

The US-North Korean Crisis and Japan's Responsibility

By [Prof. Wada Haruki](#)

Global Research, December 03, 2017

[The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus](#) 20
November 2017

Region: [Asia](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [History](#), [Militarization and WMD](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [NORTH KOREA](#)

1. The US-North Korean Crisis is deepening

*In November 2017, US **President Donald Trump** visited East Asia. In Japan, the country where he first stopped, he first played half round of golf with Japanese **Prime Minister Abe Shinzo** as if he and Mr. Abe wished to show this visit was nothing but an expression of peaceful friendship. They talked about the North Korean issue for "a great deal of time". The content of their talks was not disclosed. In the final press conference after the Summit Prime Minister Abe stated that he and President Trump "were in complete agreement as to the measures to be taken upon the analysis of the latest situation of North Korea". He said,*

"Japan consistently supports the position of President Trump when he says that all options are on the table. Through the talks over two days, I once again strongly reaffirmed that Japan and U. S. are 100 percent together".

What is the target? Abe said that they completely agreed to "enhance the pressure to a maximum level over North Korea through all possible means" in order to make North Korea abandon their nuclear program.

In the ROK President Trump spoke in the National Assembly to the Korean people in a full voice without any reserve or restraint. In reference to the North Korean situation, he spoke of "the prison state", "gulags", "a country ruled by a cult", "the brutal regime", "a rogue state". He dared to say,

"The horror of life in North Korea is so complete that citizens pay bribes to government officials to have themselves exported abroad as slaves. They would rather be slaves than live in North Korea."

He concluded that North Korea is "a hell that no person deserves". He called North Korean leader "a tyrant" and "dictator".

I say to President Trump:

"As a citizen you can accuse and denounce North Korean leader, government or system with all your words. But a US President armed with super military power should not talk in such a way. We Japanese remember how vehemently President Bush denounced Saddam Hussein's regime in TV on the eve of the

beginning of his Iraq War”.

This Trump address is not just a demand for surrender. It is even worse. The president is saying that he wishes from the bottom of his heart that such an evil and immoral state should be destroyed and that its people should be liberated. No compromise, no negotiation. He said,

“despite every crime you have committed against God and man, we will offer a path to a much better future. It begins with a stop to your development of ballistic missiles, and complete, verifiable, and total denuclearization”.

This means that the North Korean leader should come out with raised hands and unconditionally capitulate to the President of the United States.

The US-North Korean Crisis is deepening. Maximizing pressure will not lead North Korea to surrender. It will only strengthen the crisis and incline it towards a military phase. North Korea watchers and experts of this crisis have begun to talk about the possibilities of the US government taking military measures against North Korea.

In September 2017 a British institute, the Royal United Services Institute, published a report of its Deputy Director-**General Malcolm Chalmers** “Preparing for War in Korea”. Chalmers pointed to two possible ways in which war could start.

Case One. “North Korea could strike first if it believed that the US was moving towards a surprise attack”.

Case Two. “A US attack could be triggered by North Korea demonstrating new capabilities, for example through test missiles hitting the ocean near Guam or California, which might precipitate a ‘now or never’ decision by Trump. The US might then launch a preventive attack against North Korea.”

Chalmers emphasized that “given the risks involved in a limited attack, a US attack is more likely to begin on a large scale, and rapidly build to a comprehensive attack on North Korea’s military infrastructure.”

Now there is no doubt that we are facing the danger of a US-North Korean War. How can we prevent this war? We must go back to the origins of the crisis.

2. The Origins of the Crisis: the San Francisco System

The US-North Korean Crisis is a result of the US-North Korean conflict. The origins of the US-North Korean conflict can be found in the Korean War.¹ Now no one doubts that North Korean forces launched a wholesale attack across the 38th parallel early in the morning of June 25, 1950. This war was Kim Il Sung’s attempt at unification of the country by arms. His operation was approved by Stalin and Mao Zedong, who provided substantial arms and military materials. But Kim’s attempt was finally blocked by the US armed forces, named the United Nations forces. Next, another attempt at unification of the country was tried by Syngman Rhee with the United Nations forces. But Rhee’s attempt was also blocked by Chinese Communist forces. Then a Korean civil war between two Korean states turned into a

Sino-U.S. War in Korea.

