



**A Strong Alliance under Stress:
The Third US-ROK Strategic Dialogue**

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The Third US-ROK Strategic Dialogue

June 27-28, 2011, Maui

Key Findings/Recommendations

The Pacific Forum CSIS brought together a small, select group of South Korean and US security specialists for the third time to discuss concerns about the changing strategic environment in East Asia and the nature of extended deterrence. While the focus was on security, there was unanimous agreement that the Obama administration and US Congress need to move forward expeditiously on the Korea-US Free Trade Agreement. Passing the KORUS FTA now would help to broaden and deepen the ROK-US relationship, provide reassurance of continuing US commitment, and help facilitate its passage in the ROK National Assembly. Failure to do so would represent a serious setback for the Lee Myung-Baek government and for US credibility. Other key findings from this off-the-record dialogue follow:

- The US-ROK alliance is as strong or stronger than ever. Consultative and coordinative mechanisms served the alliance well during a tumultuous year and there is widespread recognition and appreciation for US steadfast support for the ROK in the face of North Korean provocations.
- There is no room for complacency, however. While there is widespread agreement that South Korea's credible threat of a forceful response to future provocations was appropriate and enjoys strong US support, there is concern about the proportionality of any response and the degree of prior coordination. While the ROK plans to, and should, take the lead in responding to isolated acts of aggression, close coordination remains essential. A proportionate response aimed at the immediate source of the provocation might not be sufficient to send an appropriate message of deterrence. The challenge is to agree upon a response that is sufficiently disproportionate to send a strong message without creating an escalatory chain of counter-responses.
- There is agreement that extended deterrence has been successful at the strategic level in preventing all-out hostilities or a North Korean nuclear attack and frustration that deterrence has failed at the tactical level when it comes to preventing North Korean isolated acts of aggression and harassment, such as those witnessed last year. This has stimulated belief that the US extended deterrent needs to be more tangible and visible to deter the North and reassure the South, resulting in high-levels of support among the general public in Korea for both the reintroduction of US tactical nuclear weapons to the Peninsula and, more starkly, the development of an indigenous ROK nuclear weapons capability. There was unanimous agreement among the assembled security specialists from both countries that such moves would be counterproductive but clearly more has to be done to bring the South Korean public to this conclusion.

- North Korean provocations have shifted public perceptions in the South toward a more hardline approach in inter-Korean relations. This has improved support for the alliance, but creates greater likelihood of a clash resulting from the desire to punish Pyongyang. While there is widespread concern of additional provocations – most would argue it is a case of when, not if – there is little fear that North Korea will use its nuclear capabilities against the South. The primary ROK fear is that the North will be emboldened by the belief that it has the US deterred.
- Americans and Korean both strongly support the three-step approach toward a return to negotiations that begins with direct North-South dialogue, followed by informal talks between Washington and Pyongyang, and culminating in a return to the Six-Party Talks. South Koreans fear that the US may abandon this approach and see proposals such as the one put forward by Senator Kerry (calling for direct bilateral talks on humanitarian issues) as steps in the wrong direction, that will encourage Pyongyang to continue disrespecting and attempting to marginalize the South.
- There is widespread agreement that North Korea’s goal is the creation of official bilateral negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang (culminating in a peace accord) that would bypass Seoul and undermine inter-Korean talks, and that this should not happen.
- There is a potential for dramatic change in 2012 – given presidential elections in the US and especially South Korea and North Korea’s determination to achieve “great and prosperous nation” status by this date, along with scheduled political change in China and elections in Taiwan and Russia, and perhaps Japan as well – which will necessitate careful alliance management.
- China is becoming an increasingly unreliable partner. It has not only failed to rein in North Korean provocations but appears to be empowering or emboldening Pyongyang by protecting the North from international condemnation and stronger sanctions (or even enforcement of existing sanctions) at the UN.
- There is also growing concern over China’s aggressive behavior region-wide in pursuit of its national interests. Explanations for this assertiveness include newfound confidence in the aftermath of the 2008 global economic crisis, a sense that the regional balance of power is shifting in its favor, and the political transition in 2012 in Beijing. There are concerns about a division of East Asia into US and Chinese camps. South Koreans fear creation of a Chinese sphere of influence in East Asia will isolate the ROK and Japan.
- Japan is viewed as an increasingly marginalized player in the region. Its decline has been accelerated by the March 11, 2011 earthquake. ROK elites understand the need for increased cooperation (particularly on security issues) with Japan even as well-known obstacles to cooperation continue to hinder progress. When

cooperation occurs, it must generally be done quietly to avoid becoming a casualty of political frictions.

- South Koreans see US interaction with NATO as a model for the nuclear interactions and consultations they want to have with the US (although it is not clear whether they have an accurate picture of the nature of those discussions).
- ROK thinking about the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) has been transformed; originally, the ROK was focused on peninsular issues, in particular using the NSS as a tool in its efforts to denuclearize North Korea. It appears that the ROK is now more global in its approach. Koreans (and Japanese) see the ongoing Fukushima nuclear crisis as having security as well as safety implications and thus view this as an appropriate subject for discussion at the 2012 NSS in Seoul. There is some concern that the US would resist expansion of the agenda to include such a discussion.
- Implementation of the US-ROK Joint Vision of 2009 has not met the expectations of either side, especially in the areas of regional and global cooperation. This has led to calls for a revised vision statement that would be accompanied with an action plan.

Of note, there was virtually no mention of previous “hot button issues” such as OpCon transfer, the 123 civilian nuclear energy agreement, or the need for contingency planning for a North Korean collapse.

The Third US-ROK Strategic Dialogue

June 27-28, 2011, Maui

Conference Report

A transitional era is testing all US alliances, but few face the challenges thrown directly at the US-ROK security alliance. North Korean provocations have escalated as the Six-Party Talks have broken down. China has asserted itself in ways that undermine key elements of the regional security order. Fortunately, the political leadership in Washington and Seoul has been in sync throughout a harrowing year; the two governments have shown resolution and solidarity in responding to Pyongyang's recklessness. But there are signs of strain and concern that the 2012 election campaigns in the ROK and the US will create new opportunities for North Korean mischief-making and reinforce the wedges that threaten to divide our two countries.

Thirty-four senior security specialists, academics, and current and former government officials from the US and South Korea, and 13 Pacific Forum CSIS Young Leaders, all attending in their private capacity, spent two days cataloguing the challenges the security alliance has faced and will encounter in the months ahead. The bilateral relationship is strong, but it will only remain so with careful tending. There is rising frustration in South Korea over North Korea belligerence. This could lead to rash actions by the South, but downplaying South Korea anxieties will ensure that they grow. The US and South Korea must work together to address the root causes of those concerns and sap their strength.

DoD Keynote Remarks

Our meeting commenced with remarks from a senior US Defense Department official, who laid out his personal views on the state of the alliance. In sum, "the US-ROK alliance has never been as strong as it is today." Unfortunately, differing views of effective deterrence and the domestic politics of security in the ROK pose a challenge to the alliance. Regional developments will exacerbate strains created by these challenges. Key issues include the political transition in Pyongyang; progress in North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile programs; political transitions in Seoul, Washington, and Beijing, all of which will drive policymakers away from cooperation and toward confrontation; and the sea change in ROK public opinion on how to deal with North Korea. (While the overall shift is good – tolerance for Pyongyang's misbehavior is decreasing – that significantly increases the risk of miscalculation). Our speaker warned that the alliance response to all these developments is based on the assumption that both Pyongyang and Beijing are capable of maintaining stability in a crisis. It is an assumption that may prove wrong.

Crisis stability – and deterrence in general – demands close cooperation between the US and South Korea. That cooperation is based on shared assumptions about deterrence and defense and our speaker noted that continuous close consultation is

required to ensure that both allies share a common perception of effective deterrence. First, he pointed to incidents in 2010 that have encouraged some in the ROK to think that extended deterrence isn't working at lower levels; it seems that the US extended deterrent needs to be more tangible and visible to be credible. Second, he noted ROK concerns about the North Korean nuclear shadow. Some in the ROK fear that Pyongyang has escalation dominance because of the perception that it has its own nuclear weapons, despite the widely acknowledged inability of North Korea to actually use such weapons should they exist. Nevertheless, this anxiety is feeding debates in the South about tactical nuclear weapons and a South Korean indigenous nuclear capability. Our speaker acknowledged the legitimacy of those concerns but believes the Alliance has satisfactory answers to them. Ultimately, however, a dialogue between the two parties is needed to quell South Korean doubts.

