

Conclusion of a peace agreement is the most pressing issue to be settled down

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As well known, Northeast Asia is a very sensitive region in geo-political terms in which there exists fierce competition between world powers as well as long-running, serious disputes and confrontation structure in terms of territorial and historical issues.

On top of it, the Korean peninsula, which is yet to see an end to the war and is faced with another round risk of war all the time, has become the world's biggest hotspot.

The Armistice Agreement (AA) was concluded in 1950s to bring 3 years' Korean war to a halt. Armistice is not meant for once-and-for-all end of the war, but a temporal cease-fire.

Ever since then, for more than 60 years, instable cease-fire situation has prevailed over the Korean peninsula which is neither in a state of war nor peace.

The above mentioned 60 years' history should not be simply regarded as the one of maintenance or sustenance of the AA.

It is the history in which the US, the belligerent party and the world's nuclear power, has kept threatening the DPRK, the other warring party with its nuclear arsenal and aggressor forces.

It is also the history in which the DPRK has safeguarded its national sovereignty and right to existence with its self-defensive counter measures.

The US's persistent nuclear threats pushed the DPRK to join the advanced ranks of the nuclear weapons states and accordingly, turned the belligerent relation between the DPRK and the US into the one between the nuclear powers.

Times have changed and so has the DPRK's strategic status.

The DPRK's successful test-fire of surface-to-surface intermediate strategic ballistic rocket "Hwasong-10" is a clear declaration that the US's unilateral nuclear threats to the DPRK has come to the end.

The powerful DPRK which has possessed even H-bomb, displays its might as a full-fledged, responsible nuclear weapons state which is striving for just international order while deterring the US's nuclear threats, blackmailing, high-handedness and arbitrariness.

Today, the belligerent relation between the DPRK and the US has fundamentally transmuted and the strategic structure in northeast Asia surrounding the Korean peninsula has also dramatically changed.

Such a reality requires the replacement of the AA with the peace agreement and establishment of the long-lasting peace-keeping regime more urgently than ever.

Peace agreement and Confidence-Building

Recently at several multilateral stages such as "Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on NEA security" and "North East Asia Cooperation Dialogue", some argued that it could be desirable for both the DPRK and the US to take confidence-building measures first as the perspective on the conclusion of peace agreement seems far-off.

In confidence building efforts, it is prerequisite for the parties concerned to forge mutual trust that they could peacefully co-exist and cooperate to achieve co-prosperity.

It is the most basic and fundamental factor in confidence building to have trust in the other party's will for peaceful co-existence.

Without trust that relevant party would neither invade nor do harm to the other party, it is unthinkable to build confidence among parties.

It is the first and foremost issue in confidence building on the Korean peninsula that the DPRK and the US should conclude the peace agreement in order to put a definite end to the state of war.

The conclusion of a peace agreement presents itself as an urgent matter to be tackled without delay in the light of the present situation on the peninsula where a war may break out at any moment due to the nullification of the Korean Armistice Agreement (AA).

The AA was adopted as an international legal document which envisaged the establishment of lasting peace-keeping mechanism on the Korean Peninsula, not a temporary halt to belligerence.

However, the U.S. has desperately blocked the peaceful settlement of the Korean issue while reinforcing aggressor forces in South Korea and introducing all sorts of war hardware including mass destructive weapons into South Korea from abroad in systematic violation of the AA.

The AA was nullified a long time ago due to the U.S.'s persistent violations and consequently, the relation between the DPRK and the U.S. turned into de facto belligerent state of war from the mere technical one.

The current belligerent relationship between the DPRK and the US on the Korean peninsula is no longer the same with the previous one where the DPRK confronted the nuclear arms of the US with the rifles.

It is now the belligerent relation between the nuclear-armed states.

At the 7th congress of the Worker's Party of Korea, DPRK's supreme leader KIM JONG UN clarified that the US should roll back its

anachronistic hostile policy towards the DPRK and replace the AA with the peace agreement with clear understanding of the strategic status of the DPRK which has proudly joined the advanced ranks of nuclear weapons states and general tendency of the times.

The stand of the DPRK government and people remains unchanged to put an end to the state of war on the legal basis and to establish lasting peace-keeping mechanism on the Korean peninsula on the legal basis by signing the peace agreement with the US.

However, if the US persistently sidesteps the DPRK's demand for conclusion of peace agreement and keeps posing extreme nuclear threats, the DPRK would physically root out the war state on the Korean peninsula with the powerful nuclear deterrent.

It is urgent requirement coming from the grave situation of Korean peninsula - the world's biggest hotspot and the site of showdown between nuclear powers - to conclude the peace agreement and establish durable peace keeping regime.

Conclusion of peace agreement is prerequisite for the sake of legal and institutional guarantee and groundwork for confidence building between the DPRK and the US as well.

A string of agreements had been made between the DPRK and the US in the past through negotiations on confidence building measures.

However, those measures remain unimplemented due to the absence of legal groundwork to guarantee its implementation and in particular, due to the US's persistent hostile policy toward the DPRK.

Legal and institutional guarantee is also required to prevent any possible nullification of agreements between parties caused by every change of the US administrations.

It is a good example that Agreed Framework under the Clinton administration and some measures taken by both parties became nullified and went in vain as new Bush administration vilified the DPRK as an "axis of evil" and designated it as the target of nuclear preemptive attack.

Establishment of institutional mechanism for peaceful co-existence legally backed by the conclusion of peace agreement would make it possible for both parties to agree on and implement practical measures for confidence building, based on trust in each other's will for peaceful co-existence.

The DPRK's sustained efforts for conclusion of peace agreement

Since the conclusion of the AA, the US, the world's nuclear power, has been threatening the DPRK's sovereignty and its right to live while blocking the latter's economic construction for peaceful development.

The Korean peninsula is located at a strategic stronghold in northeast Asia. If military confrontation and conflict continue to prevail and eventually a war break out here, it would, in turn, plunge the situation in the whole area of NEA into extreme tension and could be a fuse of a nuclear war worldwide.

The DPRK has made sincere efforts to get peace agreement concluded, out of long-cherished desire to put an end to the state of war and achieve peaceful development free from any serious threat as well as its responsibility of defending peace and security on the Korean peninsula and NEA.

However, the US systematically violated core provisions of the AA such as Paragraph 60 which stipulates the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea and the peaceful and fundamental settlement of the Korean issue by the concerted efforts of the Koreans.

The AA which should serve as a clear legal ground for concluding a peace agreement was nullified by the US in less than one year's time after it was signed.

In response to the US's breach of the AA and ever-increasing danger of war, the DPRK repeatedly proposed the conclusion of peace agreement on various occasions.

The DPRK made such proposals to the US and parties concerned in April, 1956 and to the US congress in March, 1974.

As the cease fire regime turned out to be no longer in effect due to the US in early 1990s', the DPRK repeatedly proposed talks on establishment of a new peace regime and in 1996, initiated the conclusion of provisional agreement to be replaced with the AA in order to prevent armed conflict between two parties.

It again proposed talks on peace agreement to the AA signatories in January, 2010 on the occasion of 60th anniversary of the outbreak of Korean war.

The DPRK proposed talks again on peace agreement at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly and on various other occasions, as required by the dramatically changed recent situation on the peninsula.

Nonetheless, our fair proposals and sincere efforts have led nowhere so far due to the challenge and opposition of the US who is main party concerned and holds the actual commanding power over the military in South Korea.

The US's aim lurking behind sidestepping Conclusion of Peace Agreement with DPRK

Since 1950's the US administrations have persistently refused to respond to the DPRK's fair proposal for conclusion of peace agreement and establishment of durable peace-keeping regime on the Korean peninsula and resorted to its war maneuver and escalation of tensions.

It is rooted in the US's hostile policy towards the DPRK and its strategy for domination of the world.

The US's noisy fuss about the DPRK's alleged threat is none other than a mean excuse for justifying its hostile policy and ambition for dominating the world.

The US has enforced aggressive hostile policy towards the DPRK across the spectrum of politics, economy and military from the outset of the latter's founding.

The US has denied recognizing the DPRK as a sovereign state because the latter has a different political system from its own one.

It has imposed various economic sanctions on the DPRK to block its development and today those sanctions have become all the tougher to the full extent to bring down the DPRK's system.

In military terms, the US stations its aggressor forces of odd 28,000 in South Korea, and worse still, it has kept threatening the DPRK with nukes by way of calling in all sorts of strategic assets in and around the peninsula.

In recent days, the US is driving the situation of Korean peninsula to the brink of outbreak of a nuclear war by openly conducting a "precision air raid operation" aimed at scorching down the nuclear facilities and nuclear arsenal of the DPRK while introducing its

strategic assets into South Korea such as nuclear-powered submarine "Mississippi" and a formation of nuclear strategic bombers B-52H.

The US-South Korea joint military exercises against the DPRK are provocative and intrusion-oriented and as such, are most vivid and specific evidence of a hostile policy towards the DPRK.

The US seeks to justify those exercises as annual and defensive ones, but no country will overlook its warring party's military exercises taking place before its eyes.

This year, the US staged "The Key Resolve and Foal Eagle 16" joint military exercises on the largest-ever scale with utmost hostility to the DPRK.

Those exercises involved strategic assets and huge forces enough to fight a full war and extremely adventurous "operational plan 5015" – an integration of different operational plans such as "decapitation raid operation", a "precision strike drill" and "operation of storming Pyongyang" targeted at our supreme leadership was launched under the simulation of an actual war.

The US's persistent denial of the conclusion of a peace agreement with the DPRK is also prompted by its ulterior ambition for domination over the world through holding hegemony over Asia.

It is believed that the US estimates that relaxation of the situation and subsequent advent of peace on the Korean peninsula would make it lose a good excuse for its military presence and reinforcement of forces in the region and it would lead to having adverse implications for reining in big powers in the vicinity of the Korean peninsula.

For this reason, the US categorically denies concluding a peace agreement and seeks to intentionally strain the situation on the Korean peninsula in an attempt to reinforce its justification for

restraining and gaining military superiority over big powers in the region.

The US exercised a Missile Warning joint drill, the first of its kind off Hawaii together with Japan and South Korea in late June this year under the pretext of protecting against the DPRK's missile attack.

It clearly reveals the US's desperate attempt to lay the groundwork for forging tripartite military alliance by pushing South Korea to join the US-Japan Missile Defense system and to rationalize its THAAD deployment plan and gain military upper-hand in the region.

It is the US's real intention to contain military expansion of China and undermine the strategic balance with Russia through staged establishment of Missile Defense System in East Asia as it did in Europe and formulation of Asian version of NATO built on tripartite military alliance of the US, Japan and south Korea.

The US's claim that denuclearization should take precedence over a talk on a peace agreement is nothing but a mean trick to conceal its deep-rooted hostile policy towards the DPRK and its ambition for domination over the world.

The issue of conclusion of a peace agreement between the DPRK and the U.S. is not new one raised recently and the belligerent relationship between the DPRK and the US was not spawned by the former's nuclear deterrent.

It is well known that the DPRK has called for its conclusion long before its access to a nuclear deterrent force. It dates back to the post war time in 1950's that the DPRK raised the issue with the US and the international community.

Thanks to the DPRK's proactive and stubborn efforts, a resolution was adopted at the 30th session of UN General Assembly which called for withdrawal of all foreign troops out of south Korea and conclusion of peace agreement between the DPRK and the US.

However, it has not been implemented yet due to the US's desperate opposition.

Some argues that "simultaneous discussion" on the peace agreement and denuclearization could be a fresh solution to breaking the existing deadlock.

But, it is an impracticable theory drawn from negligence of history and essence of confrontation between the DPRK and the US.

A "simultaneous discussion" formula is the failed one tried in previous dialogues long before the DPRK has become a full-fledged nuclear weapons state as of today.

Six parties had already tried simultaneous discussion on the issues of peace agreement and denuclearization in 2000's, but those efforts ended up with failure because of belligerent relationship between the DPRK and the US and ever-increasing US hostile policy towards the DPRK.

As vividly demonstrated to the world, the DPRK has proudly joined the advanced ranks of nuclear powers today.

The DPRK's access to nuclear weapons is the outcome of US hostile policy and it is not intended for a political bargaining chip or an economic deal to be put on the table of dialogue or negotiations.

Conclusion of a peace agreement could be the first step in terms of withdrawal of US hostile policy towards the DPRK, but never be the last step.

Even if the state of war comes to an end through conclusion of a peace agreement, dangers of a nuclear war could not be eradicated completely as long as the US hostile policy and its ambition for world domination remain unchanged.

The DPRK's nuclear deterrence should be considered in the context of complete withdrawal of the US hostile policy and global denuclearization.

It is unthinkable to place in parallel the DPRK's nuclear deterrence and a peace agreement which is long overdue.

The DPRK's access to a nuclear deterrent force shall never be any kind of bargaining chip unless the US hostile policy fundamentally comes to an end.

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How to approach the peace agreement is a touchstone to distinguish the peace-loving forces from trigger-happy ones.

Once a legal guarantee for peaceful co-existence between the DPRK and the US is provided by the conclusion of a peace agreement, not only the DPRK-US relations but also issues of DPRK-Japan and the North and the South relations could be resolved.

The supreme leader KIM JONG UN said the DPRK would improve and normalize relations with countries that respect its sovereignty and be friendly with the DPRK even if they were in hostile relations with the DPRK in the past.

If the US rolls back its hostile policy towards the DPRK and makes a bold decision to conclude a peace agreement without any excuse or precondition, then the DPRK-US relationship could mark dramatic

improvement on the basis of trust and it will give impetus to confidence building efforts in NEA.

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