

Policy Memo on
Governing North-East Asia Security:
Nuclear Non-proliferation & Strategic Reconciliation

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I. Nuclear proliferation issue has occupied the central position of the North East Asia security area for more than 20 years. This long-lasting situation has demonstrated that isolation, economic sanctions and military pressure, etc. seems have just stimulated the North Korea to make more desperate attempt for military building including nuclear weapons production. Further political approaches need to be explored to deal with it. A hypothesis is that a genuine strategic reconciliation among North East Asia (NEA) countries, i.e. China, Japan and Republic of Korea (ROK) would be the basis for settle down this problem. If the three nations can build mutual-confidence, it would doubtlessly in turn create a favorable environment for the Korea peninsular internal reconciliation. More importantly, such reconciliation can also push the US- DPRK relationship improved which is the key to denuclearization in the region.

II. Currently, there are at least four major contradictions between or among these NEA countries' relations: division views on history; territorial disputes; geological competition; ideological differences. Compared with the territorial disputes, geological competition and ideological differences, the division views on history looks not so urgent and more general, but it's really the most fundamental factor for long-lasting relationships between or among these countries since it is highly relevant to inter-states mutual political trust. Without basic and stable political mutual trust, any progress on other aspects can not last for long time. History has told us this regulation for many times.

III. The Strategic reconciliation means that three countries of NEA are able to get out from the shadow of history forever based on sincere respect for the history and serious considerations on the historical wars between Japan and China, Japan and ROK. It doesn't mean we want to forget the history, but means we can get right and rational lessons from the tragic history and then

build healthy bilateral relations in the future. “Strategic reconciliation” also means that all concerned countries in the region can take the long-term common interests as the top political agenda. Each country should not take advantages from damaging the others. Such strategic reconciliation must be firstly built on the mutual understandings over the history. Then it can be based on the concrete and realistic common interests and common security concerns. Genuine reconciliation between nations also must be built on the long-term mutual acceptance among the common people. Decision-makers and specialists should take leading responsibilities to educate and cultivate the people to get mutual reconciliation from the bottom. Any hostile even “enemy” education and propaganda can only cause more confrontation and conflicts. It is hard to bridge the gap of acknowledgement differences on the historical facts, but it’s much harder to healing the hostile emotional feelings of the two countries. Therefore, the politicians should not manipulate the so-called nationalism and patriotism to deepen the existed resentment each other but pay much attention to the nation’s long-lasting welfare and mutual benefits.

IV. In order to realize this kind of reconciliation, all concerned countries should continue to enlarge their common critical interests, such as denuclearization in Korea peninsular, regional stability and security, environment protection, sustainable economy and trade. It must be kept in mind that normal economic competition, including overseas infrastructure construction, investment or trade, shouldn’t be linked unsuitable to political confrontation.

V. A collapsed and disordered DPRK is no of any good to its neighbors. It’s neither acceptable if DPRK is forced to become reckless in desperation with nuclear weapons. Facing such huge and fearful threat, all other countries must be truly united to deal with it. Without any doubt, the key of denuclearization in Korea Peninsular is to make the relationship between

North Korea and the US normalization. But before that or at the same time, reconciliation inside of this region between or among NEA countries would be very helpful for pushing the DPRK-US relationship going to mitigation. As the allies of US, Japan and ROK can be helpful for encouraging and pushing the US to improve the relationship with North Korea, just like what many partners of the US in Europe and Latin America, had called for the US for many years to normalize the relationship with Cuba.

VI. Without concrete history reconciliation among these three countries, there would be no unified position and determination to deal with this most pressing problem, nuclear proliferation, neither the perpetual stability and sustainable economic prosperous in this region. In order to deal with the common challenges and ensure common interests, three countries should unite to pursue a win-win outcome with every effort and strive to become neighbors with helping each other, not hating each other any more.