Coordination on counter-provocation planning and responses was another challenge. There is agreement that the Alliance must maintain escalation control and dominance, and in the current division of labor, the ROK handles the low-end response and the US and the alliance take care of high-end ones. But our speaker observed that without careful planning and coordination the escalation ladder, firebreaks, or control could deteriorate if a constant flow of communication and coordination is not maintained at all levels of the Alliance, including in cases of unilateral self-defense by the ROK as well as for bilateral Alliance responses.

A final point raised was the product of differing approaches to denuclearization diplomacy. While both governments agree on the centrality of North-South dialogue to the Six-Party Talks and multilateral diplomacy – our speaker “can't imagine denuclearization without robust inter-Korean dialogue” – he also noted that the US has equities in those talks, such as defense of the US homeland and global nonproliferation norms, which extend beyond the Korean Peninsula. Our speaker was optimistic that the US and Korea could continue to maintain a close and coordinated Alliance approach to nuclear diplomacy, and noted that there are mechanisms in place and relationships that should help close gaps. He commended the work of the Extended Deterrence Policy Committee as especially salutary.

Our speaker took questions that anticipated themes that emerged during the next two days of discussions. For example, he acknowledged that while the US and South Korea cannot control what Pyongyang thinks, the allies can try to shape its decision-making environment and ensure that a single clear message is sent about alliance intentions and objectives. When asked to assess the notion of proportionality as the two governments respond to a North Korean provocation, he explained that self-defense authorizes attempts to neutralize the source of an attack, but going after other targets could risk escalation without careful Alliance management. Despite those limitations, our speaker said the Alliance did a good job responding to the 2010 provocations. Most importantly, there were discussions between the Allies. Any shortcomings that were identified are being addressed.

Security Perspectives

Our first session examined in more detail the regional security environment in which the alliance is now operating. Our first speaker was an American participant who described the security environment as “stable and satisfactory.” He cautioned, however, that stable doesn’t mean stationary: the defining regional development is China’s rise, which is altering strategic calculations for almost every government. China’s ascendance, coupled with political and economic difficulties in the US, prompted questions whether the era of US-brokered stability in East Asia is coming to a close. Fortunately, Washington is aware of these concerns and is doing its best to reassure allies, friends, and partners of the US commitment to its historic role in the region. Evidence can be found in diplomatic efforts to counter Chinese claims in the South China Sea, the explicit statement of support for Japan in its territorial dispute over the Senkaku/Daiyou Islands, and backing of South Korea in its standoff with the North, (which is an implicit acceptance of the potential for escalation on the Korean Peninsula). The presenter reassured those who worry about China’s anti-access/area denial (A2AD) strategy, noting that (now former) Secretary of Defense Robert Gates grasped the challenge it poses and the US is investing in capabilities to counter it. Indeed, our speaker warned of a capabilities race, rather than an arms race, in the region.

Our speaker highlighted the fact that the US hasn’t changed policy toward the South China Sea. It has provided cover for governments in Manila and Hanoi to be more assertive, and that has provoked Chinese ire. That should stroke some caution in Washington. The US isn’t directly involved in South China Sea conflicts, but it can be dragged in.

That said, neither the US nor China seeks an antagonistic relationship. Neither wants a new Cold War and both governments are working to normalize security relations. The People’s Liberation Army (PLA) is something of a wild card, however; it is increasingly assertive and shows little restraint when announcing its grievances and declaring obstacles to improving relations. He anticipates more provocations and continuing indifference if not hostility on the part of the PLA to mil-mil relations. He noted that interruptions in those talks don’t seem to make much difference; while important, they shouldn’t be at the center of the relationship.

Our ROK speaker put China at the top of the list of his regional concerns, even if his assessment of Beijing’s motives differed somewhat. He argued that the 2008 financial crisis reinforced Chinese self-confidence and fed the narrative that the US (along with much of the rest of the West) is in decline. This is one cause of the increasing assertiveness in Beijing’s foreign policy that has been the diplomatic headline of 2010. He also noted the self-correction that followed, crediting the Obama-Hu summit in January of 2011 for setting the tone for that bilateral relationship. Our speaker concluded that China is not going to challenge US global influence although it does aim to expand its influence in East Asia and seeks to become a regional leader. Toward that end, it is working on its power projection capability along with its capacity to wage asymmetric war, both in an attempt to turn the western Pacific into a “naval no-go zone.”

The South China Sea plays a key role in this strategy. Our ROK speaker sees Beijing aiming to gain complete control of the first island chain, the first step in the creation of a sphere of influence much like the US has in the Caribbean. Settling the South China Sea disputes on its terms is the cornerstone of Chinese efforts to transform the entire East Asian strategic environment. If China succeeds in this effort, both South Korea and Japan will be isolated within a Chinese sphere of influence.

Japan, once a counterweight to Chinese ambitions, is watching its regional influence decline as a result of economic problems and anemic political leadership. The triple catastrophe of March 11 has exacerbated this sad state of affairs. The result, our speaker warned, is the bifurcation of Asia into US and Chinese camps. And, he suggested, the inability of the US and Japan to work out the relocation of the US marines in Okinawa and the fate of the Futenma Relocation Facility (FRF) further undermines the US ability to lead and its capacity to stabilize the region. He added that the then-ongoing crisis at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear facility has undermined faith in the IAEA and reinforced the need for a regional cooperation mechanism to prevent and respond to nuclear accidents.

A different kind of mechanism is needed to deal with challenges posed by North Korea's nuclear program. Pyongyang continues to feed its nuclear ambitions and the result is a growing mismatch between the scale of the challenges North Korea poses and the Six-Party Talks mechanism that has been created to deal with them. Meanwhile, communications between North and South are sporadic and shrill. That makes dealing with provocations difficult as communications are needed to ensure that crises don't spiral out of control. In a related vein, our speaker warned that more attention has to be paid to North Korean contingencies. He worries that there is too much focus on the military. If China will play a critical role in dealing with any North Korean problem, then a focus on nonmilitary issues might lower Beijing's resistance to inclusion in such planning.

Several participants shared the last speaker's concern about a new Cold War structure emerging in Asia. That was countered on several levels. One South Korean participant insisted that the rest of the world is likely misreading Chinese intentions, and that the behavior that has so disturbed its neighbors (and others) is the result of internal political dynamics. He suggested more patience in assessing Chinese behavior and a higher tolerance for mis-steps by the government in Beijing. A US participant agreed that China isn't a concern, but his conclusion was based on the reasoning that China had learned from the Cold War not to challenge the US force structure and that the US can control the elements of competition with China.

No one challenged the dark assessment of Japanese prospects. One US participant noted that "the virtual alliance [of the US, ROK, and Japan] is now a strategic necessity," and another participant pointed to new forms of intensified cooperation and a desire among policy makers to go further. Trilateral cooperation among Washington, Seoul, and Tokyo is, another participant argued, important because it signals to China the strategic cost of not engaging Pyongyang to limit its bad behavior. (A US participant countered

that the decentralization of power in China could mean that Beijing has lost the ability to enforce a single line against Pyongyang; provincial governments and businesses pursue their own interests when dealing with the North, and disregard guidance from the center.) A South Korean warned that a negative Chinese response could limit Seoul's willingness to engage in such efforts and another US participant warned that pursuing trilateralism to punish China is a bad idea. That discussion may be moot, however: the deeply felt hostility between Japan and South Korea seems to intensify rather than dissipate with the passing of time. It was suggested that Japan renounce its claim to Dokdo/Takeshima as one way of dealing with that ever-present past while others felt the Korean fixation with the dispute was unwarranted since the ROK occupied the territory and no one could imagine Japan trying to take it by force. An ROK speaker said the tide might be turning, pointed to higher ratings for Japan in post-3.11 opinion polls.

Participants from both countries highlighted the importance of budget constraints on US planning and alliance credibility. China's apparent freedom from such limits provides a worrisome contrast. But US speakers pointed to numerous statements from the highest levels of the US government that show that the Asia Pacific "is the strategic theater of consequence and the US has resources and capabilities to meet commitments in the region."

When asked to consider other players, only two came to mind. India was considered – and dismissed when the focus is on traditional security issues. If, as some fear, South Korea is becoming too economically dependent on China, then relations with India could become a pressure release valve. Russia has hopes of being a player in Northeast Asia and may yet become a force to be reckoned with. But most assessments focus on Russia's vast mineral and resource riches, and there is little regard or hope for a sustained political and diplomatic role.