When the United States entered the war to assist South Korea, Japan was a country occupied by four divisions of the US army under Supreme Commander of Allied Powers (SCAP) **Douglas McArthur**. The whole of Japan automatically became a base for U.S. military operations in Korea. Throughout the war, hundreds of U.S. B-29 bombers from Yokota (near Tokyo) and Kadena (in Okinawa) flew ceaselessly to make bombing raids on North Korean armies, towns, dams, and other facilities. Japan's National Railway, Coast Guard, and Red Cross all cooperated in the war on the U.S. side. Japanese sailors led the 1st Marine Division to their Inchon landing, and minesweepers of the Japanese coast guard cleared the way for U.S. forces to land at Wonsan. The Japanese government did not decide to provide this support in accordance with any policy of its own. Rather, it was obliged to obey the SCAP orders unconditionally as a defeated and occupied country. Japan provided vital military bases to the US forces that waged war in Korea.

In the spring of 1951 it became clear that the Korean war would end in a draw. On July 10, 1951 the Korean Armistice Conference opened in Kaesong. Negotiations were difficult. The war continued, while armistice negotiations opened. Two months later a peace conference with Japan began on September 4, 1951 in San Francisco. Forty-nine nations (including Japan) signed the Treaty of Peace with Japan on September 8. Two hours later Yoshida and Dulles signed the United States-Japan Security Pact.

Here a new East Asian state system for the United States was formed. We can call it the San Francisco System.² Strictly speaking, it is the Korean War system. The United States was determined to continue the Korean War in order to block communist aggression. On the enemy side were the Soviet Union, Red China, North Korea and Communist Vietnam. On the allied side were the United States, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, South Vietnam, New Zealand, and Australia. Because the United States wished to have an independent Japan as a central junior partner with recovered economy, Japan was spared from payment of reparation. What was needed from it after independence was

- 1) the right to continue stationing US forces in Japan,
- 2) authorization for the United States to use Japan as a base for military operations in the Far East,
- 3) Permission by Japan for the United Nations to continue to support UN forces in Korea through Japan.

In order to refute possible criticism that the US had derogated Japanese sovereignty, Japan was increasingly encouraged to assume responsibility for its own defense. The United States was to dominate Okinawa completely as its most important military base in this region.

In the year that followed the conclusion of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the Yoshida government changed the Security Police Reserve into the National Security Force (*Hoantai*) and created the Maritime Security Force.

On July 27, 1953 the Korean War ended in an armistice near the 38th parallel at almost the same place where Korea had been divided in 1945. The Korean Peninsula settled into a hostile standoff. The armistice stopped the shooting, but warlike hostilities persisted without

the safety valve of Cold War détente. China and North Korea remained outside the San Francisco system.

In Japan after the truce of the Korean War the Self Defense Forces (ground, maritime and air) was created in 1954. But Article 9 of the Constitution was not revised. The Upper House of Parliament adopted unanimously a resolution which forbade the Self Defense Forces going abroad for war. Thus Japan remained a peculiar “Peace State” under a US security umbrella in the San Francisco system.

In the Korean Peninsula after the armistice Chinese Volunteer Army and US armed forces remained, one to defend the DPRK and the other to defend the ROK. In 1958 the Chinese army totally withdrew from North Korea, and in 1961 the DPRK succeeded in concluding Treaties of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance with the USSR and China. The treaty with the Soviet Union gave North Korea a nuclear umbrella, so that North Korea could feel its position secure in the face of the San Francisco system.



Kim Il-sung (Source: [NK News](#))

The San Francisco system worked for the United States to wage war against the Vietnamese communists from 1965. The ROK joined the US in this war. Japan backed the ROK with the 1965 Treaty and provided rear bases, military materials, and “R and R” (rest and recreation) facilities for the US armed forces. In January 1968, North Korea, seeking to create a second front in the Korean Peninsula, sent a partisan unit to kill ROK **President Park Chung Hee**. It was in vain. As this adventurous attempt ended in miserable failure, **Kim Il sung** hurriedly cancelled this policy in the following year.

