



Situation in Korean Peninsula: Responses of Six Party Members (North Korea, United States, South Korea, China, Russia and Japan) - Who Said What

February 1-9, 2018

*Compiled by Dr. Jojin V. John **

Country	Comments
North Korea	<p style="text-align: center;">Cho Yong-sam- Senior official, Foreign Ministry</p> <p>February 8, 2018¹</p> <p>"We have never begged for dialogue with the U.S. and will be the same in the future."</p> <p>"We clearly state that we don't have a willingness to meet with the U.S. side during our visit to South Korea."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">KCNA</p> <p>February 6, 2018²</p> <p>"If the U.S. and South Korea resume the large-scale joint military</p>

¹ "N.K. says it has no willingness to meet with U.S. at Olympics", The Yonhap News, February 8, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/08/0401000000AEN20180208001352315.html

² "N. Korea warns South, U.S. against resumption of joint military drill", The Yonhap News, February 6, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/06/0401000000AEN20180206012900315.html

	<p>exercises, the situation on the Korean peninsula will again be pushed back to the grim phase of catastrophe and the provokers will have to bear all responsibilities.”</p> <p>"This sinister military act aimed to chill the hard-won atmosphere for the improvement of the North-South ties and reverse the trend of development is an outright challenge to the sincere efforts made by the DPRK to defuse the tension on the Korean Peninsula and create a peaceful environment."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">KCNA</p> <p>February 4, 2018³</p> <p>“A high-level delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea led by Kim Yong Nam, president of the Presidium of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly, will soon visit south Korea to attend the opening ceremony of the 23rd Winter Olympics.”</p>
<p>USA</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mike Pence- Vice President</p> <p>February 8, 2018⁴</p> <p>“We’ll continue to seize every opportunity to ensure that North Korea does not use the powerful imagery and backdrop of the Olympics to paper over an appalling record of human rights and a pattern of developing weapons and conducting in the kind of missile launches that are threatening our nation and threatening neighbors across the region.”</p> <p>“There may be a possibility for any kind of an encounter with North Koreans, whether it be informal or whether it take the form of a meeting. As I said, we’ll have to wait and see exactly how that unfolds.”</p> <p>February 7, 2018⁵</p> <p>“The United States and Japan will continue to confront the most dangerous threat in the Indo-Pacific: the rogue regime in North Korea.”</p>

³ "DPRK High-level Delegation to Visit S. Korea", KCNA, February 4, 2018,

<https://kcnawatch.co/newstream/1517781676-386577533/dprk-high-level-delegation-to-visit-s-korea/>

⁴ "Remarks by Vice President Pence in Press Gaggle Before Air Force Two Departure", The White House, February 8, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-vice-president-pence-press-gaggle-air-force-two-departure/>

⁵ "Remarks by Vice President Pence and Prime Minister Abe of Japan in Joint Statements", The White House, February 7, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-vice-president-pence-prime-minister-abe-japan-joint-statements/>

“Later this week, I will have the privilege to lead the United States delegation to the Winter Olympics. ...I’ll be joined by the father of Otto Warmbier.”

“Together with Japan and our allies, let the world know this: We will continue to intensify our maximum pressure campaign until North Korea takes concrete steps toward complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization.”

“To that end, I’m announcing today that the United States of America will soon unveil the toughest and most aggressive round of economic sanctions on North Korea ever. And we will continue to isolate North Korea until it abandons its nuclear and ballistic missile program once and for all.”

February 7, 2018⁶

“Mr. Prime Minister, I say to you and I say to all the people of Japan: On behalf of President Trump, the United States is with you in this challenge, and we will continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the people of Japan, the people of South Korea, and our allies and partners across the region until we achieve the global objective of the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and we end the provocations and threats that North Korea has presented to this region and to the wider world.”

February 6, 2018⁷

“All options are on the table. But we will reiterate this week — standing beside Prime Minister Abe, standing beside President Moon — the solidarity of all these nations, and nations around the world, to continue to bring maximum pressure on an increasing basis on the rogue regime in North Korea to achieve the global objective of a denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.”