Provocations of 2010: Did Deterrence Fail?

We then turned to one of the main questions of our meeting: did deterrence fail in 2010 when North Korea twice attacked South Korean ships and territory? Our South Korean speaker framed the question by putting it in the context of North Korean politics and the establishment of the third generation of leadership in the person of Kim Jung Un, "the Young General." These preparations are occurring as the North Korean economy continues to deteriorate and Kim Jong Il recovers from health problems and tries to ensure that his son succeeds him. This has necessitated the shoring up of support from the military – the central pillar of Kim's rule – and the recreation of countervailing forces, such as the Korean Worker's Party to give his son new sources of support. In these circumstances, the provocations of 2010 are means to rally the country and the regime behind the succession proposal.

There are other explanations for North Korean belligerence, however. Pyongyang could be aiming to split the South Korean public and create pressure on the Seoul government to soften its hard line against the North. Or the attacks could be revenge for earlier naval confrontations in which South Korea got the upper hand. Some speculate

that the *Cheonan* attack was revenge and the Yeonpyeong Island shelling an attempt to exploit shortcomings in ROK defense that were exposed after the first attack.

Our speaker concluded that, overall, the ROK and the alliance failed to deter the provocations. He blamed a lack of preparation on the part of Seoul, but also noted that small-scale incidents leave the initiative to the aggressor. Since Pyongyang determines the time, place, and means of the attack, it is impossible for Seoul to defend – or to respond without risking escalation.

Nonetheless, the alliance response to the incidents of 2010 received high marks. The joint exercises and joint statements by the two governments made it clear to the North that the alliance is indivisible. Economic sanctions were strengthened and the ROK is revising its defense doctrine to move toward “proactive deterrence.” The two governments have worked more closely with Japan. Stability was maintained and escalation avoided.

Still, hardliners are quick to point out that no losses were imposed on North Korea, that Pyongyang has the capacity to provoke again, and the North knows that conflict escalation hurts the South more than it does the North. Our speaker warned that North Korea is shaping the strategic environment, forcing the ROK to respond to its initiative.

Our speaker also worried about a change in US policy. He wants to know what the US wants the ROK to do or accomplish in North-South dialogue. He was concerned about the impact of revelations that the South Korean government held secret negotiations with Pyongyang about a summit and fears that exposure of the meetings was intended to embarrass the Seoul government and make it clear to the US that Pyongyang does not consider Lee Myung Bak a real partner. What then will Washington do?

Our US presenter drew parallels to the Cuban Missile Crisis and suggested that the US go to the source of the problem. (That analogy is strained if the implication is that Beijing plays Moscow’s role in the current nuclear standoff; the nuclear weapons belong to North Korea, not China.) But by and large, those conclusions echoed those of our South Korean presenter. Our speaker endorsed the same motivations for North Korean behavior. Deterrence worked, insofar as a full-scale attack has been averted. At the same time, it appears that both South Korea and the US were deterred from retaliating against the North. Seoul’s “weak” response to the *Cheonan* incident emboldened Pyongyang to shell Yeonpyeong Island; a stronger response to the first might have deterred the latter.

North Korea’s “time tested strategy” is to create maximum havoc just short of self-containment to avoid a retaliatory strike and then change the environment to invite negotiations. Thus far, Pyongyang has built a nuclear arsenal, tested both nuclear weapons and missiles, “continuing reckless and well-calibrated actions against the ROK.” At the same time, all parties know that the North would lose in an all-out war.

In this context, future deterrence depends on Seoul being willing to surpass previous measures and risk escalation. It has to show credible resolve, to demonstrate that the Yeonpyeong Island shelling was a game changer. It is unclear if the US is on board with those suggestions as they risk escalation and a bigger crisis, however.

Discussion began by exploring motives. Several participants argued that the driving force for North Korean behavior is the leadership transition being set up in Pyongyang. One South Korean participant expressed concern about a power struggle in the capital. But if North Korean domestic dynamics are driving Pyongyang's behavior, then the ability of the US and the ROK to deter is diminished since the deterrent does not address those factors. A US participant reinforced that line of thinking by arguing that while successful at the strategic level, the extended deterrent is not designed or expected to work at the tactical level. (One US participant asked whether the deterrent was working at all: if the North has no intention of launching a full-scale attack on its neighbor, then nothing is being deterred. If that is correct, then alliance policy should aim at another objective: ensuring that the allies are not split by Pyongyang's provocations or the alliance response to them. A South Korean participant added that dividing South Korea and increasing domestic opposition to the Lee government's hard line may have been the North's objective all along. If so, it failed: South Korea has rallied behind the president.) A US participant also wondered whether retaliatory strikes against the North actually help the regime by rallying the population. More ominously, he worried that tit for tat retaliation might encourage the North to escalate. The claim that local ROK commanders have been given more leeway in the aftermath of the shelling added to concern about escalation control and the ability of both sides to walk back from a crisis when emotions get hot.

We reached no conclusions about China's role. There was general skepticism about China's influence over North Korean decision-making. One participant wondered whether it was North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons or Beijing's diplomatic cover that had emboldened Pyongyang. A US participant pointed out that the North didn't respond to the South's subsequent military maneuvers and live fire exercises after the Yeonpyeong incident, which suggested that Beijing had restrained its client, although others pointed to the pledge of a strong retaliatory response to any future provocation as the more likely determinant. China continues to call for the resumption of the Six-Party Talks but faces a dilemma since bilateral discussions between North Korea and Seoul and Washington both undercut the multilateral negotiations: the revelations of secret negotiations with the South have embarrassed the Lee Myung Bak government, at the time seemed to foreclose the North-South dialogue that the US insists must precede Six-Party Talks, and Pyongyang prefers bilateral negotiations with Washington and would just as soon forego the bigger table in Beijing.

Deterrence and Doctrine

Our US presenter quickly reviewed the key elements of the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), released in 2010. Those elements include: preventing nuclear proliferation and terrorism; reducing the role of nuclear weapons in US security strategy;

maintaining deterrence and stability; strengthening regional deterrence and reassuring allies, and maintaining a safe and secure nuclear arsenal. The NPR calls for a review of presidential and Department of Defense guidance for nuclear operations and deterrence. This requires an analysis of potential force postures and targeting objectives. At the time we met, the presidential guidance was not yet complete; when it is finished, the Pentagon will explore the ways that various guidance impacts on force structures. With that assessment, the president will provide new guidance.

The question for our presenter (and those planners) is how recent events have affected extended deterrence. As a starting point, and as our discussion made clear, those incidents have served as a reminder that deterrence concerns cross a spectrum, and the recent focus has been on nonnuclear aggression. The US and its allies must have – and must be seen to have – close diplomatic/military cooperation/consultation. Any response has to be prompt, proportional, and controlled. (To that end, there is concern that South Korean complaints that the response to the 2010 incidents was inadequate might risk escalation.)

Our speaker explored in more depth the relationship between nuclear and conventional deterrence. It was noted – as has every speaker commenting on the NPR since it was published – that the US is not going to end its extended nuclear deterrent. That concern is likely to persist no matter how many times the answer is repeated, however, because there is an inherent tension in the reduction of nuclear weapons and the assurance provided to allies and the deterrent signaled to adversaries. As always, extended deterrence will consist of a package of capabilities that includes a nuclear capability, along with conventional capabilities and the capabilities of allies. The value of any specific capability depends on what is supposed to be deterred. (Our presenter wondered aloud about the value of the South Korean deployment of a cruise missile with a range of 1,000 km; what is being deterred? Does this capability make a difference?) One capability that has engendered debate and some alarm is conventional prompt global strike (CPGS). Our presenter explained that it is being developed to give the US a more credible strike option in particular contingencies. But to potential adversaries (read Moscow and Beijing), CPGS could look like a decapitating first strike. To assuage those concerns, the US has altered the program's design so that it looks less like an ICBM.

Finally, our speaker followed up on a strand from previous sessions and explored the links between the new US strategic doctrine in NATO and its impact on Asia. The short answer is that there should not be an impact as they are very different theaters with different needs. At the same, it was acknowledged that Asian audiences are watching European developments closely; a particular item of concern is the degree to which Washington is seen as treating the two sets of allies equally and giving them input into decision-making and planning processes. Our speaker asserted that the Asian extended deterrent consultative process is more focused and serious than the one in Europe; again, the reason is different threat perceptions. In particular, Japan is well ahead of NATO when it comes to missile defense.

