

# Is Another Peace Possible?

## *A Pacifist Perspective of the Crisis on the Korean Peninsula*

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### **Summary**

*In the situation that the risk of war has grown increasingly high on the Korean Peninsula, dreaming a pacifist future appears to be foolish. This study is to raise a pacifist alternative by not only criticizing the problems of a series of traditional security-oriented policy options, but also by proposing a fully denuclearized society in the South Korean civil movements. The pacifist alternatives in the paper are treated as a competing policy option in realizing sustainable peace on the peninsula.*

**Keywords:** pacifism, denuclearization, peace regime, peace movement, Korean Peninsula

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Although there has always been the possibility of war on the Korean Peninsula since the Korean War ceased in 1953, it is no exaggeration to say that the sense of risk of war is higher than ever. The fundamental reasons are that the division and armistice of the Korean Peninsula still remain. Furthermore, the North Korean nuclear issue fuels the crisis to become more complex and serious. In the meantime, conflicts over the direction of coping

with the crisis on the peninsula are aggravated. So-called military options emerged, some of them instigated by the media. At this point, the prospect of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is grim, and there is little possibility of a peace regime on Korean soil.

This article aims to get across the necessity of pacifism and the movements pursuing true peace on the Korean Peninsula in these days of its critical condition. To this end, the paper will evaluate the existing security discourse and compare its weaknesses with pacifism. In order to formulate such a discussion, this paper briefly explains pacifism on the bases of its logic and work patterns, and present the meaning of pacifism with regards to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and a peace regime, said to be essential for achieving sustainable peace. The paper then puts forward the opinion that pacifism will grow as a persuasive alternative discourse from a long-term perspective although its validity seems to be insignificant for the moment.

## **II. THE LOGIC AND WORK PATTERNS OF PACIFISM**

### ***1. The Basic Logic of Pacifism***

Pacifism would be defined as the perspective of striving for peace without the use of (any) violence, and related activities. From the view of whether allow violence or not, pacifism can be divided into absolutism that rejects all violence, and reformism that consents to violence for self-defense. What binds multiple pacifists' positions into a single belief, pacifism, is the firm faith not in the nonviolence but in the achievement of peace. In other words, the motto, "If you want peace, prepare for peace" (*Si vis pacem, para pacem*), is an expression representing the fundamental idea of pacifism. Such a slogan is against political realism as expressed in the proverbial saying, "If you want peace, prepare for war" (*Si vis pacem, para bellum*).

Another point of the essential logic of pacifism is that of rejecting discrimination of me and others, or inside and outside, and the advocating of a holistic point of view. Compared with the established international political

theories, the logical direction of pacifism is from the inside to the outside. The message of Won Buddhism represents this well:

World peace comes from the harmonious mind of each person, and the heart of being together makes world peace. In any difficulties, you must not let go of your peaceful mind to become a master who brings peace in the world. (Chongsan, 2012)

As a starting point for achieving peace, Marshall B. Rosenberg, a well-known nonviolence communication (NVC) researcher and practitioner, suggests an attitude of recognizing the world as unity through internal changes of us and the transformation of our image of others as our enemies. This is based on the reflection that humanity has made a hierarchical structure such as nobles and slaves, men and women, white and colored people, the haves and the have-nots to repeat the vicious circle of violence. Pacifism puts forth the premise of that such discrimination and domination are contrary to human nature, but pacifism does not stay there; rather, it invites the feelings and desires of others into our being and recommends soundly expressing our own desires. It breaks the boundary and discrimination, and, instead, makes peace with sympathy and communication (Rosenberg, 2005; Rosenberg and Chopra, 2005).

Such logic of pacifism stands against political realism. Political realism distinguishes domestic politics from international politics based on whether a government exists or not. According to political realists, in the anarchic international politics, the self-help system inevitably triggers a zero-sum game, and thus “a preparation of war for peace” is unavoidable. By contrast, pacifism sees the domestic and international politics as a whole rather than discriminating between them. For example, when Mary-Wynne Ashford and Guy Dauncey proposed 101 peace movements, the domains of the campaigns widely included individuals, women, adolescents, schools, activists, religious organizations, media, social workers, businesses, cities, nations, international organizations, and countries in conflict regardless of domestic or international spheres (Ashford and Dauncey, 2006). The view of pacifism in this regard is based on the criticism of the structural violence created by defining a

boundary and the notion that the mental, internal violence results in physical, external violence.

The third basic logic of pacifism is to resolve conflict and make peace in an optimistic and positive attitude. Pacifists are optimistic about that the two parties in conflict are able to express what they are observing, feeling, needing, and asking from one another, and if there is an opportunity to sympathize and listen to the other, solutions that usually satisfy the needs of both sides can be drawn (Rosenberg and Chopra, 2005). Religious beliefs are playing a key role in keeping such a thought (Hershberger, 2009). It is surely true that religion has two faces of peace and violence (Park, 2013), but it is also correct to say that one of the mainstays of intellectual and practical bases of pacifism is religion.

## ***2. How Pacifism Works***

What kinds of attitude and action methods, then, should pacifism take when engaging with real problems? This is to which the basic logic of pacifism applies and also the basis for applying pacifism to the peace issue on the Korean Peninsula. This paper will explain how pacifism works with five themes: violence, actors, power, interests, and identity.

First, pacifism deepens the path to ending conflict and doing away with violence. Pacifists do not point out specific images or actions as causes of war. Instead, they discuss the roots of war in terms of historical and structural aspects and suggest treating war like “a disease.” In other words, pacifists propose to cope with the disease (war) not by using symptomatic therapy, but by identifying and preventing the cause and minimizing the damage they create to cure, and to carry out the healing process for the patient rather than for one’s own interests (Ashford and Dauncey, 2006). The thoughts coincide in opinion with those of the representative peace scholar Johan Galtung. Galtung said that peace studies are similar to health studies in that the triple structure of diagnosis, prediction, and prescription can be applied and that creating peace is obviously related to reducing violence (treatment) and avoiding it (prevention). Although symptomatic therapy is often referred to as political remedy for conflict resolution, pacifism deeply digs a path to peace

in that it seeks to prevent and prescribe by identifying a variety of causes. What is worth mentioning again is that peacemakers' peacemaking process works from the inside out. The reason is they look for the causes of anger and violence not from outside but inside.

Second, pacifism treats doers from all the parties involved in the matter fairly and impartially. In other words, they do not select (exclude) certain actors and be hostile toward them, and do not pursue problem solving from a standpoint of a party. Pacifism sympathizes with the parties involved in the dispute and maintains even distance from them. To resolve a dispute, pacifists start with revealing the actor's inner needs in a sufficient and frank manner. Therefore, leading all the relevant actors to a dialogue and helping those to have fair and balanced talk is crucial. This is the way what are presented in nonviolent dialogue, to observe what it is, to recognize and express feelings, to listen with sympathy and to voice resentment completely (Rosenberg 2005; 207-212).

Third, pacifism does not directly connect peace with the specific distribution of power defined by power politics. Instead, pacifists sometimes see the world as a composition of empires versus world public opinion (Ashford and Dauncey 2006; 2). This means the relative magnitude of the force centered on the military does not directly link to a path of peace. Rather, pacifism pursues the solidarity of all forces seeking peace to resist and respond to the violence and domination of empires. This is a way to cultivate a kind of "resisting power." The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), which received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017, resolved to adopt the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) at the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly. Although not all nuclear powers have joined the treaty, if more than 50 countries sign and ratify the pact, it can have international legal consequences. Such a nuclear-weapon-banning movement is not prone to succeed in the short term, but it is right on the path supported by international opinion as above. Pacifism can strategically consider the distribution of power of the established, but it does not take subordinate actions to it. Rather, it focuses on alternative power, promotion of public opinion favorable to peace and peaceful legislative activities.

Fourth, if dispute resolution is a matter of adjustment of interests among stakeholders, what is the position of pacifism about it? We can apply the concept of balance of interest on the extension of the second discussion above. The concept of balance of interest, which has been widely used in education, law, and others, has often been applied in international relations. A study on setting up a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula from the viewpoint of the theory of the balance of interest advocates the following: (1) to include all stakeholders but to appropriately arrange them according to relevant issues; (2) to hold the exclusive profit in check by accepting the mutually congruous gains (Suh, 2010, 1-22). Based on such a viewpoint, the 9.19 Joint Statements agreed at the Six-Party Talks in 2005 seems pertinent. But it is not true to say that it stood on a pacifist perspective. It is because the concept of the interest balance can conceal injustice through conspiracy without abandoning conflict resolution by force. In fact, in pacifism, benefits are not mechanical or arithmetic balances. Johan Galtung introduces eleven ways of intervening in conflict as a means of communication; raising such questions as for whose benefit or by whose sacrifice (Galtung, 1996). Any benefit in pacifism firstly considers positions of victims and victims' situations, and aims at the positive peace, thereby differentiating it from the established concepts such as balance of power, balance of interest, and so on.

Finally, pacifism more concerns defining itself as a universal norm rather than presenting a fixed identity. Conventional constructivism emphasizes ideas as the main variables of external relations instead of distinguishing identities and norms. And pacifism also mentions the change in identity from the perspective of maximizing interests — the identity of Hobbes, Locke, and Kant (Wendt, 1999). But as Immanuel Kant distinguishes hypothetical imperatives from categorical imperatives, the change in identity associated with maximizing interests can be distinguished from the identity pacifist stands by. It is far from pacifism to regulate identity undertaken by dichotomies defining oneself and opponent as me and other person, and good and evil to pursue maximization of their own advantages to attain peace as a result. The reason is because pacifism goes from the inside outward and from oneself to the world. And identity politics emphasized in conventional constructivism distinguishes me and other person from good and evil, and

focuses on the aspect of justifying oneself and opposing others, which is a qualitatively different dimension from that of pacifism.

### **III. THE COMPETING PERSPECTIVES AND CRITICISMS**

Peace building on the Korean Peninsula has denuclearization and a peace regime in the core elements. Related countries have negotiated in a variety of ways, including bilateral and multilateral, and as a result, some denuclearization processes have been carried out. However, since the end of 2008, the door to the dialogue has been closed and the North Korean nuclear situation has worsened.

A variety of peaceless methods seem to prevail over the pacifist approaches in the crisis phase of the Korean Peninsula created by the U.S. Trump government and the Kim Jong Eun regime in 2017. The discourses can largely be grouped into five categories: to prioritize denuclearization, to prioritize peace regime, to carry out denuclearization and a peace regime side by side, to deter nuclear weapons, and to take military options. However, in the following discussion, we will review the methods from the perspective of pacifism, except for military attack options. Of course, the military option mentioned by some in the Trump administration could be a potential alternative on the table in real politics. However, from the viewpoint of “pacifism,” the theme of the discussion, the military option is not included because it does not belong to the relevant categories.

#### ***1. Denuclearization Comes First, and a Peace Regime Second***

First, the most widely mentioned peace-building measure was putting denuclearization first and a peace regime second. Since the 1990s, when the North Korean nuclear issue arose, a consensus has formed that to establish a peace regime without resolving the North Korean nuclear issue is impossible.

As the North Korean nuclear issue bulged, the theory of denuclearization began to emerge as shown in the adoption of Joint Declaration on Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula (January 20, 1992). Following the

first North Korean nuclear crisis, the United States and North Korea adopted the “Agreed Framework” in Geneva (October 21, 1994), and since then, in the process of adopting the 9.19, 2.13, and 10.3 agreements on the Six-Party Talks, the theory of denuclearization first and a peace regime second had virtually gained influence. Of course, this does not mean that the theory was stated in these agreements. However, it is hard to find a case evaluating the agreements of the Six-Party Talks as a theory of carrying out denuclearization and a peace regime at the same time. The actual process of the six-party talks showed that discussions about building a peace regime would be possible when North Korea first would take visible a step toward denuclearization.

Nevertheless, it is not that all participating countries in the Six-Party Talks formally confirmed the theory of denuclearization first and then a peace regime second. From the outset, North Korea was in a position to pursue denuclearization and a peace regime based on the theory of a kind of “reciprocity,” which advocates “word-to-word, action-to-action.” Accordingly, the U.S. extreme pre-denuclearization rhetoric generated strong opposition from the North. Though there were differences of opinion among the relevant parties depending on the situation over time, the discussions about the establishment of a peace regime did not occur without a substantial progress on the North Korean nuclear issue.