The San Francisco system could not assure the United States even of a draw in the Vietnam War. In order to avoid giving the impression of a miserable defeat, the US government found a way out by coming to terms with China. Nixon visited Beijing in February 1972 to accomplish US-China reconciliation. This brought a big change to the San Francisco system.

In the 1970s the international position of China drastically changed. The Korean War had been fought between Chinese-North Korean forces and United Nations forces. The latter camp comprised the forces of 16 countries: the United States, ROK, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand, France, Greece, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, Turkey, Ethiopia, and Colombia. In the 1970s China opened diplomatic relations with the above-mentioned fifteen countries, excepting only the ROK. For China, the Sino-American War completely ended and the Korean War almost ended. The DPRK wanted

to follow the Chinese way, but that path was closed to it. Thirteen of the 16 countries in the United Nations camp opened diplomatic relations with the DPRK in the 1970s and 1980s. But the United States, ROK and France stayed out of this process. Between South and North there were some changes, but between the United States and North Korea there was no change. Basically, military confrontation continued.

3. The Start of the New Conflict: North Korea's Two Options and the United States

At the end of 1980s a great change in world history started with the US-Soviet reconciliation and East European revolutions. In autumn of 1989 communist governments of this region were overthrown one after the other. Then the Soviet government radically changed its political system and policy, and opened diplomatic relations with the ROK. Presidents Gorbachev and Roh Tae-wu met at San Francisco on June 4, 1990 to agree on the opening of diplomatic relations. North Koreans felt cornered.

On September 2, 1990 Soviet **Foreign Minister Shevardnadze** visited North Korea to inform it of the decision of his government. DPRK **Foreign Minister Kim Yong-nam** read a memorandum to him.

“If the Soviet Union is going to establish ‘diplomatic relations’ with South Korea, the DPRK-USSR treaty of alliance will be nominal. If so, we are obliged to take measures to procure by ourselves such weapons as were hitherto supplied on the basis of the alliance.”³

This meant that once the Soviet nuclear umbrella was withdrawn, North Korea would have to have its own nuclear weapons.

On September 24, 1990 a delegation of Japanese ruling and opposition parties headed by **Kanemaru Shin** and **Tanabe Makoto** visited North Korea. Kanemaru, former deputy Prime Minister, spoke in Pyongyang, offering deep apology for the “unbearable pain and damage caused by Japan’s deeds to the Korean people”. Kim Il Sung expressed his willingness to start negotiation of normalization of relations of both countries. On September 28 a joint statement of three parties was signed, promising normalization negotiations.

At this crucial historical turning point, in their desperate situation, North Korean leaders decided to adopt two policy options to get their own nuclear weapons and to normalize relations with Japan. The United States vehemently repulsed its nuclear program, and did not approve Japan’s normalization of relations with a North Korea that had a nuclear program. Therefore in the changing world after the end of the Cold War a new conflict started between North Korea and the United States on the basis of North Korea’s options.

Japan-North Korea negotiations on normalization opened in January 1991, continued regularly until May 1992, when the seventh round of negotiations was held, but in the next round, the eighth, in November 1992, North Korea’s representative declared the negotiations suspended. The main reason for the break was that the Japanese representative, on Washington’s advice, took the position that the clearing up of nuclear doubts was a prerequisite for normalization. The second reason was that the Japanese representative insisted that Taguchi Yaeko (Lee Eun Hye) was a victim of North Korean abduction. Taguchi, or Lee, was a Japanese abducted woman, who was said to have been a

teacher of **Kim Hyon Hui**, perpetrator of the Korean Airlines explosion incident of 1987.⁴

The US government had been very sensitive to the North Korean nuclear program and pressed North Korea strongly to accept IAEA inspection. By the spring of 1993 disagreements between the United States and North Korea had become acute, and in the summer of 1994 the two countries came to the brink of war over North Korea's nuclear program. This was the first war crisis between the United States and North Korea.



President Kim Il Sung receives former US President Jimmy Carter (Source: KANCC.org)

This crisis was overcome by former President Carter's visit and his talks with Kim Il Sung. A nuclear freeze agreement was concluded in October 1994. The latter half of 1990s was the period of North Korean economic distress and the time of construction of light-water reactors under KEDO's guidance. But the construction was not accomplished and it is not clear who is to blame.