Our South Korean presenter tried to explain “proactive deterrence.” (“Tried” is the key word because the concept remains a work in progress.) Introduced by the Defense Reform Commission, he noted that it was originally revealed without detailed preparation and review. The Ministry of Defense is trying to define and elaborate the concept. He likened it to escalation dominance: it is intended to deter an initial provocation by showing that the ROK will use all its tools to do all it can do. To that end, proactive deterrence includes four behavioral components: deterring provocations by dominance; retaliating actively by the exercise of the right of self-defense; ending conflict as soon as possible; and preventing escalation. As it has evolved, it no longer includes a preemptive strike option. Our speaker explained that an ROK preemptive strike could make a situation worse. In a full-scale war, however, that option remains on the table. The limit would apply only to regional provocations.

As a specific example, he suggested that after the Yeonpyeong attack, the ROK would strike back with more firepower, hitting supporting troops as well as the original fire point. The ROK would aim to avoid the escalation to total war. In preparation, the ROK will be extending its ISR capabilities, fortifying the northwest islands, and deploying attack helicopters. The South will also take steps to neutralize the North’s missile capability.

Our speaker then turned to a particularly worrisome development in the aftermath of the *Cheonan* attack: growing support in the ROK for the redeployment of US tactical nuclear weapons to the South. A March Asan Institute opinion poll showed that 67.3 percent of respondents approved of the temporary redeployment of such weapons until the North Korean threat was eliminated; 32 percent did not. The same poll showed that 69 percent think the ROK should have its own nuclear weapons while 29 percent did not. According to official ROK government policy, such deployments are not effective or even helpful in denuclearizing North Korea. Conventional weapons systems serve the same purpose and are not as divisive.

What is especially worrisome is that while 50 percent of South Koreans believe the US will use nuclear weapons to protect the South after a nuclear attack, 41 percent have doubts. Frustration over the alliance’s seeming inability to check Pyongyang’s aggressiveness and the fear that South Korea would not be avenged are driving public support for the ROK’s possession of its own arsenal. Our speaker hoped that the US and ROK extended deterrence discussions would increase public understanding of US policy and undermine support for either redeployment of US tactical weapons or the indigenous option.

During our discussion, participants from both countries highlighted the June 2009 joint statement issued by Presidents Obama and Lee that specifically referred to the nuclear component of the US extended deterrent. Such an explicit reference is extremely rare in US foreign policy, and should provide the reassurance South Koreans seek (as well as the clear signaling of intent to adversaries that both sides desire). Unfortunately, South Korean participants explained that the public doesn’t know much about nuclear weapons nor does it pay much attention to such statements. Plainly, more efforts to

educate the public are needed. (A US participant noted with some irony that North Korea seems convinced the US would retaliate with nuclear weapons; the North insists that the US has a preemptive nuclear strike doctrine.) Yet another US participant warned South Korean counterparts that the US is never specific about the circumstances in which it will use nuclear weapons; if the ROK public wants this type of detail, it will be disappointed.

All participants agreed that redeployment of tactical US nuclear weapons is a bad idea. Nor would it address the chief ROK complaint: it isn't clear why the US would be any less reluctant to use tactical weapons than its strategic ones. South Korean fears of abandonment would persist. Moreover, such a tactic undermines the US position on proliferation in general and the Korean Peninsula in particular. It does similar damage to President Lee. In addition, it justifies the North Korea acquisition of such capabilities and it hands the South Korean left a club to use against its domestic opponents. As one US participant exclaimed, "it would be 2002 all over again."

Our discussion focused on the ROK. While most thinking examined ROK capabilities, there was also an attempt to grasp how ROK decision-makers assess the amount of damage that is acceptable and identify the threshold for retaliation. Americans asked their ROK counterparts to explain the impact on their thinking of the shift in US policy toward greater reliance on conventional means of deterrence, including missile defense. Specific answers were not forthcoming.

As occurred last year, South Korean participants spoke well of US consultations with European allies and suggested they might serve as a model for Seoul and Washington. Americans explained that the NATO talks are far less substantive than most South Koreans believe and that these days the main topic of US and European discussions are budgets and the need for Europe to spend more.

Nuclear Policy after Fukushima

We then explored the impact of Japan's March 11 triple disaster and its impact on nuclear policy. Our ROK speaker began by emphasizing that the real damage to the Fukushima Dai-ichi facility was done by the tsunami, not the earthquake that day. Indeed, a nuclear power plant that was closer to the epicenter of the quake wasn't damaged. The problem was the largest tsunami in 1,200 years. The complete destruction of virtually all local infrastructure – roads, ports, airports, railroads, telephones, and the like – compounded the difficulty of the response and recovery. Unfortunately, the nuclear situation is still not yet under control. Not only is the reactor core's condition uncertain, but 100 tons of water have been used to cool the plant: this must be disposed of, too.

The accident has undermined Japan's national energy strategy. After the accident, Prime Minister Kan announced that the country would give up its nuclear power capabilities. By 2030, Japan was on track to get 50 percent of all electricity generated from nuclear power. If Kan stuck to this pledge, that supply must be replaced. As a first step, all Japanese plants will be shut down and checked for safety. Our speaker warned

that March 11 has provided a bonanza of information for terrorists, highlighting national vulnerabilities and potential targets.

The most troubling impact of the incidents of March 11 is the erosion of the Japanese public's faith in government. Forty percent want a reduction in the country's dependence on nuclear energy; 7.2 percent want a complete phaseout. A majority doesn't trust nuclear energy.

Our speaker then outlined the impact of March 11 on South Korea. The ROK is 100 percent dependent on imported fuel; 37 percent of its energy needs are met by nuclear power generation and the government plans to build eight more plants by 2016. In his words, enthusiasm for nuclear energy "has been somewhat dampened." In a recent survey, 65 percent of respondents said nuclear power plants are dangerous; 28.9 percent considers them "not dangerous." When asked to assess government announcements about safety, 52.4 percent said they don't trust them, while 44 percent said they do. A majority – 57.5 percent – don't want all nuclear plants scrapped; 33.2 percent do. At the same time, the government remains committed to being a major player in the global nuclear energy renaissance. As a sign of the commitment, President Lee attended the UAE groundbreaking of a nuclear plant that is being built by a South Korean company.

Our US speaker agreed with almost all of his predecessor's remarks while warning that the situation in Japan is not yet stable, that the issue is emotional and thus sober analysis is needed more than ever, and that caution has to guide all assessments. Still, it is clear that the problem is primarily a result of design failure and that our risk methodology is not adequate. (The fact that the tsunami was five times worse than the worst-case scenario should give some reason to pause.) That should not come as a surprise given the complexity of nuclear systems, their many vulnerabilities, and the multiple possible sources of failure. Our speaker noted that as we met, a US nuclear plant in Nebraska was being flooded and another in New Mexico was threatened by fires.

Our speaker highlighted the prospect and impact of single point failures. Inherent risks were exacerbated by regulatory failure in Japan, a political, cultural, and bureaucratic problem, as well as the failure of the country's safety culture. For our US speaker, lessons learned include the need to develop a new safety culture, to focus on emergency management and preparedness, to create an independent nuclear regulator, and to take a more nuanced approach to design risks. More attention must be paid to "soft targets" such as nuclear fuel that might attract the attention of terrorists. As this list makes clear, both hardware and software are sources of danger. Ultimately, national governments need to look hard at plans for nuclear power facilities and decide if they are realistic; this effort should be complemented by a rigorous assessment of nuclear power standards. The development of human capabilities should begin during the facility sales process. Equally probing questions should be asked about the disposition of spent fuel, which can also become a terrorist target.

During the discussion, several speakers warned that the accident will compound Japan's economic woes and the national preoccupation with recovery could undermine

Japan's ability to take on international roles and responsibilities. They urged the ROK to engage Tokyo in the aftermath of March 11 to help prevent Japan from turning further inward. One US participant suggested that revelations that there is cesium in yellow dust from China could open the door to trilateral cooperation on radiation monitoring. It was suggested that Seoul should cooperate with Japan on promoting lessons learned from the Fukushima accident, and use the forthcoming Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) that Seoul will host next year as a venue. (There are reports that the US government is wary of expanding the focus of the NSS to take on safety concerns.) Another US speaker suggested that Japan and South Korea could either compete or cooperate as they advance different visions of Green Growth and emissions reductions: the nonnuclear approach that Japan seems to be embracing vs. the nuclear one favored by the ROK. (Several participants were skeptical that Japan could meet its energy needs without nuclear power.) Either way, another US participant noted that March 11 should be a wakeup call for Southeast Asian nations that seem to be ready to invest in nuclear capabilities to have a complete understanding of the risks involved.