The second theory, denuclearization first and then a peace regime, had a fundamental limitation in two respects. One is the potential for an unfair treatment, in the logic of North Korea’s interests, one of the main parties to the establishment of peace on the Korean Peninsula. North Korea has consistently pointed this out as a unilateral argument in the talks, even with the nuclear tests and missile tests.

Second, there is a stance to see the theory of denuclearization first and a peace regime second is unrealistic when we squarely face the situation of North Korea’s upgrading of its nuclear capability. In particular, the Kim Jung Eun regime has carried out nuclear tests three times, from the 3rd to the 6th nuclear tests, and successive long-range ballistic missile tests. North Korea will use its advanced nuclear and missile capabilities as leverage to secure self-regulatory deterrence and in negotiations with the United States. The official position of North Korea supports this:



The DPRK's nuclear deterrence for self-defense is the powerful guarantee for defusing the danger of a nuclear war and ensuring durable peace on the Korean Peninsula and a common treasure of the nation for reunification and prosperity of the country. ... If the U.S. and the South Korean puppet group persist in escalating the moves to stifle the DPRK, the latter will further strengthen its nuclear deterrence." (*Rodong Sinmun*, May 2, 2017)

North Korea's nuclear capability is assessed to have reached the successful development of small-sized warheads of less than 1,000 kilograms, and not only atomic bombs but hydrogen bombs were developed as a result of the sixth nuclear test. Furthermore, North Korea claims to have achieved standardization the development of nuclear warheads, insinuating mass production of them is possible. There are also estimates that the North holds hundreds of nuclei to be carried on the Scud missiles. If North Korea succeeds in developing nuclear warheads and intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) capable of nuclear attack on the U.S. mainland, they will have the power to make a nuclear strike to the three areas, the Korean Peninsula, the East Asia Pacific, and the U.S. mainland, coming closer to have the "balance of power" with the U.S., as they insist. On November 29, 2017, the North Korea military successfully test-fired an intercontinental ballistic missile Hwasong-15, which is reportedly capable of striking the whole mainland of the United States. In this situation, negotiations with Pyongyang would be impossible without doing away with the ideas of North Korean nuclear abandonment as pre-condition before forming a peace regime, and that would only bring on a result of prolonging the Cold War structure on the Korean Peninsula.

## ***2. Peace Regime First***

The fewest experts stand for the position to give priority to a peace regime over denuclearization. This is the stance taken by North Korea at the end of the Kim Jong Il era and at the beginning of the Kim Jong Un regime. North Korea has argued that its nuclear development is an inevitable and defensive measure resulting from the hostile U.S. policies, not a problem if the armistice regime had been turned into a peace regime.

On January 17, 2009, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of North Korea said, “Normalization of relations with the U.S. and nuclear concerns are completely separate issues.” “Even if North Korea-U.S. relations are diplomatically normalized, we will not change our nuclear status as long as any nuclear threats by the U.S. remain,” he added (*Korean Central News Agency*, January 17, 2009). Furthermore, in 2015, North Korea’s Foreign Ministry criticized pursuing a simultaneous progress of the preemptive denuclearization of North Korea and denuclearization-peace regime, officially formulating its concluding a peace agreement first policy.

We engaged in the talks about the denuclearization in the Six-Party Talks and also participated in the dialogue dealing with the nuclear issue and the peace guarantee at the same time in the past taking into account the claims of the parties concerned that insisted the denuclearization problem be addressed with priority. However, all the attempts ended up in failure. Even if there was a partial consensus for a time, they were unsuccessful being put into practice. ... In order to decisively cut off the vicious circle of confrontation and tension, we have found a conclusion that we must precede changing the armistice into a peace treaty over all other issues (*Korean Central News Agency*, October 17, 2015).

North Korea further insists that there can be no unilateral disarmament in “the reality of the present day in which the U.S. hostile policies continue to threaten our own existence and North Korea and the United States are still in engagement.” The North also reaffirmed the preference for signing a peace treaty by expressing its stance as “nothing can be solved if the issues of making a peace treaty and denuclearization are muddled up” (*Korean Central News Agency*, December 2, 2015).

Such a position of the North reflects its deep distrust and threat perception accounted for the hostile relations it has with the United States. However, under the nuclear nonproliferation regime, the peace regime first theory is weak in a sense of reality, only trying to attempt to rationalize the North’s intention to continue arming itself with a nuclear arsenal.

Meanwhile, the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK), which has led the unification movement, assessed that existing talks including

the Six-Party Talks had focused on denuclearization, neglecting the peace treaty, and decided on formulating a treaty draft to show a way to a peace regime. After a year of preparation, the Committee for Reconciliation and Reunification in the NCKK proposed a peace treaty draft and adopted it on April 21, 2016 at the second Executive Committee of the 64th Session. The Article 10 of the NCKK's Peace Treaty draft states that "the contracting parties shall ban nuclear armaments, all measures related to military -- technological development, deployment and operation of weapons of mass destruction on the Korean (Chosun) peninsula." What is very clearly expressed in the article is that the NCKK is very clearly bringing out its stance on giving concerted efforts for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and a peace regime. The idea of denuclearization first, then a peace regime second is not mentioned in the draft. Moreover, the fact that it does not ask for denuclearization as a precondition for the conclusion of a peace treaty makes it closer to be the peace regime first theory.

Additionally, there are a few South Korean researchers who insist that the issue of establishing a peace regime should be actively discussed in order to fundamentally transform the Cold War structure on the Korean Peninsula and to bring North Korea into negotiations. They take a stance that the North Korean nuclear issue could be discussed in connection with an establishment of a peace regime at the exit.

### ***3. Denuclearization abreast of a Peace Regime***

The third option for building peace on the peninsula is pushing for denuclearization and a peace regime at the same time. This is considered to be the most ideal plan because the idea represents the positions of North Korea and the other parties in the Six-Party Talks in a balanced way.

Currently, a representative administration that supports the theory of carrying out denuclearization and a peace regime side by side is the Moon Jae-in government in South Korea. The South Korean president has stated such a viewpoint through the pledge of the presidential election and in the national political agenda after coming to power. On July 6, 2017, President Moon Jae-in announced "a New Vision for the Peace on the Korean Peninsula," saying

“The government will comprehensively resolve such pending issues of the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia as complete dismantlement of the North Korean nuclear program, establishment of a peace regime, resolution of North Korea’s security and economic concerns, and improvement of the U.S.-North Korea and North Korea-Japan relations. In addition, on July 19, the National Advisory Committee announced the “Five Year Plan for the Government Administration of the Moon Jae-in government” and said, “In order to reach a consensus in 2020, we will formulate a comprehensive denuclearization negotiation plan to connect nuclear freeze to a complete abandonment, and will push for a measure for denuclearization at the early stage and resuming negotiations for comprehensive denuclearization.” Concerning the establishment of a peace regime that is in line with the denuclearization of North Korea, the National Advisory Committee has presented a plan to prepare a road map of the peace regime in 2017, followed by negotiations of the peace regime in accordance with the progress of denuclearization, and conclude a peace treaty at the stage of complete resolution of the North Korean nuclear issues (*Pressian*, July 9, 2017).

However, whether or not the Moon Jae-in government is actually carrying forward the policy is a different matter. It is because pursuing the parallelism would not be easy for South Korea under the circumstances that North Korea went through with successive nuclear and missile tests while the strict international sanctions are imposed on the regime. When President Moon spoke “It is not a time to talk,” it represented the position in which South Korea was placed. The government is desperately seeking a way to transform the situation to pursue denuclearization and a peace regime at the same time.

Another nation to back up the theory of going abreast denuclearization and a peace regime is China. China has an interest in turning the crisis of the Korean Peninsula into a dialogue phase and restoring the Six-Party Talk structure. On March 8, 2014, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi(王毅) formally proposed reviving talks – which had reached deadlock – on the concurrence of the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the establishment of a peace regime as a solution to the nuclear issue on the peninsula (*Tongil News*, February 17, 2016). China, meanwhile, pushed

forward two-way concrete measures with Russia, and proposed a joint statement based on a phased approach by speaking up for stopping North Korea's nuclear and missile provocations and the U.S.-R.O.K. joint military exercises, and moving forward on negotiations on denuclearization process on the Korean Peninsula and a peace treaty among the parties concerned including the United States and North and South Korea (*Yonhap News Agency*, October 12, 2017).