“With regard to any interaction with the North Korean delegation, I have not requested a meeting, but we’ll see what happens. President Trump has said he always believes in talking, but I haven’t requested

⁶ "Remarks by Vice President Pence and Prime Minister Abe of Japan Before Bilateral Meeting", The White House, February 8, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-vice-president-pence-prime-minister-abe-japan-bilateral-meeting/>

⁷ "Press Gaggle by Vice President Pence", The White House, February 6, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/press-gaggle-vice-president-pence/>

any meetings. But we'll see what happens."

Jim Mattis- Secretary of Defense

February 7, 2018⁸

"As far as the situation with Korea, it is firmly in the diplomatic lane. ..And we, of course, back up Secretary of State Tillerson's foreign policy efforts, as guided by the President, with viable military options."

February 6, 2018⁹

"We will continue bolstering them (Guam) to keep pace with the threat out of North Korea."

"Besides the THAAD system we also keep the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense U.S. Navy warship in the waters out there. We can always reinforce that."

"We also have several of those ships in Japanese waters right now and they can move back and forth to include coverage of Guam in the mobile way that comes to our Navy."

Rex Tillerson- Secretary of State

February 7, 2018¹⁰

"The Vice President's there (South Korea), and we'll just have to see what happens."

"The South Koreans have been using some training facilities in the North, so our understanding is this is on a reciprocal basis and there is no gain, there is no cash or anything being paid to the North Koreans for their participation in the Olympics. So it's very much just on an equal basis."

"I'm not sure that the South or the U.S. expected to get anything out of

⁸ "Press Briefing by Press Secretary Sarah Sanders and Secretary of Defense James Mattis", The White House, February 7, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/press-briefing-press-secretary-sarah-sanders-secretary-defense-james-mattis-02072018/>

⁹ <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/07/0401000000AEN20180207000200315.html>

¹⁰ "Interview With Rich Edson of Fox News", The US Department of State, February 6, 2018, <https://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2018/02/278034.htm>

this.”

"In terms of the South Koreans allowing the North Koreans to participate, and with the approval of the IOC (International Olympic Committee) as well, our understanding is that what North Korea is receiving from the South Koreans is no more than what all the participants who are attending the Olympics are receiving.”

Heather Nauert - Spokesperson, State Department

February 6, 2018¹¹

“There are no plans to meet with any North Korean officials during or after the Olympics; I want to be clear about that. There are no plans to do so.”

Joseph Yun- Special envoy on North Korea

February 5, 2018¹²

Following his meeting with Lee Do-hoon, South Korea’s special representative for Korean Peninsula peace and security affairs On February 5, 2018, U.S. special envoy on North Korea Joseph Yun said,

"We want to open dialogue with North Korea, we want to have a credible dialogue, a dialogue that could lead ... towards denuclearization.”

"That is our goal, and of course President Moon has also emphasized that goal too.”

Donald Trump

February 2, 2018¹³

“I just had a phone call with the President of South Korea, President Moon, and they are in dialogue (with North Korea), at least as it

¹¹ "Department Press Briefing - February 06, 2018", US Department of State, February 6, 2018, <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2018/02/278014.htm>

¹² "S. Korean, U.S. nuke envoys discuss ways to resume denuclearization talks", The Yonhap news, February 5, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/04/0401000000AEN20180204004653315.html

¹³ "Remarks by President Trump in Meeting with North Korean Defectors", The White House, February 2, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-meeting-north-korean-defectors/>

concerns the Olympics. And that's a good thing, not a bad thing."

Statement- White House

February 2, 2018¹⁴

"President Donald J. Trump spoke today with President Moon Jae-in of the Republic of Korea to wish him and the Korean people a successful Winter Olympic Games. The two leaders discussed the importance of improving the human rights situation in North Korea and underscored their commitment to work together on this issue."

February 2, 2018¹⁵

"President Donald J. Trump spoke today with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan. President Trump thanked Prime Minister Abe for Japan's efforts to maintain international pressure on North Korea, including recent efforts to clamp down on North Korea's attempts to circumvent sanctions in the waters surrounding the Korean Peninsula. Both leaders agreed on the need to intensify the international maximum pressure campaign to denuclearize North Korea."

Nuclear Posture Review- Department of Defense

February 2, 2018¹⁶

"North Korean officials insist that they will not give up nuclear weapons, and North Korea may now be only months away from the capability to strike the United States with nuclear-armed ballistic missiles."

"Its expansive nuclear and missile programs suggest the potential for nuclear first use in support of conventional operations."