Again, US participants urged the ROK to seize the moment and expand cooperation with Japan, either bilaterally or with the US. The Self-Defense Forces were one of the few institutions in Japan to emerge from the incident with its reputation enhanced – credit its exemplary response to the crisis. One participant suggested that the three countries try contingency planning based on a North Korean attack on a nuclear plant. ROK participants were notably silent in response, although one pointed out that military ties are improving quietly, out of public view. He also noted that Korean goodwill generated in the aftermath of the accident was dissipated by the approval of new school textbooks that refer to the disputed Dokdo/Takeshima islands as Japanese. The speaker ruefully characterized it as a “bureaucratic glitch.”

Nuclear Diplomacy

Day two began with a look at the two countries' nuclear diplomacy. Our ROK presenter looked at the future of the Six-Party Talks, and conceded his frustration. According to him, only China is not disappointed by their current status and outlook. For him, the starting point is the South Korean demand for an apology by North Korea for the two incidents in 2010 – the sinking of the *Cheonan* and the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island. But hanging over the prospect of resumption is Pyongyang's disdain for President Lee, its anger at his hard line, and its desire to ensure that it gives him no diplomatic victories. Our speaker insisted that the only way to rekindle the talks is to change the format, relax all preconditions, and focus on a package deal that responds to all participants' needs. That is extremely unlikely as South Korea (and the US) descend into election-year campaigns in 2012.

The speaker then turned to extended deterrence and nuclear arms reductions. He argued that Pyongyang's progress in its nuclear program in combination with the prospect of political instability obligates Seoul to show a more robust defense posture. But he was optimistic about the state of the extended deterrent. He noted that the US Nuclear Posture Review offered Pyongyang its long-sought negative security assurances,

but they will take a long time to go into effect. In the interim, the US commitment to the ROK's defense remains strong and the two countries are consulting through the Extended Deterrence Policy Committee (EDPC). The two countries' conventional capabilities remain strong, too. Our speaker disagreed with the view that the US should redeploy tactical nuclear weapons to the peninsula (But it is OK to talk about the option to send a message to Pyongyang). The two countries can show their commitment to each other with regular joint exercises with aircraft carriers, visits or the rotational stationing of stealth bombers on ROK bases, and efforts to make force augmentation plans more feasible.

Finally, our speaker shed light on South Korea thinking about the Nuclear Security Summit that it will host in 2012. He explained that the desire to host the meeting grew out of President Lee's vision of "Global Korea." The summit will demonstrate that the ROK is an advanced and responsible state committed to the 3S – safety, security, and safeguards. And yes, it would pressure North Korea to comply with global norms in its own nuclear program. Two questions dominate ROK preparations. First, should the subject matter of the NSS be deepened or widened? Should the ambit expand to safety as well as security of nuclear facilities? And should the focus remain on fissile materials or expand to include radiological materials and power plants? Second, how can the ROK maintain the momentum being developed? For example, should the NSS be institutionalized?

Our US presenter split the topic into three issues: nonproliferation, arms control, and transparency. On the nonproliferation front, he noted that a lot of work is being done and there is considerable progress. This is important as there is a real risk of nuclear contagions: "proliferation cascades are possible." For a number of years, it has become evident that proliferation and disarmament were linked concepts: a real US commitment to disarmament was needed to win other governments' backing for Washington's nonproliferation agenda. But it appears that there is another linkage: the prospect of proliferation is becoming an obstacle to disarmament. Countries are not discrete problems; instead, their behavior inspires others to act in similar ways. Thus, North Korea is aiming to follow Pakistan, and Iran is closely watching how the world responds to Pyongyang's demand to be treated as a nuclear weapon state. Our speaker warned that international outrage is diminishing as the novelty of North Korea's status wears off; its possession of nuclear weapons is beginning to be accepted as "a fact." (Ironically, North Korean provocations undermine that objective by reminding the world of the potential consequences of acquiescence.) The revelation that North Korea has a uranium enrichment program is a new chapter in this saga.

The US position in nuclear negotiations with Pyongyang is that North Korea must demonstrate its seriousness and that it is prepared to honor its commitments. While the administration has not wavered in its policy of strategic patience, the speaker warned that "time is not on our side"; delays favor proliferators. He added that the Syrian facility, destroyed by Israel in September 2007, "had North Korea written all over it." The US concluded that the building was intended to process plutonium for the purpose of developing nuclear weapons. In contrast, there is no evidence that Burma's nuclear plans

constitute a violation of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, but doubts and concerns are mounting. Finally, Iran is a “major proliferation challenge.” Tehran has tripled its enrichment capacity and managed to keep the IAEA at arms-length. There is no certainty that Iran is complying with its IAEA obligations – and if it is today, how much longer that will be true.

Arms control poses equally thorny problems. While the US-Russia New START treaty is a step forward, it is just a start. Future negotiations have to take up tactical nuclear weapons, and there is no sign the Russians are interested in putting them on the table. Moscow’s conventional inferiority makes tactical nuclear arsenals an integral part of its security planning; for the US, those weapons serve political, not military, purposes. Missile defense is another bone of contention. Here, the US has shown little inclination to do more to address Moscow’s concerns. Hanging over all such discussions is the question of when China is likely to be involved in arms control talks. Beijing insists it will be involved “when the time is right,” conveniently declining to say when that will be. As US and Russian arsenals shrink in size, the fear that China will “sprint to parity” – an option Chinese insist they will decline – becomes larger.

In other talks, our speaker noted that the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT) has been held up (again) in the Conference on Disarmament. Blame for that holdup belongs on Pakistan’s shoulders. Our speaker also argued that the US will ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) but the process will be more carefully managed than in the past and previous mistakes won’t be repeated. That means it is uncertain when it will be resubmitted for consideration by the Senate.

Finally, our speaker urged all countries to develop and nurture a culture of transparency. While transparency is not the same as verification, it is still vital. This is especially so when dealing with China – the Chinese reaction to such calls has been “consistently evasive and negative.” Our presenter argued that the problem is not a lack of understanding but rather that it is politically expedient to misrepresent foreign demands. He suggested that this is a problem of political culture. He concluded by warning that the failure to make progress on this front with China will limit the progress of arms control talks.

Discussion focused on two topics. The first was the future of the Six-Party Talks. The consensus view – but not unanimous – was that the outlook is grim. North Korea seems determined to cling to its nuclear weapons, China will not exert its leverage (such as it is) to push Pyongyang to moderate its behavior, and the talks don’t seem suited to emerging issues, such as the North’s highly enriched uranium (HEU) program. That latter issue is especially important as Pyongyang now seems indifferent to maintaining plutonium capabilities, having demonstrated that it has an HEU program. As one US participant noted, North Korea seems determined to blow through every red line the US (and others) establish. How can an effective barrier against proliferation be established? Suggestions to fix the talks included trimming the number of participants, taking China out of the chair, and expanding subject areas to deal with the transfer of nuclear technologies.

Success ultimately depends on getting the US and China on the same page, but there is little hope that can be accomplished; blame diverging national interests when thinking about the future of the Korean Peninsula. One US participant noted the problem posed by the proliferation of North Korean businesses in China that acquire technology as Chinese companies. Ironically, ROK restrictions on its companies doing business with the North have made the Chinese option even more valuable. He suggested using the profit motive to work against North Korea by encouraging its Chinese business partners to blow the whistle when engaged to make deals.

One voice of dissent urged both Seoul and Washington to think harder about ways to get North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons. He bemoaned the lack of consistency in negotiating with Pyongyang, arguing that a steadier line would have led to a different outcome. He suggested that waiting for the North to be creative about negotiations makes little sense. Finally, he warned that there is no leverage to be gained by denying Pyongyang something it does not value. That should guide US and South Korea thinking when negotiating with Pyongyang.

The second topic of discussion was the Nuclear Security Summit. Mostly, we posed questions. What is expected of South Korea as host? How does the US define a “successful” summit? Will Seoul continue the momentum of the NSS – and Global Korea – beyond the MB administration? There was considerable skepticism from ROK participants on this point, with one suggesting that there is little the South can do in the global setting, besides provide peacekeeping forces. It can be a regional player, however.

Finally, a US participant warned the group that (re)deploying US assets to ROK is a complicated procedure and involves considerable more than just flying newer planes or sailing ships to the Peninsula to show the flag. But signals are important and should continue to guide the two countries’ thinking about force planning and posture.

The State of the Alliance

We then explored the state of the alliance. Our ROK presenter applauded the current situation. Consultations have been strengthened and broadened. But expectations on both sides remain high. To prove that point, our speaker called on the two countries to develop a second vision statement that is more comprehensive and has detailed action plans. That document should focus on strategic issues, such as the mid- to long-term strategic outlook and list concerns, challenges, and opportunities. (In a departure from previous comments, he too urged the ROK to take a global perspective.) Prominent on that list is North Korea, including nuclear challenges; the rise of China, which will take on such topics as the power shift in the region, regional security architecture, and US policy toward East Asia and the Asia Pacific; off-peninsula US-ROK security cooperation, in particular the ROK contribution; and finally, the future of trilateral (and other) forms of cooperation. A particular concern for him is enhancing ROK-Japan bilateral cooperation.

Our ROK speaker conceptualized alliance management issues broadly. As he explained, the two governments need to figure out ways to take cooperation beyond the realm of military issues and make those ideas real. High on his list is getting the Korea-US Free Trade Agreement (KORUS) ratified by both legislatures and then moving to post-free trade agreement cooperation. A key task is securing domestic understanding and support for the alliance in both countries. Critical post-2015 issues include: force transformation, base relocation, cost sharing, burden sharing, OPCON transfer, OPlans, the post-Combined Forces Command (CFC), United Nations Command (UNC) future, roles/missions/capabilities, extended deterrence, and exercises and training. Doing that, he warned, requires a better interagency process in the ROK.

Turning to the 2009 Joint Declaration that was issued by Presidents Lee and Obama, he characterized it as too abstract, ambiguous, and ambitious. It focused on the present, not the future and the narrative has not been followed up by action. (This could be part of a larger problem – a tendency by the two countries to underestimate or dismiss details.) He called on the two governments to “revisit the fundamentals of the alliance” while exploring changes at the regional and global level, and in particular how they interact.

Examining deterrence, doctrine, and the alliance, he characterized the US commitment as credible, despite diversifying North Korea threats. He is worried about the lack of understanding of deterrence in the ROK, and warned that it can push the public to adopt extreme approaches to security threats. That said, he acknowledged differences between Seoul and Washington on how to deter and defend against specific threats, but suggested that a better understanding of the nature and complexity of North Korean threats will help overcome that challenge.

He applauded the work of the EDPC, and noted that both countries have made unilateral efforts to strengthen the deterrent. South Korea has introduced the concept of proactive deterrence, set up a northwest island defense headquarters, revised rules of engagement, and is pursuing defense reform 307. For its part, the US has reaffirmed its security commitment.

His bilateral discussion agenda includes: North Korean threats and how to respond to them; the capabilities and mechanisms needed to respond effectively; mid- and long-term challenges in and around the Korean Peninsula; the desired end state on the peninsula; China; global security challenges; and responsibility sharing.

Our US presenter provided a shorter assessment. The alliance is good, but more work needs to be done. The two governments should use one basic question as a benchmark: does North Korea strengthen or weaken the alliance? Another troubling issue is environmental concerns at US bases in Korea, in particular the disposition of Agent Orange.

Turning specifically to deterrence, our speaker asked a fundamental question: if we don't understand why North Korea does what it does, then how can we deter it? To

better deal with Pyongyang, the speaker suggested establishing tiered groups to explore alliance management and extended deterrence. As a guiding principle, the ROK should be considered a *key* ally, not just another ally. Those talks should take up specific steps on early warning, preparedness, logistics, and the like.

There was agreement in the discussion that the original “oomph” provided by the 2009 joint declaration has faded and a new joint vision statement (or at least further refinement) is need. The need for new momentum was spurred by concern about the degree to which the current state of the alliance reflects personalities, and those could change next year. Another participant credited North Korea for demonstrating to South Koreans the value of the alliance. But another participant warned that strengthening the alliance has in the past sown the seeds of longer-term problems and alliance managers need to anticipate those difficulties.

As the two countries contemplate a shared future and their roles in shaping the region, that by definition demands better ROK-Japan cooperation. Seoul was urged to take the initiative and engage Tokyo. One ambitious suggestion called for trilateral US-ROK-Japan cooperation on missile defense. Of course, the obstacles to strengthening such cooperation are well known: history, textbooks, Dokdo, Yasukuni, comfort women, etc. But South Korean participants acknowledged the need to institutionalize a bilateral dialogue and try to insulate it from political pressure. Many felt that the initiative must come from Tokyo, however. One key element has to be a strong public diplomacy track. Anticipating Chinese objections, a speaker noted that Beijing could eventually join such discussions after they were established.

Next Steps for the Alliance

Finally, we looked at where the alliance is going. Our US presenter first looked at the thorny problem of North Korea. He sees the US moving slowly back to talks (both bilaterally and multilaterally). Pyongyang is providing rhetorical “teasers,” but our speaker insisted denuclearization is not going to happen. For him, the uranium enrichment program, newly revealed by Pyongyang, is “a game changer” because it makes full verification impossible. He identified Pyongyang’s priorities as: retaining its nuclear capability while giving pieces away and winning de facto recognition of its status as a nuclear power; a peace treaty, preferably with the US only; driving a wedge between Washington and Seoul; re-engaging the US to get economic/security benefits while making minimal concessions; getting rid of US troops on the Korean Peninsula; ending the US-ROK security treaty, ending the US nuclear umbrella; and positioning itself for the ROK presidential election. The two countries (and others) must keep denuclearization as the goal of negotiations, demanding concrete interim steps and real deliverables along the way. Meanwhile, we should be exploring North Korean weaknesses. We should have no illusions about what is going on – we are buying time. Throughout the process, the US and ROK must be in sync. The bottom line for both governments must be that there can be no normalization or peace treaty without denuclearization.

Turning to China, he noted that its rise makes bilateral and trilateral cooperation more important than ever. That task is made easier by the fact that both US and Korean governments and experts agree on assessments of China. Washington backs the “Plus Three” dialogue that includes Seoul, Tokyo, and Beijing. The US also coordinates with and debriefs its two Northeast Asian allies on the Strategic & Economic Dialogue (S&ED) as well as the various US-China bilateral meetings, including mil-mil discussions. He reminded the group that all engagement with China should stress transparency and that reassurances about US forward deployments in Asia are more important than ever in this environment.

The bilateral relationship is strong, but the test is keeping it at its current level. That task is complicated by the volatility of ROK politics and the hothouse environment of presidential campaigns. Thus far, the gaps on key topics – extended deterrence, North Korean provocations, and nuclear diplomacy – are being managed well. He specifically flagged the extended deterrence dialogue as a confidence builder. The environmental issues identified earlier and the Yongsan move needs to be handled quickly and transparently. He agreed with the speaker in the previous session that KORUS needs to be a priority: “just get it done.” It is a symbol of the two countries’ new and revitalized partnership. At the same time, the governments should be expanding areas of cooperation – going global, tackling nontraditional security issues, and developing a memorandum of understanding on aid coordination are three targets.

Our ROK presenter agreed on the need for a joint vision statement. For him, the first pillar should enhance bilateral cooperation on security and beyond. He recommended the institutionalization of the alliance by passing KORUS and revising the US-ROK civilian nuclear energy cooperation accord. The second pillar would focus on regional peace and stability, and would tackle multilateral cooperation in East Asia. He does not see competition among the regional actors for leadership. Of course, China is key to this pillar and engagement is his preferred strategy. He called for enhanced bilateral strategic communication with the US on issues involving China. The third pillar of the vision is its global dimension. The ROK is a ready participant in peacekeeping operations, having dispatched 600 troops in 9 missions, including PRT teams to Iraq and Afghanistan. South Korea’s overseas development assistance is expected to triple to \$3 billion by 2015. Finally, the ROK is a contact partner of NATO and a partner of the OSCE. Our ROK speaker underscored the high support the alliance enjoys in both countries: a survey showed 87 percent of ROK respondents and 80 percent of those in the US agree on the necessity of the alliance. He also applauded inclusion of the ROK in the US visa waiver program as a vital means for building support for the alliance in the South.

Our discussion focused on North Korea, in particular how to maintain a united front among the two countries while shaping developments north of the 38th parallel. The group agreed that they can influence Pyongyang best when the two countries send a single message. That demands consistency between the two countries and within each country. Pendulum swings in policy, engendered by changes in the government in each country, must be avoided. We agreed that China, while unable to force Pyongyang’s

hand, does play a big role. Seoul may have more influence in Beijing on this topic than does Washington. Several participants suggested broadening the scope of discussions with the North. For some, that meant going beyond security matters and taking up social-economic concerns, ideally to speed up the process of change in the DPRK. That could mean expanding exchanges to give more people a taste of life outside the regime. The goal is to exploit cracks developing in North Korean society. (A US participant countered that limits on such programs come from Pyongyang, not its partners in waiting.)

Related to this issue is the question of food aid. A US discussant noted that there is little evidence of food hoarding in the DPRK, a periodically cited reason to not provide humanitarian aid despite the country's structural inability to feed its citizens. While speakers warned against linking food aid to politics, a US speaker insisted that Pyongyang made food a political issue when it said it would have no bilateral engagement with Seoul.

US participants flagged the missile issue and urged the two countries to make it a priority in negotiations with Pyongyang; finding a way to tackle that pressing concern without undermining denuclearization talks will be tough. This could also provide a platform for US-ROK-Japan cooperation and coordination.

Overall, the mood was dark. The prospects for denuclearization are small and shrinking. But there was also agreement that North Korea cannot be accepted as a de facto nuclear power. One US participant called on the alliance "to start thinking seriously about replacing the North Korean regime." That may be the only way to solve the nuclear issue. In the meantime, the world should be expecting a third nuclear test.

A final thread of this conversation tackled competing schools of thought about deterrence and crisis management. The events of 2010 have many observers on both sides yearning for escalation dominance as the best way to counter the North. One US participant noted the seductiveness of that appeal, but argued that in theory crisis management has been the US objective. Success in this endeavor, however, demands reciprocal restraint by both parties to the crisis and in the current environment, that is unrealistic. That seems to leave escalation dominance as the only option. Which forces a basic question: does the US (and its allies) have the will and capability to prevail at each level of confrontation?

Americans and South Koreans (or at least our group) agree on the key pillars of the Northeast Asian security order. The current North Korean regime cannot be persuaded or coerced into giving up its nuclear weapons. At the same time, the Six-Party Talks should continue, even though prospects for success are poor, in order to manage the problem and reduce the prospects of confrontation and prevent the situation from getting worse. No one believes the situation on the Korean Peninsula would be improved by reintroducing US tactical nuclear weapons nor by Seoul's acquisition of its own nuclear capability. US extended deterrence is working at the strategic level; the prospects of the North launching an all-out attack on the South are extremely remote, as is the likelihood of Pyongyang ever actually using its nuclear weapons against the ROK or against US

forces on or beyond the Peninsula. The state of the alliance is good and there is great appreciation in South Korea for US support during the last year. But both countries should guard against complacency. A guiding rule for the bilateral security partnership should be “no surprises.” More public diplomacy is needed to raise awareness of both countries on the importance of the alliance both today and tomorrow. Indeed, there are few more important or valuable tools to deal with the many complexities of the dynamic Northeast Asian security environment.

APPENDIX A

The Third US-ROK Strategic Dialogue June 27-28, 2011

Agenda

June 26 – Sunday

6:30 PM Welcome Reception and Dinner

June 27 - Monday

9:00 AM Opening Remarks
Keynote Address: Mr. R. Michael Schiffer
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense

9:15 AM **Session 1: Security Perspectives**
US presenter: Mike McDevitt
ROK presenter: Yoon Young-Kwan

This session explores each country's view of the security environment to identify issues, and highlight shared and divergent concerns. What are the principal strategic challenges to each country and to regional security and stability? How does each weight traditional and nontraditional threats? How does each view the regional balance of power? What factors influence and how are trends impacting that balance? Is the security environment 'new' and if so, how? How do these changes affect our responses to security threats? [Discussion of North Korea should be deferred to the next session]

10:45 AM Coffee Break

11:00 AM **Session 2: Views of North Korea and Explaining 2010: Did Deterrence Fail?**
ROK presenter: Shin Beomchul
US presenter: Sue Terry

This session focuses on North Korea. How does each country interpret developments in North Korea over the last year and what forces are at work? Why did North Korea sink the Cheonan and shell Yeongpyeong island? Were these a failure of deterrence? How did the two countries' respond? Was that response sufficient?

12:30 PM Lunch

1:30 PM **Session 3: Deterrence and Doctrine**

US presenter: Elaine Bunn
ROK presenter: Cho Namhoon

How are the two countries' military strategies and doctrine adapted to a changing security environment? The US presenter will examine how the Nuclear Posture Review has shaped US force planning and whether recent events influenced US thinking about the extended deterrent. How do the nuclear deterrent and the conventional deterrent fit together? Does NATO's new strategic doctrine shape US thinking about Asia? Should it? The ROK presenter will provide South Korean thinking about the NPR and its impact on US policy. Should the US – as some in South Korea argue – reintroduce tactical nuclear weapons to South Korea? In addition, the speaker should explain the ROK doctrine of proactive deterrence, what it is, what it means, how it will work and its implications for the alliance.

3:00 PM Coffee Break

3:15 PM **Session 4: Nuclear Policy after Fukushima**
US presenter: Toby Dalton
ROK presenter: Hahm Chaibong

This session will look at respective interpretations of what happened at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. What caused the catastrophe at that facility? What lessons can be learned from it? What are its implications for Japan, for the region, and for the nuclear power industry?

5:00 PM Session adjourns

6:30 PM Reception and Dinner

June 28 – Tuesday

9:00 AM **Session 5: Nuclear Diplomacy**
ROK presenter: Kim Young-Ho
US presenter: Robert Gromoll

This session examines the two countries' approach to nuclear diplomacy and the various initiatives to contain or reduce nuclear weapons. They should be prepared to address the role of the Six Party Talks and their future, the New Start agreement, and thoughts about the most important next steps in arms control and how to ensure progress doesn't undermine the extended deterrent. Both speakers should also address the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit, in particular the expectations they have for the meeting.

10:30 AM Coffee Break

10:45 AM **Session 6: The State of the Alliance:**
 ROK presenter: Choi Kang
 US presenter: Katy Oh

How does each side characterize the state of the alliance? What are the key issues in the bilateral relationship and how does each side see the other's response to them? How will changes identified in session 3 impact the alliance? What is being done to ensure that the two countries are working together as they adapt to developments? Is the Extended Deterrence Policy Committee working? What should be on its agenda?

12:30 PM Lunch

2:00 PM **Session 7: Next Steps for the Alliance**
 US presenter: Evans Revere
 ROK presenter: Lee Hyun-ju

Presenters should anticipate key issues and concerns for the US-ROK security alliance and what should be done to ensure that the extended deterrent stays strong. Do the two countries share a common vision of the alliance's future? What is it? How can the alliance work with other US allies – in particular, Japan but also Australia – and partners, such as India? How can it engage China? How can both work together toward a safer nonnuclear world?

3:30 PM **Session 8: Conclusions and Wrap Up**

4:00 PM Conference adjourns

APPENDIX B

The Third US-ROK Strategic Dialogue June 27, 28, 2011

PARTICIPANT LIST

Korea

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Mr. Ralph A. Cossa
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Dr. Toby Dalton
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Mr. Brad Glosserman
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Mr. Markus V. Garlauskas
Chief, Strategy Division
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Dr. Robert H. Gromoll
Director
Office of Regional Affairs (ISN/RA)
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Mr. David Hamon
Defense Threat Reduction Agency

Mr. Christopher Johnstone
Director for Northeast Asia
Office of the Secretary of Defense

Dr. Kerry M. Kartchner
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Mr. Bob Vince
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U.S. Department of Defense

APPENDIX C

Enhancing Deterrence: U.S.-Japan-ROK Trilateral Statement Pacific Forum CSIS – Young Leaders Program U.S.-Japan-ROK Strategic Dialogue – Maui, HI (June 27 – July 1, 2011)

Introduction

The United States-Japan and United States-Republic of Korea (ROK) alliances have long been the key pillars of regional stability in the Asia-Pacific, enabling a peaceful environment for East Asia's remarkable economic development and integration. These alliances represent not only the full commitment of the U.S. to the defense of Japan and the ROK, but also the willingness of Japan and the ROK to play an active role in regional and global security. In particular, these alliances are necessary to deter aggression from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and elicit China's cooperation in contributing to regional stability and prosperity. The three parties recognize that a strong trilateral relationship requires continued enhancement of bilateral ties. Moreover, contemporary and emerging threats require an evolution toward greater trilateral security cooperation. Provocations, proliferation, nontraditional security challenges, and a changing strategic environment demand stronger political and economic ties amongst the three parties, and the development of a robust Trilateral Strategic Partnership (TSP).