In June 2000 ROK **President Kim Dae Jung** visited Pyongyang and met Kim Jong Il. And in October 2000 DPRK number two, **Cho Myong Rok**, visited Washington and met President Clinton. This was a time of great hope, but it did not last long. At the end of this year George Bush won the US presidential election. In September 2001 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington fundamentally changed the atmosphere of the United States and at the beginning of 2002 President Bush named Iraq, Iran and North Korea as the "axis of Evil" and expressed determination to fight against them.

Although a counter-wind was already blowing, Japanese **Prime Minister Koizumi** visited Pyongyang on September 17, 2002 and met **Chairman Kim Jong Il**. This was the result of one year-long secret negotiations with a North Korean emissary. Kim admitted and apologized for the abduction of a group of Japanese civilians. Kim and Koizumi signed the Pyongyang Declaration of intent to move towards normalization of relations between the two countries. In this document Japan apologized for the damages and suffering caused by Japanese colonial rule to the Korean people and promised economic cooperation after the establishment of diplomatic relations.

Initially Koizumi's diplomacy and the moves to normalize relations with North Korea drew a positive public response in Japan. But the leaders of the national movement for abducted Japanese began to accuse diplomats of failing to verify information about the so-called "dead abducted people" and organized a campaign against the establishment of diplomatic relations with North Korea without a complete solution of the abduction issue. **Sato Katsumi**, chairman of this movement, spoke to the Diet committee on December 10, 2002, saying that the Kim Jong Il regime was a military fascist regime which should be overthrown

as quickly as possible.⁵ The United States government which had not been consulted by the Koizumi government, soon intervened in the negotiations. **James A. Kelly**, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific affairs, visited North Korea in October and came back to tell the Japanese government that North Korea was starting a uranium enrichment program. This amounted to strong pressure on the Koizumi government to slow the normalization negotiations. Representatives of both countries met only once in October, but on that occasion they could not even decide when they would meet next.

In March 2003 President Bush started a war against Iraq. North Korea was terrified. In August 2003 in Beijing Six Party Talks opened on the North Korean nuclear program. Difficult discussion began. On May 22, 2004 Prime Minister Koizumi visited Pyongyang and met Kim Jong Il once more. Koizumi, on leaving Tokyo, issued a statement, in which he declared that he was determined to “normalize our abnormal relations, change the antagonistic relations into friendly relations and hostile relations into cooperation”. Kim’s words were recorded in the Japanese Foreign Ministry file and partly leaked in a TV program.⁶ Kim Jong Il told Koizumi,

“Today I would like to say to you, Prime Minister, that it is no use having nuclear weapons. Americans are arrogant enough to say that they put on the table their arms for a preventive attack against us. This makes us quite upset. Nobody can keep silent if threatened by someone with a stick. We came to have nuclear weapons for the sake of the right of existence. If our existence is secured, nuclear weapons will not be necessary any more.” “Americans, forgetting what they have done, demand that we abandon nuclear weapons first. Nonsense. Complete abandonment of nuclear weapons can only be demanded from an enemy state that has capitulated. We are not a capitulated people. Americans want us to disarm unconditionally, like Iraq. We will not obey such a demand. If America is going to attack us with nuclear weapons, we should not stand still, doing nothing, for if we did that Iraq’s destiny would await us.”

On the other hand, Kim Jong Il expressed his willingness to have dialogue with the United States. He told Koizumi,

“We wish to sing a duet with the Americans through the Six Party Talks. We wish to sing songs with Americans until our voices get hoarse. We ask you, governments of surrounding countries, to provide orchestral accompaniment. A good accompaniment makes a duet so much better.”

These words presumably were conveyed to the US government, but it adopted a stern attitude. This time too, the Koizumi government failed to move forward.

