

The Korean Peninsula Conflict: A Way Out

By [Prof. Johan Galtung](#)

Global Research, June 01, 2016

[Transcend Media Services](#) 30 May 2016

Region: [Asia](#)

Theme: [Military and WMD](#), [US NATO](#)

[War Agenda](#)

Like the Israel-Palestine conflict, the world has gotten tired of it, “what, the two Koreas still unable to sort it out”? Also, like Israel-Palestine, the USA is in it; making the situation complicated.

Never has the situation been so tense after the end of the war in Korea more than 60 years ago. Not only because of the nuclear bomb with missiles in North Korea, and the hawkish pro-nuke reaction in South Korea and Japan, but because of no moves forward to solve the underlying conflict. And where is that conflict? Not between North and South Korea, but between North Korea and USA that after 140+ years of victorious warfare had to accept armistice, not victory, in Korea.

Conflict means incompatible goals. Travel to Pyongyang and find that their goals are peace treaty, normalization of relations, and a nuclear free Korean Peninsula. And the US goal is the collapse of the present NK regime; failing that, status quo. Given the threat of a major war, even nuclear war, that goal is untenable. Some points.

- Why does NK have nuclear capability? Because NK is threatened by the USA-South Korea alliance in general and their “Team Spirit” in particular to deter conventional, or nuclear attacks; failing that to fight back, and particularly against where the attack might come from: US bases in Okinawa-RyuKyu, and from Japan proper. Militarily trivial.
- AND to have a bargaining chip in any denuclearization that of course has to be monitored; given the US cheating in connection with Austrian neutralization in 1955 focused particularly on that one.
- AND to show that we are not collapsing, we are capable of making nuclear bombs and the missiles to carry them; far from collapsing.
- AND, ominously: as the ultimate response if threatened by collapse. Nuclear suicide? More likely killing those seen as never listening, never thawing in sunshine, using boycotts and sanctions.

Beat a dog repeatedly and it becomes crazy. NK has been beaten, also by exceptional rain causing slides of clay covering enormous cultivated areas, but mainly by an unholy alliance Seoul-Washington. Seoul even commits fratricide on their brothers and sisters in NK, into death and collapse, because Seoul dislikes their regime.

This situation has made both Koreas *absurd* societies, detached from reality. In the North a fundamentalist Confucian society with a filial piety through the Kims, assuming that the spirit of Kim Il Sung drifts down to son and grandson as incorporations in one person of the national will; in the South through the Parks, at present running a society that is a carbon

copy of Japan down to the smallest details on the basis of hysterical anti-Japanism, run by US micro-management.

They will both change. Absurdities are unsustainable.

SK is also a Christian, Methodist-Catholic, country. But one senses no Love Thy Neighbor and Love Thy Enemy, only much of Seoul sitting in "judgment over living and dead". Jointly with USA.

Sanctions are multi-state terrorism, like terrorism and state terrorism hitting the weak, defenseless, and like them backfiring. Idea: "get rid of your leaders and terrorism will stop". Reality: the victims turn against the killers, not the leaders. One more absurdity.

There is a way out. Build on the North Korean goals, hold NK to their words. Their regime will, like all regimes, change; even the USA is now heading for basic change. Design a peace treaty, like with South Korea, normalize diplomatic relations North-South and North-USA; and design a regime for a nuclear free peninsula, destroying or removing weapons monitored by solid UN inspection, also claims of no weapons.

The two instruments for normalization and denuclearization are then exchanged by depositing them in an escrow with a third party-the UN General Assembly, not UNSC, too similar to the Six Parties Talks.

Then: implementation; preferably quick; de Gaulle style.

But that is only the beginning, only remedies for a pathological and very dangerous situation. Then comes the peace-building, based on cooperation for mutual *and equal* benefit, equity (not some SK chaebol-□□ getting cheap labor in NK), and on harmony based on deep empathy with each other, sharing joys and sorrows; not the opposite, like enjoying suffering and imminent collapse because "sanctions are having a bite".

Of 40 such proposals here are two.

There is the contested maritime zone between the two different maritime border: use it for *joint fishing and joint fish breeding*. Share the income 40-40-20; 20 for the ecology and administration.

There is no flight Seoul-Pyongyang: start it both ways. Use it also for the construction workers and personnel for two embassies.

Admittedly, it is unlikely that USA will come to its senses and initiate all of this although not impossible-the absurdity built into the US boycott of Cuba is being remedied after 58 years. For Korea under a Trump or Sanders presidency, but not belligerent Clinton.

South Korea has to do it, by becoming an independent, autonomous country, not micro-managed, on at least this issue. There is a longer term mechanism: absurdities have limited life expectancy as witnessed by the decline and fall of empires to the UK, Soviet and US empires.

And there is a short term possibility: presidential power in SK accrues to the two term UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, if elected as a candidate for the governing Saenuri party. Watching his choice of words on the Korean issue, he is always emphasizing dialogue. He

would know how to handle a UN General Assembly Uniting for Peace, could have dialogue contact with NK; the rest more or less as above.

Could a united Korean nation with two states at peace inspire the other four of the Six, their ten relations all non-peace, some even recently at war? History moves quickly these days. If pushed by democratic pressure from below. And pulled by power from above.

Johan Galtung, a professor of peace studies, dr hc mult, is founder of the [TRANSCEND Network for Peace, Development and Environment](#) and rector of the [TRANSCEND Peace University-TPU](#). He has published 164 books on peace and related issues, of which 41 have been translated into 35 languages, for a total of 135 book translations, including '50 Years-100 Peace and Conflict Perspectives,' published by the [TRANSCEND University Press-TUP](#).

The original source of this article is [Transcend Media Services](#)
Copyright © [Prof. Johan Galtung](#), [Transcend Media Services](#), 2016

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Prof. Johan Galtung](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca
www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca