



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

March 1-9, 2018

*Compiled by Dr. Jojin V. John **

Country	Comments
North Korea	<p style="text-align: center;">Rodong Sinmun</p> <p>March 7, 2018¹</p> <p>"There was no other choice at the sharp phase of confrontation where (North Korea) had to defend its own institution and fate on its own in the face of the United States, the world's biggest nuclear power."</p> <p>"We came into possession of nuclear weapons in a righteous manner with a goal of defending the country's top interest against U.S. nuclear threats."</p> <p>"The peace and security of the Korean Peninsula, Northeast Asia and the world have been secured thanks to our strengthening of nuclear deterrence."</p> <p>"Our nuclear (program) is aimed at punishing and securing peace from</p>

¹ "N. Korean paper justifies nuclear arsenal despite recent inter-Korean agreement", The Yonhap News, March 7, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/07/0401000000AEN20180307005900315.html

aggressors and warmongers, not threatening anyone."

Kim Jong-un

March 6, 2018²

"It is important that (the two Koreas) should use today's meeting as a stepping stone (for better ties) and continue to foster reconciliation and to seek dialogue as both sides aspire."

KCNA

March 6, 2017³

"He (Kim Jong -un)had an openhearted talk with the party of the special envoy delegation of the south side over the issues arising in actively improving the north-south relations and ensuring peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula."

"He repeatedly clarified that it is our consistent and principled stand and his firm will to vigorously advance the north-south relations and write a new history of national reunification by the concerted efforts of our nation to be proud of in the world."

"Hearing the intention of President Moon Jae In for a summit from the special envoy of the south side, he exchanged views and made a satisfactory agreement."

"He gave the important instruction to the relevant field to rapidly take practical steps for it."

"He also made an exchange of in-depth views on the issues for easing the acute military tensions on the Korean Peninsula and activating the versatile dialogue, contact, cooperation and exchange."

"The talk between the Supreme Leader and the delegation of the special envoy of President Moon Jae In took place in a compatriotic and sincere atmosphere."

² "N. Korean TV airs footage of Kim's meeting with S. Korean envoys", The Yonhap News, March 6, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/06/0401000000AEN20180306013400315.html

³ "Kim Jong Un Meets Members of Delegation of Special Envoy of S. Korean President", KCNA, March 4, 2018, <https://kcnawatch.co/newstream/1520289057-660794138/kim-jong-un-meets-members-of-delegation-of-special-envoy-of-s-korean-president/>

USA

Donald Trump- President

March 8, 2018⁴

"Kim Jong Un talked about denuclearization with the South Korean Representatives, not just a freeze," he wrote. "Also, no missile testing by North Korea during this period of time. Great progress being made but sanctions will remain until an agreement is reached. Meeting being planned!"

Rex Tillerson- Secretary of States

March 8, 2018⁵

"I think, as President Trump has indicated, potentially positive signals coming from North Korea by way of their intra-Korean dialogue with South Korea."

"In terms of direct talks with the United States -- and you asked negotiations, and we're a long ways from negotiations."

"I think the first step -- and I've said this before -- is to have talks, have some kind of talks about talks, because I don't know yet, until we are able to meet ourselves face to face with representatives of North Korea, whether the conditions are right to even begin thinking about negotiations."

Donald Trump- President

March 6, 2018⁶

"I think that they are sincere, but I think they're sincere also because the sanctions and what we're doing with respect to North Korea, including, you know, the great help that we've been given from China. And they can do more, but I think they've done more than, certainly,

⁴ Donald Trump, Twitter, March 8, 2018, <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/971915531346436096=19>

⁵ "Tillerson: U.S. is 'long ways' from negotiations with N. Korea", The Yonhap News, March 9, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/09/0401000000AEN20180309000300315.html

⁶ "Remarks by President Trump and Prime Minister Löfven of Sweden in Joint Press Conference", The White House, March 6, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-prime-minister-lofven-sweden-joint-press-conference/>

they've ever done for our country before. So China has been a big help. I think that's been a factor. But the sanctions have been very, very strong and very biting. And we don't want that to happen. So I really believe they are sincere. I hope they're sincere. We're going to soon find out."

March 6, 2018⁷

When asked whether or not the recent events in North Korea a breakthrough, President Trump said,

"Well, I hope so. I want to see what happens. We're in very close contact. We have come, certainly, a long way, at least rhetorically, with North Korea. It would be a great thing for the world. It would be a great thing for North Korea. It would be a great thing for the Peninsula."

On North Korea's preparedness to give up their nuclear weapons, President Trump said,

"We're going to see. We're going to see. They seem to be acting positively."

"I think that their statement and the statements coming out of South Korea and North Korea have been very positive. That would be a great thing for the world. "

"I will say this — and we've been given tremendous credit, because the Olympics was not going well. And when they came in out of the blue and they said, we'd love to participate in the Olympics, it made the Olympics very successful. President Moon of South Korea was very generous in his statements, as to the fact that we had a lot to do with that, if not everything. We had a lot to do with it."

"The Olympics were beautiful. There were, really, very successful. And as you know, they weren't looking that way prior to. So I thought North Korea was terrific. They came out — they went into the Olympics, they went in with good spirit, they did well. Let's see if we can carry it over."

⁷ "Remarks by President Trump and Prime Minister Löfven of Sweden Before Bilateral Meeting", The White House, March 6, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-prime-minister-lofven-sweden-bilateral-meeting/>

March 6, 2018⁸

"Possible progress being made in talks with North Korea. For the first time in many years, a serious effort is being made by all parties concerned," he tweeted. "The World is watching and waiting! May be false hope, but the U.S. is ready to go hard in either direction!"

Mike Pence- Vice President

March 6, 2018⁹

"Whichever direction talks with North Korea go, we will be firm in our resolve. The United States and our allies remain committed to applying maximum pressure on the Kim regime to end their nuclear program. All options are on the table and our posture toward the regime will not change until we see credible, verifiable, and concrete steps toward denuclearization."

Statement- State Department

March 6, 2018¹⁰

On February 22, 2018, the United States determined under the Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Warfare Elimination Act of 1991 (CBW Act) that the Government of North Korea used the chemical warfare agent VX to assassinate Kim Jong Nam, in the Kuala Lumpur airport.

These sanctions are in addition to existing U.S. comprehensive sanctions against targeting unlawful North Korean activities. The sanctions took effect upon publication of this determination in the Federal Register on March 5, 2018.

The United States strongly condemns the use of chemical weapons to conduct an assassination. This public display of contempt for universal norms against chemical weapons use further demonstrates the reckless nature of North Korea and underscores that we cannot afford to

⁸ Donald Trump, Twitter, March 6, 2018, <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/971025582061424640>

⁹ "Statement from Vice President Mike Pence on North Korea", The White House, March 6, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/statement-vice-president-mike-pence-north-korea/>

¹⁰ "Imposition of Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Warfare Elimination Act Sanctions on North Korea", The US State Department, March 6, 2018, <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2018/03/279079.htm>

	<p>tolerate a North Korean WMD program of any kind.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Heather Nauert- Spokesperson</p> <p>March 1, 2018¹¹</p> <p>“President Trump and President Moon noted their firm position that any dialogue with North Korea must be conducted with the explicit and unwavering goal of complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization. The two leaders committed to maintain close coordination.”</p> <p>“United States is latched up very closely with South Korea. We have many conversations with our ally. Those conversations continue. We have a broad range of conversations with them. We share the principle of the denuclearization and the complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and that hasn’t changed.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Statement- White House</p> <p>March 1, 2018¹²</p> <p>“President Moon briefed (over phone) President Trump on developments regarding North Korea and inter-Korean talks. President Trump and President Moon noted their firm position that any dialogue with North Korea must be conducted with the explicit and unwavering goal of complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization. The two leaders committed to maintain close coordination.”</p>
South Korea	<p style="text-align: center;">Chung Eui-yong- National Security Adviser</p> <p>March 8, 2018¹³</p> <p>“I told President Trump that, in our meeting, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un said he is committed to denuclearization. Kim pledged that</p>

¹¹“ Department Press Briefing”, US Department of States, March 1, 2018, <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2018/03/278982.htm>

¹² "Readout of President Donald J. Trump’s Call with President Moon Jae-in of the Republic of Korea", The White House, March 1, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/readout-president-donald-j-trumps-call-president-moon-jae-republic-korea-6/>

¹³ "Remarks by Republic of Korea National Security Advisor Chung Eui-Yong", The White House, March 8, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-republic-korea-national-security-advisor-chung-eui-yong/>

North Korea will refrain from any further nuclear or missile tests. He understands that the routine joint military exercises between the Republic of Korea and the United States must continue. And he expressed his eagerness to meet President Trump as soon as possible.”

“President Trump appreciated the briefing and said he would meet Kim Jong-un by May to achieve permanent denuclearization.”

“The Republic of Korea, along with the United States, Japan, and our many partners around the world remain fully and resolutely committed to the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Along with President Trump, we are optimistic about continuing a diplomatic process to test the possibility of a peaceful resolution.”

“The Republic of Korea, the United States, and our partners stand together in insisting that we not repeat the mistakes of the past, and that the pressure will continue until North Korea matches its words with concrete actions.”

Cho Myoung-gyon- Unification Minister

March 9, 2018¹⁴

"We made our own judgment that it's fortunate that there's a figure like Vice Director Kim Yo-jong (sister of Kim Jong-un) in the North's leadership.”

"I got the impression that she could be playing an important role in various work related to North Korea's external relations as well as South-North ties.”

Lee Nak-yon- Prime Minister

March 8, 2018¹⁵

"We're not in a situation where we can lift sanctions just to hold dialogue. That is because sanctions are a U.N. decision and it's difficult to believe the U.N. would make such a decision (to ease sanctions) just

¹⁴ "S. Korean minister speaks well of N. Korea's ruling family", The Yonhap News, March 9, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/09/0401000000AEN20180309007900315.html

¹⁵ "PM: Sanctions on N. Korea cannot be lifted in exchange for talks", The Yonhap News, March 8, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/08/0401000000AEN20180308013551315.html

because dialogue has started."

"I'm saying this because some people may be concerned that something could be offered, rewards could be given and sanctions could be eased only for dialogue. We're in a situation where it is difficult for such things to happen."

"Before late April, dialogue between the North and the U.S. can take place at whatever level it is. I hope so."

"There could be critical moments and a great deal of patience may be required of us, but we will overcome them."

Song Young-moo- Defense Minister

March 8, 2018¹⁶

Minister during his meeting with Pacific Fleet Commander Adm. Scott Swift said,

"Lots of changes are expected in South-North relations and (security conditions) surrounding the Korean Peninsula going forward."

"You need not deploy (defense assets) like nuclear submarines during the remainder of your tenure as commander."

Chung Eui-yong- National Security Advisor and Head of President Moon's envoys to North Korea

March 6, 2018¹⁷

1. "The South and the North agreed to hold the third inter-Korean summit at the Panmunjom Peace House (a South Korean facility in the joint security area of Panmunjom located just south of the inter-Korean border) in late April, and decided to proceed with specific practical consultations."

¹⁶ "Defense chief's 'joke' adds to speculation about scaled-down drills", The Yonhap News, March 8, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/08/0401000000AEN20180308009651315.html

¹⁷ "Inter-Korean Summit held at the end of April" - Result of North Korea Special Mission Delegation Cheong Wa Dae briefing", Office of the President, March 6, 2018, <http://www1.president.go.kr/articles/2503>; "Koreas agree to hold third summit in April, reaffirm resolve to denuclearize", The Yonhap News, March 6, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/06/0401000000AEN20180306013055315.html

2. "The South and the North have agreed to establish a hot line between the two countries for the purpose of alleviating military tensions and for close consultation, and have decided to make the first call before the third inter-Korean summit."

3. "The North has clarified its willingness to denuclearize the Korean peninsula and clarified that there is no reason to retain nuclear if the military threat to North Korea is resolved and North Korea's system security is guaranteed."

4. "The North side expressed its willingness to speak frankly with the United States to discuss denuclearization issues and normalize relations with North Korea."

5. "While the dialogue continues, the North has made it clear that it will not resume strategic provocations such as additional nuclear tests and ballistic missile tests. In addition, the North has confirmed that it will not use conventional weapons as well as nuclear weapons toward the South."

6. "The North invited a South Korean Taekwondo demonstration team and a troupe to visit Pyongyang to continue the good atmosphere of inter-Korean reconciliation and cooperation for the Pyeongchang Olympic Games."

"Chairman Kim said the denuclearization issue may be discussed as an agenda for the North-U.S. dialogue."

"What we must especially pay attention to is the fact that (he) has clearly stated that the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula was an instruction of his predecessor and that there has been no change to such an instruction."

Official- Office of the President

March 6, 2018¹⁸

"Our stance on the joint military drills is that it is hard to postpone the exercises again or suspend them and there is no justification for doing

¹⁸ "N.K. leader expresses understanding about S. Korea-U.S. military drills: Seoul", The Yonhap News, March 6, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/06/0401000000AEN20180306013100315.html; "N.K. leader willing to discuss denuclearization with U.S.: Seoul", The Yonhap News, March 6, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/06/0401000000AEN20180306013251315.html

so. But Kim said that he understands the South's stance."

"Chairman Kim said that even denuclearization could be among the agenda items for talks between North Korea and the U.S."

"What drew our attention, in particular, is that he made clear that achieving denuclearization is his father's dying wish and that it has not been changed at all."

"Kim also didn't specify anything special from South Korea or other countries in return for the North coming to dialogue but expressed an intent to be treated seriously as a counterpart for talks."

Moon Jae-in- President

March 6, 2017¹⁹

"The foundation of peace is nothing but strong military power and defense readiness that do not tolerate any provocation."

"Peace is our survival and a necessary condition for our prosperity. However, without a strong military and robust national defense, we can neither make nor maintain peace."

"We must talk with North Korea for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. But at the same time, we must focus all our energy on building capabilities that can counter North Korea and its missiles quickly and practically,"

"I sent a special delegation of envoys to North Korea yesterday. We now have embarked on a journey for peace and prosperity with a belief that we can achieve our goal of establishing peace and denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula through our own efforts."

"I will further develop and strengthen the Korea-U.S. joint defense posture."

"I will also continue my efforts to win the full support of other neighboring countries and the international community for peace on the Korean Peninsula."

Noh Kyu- duk- Spokesman, Foreign Ministry

¹⁹ "Moon calls for dialogue with N. Korea, increased deterrence", The Yonhap News, March 6, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/06/0401000000AEN20180306007351315.html

March 6, 2018²⁰

"The latest action by the U.S. can be seen as part of the international community's joint efforts to bring the North out to the path of denuclearization through strong sanctions and pressure."

"We expect that it will contribute to finding a peaceful resolution of the North's nuclear issue."

Statement- Unification Ministry

March 6, 2018²¹

"The government thinks that North Korea appears to attach an importance to the special envoys' trip."

Kang Kyung-wha- Foreign Minister

March 5, 2018²²

"Although there were no direct contacts between the U.S. and North Korean delegations on the sidelines of the Olympics, we were able to confirm ... the willingness on both sides to engage directly."

"Now through our special envoy's visit to Pyongyang, we hope to further explore North Korea's intentions for dialogue."

"So far, North Korea has not indicated any desire to engage in denuclearization talks with the U.S. But it knows very well that with the heavy sanctions placed upon it, its key interests cannot be secured without coming to terms with the U.S.."