In fact, the contents of agreements of the 9.19 Joint Statement, the 2.13 Agreement, and the 10.3 Agreement, which were agreed upon by the participating nations in the processes of the Six-Party Talks, have combined the mutual interests of the parties within a certain framework of balanced interest. The agreements between North Korea and the United States, such as the Geneva Agreed Framework (1994) and the Joint Communique of the DPRK and USA (2000), can be understood providing a framework of carrying out denuclearization and a peace regime in parallel based on reciprocity. If the participating countries had agreed upon the verification method of the nuclear list that North Korea had declared, the denuclearization based on the existing agreements could have been further progressed since 2008. However, such a parallel proposal could not cross over the great wall of distrust, and the fact that the recent proposals by China and Russia in the same vein were not accepted did not have an explanation except disbelief. The implication of the parallel proposal is that the denuclearization and the peace regime are not a matter of order or importance, but an entity like a coin having two sides.

#### ***4. Nuclear Deterrence Peace***

As the crisis continues on the Korean Peninsula, the solution using non-peaceful means has added weight because North Korea and the United States are heightening military tensions on the basis of nuclear deterrence. Even some in South Korea insist on the introduction of nuclear weapons in the country.

In the early 1990s, when the United States decided on dismantling the American tactical nuclear weapons from the Korean Peninsula, there was hope that waves from the Cold War breakup would reach the peninsula. After

the first North Korean nuclear crisis in 1994, the adoption of the “Agreed Framework” between North Korea and the United States opened a door to raise the issues of bilateral relations and denuclearization. However, both of these miscarried in the process of denuclearization and a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula. This is because the hostility between the U.S. and North Korea remained undissolved and the Korean armistice was still valid. On the extension, the U.S. doctrine of nuclear strike on North Korea has been effective. Even when the U.S. President made a public statement that he had no will to attack North Korea, the U.S. military was maintaining the doctrine. Now, the U.S. president has come to the point of mentioning the possibility of a nuclear attack on North Korea.

The motive of North Korea for nuclear development was strong in the face of mutual hostility and the potential threat of the U.S. nuclear attack. The North’s nuclear development hit its stride during the George W. Bush government. In the Trump administration, North Korea has further advanced its level of nuclear development to the stage of completion. The Kim Jong Eun regime, which declares the economic-nuclear parallel route, clarifying the nuclear development as nuclear deterrence, argues as follows:

“The fact that we have the strongest nuclear arsenal is a fair self-defensive measure chosen to protect the country’s sovereignty and national right to survive from the United States’ diktat and abuse of authority carrying out extremely hostile policies toward North Korea and posing nuclear threat for more than half a century” (*Korean Central News Agency*, August 7, 2017).

Kim Jung Eun reaffirmed the parallel line of the policy at the 2nd Plenary Session of the 7th North Korean Workers’ Party on October 7, 2017. Around that time, the high-ranking North Korean officials and the state media said they would continue their efforts to upgrade the nuclear capabilities and pursue a “balance of power” with the United States. In the October 12, 2017 article, the North Korean Workers’ Party-run newspaper *The Rodong Sinmun* stated that “Whatever threats from the U.S., we will spur the struggle for the completion of the nation’s nuclear armed forces, and see the bitter end in this road. That is the adamant position of our military and the people” (*Tongil*

*News*, October 12, 2017), North Korea's foreign minister Li Yong-ho told in a meeting with a Russian delegation of Tass, the Russian news agency, that, "We cannot negotiate with our nuclear weapons unless the United States' squeezing policy toward our country fundamentally disappears, and this is our principle position." "We have reached the very last point on the road to the final goal of balancing real power with the U.S.," he added (*Hankook Ilbo*, October 12, 2017). DPRK finally demonstrated its capability to strike the whole land of the United States with nuclear missile before passing the year of 2017. North Korea's action to upgrade its nuclear weapons capabilities is dangerous as it heightens the crisis on the Korean Peninsula and is a direct violation of the agreement concerned with denuclearization.