"Given North Korea's current and emerging nuclear capabilities; existing chemical, biological, and conventional capabilities; and extremely provocative rhetoric and actions, it has come to pose an

¹⁴ "Readout of President Donald J. Trump's Call with President Moon Jae-In", The White House, February 2, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/readout-president-donald-j-trumps-call-president-moon-jae/>

¹⁵ "Readout of President Donald J. Trump's Call with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan", The White House, February 2, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/readout-president-donald-j-trumps-call-prime-minister-shinzo-abe-japan-6/>

¹⁶ "Nuclear Posture Review", US Department of Defense, February 2, 2018, <https://media.defense.gov/2018/Feb/02/2001872886/-1/-1/1/2018-NUCLEAR-POSTURE-REVIEW-FINAL-REPORT.PDF>

urgent and unpredictable threat to the United States, allies, and partners. Consequently, the United States reaffirms that North Korea's illicit nuclear program must be completely, verifiably, and irreversibly eliminated, resulting in a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons."

"Our deterrence strategy for North Korea makes clear that any North Korean nuclear attack against the United States or its allies and partners is unacceptable and will result in the end of that regime. There is no scenario in which the Kim (Jong-un) regime could employ nuclear weapons and survive."

"We will hold the Kim regime fully responsible for any transfer of nuclear weapons technology, material or expertise to any state or non-state actor."

"Although North Korea's missile forces are expanding and increasingly mobile, U.S. and allied missile defenses are increasingly capable against North Korea's missile threat, and the United States has the early warning systems and strike capabilities necessary to degrade North Korean missile capabilities prior to launch. We will continually improve these defensive capabilities as needed to stay ahead of North Korean missile threats if they continue to grow, while also taking steps to preclude an arms race with China or Russia."

Patrick Shanahan- Deputy Secretary of Defense

February 2, 2018¹⁷

"With respect to North Korea, the capabilities in the nuclear triad that exist today, as well as the recapitalization that's discussed in the report, and some of these supplementary capabilities -- all of those things, in various circumstances, would have applicability in the type of hypothetical scenarios that we worry about with North Korea."

"Unfortunately, some of the -- our concerns that we used to have a few years ago have become, quite frankly, not so hypothetical anymore, in terms of the threat that we face."

¹⁷ "News Briefing on the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review", The US Department of Defense, February 2, 2018, <https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript-View/Article/1431945/news-briefing-on-the-2018-nuclear-posture-review/>

Dana W. White- Chief Spokesperson, Pentagon

February 1, 2018¹⁸

"Korea has -- often has parades."

"I think we are encouraged by the inter-Korea dialogue, and we encourage it. The relationship between Seoul and Washington has never been closer, so we look forward to more progress."

Joseph Yun- Special Representative on Korean peninsula

February 2, 2018¹⁹

On February 2, 2018, U.S. nuclear envoy Joseph Yun had a meeting with South Korean Vice Unification Minister Chun Hae-sung in Seoul.

"We want to open dialogue with North Korea, we want to have a credible dialogue, a dialogue that could lead steps towards denuclearization."

"That is our goal and of course President Moon has also emphasized that goal too."

"I told him ... that U.S. of course wants to see a very secure, very successful Olympics, and we want to do what we can to help."

"And I also emphasize to them that this is a good opportunity to make progress on denuclearization, which is of course the ultimate goal of the United States. And we agreed to talk again at some future date."

Heather Neuart- Spokesperson, White House

February 1, 2018

"Our policy has not changed in any way. Our policy is still the

¹⁸ "Department Of Defense Press Briefing By Pentagon Chief Spokesperson Dana W. White And Joint Staff Director Lt. Gen. Kenneth F. McKenzie Jr. In The Pentagon Briefing Room", The US Department of Defense, February 1, 2018, <https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript-View/Article/1430178/department-of-defense-press-briefing-by-pentagon-chief-spokesperson-dana-w-whit/>

¹⁹ "Top U.S. nuke envoy says Washington wants 'credible dialogue' with N.K. for denuclearization", The Yonhap News, February 2, 2018, www.english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/02/0401000000AEN20180202008751315.html

	<p>maximum pressure policy. We want a denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.</p> <p>“Stories about a bloody (nose) – all that kind of stuff, let me just say: Our policy has not changed, our policy remains the same.”</p>
<p>South Korea</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Woo Won-shik- Floor Leader, Democratic Party (Ruling Party)</p> <p>February 9, 2018²⁰</p> <p>"We have to use the Olympics as a stage of peace as much as possible so as to open wider the door of inter-Korean dialogue."</p> <p>"President Moon's meeting with the North's delegation will be an important turning point."</p> <p>"Beginning with today's meeting, I hope the government will be able to calmly improve inter-Korean relations so that we can move forward on the path of peace on the Korean Peninsula."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moon Jae-in –President</p> <p>February 8, 2018²¹</p> <p>“I believe that it is thanks to the unwavering principle of the United States and the very strong and close coordination between Korea and the United States that enabled North Korea to come out to dialogue and to participate in the Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games.”</p> <p>“And we certainly hope to utilize this opportunity to the maximum so that the Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games can become a venue that leads to dialogue for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, as well as the establishment of peace on the Korean Peninsula.”</p> <p>“And one thing that I would always like to emphasize is that the</p>

²⁰ "Ruling party calls for effective use of Olympics to promote peace with N. Korea", The Yonhap News, February 9, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/09/81/0401000000AEN20180209003700315F.html

²¹ "Remarks by Vice President Pence and President Moon of the Republic of Korea Before Bilateral Meeting", The White House, February 8, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-vice-president-pence-president-moon-republic-korea-bilateral-meeting/>

airtight cooperation between Korea and the United States is of the utmost importance. And I would also like to mention that this moment, with you and me together, this is the greatest testament to the great cooperation that we have between our two countries.”

February 8, 2018²²

"The South Korea-U.S. alliance is stronger than ever, and Vice President Pence's visit to celebrate the PyeongChang Olympics, following President Donald Trump's state visit here in November, will serve as a chance to show the strong alliance and bond between the peoples of the two countries."

"By making the best use of this opportunity, (I) hope inter-Korean talks will lead to a resolution of the nuclear issue and the establishment of peace on the Korean Peninsula. To this end, we need multi-faceted efforts for dialogue.”

Kim Eui-kyeom – Spokesman, Office of the President

February 8, 2018²³

"President Moon plans to hold a meeting and have lunch with the North Korean delegation on Feb. 10.”

February 7, 2018²⁴

"We believe North Korea's delegation contains the North's willingness to celebrate the PyeongChang Winter Olympic Games and also reduce tension."

Noh Kyu-duk – Spokesperson, Foreign Ministry

February 8, 2018²⁵

"Our basic stance is that we will not cause any controversy from a

²² "Moon, Pence reaffirm 'maximum pressure' approach to bring N.K. to denuclearization talks", The Yonhap News, February 8, 2018,

english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/08/0401000000AEN20180208014651315.html

²³ "Moon to meet N. Korean delegates to PyeongChang on Saturday: Cheong Wa Dae", The Yonhap News, February 8, 2018,

english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/08/86/0401000000AEN20180208012251315F.html

²⁴ "Seoul welcomes planned visit of N. Korean leader Kim's sister", The Yonhap News, February 7, 2018, www.english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/07/0401000000AEN20180207013000315.html

²⁵ "S. Korea says exemptions to N.K. sanctions temporary during Olympics", The Yonhap New, February 8, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/08/54/0401000000AEN20180208005853315F.html

potential violation of sanctions on the North in the process of making the PyeongChang Winter Olympics a success.”

"We hope you understand that (the government) has taken what it thought necessary and minimum measures to make sure of a successful hosting of the games.”

Statement- Ministry of Unification

February 7, 2018²⁶

According to the Unification Ministry, the younger sister of leader Kim Jong-un, Kim Yo-jong, the deputy chief of the ruling party's propaganda and agitation department, will be included in the delegation, which is led by ceremonial head of state Kim Yong-nam. The team also includes Choe Hwi, the chairman of the National Sports Guidance Committee, and Ri Son-gwon, the head of the North's state agency in charge of inter-Korean affairs.

"The government views the composition of the delegation -- party, government and sports officials -- as meaningful, given that their trip is aimed at celebrating the opening ceremony of the Winter Games."

Baik Tae-hyun- Spokesperson, Ministry of Unification

February 7, 2018²⁷

“The North has asked the South to provide fuel (to the ship). The government is currently reviewing it.”

February 5, 2018²⁸

Though many North Korean vessels were blacklisted by the United Nations and put under embargo, the North Korean cargo-passenger ferry Mangyongbong-92 is free of international sanctions.

"The Mangyongbong-92 is neither subject to the United States'

²⁶ "N.K. to send leader Kim Jong-un's sister to S. Korea this week", Yonhap News, February 7, 2018, www.english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/06/0401000000AEN20180206013552315.html

²⁷ "N.K. asks S. Korea to offer fuel for ship that carried art troupe", The Yonhap News, February 7, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/07/0401000000AEN20180207005500315.html

²⁸ "Free from int'l sanctions, N. Korean ferry needs nod from Seoul to sail to South: officials", The Yonhap News, February 5, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/05/0401000000AEN20180205009000315.html

unilateral sanctions, nor to the U.N. sanctions.”

"Although our North Korea sanctions, May 25 measures, ban the North Korean vessels' entry into and navigation on our seas, (the government) is considering an exemption from the sanctions as part of the bid to host the Olympics successfully.”

"Seoul will make sure (the ferry's travel) would not come in violation of any sanctions through close coordination with the U.S. and the international community.”

"Even if some amount of petroleum is provided, it is unlikely to cause issues if the provision is made within a certain amount and is reported to the U.N. Security Council.”

February 5, 2018²⁹

"The government plans to make preparations in a way that talks between high-level government officials from the South and the North could take place in line with the North Korean delegation's attendance at the Olympic opening ceremony and other sports events during their stay here.”

"The government hopes that the upcoming visit by the high-level North Korean delegation will become a milestone in hosting an Olympics of peace, restoring inter-Korean relations and building peace on the Korean Peninsula.”

Official – Presidential Office

February 5, 2018³⁰

"President Moon will be meeting with Kim, beginning with the Olympic opening ceremony.”

"But it is something that should be discussed with the North's advance delegation whether Kim will separately pay a visit to President Moon.”

²⁹ "S. Korea seeks to arrange high-level talks with with N. Korean delegates: ministry", The Yonhap News, February 5, 2018,

www.english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/05/0401000000AEN20180205005000315.html

³⁰ "Moon considering meeting one-on-one with N. Korea's ceremonial leader: Cheong Wa Dae", Yonhap News, February 5, 2018,

english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2018/02/05/0301000000AEN20180205002551315.html

February 5, 2018

"A reflection of North Korea's willingness to improve inter-Korean ties and help make the PyeongChang Games a success."

"Given Kim Yong-nam is responsible for summit diplomacy as the head of state by the constitution, the North appears to show some sincerity to the South in its own way."

Baik Tae-hyun- Spokesman, Ministry of Unification

February 5, 2018³¹

"The government plans to make preparations in a way that talks between high-level government officials from the South and the North could take place in line with the North Korean delegation's attendance at the Olympic opening ceremony and other sports events during their stay here."

"The government hopes that the upcoming visit by the high-level North Korean delegation will become a milestone in hosting an Olympics of peace, restoring inter-Korean relations and building peace on the Korean Peninsula."

February 5, 2018³²

The North notified the South Korea on February 4, 2018 that it plans to send the 140-member Samjiyon art troupe by ship. However, arrival of North Korean ship at a South Korean port violates Seoul's unilateral sanctions. On the matter the Unification ministry said,

"The May 24 sanctions ban a North Korean vessel entering a South Korean port. But we are considering an exemption to make the PyeongChang Games a success."

"When it comes to U.N. sanctions, we will closely consult with the international community including the U.S. in order not to make the move violate sanctions."

³¹ "S. Korea seeks to arrange high-level talks with with N. Korean delegates: ministry", The Yonhap news, February 5, 2018,

www.english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/05/0401000000AEN20180205005000315.html

³² "N.K. offers to send art troupe to S. Korea by ferry this week", The Yonhap News, february 5, 2018, www.english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/05/0401000000AEN20180205003551315.html

	<p style="text-align: center;">Noh Kyu-duk- Spokesman, Foreign Ministry</p> <p>February 1, 2018³³</p> <p>"We assess that (the address) once again issues the U.S.' strong determination for the resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue."</p> <p>"South Korea and the U.S. share the stance and position that they will forge ahead with all the available diplomatic efforts including sanctions and pressure in order to bring North Korea to the negotiating table for denuclearization."</p> <p>"The countries are continuing their coordination and the latest address seems to have been made in that regard."</p>
<p>China</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Wang Yi- Foreign Minister</p> <p>February 8, 2018³⁴</p> <p>"China, as the biggest neighboring country to the Korean Peninsula, expresses support to the recent positive interactions."</p> <p>"Achieving the goal of dialogue and consultation on the Korean Peninsula requires efforts not only from the two parties, but also from all relevant sides."</p> <p>"We hope that dialogue during the PyeongChang Winter Olympics will be conducted routinely."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Geng Shuang's-Spokesperson, Foreign Ministry</p> <p>February 7, 2018³⁵</p> <p>"The core of the Korean Peninsula issue is the contradiction between the DPRK and the US. As parties directly concerned, the DPRK and the US should enhance mutual understanding and accumulate mutual trust through dialogue so as to pave the way for the final settlement of</p>

³³ "S. Korea lauds Trump address for pledging firm will to resolve N. Korean nukes", Yonhap News, February 1, 2018, www.english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/02/01/0401000000AEN20180201009600315.html

³⁴ "Chinese FM calls on DPRK, ROK to maintain interactions", Xinhua, February 8, 2018, www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-02/08/c_136959492.htm

³⁵ "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Geng Shuang's Regular Press Conference", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PRC, February 7, 2018, www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1532736.shtml

	<p>the issue.”</p> <p>“At present, the situation on the Korean Peninsula appears to be easing up, which does not come by easily. Direct dialogues between the DPRK and the US will help consolidate the momentum and move forward the process of the political settlement of the Peninsula issue.”</p>
<p>Russia</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Alexander Matsegora- Ambassador to North Korea</p> <p>February 8, 2018³⁶</p> <p>“The probability at the moment is perhaps not very high. We believe that the six-party format will be relevant without fail. However, it will be relevant at the next stages. The task now is to seek to reduce tensions in relations between Pyongyang and Seoul and try to reduce tensions between North Korea and the United States.”</p> <p>“The issue at hand at the moment is work in a bilateral format.”</p> <p>February 7, 2018³⁷</p> <p>"The conditions are very good now, with positive attitude, the Olympic Games [in PyeongChang], the Olympic ceasefire and no [military] exercises.”</p> <p>"We call on them: ‘dear friends, let’s begin!’"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Alexander Timonin- Ambassador to South Korea</p> <p>February 6, 2018³⁸</p> <p>"Russia welcomes positive changes in the situation on the Korean Peninsula reflected in inter-Korean contacts, which took place in January and resulted in important agreements concerning the joint participation of North and South Korea in the Olympic Winter Games in PyeongChang."</p>

³⁶ "Revival of six-party talks on North Korea unlikely now —Russian ambassador", TASS, February 8, 2018, <http://tass.com/politics/989032>

³⁷ "Russia calls on North Korea, US to start talks — Russian ambassador to Pyongyang", TASS, February 7, 2018, <http://tass.com/world/988790>

³⁸ "Russia expects Seoul, Pyongyang to maintain contacts after Olympics", TASS, February 6, 2018, <http://tass.com/politics/988690>

	<p>"We hope that the implementation of the agreements will help ease tensions and ensure peace in Southeast Asia."</p>
<p>Japan</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Shinzo Abe- Prime Minister</p> <p>February 7, 2018³⁹</p> <p>"We respect the progress on inter-Korean talks, but we need to accept the reality that North Korea is persistently pursuing nuclear and missile programs."</p> <p>"Today, I shared the recognition with Vice President Pence once again that Japan, the U.S. and South Korea need to maximize pressure against North Korea through every possible measure. I was able to coordinate our North Korea policy completely."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Yoshihide Suga- Chief Cabinet Secretary</p> <p>February 7, 2018⁴⁰</p> <p>"It is likely that North Korea is trying to deflect international attention away from its nuclear and missile programs and buy itself more time to press ahead with further development."</p> <p>"We cannot be swayed by North Korea's smile diplomacy."</p>

**Dr. Jojin V. John, Research Fellow, Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi.*

Disclaimer: The views expressed are that of the Researcher and not of the Council.

³⁹ "Abe and Pence say no divide on North Korea during Tokyo meeting, warn against Pyongyang's 'smile diplomacy'", The Japan Times, February 7, 2018, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/02/07/national/politics-diplomacy/pence-views-japans-missile-defense-site-north-korea-agenda-talks/#.WnozJuhuaM9>

⁴⁰ Ibid