The TSP parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them shall be considered an attack against all of them. Consequently, the TSP parties agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each party, in consonance with its own laws, will assist the party or parties so attacked by taking such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the Asia-Pacific region.

The TSP will have the following objectives:

- Promoting an open, inclusive, and rule-of-law-based Asia-Pacific region proceeding from common threat perceptions, mutual interests for peace and stability, and shared values for good governance and free trade.
- Enhancing the security of the TSP parties by increasing defense and diplomatic cooperation while pursuing efficiencies.
- Achieving denuclearization of the DPRK, deterring further aggression, preventing nuclear testing and the proliferation of nuclear materials and technology, and working toward peaceful development of inter-Korean relations.
- Demonstrating the cooperative will of the TSP parties for the purpose of effective deterrence.
- Using trilateral cooperation as a platform for addressing regional and global issues while building constructive partnerships with other stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region. The TSP parties recognize that the growing role of China is one of the most important trends in the region, and the TSP parties seek to engage China as a responsible partner.

Trilateral Coordination

The United States, Japan, and the ROK recognize the current and emerging threats posed by the DPRK to international nonproliferation regimes, the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region, and the U.S. homeland. The TSP parties roundly condemn attacks by the DPRK on the Cheonan and Yeonpyeong Island as direct violations of the 1953 Armistice Agreement, and resolve to maintain and enhance deterrence against future aggression.

The fundamental purposes of the U.S.-ROK alliance are to deter major aggression by the DPRK and to defend the ROK. The U.S.-Japan alliance deters attacks against Japan and contributes to the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region, including the deterrence of major conflict on the Korean Peninsula. In the event of major aggression by the DPRK against the ROK, Japan commits to enable and contribute logistical, C4ISR, and basing support to U.S.-ROK operations on the Korean peninsula. The U.S. commits to sustaining and adapting its extended deterrent capabilities, including but not limited to nuclear forces. In the event of aggression by the DPRK against Japan, the ROK commits to providing appropriate support to the combined efforts of the U.S. and Japan in responding to such an attack.

The U.S., Japan, and the ROK also resolve to enhance deterrence against lower-level provocations by the DPRK. The U.S. and the ROK resolve to respond decisively and under close consultation to incidents of limited aggression by the DPRK. Japan supports the strengthening of deterrence against the DPRK, and will appropriately support U.S. and ROK military deterrence and response operations in accordance with Japanese law. Further, the TSP parties pledge to coordinate diplomatic, political, and economic responses to provocations by the DPRK.

The TSP parties reaffirm their commitment to the denuclearization of the DPRK, in accordance with the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks and UN Security Council Resolutions 1789 and 1874. The parties urge the DPRK to return to the Six-Party Talks, and encourage its immediate compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and its other international obligations. The TSP parties also call upon China to take appropriate steps to this end.

In light of the DPRK's continuing flagrant violations of its denuclearization commitments and emerging reports of active nuclear proliferation activities with third-party states, the TSP parties commit to hold the DPRK accountable for any future proliferation activities, especially proliferation of nuclear materials, weapons, or technologies. The TSP parties will undertake diplomatic, political, economic, and, as appropriate, military measures in response to proliferation activities conducted by the DPRK. The U.S. reaffirms that it will hold any state or entity fully accountable for participating in, supporting, or enabling a WMD terrorist attack against the U.S. or its allies.

The TSP parties encourage China to play a responsible and constructive role in regional stability and prosperity, adhere to international norms of behavior, and actively promote trust with the U.S., Japan, and the ROK. The parties also call upon China to improve openness and

transparency with respect to its military modernization and related activities and strengthen confidence-building measures with other countries in the Asia-Pacific. In this regard, the TSP parties express concern regarding recent naval incidents within the East and South China Seas and affirm their commitment to the peaceful and non-coercive resolution of all territorial disputes. The TSP parties resolve to coordinate efforts to address China's rapid and opaque military modernization and related activities while utilizing every opportunity to cooperate with China to reduce tensions in the region.

The TSP parties commit to enhance trilateral defense cooperation and integration. To that end, the parties will enhance the interoperability of their defense capabilities, including naval, air, C4ISR, space, and cyberspace assets and systems, and to expand defense industrial cooperation and exchanges.

In recognition of emerging anti-access/area denial challenges, the TSP parties commit to jointly develop operational plans, systems, and postures designed to ensure access to global commons. The TSP parties agree to explore opportunities to enhance defense technology cooperation and create systems which can be developed, built, exported, and used by all parties.

The TSP parties pledge to continue further development and deployment of missile defense capabilities commensurate with the growing threat posed by DPRK missile capabilities and to improve intelligence sharing and trilateral defense coordination with regard to missile attacks.

The TSP parties agree to create a Trilateral Extended Deterrence Policy Committee, to meet regularly at the DASD/DDG level, and to discuss issues relating to extended deterrence, the role of nuclear and conventional capabilities, missile defense, and emerging deterrence issues in space and cyberspace.

Recognizing the fiscal challenges facing the governments of all three parties and the pressure these challenges will place on defense expenditures, the TSP parties commit to bear a proportionate financial burden in order to preserve peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region. The parties further agree to examine opportunities for divisions of labor among their defense postures based on their respective enduring and bridging capabilities.

Timeline and Roadmap for TSP Implementation

The TSP parties commit to regular and close consultations via the following mechanisms:

Trilateral Extended Deterrence Policy Committee

- Discuss nuclear and non-nuclear deterrence at all levels of conflict.
- Explore deterrence implications in space and cyberspace.
- Mechanism: Annual DASD/DDG meeting to commence within six to nine months.

Trilateral Contingency Planning to Respond in the Event of Aggression, Proliferation, or Attempted Access Denial

- Trilateral J-5 Planning Meeting: Coordinate planning on issues including possible conflict on the Korean peninsula, maritime security, space, cyberspace, etc.
- Trilateral State/Treasury Dialogue: Coordinate trilateral diplomatic, political, economic and financial strategies.
- Mechanism: Annual O-7/DASD/DDG meeting to commence within six to nine months.

Trilateral Policy Consultations

- Trilateral Exchange of Regional Threat Assessments.
Mechanism: Annual working-level civilian and military intelligence meeting supplemented by quarterly VTC.
- Trilateral Consultations on U.S.-ROK and U.S.-Japan DPRI Negotiations and Progress Mechanism: Annual USDP/DG meeting to commence within six to nine months (VTC will begin 18 months after the establishment of a secure communication line among the three parties).

Defense Technology Cooperation Initiative

- Explore opportunities to enhance defense technology cooperation.
- Encourage defense industrial companies in all three countries to take part in track II talks.
- Mechanism: Annual Trilateral USD-AT&L & counterparts meeting to commence within six to nine months.

Enhanced Trilateral Interoperability

- Explore opportunities in existing bilateral and multilateral initiatives to improve trilateral military interoperability. (e.g., Cobra Gold, RIMPAC, Key Resolve, Gulf of Aden operations, ARF VDR).
- Negotiate and implement the trilateral General Security of Military Information Agreements (GSOMIA) and Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreements (ACSA), to commence within three to six months.

Enhance Trilateral Cooperation on Missile Defense

- Exchange observers during missile defense exercises.
- Develop joint missile defense-related operational plans and exercises.
- Establish joint missile defense centers within two years.

Enhance Trilateral Strategic Research and Intelligence Practices

- Provide funding for a one-year long visiting fellowship, to be termed the TSP Fellowship, which would involve personnel exchanges among Japan's National Defense Academy, the Korean Military Academy, and the U.S. National Defense University/National Intelligence University College with a view to improving national information security practices. TSP Fellows would carry out research on TSP areas of interest. This would commence within one year.