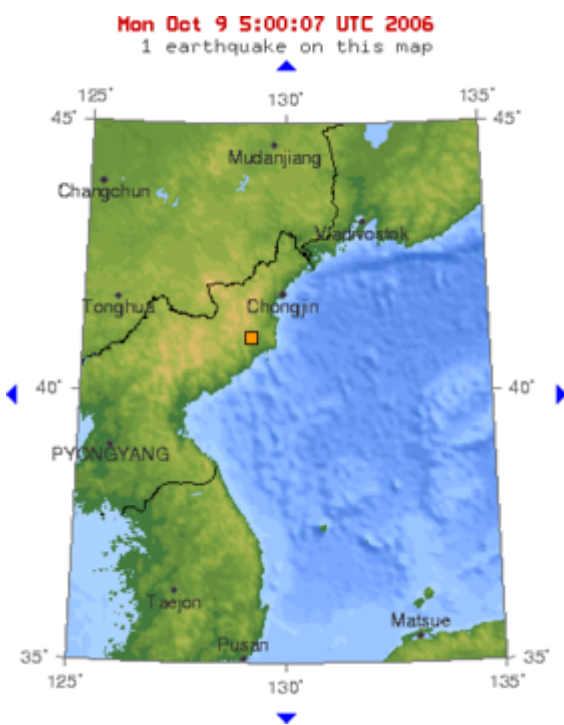
In September 2005 the Fourth round of Six Party Talks was held in Beijing. This round gave the most impressive document for cooperation. Under its terms, North Korea would abandon its entire nuclear program. And the United States pledged not to attack North Korea and to move toward normalization of relations. But its promising atmosphere vanished immediately, when the US Treasury imposed sanctions on the DPRK for alleged money laundering and other offenses. The last chance was crushed.

In October 2005 Koizumi appointed Abe Shinzo his Chief Cabinet Secretary, in fact nominating him as his successor in government and in the ruling party. On July 5, 2006

North Korea shot a Taepodong missile over Japan. Abe took the initiative in imposing severe sanctions on North Korea. In September Abe, now President of the Liberal Democratic Party and Prime Minister of Japan, stated in his first policy speech to the Diet on September 29, 2006:

“There can be no normalization of relations between Japan and North Korea unless the abduction issue is resolved. In order to advance comprehensive measures concerning the abduction issue, I have decided to establish the “Headquarters on the Abduction Issue” chaired by myself ... Under the policy of dialogue and pressure, I will continue to strongly demand the return of all abductees assuming that they are all still alive. Regarding nuclear and missile issues, I will strive to seek resolution through the Six-Party Talks, while ensuring close coordination between Japan and the United States.”

By formulating this new principle of addressing the abduction issue, Abe succeeded in closing completely the negotiations for normalization with North Korea. This step was thought to fit well with US government policy.



Graphic showing seismic activity at the time of the test, 2006 North Korean nuclear test (Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#))

On October 9, 2006 North Korea carried out its first nuclear test. The Abe government imposed a second set of sanctions on North Korea, forbidding any North Korean ship from entering Japan’s ports and prohibiting import of any North Korean merchandise to Japan. The UN Security Council condemned North Korea’s test in Resolution 1718. On the other hand, the Bush administration was shocked by the North Korean nuclear test and tried to invite North Korea to change its policy. On October 11, 2008 the Bush administration de-listed the DPRK as a terrorist state. The DPRK closed its Yongbyong facilities. But this was not able to produce a true breakthrough in relations.

In January 2009 President Obama took office at the White House. On February 13 **Hillary Clinton**, Secretary of State, delivered an address to the Asia Society in which she stated that the United States would move to normalize relations with North Korea, and conclude a peace treaty, if North Korea would abandon its nuclear weapon program in complete and verifiable form. This was the preparation of a long chapter in the US-North Korean Crisis.

On May 25, 2009 North Korea conducted its second nuclear test-explosion. On June 12, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1874. The Japanese government adopted new sanctions, prohibiting the export of Japanese merchandise to North Korea. Trade between the two countries totally stopped.

In December 17, 2011 Kim Jong Il died. His successor was his son **Kim Jong Un**, 28 years old. Without special abilities or special achievements, he was going to dominate this difficult country, supported by the party-state system. In the first two years of his rule Kim Jong Un made efforts to strengthen his power by eliminating two advisors who were appointed by his father and replacing old army and party leaders with men of a younger generation. And he tried to establish a reputation for loving the people by constructing many facilities such as hospitals, recreation parks, and a ski slope. After such preparation he was going to work in diplomacy and military affairs, leaving the task of economic reforms to the Prime Minister and his cabinet. But in 2012~2013 he could meet only one Japanese and one American - Kim Jong Il's house cook known as Fujimoto Kenji and the former NBA star Dennis Rodman. He had to concentrate his attention on the nuclear and ballistic missile program. This was his faithful fulfillment of the late leader Kim Jong Il's testament.