Chung Eui-yong- Chief, National Security Office and Head of President Moon's Special Envoys to North Korea

²⁰ "Latest U.S. sanctions on N.K. likely to help peacefully resolve nuclear problem: official", The Yonhap News, March 6, 2018,

english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/06/0401000000AEN20180306008800315.html

²¹ "N.K. apparently attaches importance to S. Korean envoy's trip: Seoul", The Yonhap News, March 6, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/06/0401000000AEN20180306006800315.html

²² "S. Korean special envoy hopes to explore N. Korea's intention for talks with U.S.: FM", The Yonhap News, March 5, 2018,

english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/05/0401000000AEN20180305006800315.html

	<p>March 5, 2018²³</p> <p>"Most of all, I will deliver President Moon Jae-in's sincere and firm resolve to maintain the dialogue and improvement in relations between the South and the North, which were fostered on the occasion of the PyeongChang Winter Olympics, to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula."</p> <p>"In addition, I plan to hold in-depth discussions on various ways to continue talks between not only the South and the North, but also the North and the United States and the international community."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Statement- Office of the President</p> <p>March 2, 2018²⁴</p> <p>"President Moon told President Trump that he plans to send a special envoy to North Korea, who will reciprocate the visit by North Korea's special envoy Kim Yo-jong and confirm details of issues discussed during a high-level North Korean delegation's South Korea visit."</p> <p>"President Trump and President Moon noted their firm position that any dialogue with North Korea must be conducted with the explicit and unwavering goal of complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization."</p> <p>"The two leaders committed to maintain close coordination."</p>
China	<p style="text-align: center;">Geng Shuang- Spokesperson, Foreign Ministry</p> <p>March 7, 2018²⁵</p> <p>"We hope that all relevant parties will seize the current opportunity and work for the shared goal to advance the process of denuclearizing the Peninsula and politically resolving the Korean Peninsula issue. China stands ready to play its part to this end."</p> <p>March 6, 2017²⁶</p>

²³ "Moon's envoy says trip aimed at facilitating U.S.-N.K. denuclearization talks", The Yonhap News, March 5, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/05/0401000000AEN20180305006553315.html

²⁴ "Moon to send special envoy to N. Korea: Cheong Wa Dae", The Yonhap News, March 2, 2018, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/01/0401000000AEN20180301007554315.html

²⁵ "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Geng Shuang's Regular Press Conference", The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PRC, March 7, 2018 www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1540251.shtml

	<p>“China has noted that the visit of the ROK President's Special Delegation to the DPRK has achieved positive outcomes and we welcome this. As a close neighbor to the Korean Peninsula, China always supports the efforts made by the DPRK and ROK to improve their relations and the efforts made by all relevant parties to address their respective legitimate concerns, including the security issue through dialogue and consultation so as to promote the process of denuclearization of the Peninsula. We believe that this serves the common interests of all the people on the Peninsula as well as the relevant parties and can also contribute to regional peace and stability. We hope that the DPRK and the ROK can earnestly implement the relevant consensus and continue with their efforts to advance reconciliation and cooperation. We hope that all relevant parties can seize the current opportunity, work for the shared goal and make concerted efforts to promote the process of denuclearization of the Peninsula and politically resolving the Korean Peninsula issue. China is willing to continue to play its due role to this end.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hua Chunying- Spokesperson, Foreign Ministry</p> <p>March 2, 2018²⁷</p> <p>We have noted that the ROK said it would send a special envoy to the DPRK and the DPRK and the US have also showed willingness for talks. China welcomes and supports these positive developments.”</p> <p>“The development of the situation on the Korean Peninsula since the beginning of this year fully shows that the suspension of the DPRK's nuclear and missile activities and of the US and the ROK's large-scale joint military exercises is conducive to easing tensions, building up mutual trust and creating conditions for dialogue.”</p>
Russia	<p style="text-align: center;">Maria Zakharova- Spokeswoman, Foreign Ministry</p> <p>March 7, 2018²⁸</p>

²⁶ "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Geng Shuang's Remarks on the Outcomes of the ROK President's Special Delegation's Visit to the DPRK", The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PRC, March 6, 2018, www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2535_665405/t1540104.shtml

²⁷ "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying's Regular Press Conference", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PRC, March 2, 2018, www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1539127.shtml

²⁸ "Diplomat slams new US sanctions against North Korea as illegitimate", TASS, March 7, 2018, <http://tass.com/politics/993163>

"We proceed from the fact that the sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council, in particular, on North Korea, are legitimate."

"Other sanctions, which again, despite the fact that they are tied to and are motivated by the situation on the Korean peninsula and are adopted in addition but in circumvention of the UN Security Council, are not legitimate from our viewpoint."

"All the efforts that are being taken to calm the situation should be welcomed."

"It is necessary to be extremely accurate in this situation and not to engage in provocations that would throw the situation back."

"We welcome the development of positive trends in the inter-Korean dialogue in light of the visit by the South Korean president's special envoy to Pyongyang, which took place on March 5-6."

"We hope that the agreements reached by North and South (Korea) will begin to be implemented in practical steps aimed at further reducing tensions around the Korean Peninsula and, specifically, will contribute to the beginning of the direct US-Korean dialogue."

"We call on all the parties involved to support this process."

"The end result of joint efforts along these lines should be a comprehensive settlement of the situation in this subregion and the creation of a lasting peace and security mechanism in Northeast Asia."

Statement- Foreign Ministry

March 6, 2018²⁹

On March 6, Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Morgulov during his meeting with Deputy of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea Chung Dong-young, who heads the Deputy Group on Peace and Cooperation in Northeast Asia, said,

"Mr Morgulov reaffirmed Russia's intention to facilitate dialogue between South and North Korea, its expansion and deepening, including in the economic area."

²⁹ "Press release on Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Morgulov's conversation with Deputy of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea Chung Dong-young", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Russia, March 6, 2018, www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/ckNonkJEo2Bw/content/id/3110733

	<p style="text-align: center;">Konstantin Kosachev – Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, Russian Federation Council (upper house of parliament)</p> <p>March 6, 2017³⁰</p> <p>“The North side clearly affirmed its commitment to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and said it would have no reason to possess nuclear weapons should the safety of its regime be guaranteed and military threats against North Korea removed.”</p> <p>"First, North Korea has seized the initiative as far as the Korean Peninsula situation goes. Second, it has proved its willingness to resolve issues with South Korea, which was concerned about missile and nuclear threats more than others.”</p> <p>“Neither South Korea nor even the United Nations Security Council is capable of providing security guarantees to North Korea. Only the United States can do that for it is Washington that constitutes the main threat to North Korea and makes no secret of it, imposing sanctions and even threatening to use military force.”</p> <p>"Recent progress in the inter-Korean relations definitely goes to Pyongyang’s credit.”</p>
Japan	<p style="text-align: center;">Shinzo Abe- Prime Minister</p> <p>March 9, 2018³¹</p> <p>"North Korea expressed an intention for dialogue for denuclearization. (I) appreciate this change.”</p> <p>"This is a result of the international community's continuation of high-level pressure.”</p> <p>"The stance by Japan and the U.S. remains unchanged -- that they will continue their maximum pressure until North Korea takes concrete action toward complete, verifiable and irreversible disposal of its nuclear and missile programs.”</p>

³⁰ North Korea 'seizes initiative' in Korean Peninsula issue, Russian senator says", TASS, March 6, 2018, <http://tass.com/politics/993018>

³¹ "Abe says he appreciates N. Korea's shift to talks, will continue pressure", The Yonhap News, March 9, 2018, aenglish.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/03/09/0401000000AEN20180309005000315.html

Taro Kono- Foreign Minister

March 6, 2018³²

“I think the sanctions are having an effect, so they are desperately attempting a charm offensive.”

**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.

³² "Press Conference by Foreign Minister Taro Kono", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, March 6, 2018, www.mofa.go.jp/press/kaiken/kaiken4e_000470.html#topic1