressed, perhaps beyond the scope of existing NWFZs, and in terms of the number of countries involved.

- APLN looks forward to working with others on this approach to the nuclear security issues of Northeast Asia, including publishing and promoting creative new approaches.

Appendix I: Participants

APLN members

Australia

Ramesh Thakur (Co-Convenor)
John Tilemann (Director of Research, APLN)

China

Chen Dongxiao (President, Shanghai Institute of International Studies)
Pan Zhenqiang (Senior Advisor to China Reform Forum; Ret. Major General, PLA)
Zhao Tong (Associate, Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global Policy)

Japan

Nobuyasu Abe (former UN Under-Secretary General for Disarmament; Commissioner, Japan Atomic Energy Commission)
Toshio Sano (former Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva)
Tatsujiro Suzuki (Director, Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition, Nagasaki University)
Hiromichi Umebayashi (Special Advisor, Peace Depot Inc.)

Mongolia

Nyamosor Tuya (former Foreign Minister)

South Korea

Yongsoo Hwang (Principal Researcher, Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute (KAERI))
Sanghyun Lee (Director of Research Planning, The Sejong Institute)
Sung-hwan Kim (former Minister of Foreign and Trade Affairs)

Other Participants

Mongolia Development Strategy Institute

Sukhbaatar Batbold (Chairman of the MDSI / MP / former Prime Minister / former Foreign Minister of Mongolia)
Dashdorj Zorigt (Executive Director, MDSI / former Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources)

Invited Speakers

Morton H. Halperin (Senior Advisor, the Open Society Foundations)
Peter Hayes (Director, Nautilus Institute / Member of APLN)

Jargalsaikhan Enkhsaikhan (former Permanent Representative to the UN / former Resident Representative to the IAEA / Chairman, Blue Banner Mongolia)

Alexander Vorontsov (Advisor, Center for Energy and Security Studies / Head of the Korean and Mongolian Studies Department, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences)

Observers

Michael Hamel-Green (Emeritus Professor, Victoria University in Melbourne)

Jung Min Kang (Senior Research Fellow, Natural Resources Defense Council)

Noosgoi Altantsetseg (Professor, School of Foreign Service and Public Administration, Mongolian National University)

Sosorbaram Enkhtsetseg (Associate Professor, School of Foreign Service and Public Administration, Mongolian National University)

Elisabeth Suh (Research Assistant, Politik und Sicherheit German Institute for International and Security Affairs)

Jae-jung Suh (Professor, International Christian University)

Mark Suh (Member of Pugwash Council / Professor, Free University of Berlin)

[APLN Secretariat]

Hyungtaek Hong (Secretary General, APLN Secretariat)

Jamie Cho (Program Officer, APLN Secretariat)

Appendix II: Program

1. Opening: Welcome Remarks

- Ramesh Thakur (Co-Convenor, APLN)
- Sukhbaatar Batbold (Chairman, MDSI)

2. Session 1 “North Korea Nuclear Issues: Key National Perspectives”

Chair: Ramesh Thakur

Introductory remarks:

- Nyamosor Tuya (Mongolia)
- Yongsoo Hwang (ROK)
- Nobuyasu Abe (Japan)
- Chen Dongxiao (China)
- Alexandre Vorontsov (Russia)
- Morton Halperin (the US)

3. Session 2 “The NPT – Maintaining its Effectiveness”

Chair: Ramesh Thakur

Introductory remarks:

- Toshio Sano
- Zhao Tong

4. Session 3 “Japan, South Korea and the Nuclear Umbrella”

Chair: Ramesh Thakur

Introductory remarks:

- Sanghyun Lee
- Tatsujiro Suzuki

5. Session 4 “Regional and Global Non-proliferation and Disarmament Initiatives”

Chair: Ramesh Thakur

(1) Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in Northeast Asia: Tool for Non-proliferation, Disarmament, or Both?

Introductory remarks:

- Hiromichi Umebayashi
- Jargalsaikhan Enkhsaikhan

(2) UN Nuclear Ban Treaty Negotiations

Introductory remarks:

- Sung-hwan Kim
- Tatsujiro Suzuki

6. Keynote Speech at Dinner

Keynote Speech by Damdin Tsogtbaatar (MP, Member of the Foreign Relations Committee, State Great Hural of Mongolia)

7. Session 5 “Denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula: Weighing the Options”

Chair: Ramesh Thakur

Introductory remarks:

- Peter Hayes
- Pan Zhenqiang

APLN and MDSI

The **Asia Pacific Leadership Network (APLN)** comprises around eighty former senior political, diplomatic, military and other opinion leaders from fifteen countries around the region, including nuclear-weapons possessing states China, India and Pakistan. The objective of the group, founded by former Australian Foreign Minister and President Emeritus of the International Crisis Group Gareth Evans, is to inform and energize public opinion, and especially high level policy-makers, to take seriously the very real threats posed by nuclear weapons, and do everything possible to achieve a world in which they are contained, diminished and ultimately eliminated. The co-Convenors are Professors Chung-in Moon and Ramesh Thakur. The Secretariat is located at the East Asia Foundation in Seoul, Republic of Korea. See further www.a-pln.org.

Mongolia Development Strategy Institute (MDSI) was founded in 2003 with the goal of analyzing and debating policy issues that

have a major impact on the country's economic, social, political and environmental development and its role in international and regional processes. It does so by commissioning research on specific topics and by serving as a forum for public discussion on economic and security issues. See further <http://www.mongolia-dsi.org>.

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