In the meantime, as North Korea could be about to emerge as a "nuclear state," there was public opinion in South Korea claiming to develop nuclear weapons or to reintroduce U.S. nuclear weapons. Anti-North Korean opinion, combined with perception of North Korea's threat, the public opinion in favor of introducing the tactical nuclear weapons to cope with the North's nuclear programs was higher than the opposition. Moreover, some political forces have advocated adoption of tactical nuclear weapons or nuclear armaments. However, the United States has supported neither relocating its tactical nuclear weapons to the Korean Peninsula nor South Korea's going nuclear. The nuclear deterrent seems to be a strong response, but it could result in a security dilemma and may deprive South Korea of the cause of demanding North Korea give up nuclear weapons.

#### **IV. EMERGING PACIFISM AND PEACE ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA**

The development of the peace movements in South Korea was not only tardy but also barren. Under the division system, the peace movement was hardly formed as one of the independent sectors. Even after the democratization in 1987, the influence of anti-North Korea ideology was large. The peace movement separated from the unification movements and started as an independent activity when the drive against sending troops to Iraq

began in 2003. Nevertheless, the host of the peace movement has endorsed “a peaceful use of the nuclear program” for “a peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue.” Only some of the environmental movements have argued against all types of nuclear activity. However, as concerns over the nuclear safety of the nation grew as a result of the impact of the radiation leak from the Fukushima nuclear power plant and the accident at the domestic nuclear power plant, the peace movements could not help but change its concessional attitude. On October 15, 2017, they announced a declaration to be recorded in the South Korea peace movement at Soseong-ri in Seongju-gun, Gyeongsangbuk-do Province where an anti-deployment campaign for THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) is ongoing. The people who gathered there stated, “We want to unite the anti-war and anti-nuclear movements for denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the post-nuclear campaigns for the abolition of the nuclear power plant in the name of peace,” and also added the following:

“We do not agree with the theory of nuclear armaments which advocates stopping the nuclear weapons with nuclear arms and deployment of tactical nuclear weapons. ... We are witnessing how terribly both sides of the parties armed with nuclear weapons destroy our lives here in Soseong-ri. If we are not able to achieve peace beyond nuclear power generation and nuclear weapons, now it is Soseong-ri, but there is no law that a second or even third Soseong-ri comes about.” (Let’s Make Peace, October 15, 2015)

In fact, it is true that citizen movements based on pacifism have not been active in relation to peace on the Korean Peninsula, and certain minority groups lead the activities unless there is an opportunity to attract public attention. One such representative organization is the People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD), which has led peace movements based on the Center for Peace and Disarmament. The center has monitored and campaigned for peace building on the peninsula including the simultaneous implementation of denuclearization and a peace regime (PSPD, March 30, 2016) for a long time.

In the worsening security environment of the Moon Jae-in government, the PSPD does not give up the view of pacifism in cooperation with such



related peace movement groups as the Civil Peace Forum. Under the security crisis fomented by North Korea and the United States on the Korean Peninsula is persisting, public sentiment supporting a military approach or specific actors (or criticism) have attracted attention at home and abroad. PSPD dismisses any military action that promotes crisis. For example, on August 29, 2017, North Korea launched a ballistic missile while *Eulji* Freedom Guardian (UFG) US-ROK military exercises were under way. At that time, PSPD commented, “North Korea’s repeated missile launches are a serious threat to peace and stability in the region.” At the same time, PSPD pointed out the instructions of President Moon Jae-in, “Show off the power of punishing North Korea,” and claimed that “South Korea and the United States, which have overwhelming advantages over conventional and nuclear deterrence against North Korea, should take more radical and preemptive measures to ease the military tensions in order to make breakthroughs to build trust and to solve the problem” (PSPD, August 29, 2017). PSPD also showed expectations toward the newly established Moon Jae-in government in its beginning. However, watching the government giving focuses on sanctions against North Korea and decided on the deployment of THAAD, they started criticizing the administration of Moon Jae-in, concerned about possible worsening of crisis (NGOs Coalition against THAAD Deployment in South Korea, September 7-8, 2017).