4. The US-North Korean Crisis starts

When did the US-North Korean crisis really start? I would say that the crisis started with the fourth North Korean nuclear test-explosion on January 6, 2016. The North Korean government announced that this was a hydrogen bomb test. On February 7 North Korea launched its "Kangmyongsung-4" rocket. These events gave a severe shock to the United States, ROK, Japan and China. The ROK decided to close the Kaesong industrial complex. The UN Security Council unanimously adopted a Resolution of sanctions on March 2. The US-ROK military exercise Key Resolve started on March 7. In March North Korea test-fired short-range missiles continuously and on April 23 carried out a test shooting of a Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM). On June 22 North Korea test-fired two Musudang medium-range missiles and the next day test-fired "Hwasung-10", a long-range missile.

Shooting of various missiles continued in July. On August 24 North Korea test-fired a SLBM and on September 5 it shot three missiles into the Japanese EEZ. Then came the fifth nuclear test-explosion on September 9. The high tempo of tests was striking.

This tendency did not change in 2017. On February 12 North Korea test-fired a "Pukguksung-2" missile over the Sea of Japan. On March 6, it test-fired four ballistic missiles and three fell in the Japanese Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The North Korean News Agency announced that these missiles were shot by "the artillery detachment which was to attack US bases in Japan when an unforeseen situation would occur". On May 14 North Korea test-fired a "Hwasong-12" missile, which was estimated to be able to fly 4000 km. On July 4 North Korea test-fired "Hwasong-14". It was the first North Korean ICBM, estimated to be able to fly 6000~9000 km, reaching Alaska, Hawaii and maybe Seattle. And on July 28 North Korea shot another ICBM, which was estimated to be able to fly 14,000 km, reaching New York. The US government was seriously frightened. Despite the presence of the US

nuclear aircraft carrier Carl Vinson in the seas of East Asia from April, the North Korean advances could not be stopped.

Now we come to the true US-North Korean crisis. The crisis of today can clearly be seen in President Trump's address in the National Assembly of the ROK.

5. Japan's possibility, Japan's responsibility

How can we get out of this crisis? No doubt, the United States and North Korea should have a dialogue. The United States government is said to have been conducting secret contacts or preliminary negotiation with North Korea, but President Trump and Prime Minister Abe are constantly strengthening pressure against it, demanding it abandon all nuclear and missile programs in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner. North Korean officials are saying that no negotiation will be possible so long as the United States does not recognize North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons.

China is now proposing a double freeze of North Korea's nuclear and missile programs and of the US-ROK annual joint military exercises. North Korea had itself proposed such an idea to the United States on January 9, 2015. But now it does not seem to find this idea so attractive. It wants more. It wants a positive change of US attitude.

Here I propose a Japanese way, for Japan to normalize relations with North Korea unconditionally. This implies unconditional recognition by the US government of normalization of Japan-North Korean relations. If this step is supplementary to the Chinese proposal of double freeze, a real change could take place in the situation surrounding North Korea.

To think concretely about the normalization of Japan-DPRK relations there is a good model. It is President Obama's "unconditional establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba." Obama overcame various hindrances and succeeded in moving toward the normalization of relations with a next door neighbor. Following his example, we Japanese can go through "unconditional establishment of diplomatic relations with North Korea". But of course North Korea's abstention from any further nuclear explosion for a certain period after the establishment of diplomatic relations is a natural premise, not to say a precondition.

Obama's US-Cuba normalization model proceeded by several stages, first, opening of diplomatic relations and setting up of embassies, next, real negotiations and gradual nullification of economic sanctions.