Furthermore, the peace movement camp including PSPD proposes unconditional dialogue among related actors as a solution to deal successfully with the security crisis on the peninsula and for peace settlement. For example, on the sixth North Korea’s nuclear weapons test on September 3, they urge the relevant nations including the Moon Jae-in government to have a dialogue while maintaining the position on denuclearizing.

In any case, North Korea seems to pose finalizing its nuclear armaments. ... The People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy makes it clear that no nuclear weapons should be deployed or used on the Korean Peninsula, and they also believe that North Korea’s nuclear weapons must be abolished. ... The United States should immediately step in to take nuclear negotiations. The Moon Jae-in government should proactively create the conditions for nuclear negotiations if they want to resolve the issue of the Korean

Peninsula peacefully as they professed. (PSPD, September 3, 2017)

Meanwhile, NCKK has exerted various efforts to achieve denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula together with a peace regime since 2010. In particular, when the General Assembly of the 10th World Council of Churches (WCC) held in Pusan from October 30 to November 8 in 2013, they promoted peace treaty campaigns and the “Peace Train” (Berlin-Busan) project. During the WCC General Assembly, they adopted the Statement on Peace and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula including the following points:

We are convinced that it is the right time to begin a new process towards a comprehensive peace treaty that will replace the 1953 Armistice Agreement and secure just and peaceful relations among nations in the North and South, and facilitating Korean reunification.

NCKK has also evoked such evaluations that despite the government’s full sanctions against North Korea, which began with the Cheonan Corvette incident in 2010, it has continued humanitarian aid and exchanges with North Korean churches. NCKK pressed the South Korean government joining the international sanctions against North Korea “to create a new momentum for the South and North Korea to autonomously resolve Northeast Asia situations” through “unconditional inter-Korean dialogues.” As one of such measures, they have proposed the South Korean government to dispatch special envoys to the North (NCKK, August 10, 2017).

## **V. CONCLUSION**

Peace on the Korean Peninsula is an international issue in terms of its historical origin, relevant actors, and realistic influences. In particular, denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is part of the denuclearization of the whole world. So in South Korea, the Citizens’ Peace Forum and the Peace Network have joined International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) to participate in the campaigns to legislate the ban on nuclear

weapons. As a result, the fifty one member nations of the United Nations General Assembly signed the Nuclear Weapons Convention on July 7, 2017.

The Korean peace movements are committed to maintaining the belief of “achieving peace through peaceful means,” addressing all the parties of the security and peace issue on the Korean Peninsula, approaching equally from the pacifist perspective, and maintaining optimism for peaceful settlement of disputes despite a serious security crisis. In this sense, the South Korean peace movements have all the basic logic of pacifism. On the extension, they have taken the position of concurrent approaches in the discussion of denuclearization and a peace regime and have intervened in the relevant situation. However, in the process of establishing a position on the “peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue, it exposed its limitations, for example, accepting non-military usage of nuclear powers. But now they have changed their positions against all nuclear powers, as seen in the Peace Declaration in Soseong-ri. This proves that the distinct characteristics of the issue on the peninsula were reflected in the South Korean peace movements.

In terms of the operation modes of pacifism, the South Korean peace movement have tried to figure out the causes of the current security crisis by looking at the historical and structural dimensions of the division and armistice system, to identify the relations between the crisis situations and actors as a whole, to make closely balanced approaches to the doers, to reject situation dependent activities relying on power distribution, to establish a position from the public standpoint, and to seek a peaceful solution based on mutual sympathy and understanding, moving away from the hostile images among actors.

The Korean peace movement stands on pacifism. In terms of denuclearization and the establishment of a peace regime, the key issues for establishment of peace on the Korean Peninsula, the perspective of pacifism is critical and useful for finding alternatives. Of course, the pacifist solution proposed in the past has some undeniable limitations in its approval and reality. Therefore, expanding public opinion of pacifism and communications with policy decision-making groups is important in the peace movements. However, taking into account of the situations that militaristic views have intensified the crisis on the Korean Peninsula, and such a crisis may continue to exist in the midst of rampant

military options, disparaging the claims of pacifism in the sense of a moral dimension is not proper because peace on the Korean Peninsula is not an ideal design but an essential task.

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