The Pyongyang Declaration exists between Japan and the DPRK. It was signed in 2002 by Prime Minister Koizumi and Chairman Kim Jong Il. Following the Obama model, Japan and North Korea could issue a joint statement reaffirming the Pyongyang Declaration and establishing diplomatic relations, initially at least leaving the present situation basically intact. This means that North Korea would continue to possess nuclear weapons and to maintain its basic position on the abduction issue, and that Japan would maintain its own sanctions toward North Korea and keep all existing US bases in mainland Japan and Okinawa. Thus the two countries would open embassies in Pyongyang and Tokyo and immediately start negotiations. The negotiations would proceed at three tables.

Table one would be for negotiations concerning economic cooperation. This is a step which was promised in the Pyongyang Declaration as a sign of apology for the "tremendous

damage and suffering” caused by Japan “to the people of Korea through its colonial rule”. A ten year program of economic cooperation should be drawn up, including agreement on implementation of each year’s project.

Table two would be for negotiations concerning North Korea’s nuclear and ballistic missile program. Japan should convey to North Korea its grave concern about North Korean underground nuclear explosions and ask it to stop. Japan also should ask North Korea to inform it when and where it planned to test-fire missiles. Further Japan should ask North Korea not to attack US military bases in Japan. Then North Korea might say that the US forces might attack North Korea from the bases in Japan. North Korea might demand Japan should get an official statement from the US government that US forces would never attack North Korea from their bases in Japan. Such negotiations would be very meaningful and important.

Table three would be for negotiations concerning the abduction issue. These negotiations could start from the point at which North Korea said eight abducted victims, including Yokota Megumi, had all died. Japan could point out that North Korean explanations of the circumstances of their death is not yet persuasive and could demand further explanation and joint on-the-spot investigations. North Korea may be concealing some living abducted Japanese persons, for example Taguchi Yaeko (referred to above), teacher of Kim Hyon-hui who blew up a KAL plane in 1987. To save such a victim, it is necessary to continue negotiation as long as possible, waiting for the North Korean situation to change.

With the establishment of diplomatic relations with North Korea, the Japanese government could take measures toward North Korean comfort women, following the Japan-ROK agreement of 2015. Also the Japanese government could give certificates to *hibakusha* in North Korea on examination by the embassy and begin to pay them regular assistance money.

Some restrictions affecting the import and export of goods between Japan and DPRK could be lifted, and restrictions affecting ship visits and chartered flights could be slowly relaxed. Cultural exchanges and humanitarian aid could be opened immediately. Concerts of the NHK philharmonic orchestra in Pyongyang, and exhibitions of people’s suffering from the US atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki are specially recommended.

If the Chinese proposal and a Japanese proposal along the above lines are put in one basket and presented to North Korea, the US-North Korean crisis may be relaxed. It is Japan’s responsibility to strive to the utmost to prevent a US-North Korea war.

This paper was presented to the conference on “Civic Engagement and State Policy for Peace in Northeast Asia: Beyond the San Francisco System,” held on December 1-2, 2017 at Perry World House, University of Pennsylvania. English text by the author, slightly edited for the Asia-Pacific Journal.

Wada Haruki is Emeritus Professor of the Institute of Social Science, Tokyo University and a specialist on Russia, Korea, and the Korean War.

Notes

¹ See Wada Haruki, *The Korean War: An International History*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2014

²There are several concepts of the San Francisco system. My idea was described in my article. Haruki Wada, "Historical legacies and regional integration", *The San Francisco System and its Legacies*, edited by Kimie Hara, Routledge, 2015, pp. 252-263.

³*Asahi Shimbun*, 1 January 1991.

⁴Takasaki Soji, *Kensho Nittyokosho* (Japan-Korean Negotiations Revisited). Heibonsha, 2004, pp. 42-65.

⁵Wada Haruki, "Sato Katsumi Kenkyu" (A study of Sato Katsumi), *Shukan Kinyobi*, No. 476, September 19, 2003, p. 17.

⁶NHK Special, Hiroku Nittyokosho (A Secret Story: Japan-Korean Negotiations), November 8, 2009. Wada Haruki, *Kitatyosen Gendaishi* (A Contemporary History of North Korea), Iwanami, 2012, pp. 215-216.

The original source of this article is [The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus](#)
Copyright © [Prof. Wada Haruki](#), [The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus](#), 2017

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

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Prof. Wada Haruki](#)

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