



Fresh Eyes on Old Relations

**Young Leaders Analysis of the
US-ROK-Japan Trilateral Strategic Dialogue**



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Pacific Forum CSIS

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Introduction

By Timothy Stafford

Earlier this year, Pacific Forum Young Leaders were invited to observe a Table Top Exercise (TTX) held as part of the US-ROK-Japan Trilateral Strategic Dialogue. The Young Leaders were subsequently divided into teams comprising one Korean, one Japanese, and one American (or NATO member nation) participant, and asked to offer their collected views on the ways the three nations could improve functional cooperation when dealing with a crisis including the DPRK. The five papers are contained within this document.

All five groups agree that the US, Japan, and the Republic of Korea (ROK) need to do more to co-ordinate their public messages. Though they note that increasing North Korean capabilities are driving the three countries closer together, they stress that each nation would experience and manage the threat of war differently during a crisis situation. They also highlight a lack of mutual trust amongst the two US allies – Japan and South Korea – as well as a sense of distrust in the United States’ commitment to its allies, in addition to its capability to effectively deter North Korea. As a result, they recommend a number of steps to increase alliance resolve in the face of DPRK provocations.

Without fail, the groups stress the importance of increased intelligence sharing, not only during a crisis involving North Korea, but also during ordinary circumstances. Each group notes the importance of Japan and Korea reaching agreement on the passage of a General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA)¹. The groups also note that having signed a GSOMIA with more than 20 countries, the ROK’s failure to reach an agreement with Japan – a neighboring country that shares a common threat (North Korea) and a common ally (the United States) – is an abnormality. Their views underscore the importance of officials in Tokyo and Seoul investing political capital to bring about meaningful intelligence sharing.

Another recurring theme is the need to engage China during any crisis scenario, to avoid misperceptions and reduce tensions. The groups note that representatives from the US, ROK, and Japan tended to agree that China should remain ‘on the outskirts’ of a North Korean crisis. Yet they also draw attention to the fact that US participants in the TTX placed greater emphasis on consultation with China to signal the importance of the two core US objectives: removing the Kim regime and securing Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). By contrast, they point out that South Korean delegates focused on signaling China their intention to execute a ‘self-defense’ retaliation plan, which included either establishing a peaceful regime or bringing about full reunification. The support younger Korean participants offered for unification during any military crisis on the peninsula was striking, suggesting that generational change may not undermine support for unification, and may in fact intensify it.

¹ A ROK-JAPAN GSOMIA was agreed in November 2016, after these papers were written.

Unification is also a recurring theme. A number of the groups note that while the presence of Chinese troops in North Korea (presented in the latter half of the simulation) gave the United States delegation pause, it prompted a sense of urgency in the ROK to achieve objectives before China had the opportunity to intervene. As a result, the importance of continuing to seek dialogue with China with respect to a possible North Korean contingency, and to do so in concert, is frequently highlighted. At the same time, some of the groups stress the importance of trilateral discussions regarding the desirability of unification. They note that while ROK participants expressed their desire to achieve reunification by means of all-out war against North Korea, the US and Japanese delegations were less keen to make that a goal the central feature of their response.

One group focused on the importance of clarifying the timing of Noncombatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) during a crisis situation. The participants in that group note that “premature evacuation may stir needless confusion and fear among the public,” but also stress that “one must acknowledge that there is a point where NEO would be an appropriate response.” To resolve this dichotomy, they call for Seoul and Japan to work toward agreement on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on when NEOs are justified.

Another group highlights the need to forge greater consensus on how to respond in a situation in which the DPRK has resorted to the use of nuclear arms. The participants of the group note that “[though] the US’s conventional counter-force capability is sufficient enough to neutralize the opponent’s second strike capability and deliver proportional retaliation, deterrent credibility in some ways dictates the necessity of a nuclear response.” They also stress that this issue was a point of contention throughout the TTX, demonstrating the importance of engaging in greater debate and discussion ahead of time to ensure a common position.

Several groups focused on the potential role for military action by Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) during a crisis situation. One group states that “Japan cannot strike the North Korea bases nor [conduct] offensive operations in the North Korean territory” without ROK consent, due to the obligations imposed by collective self-defense. At the same time, another group observes that “South Korean participants showed concern over possible JSDF military actions on and around the Korean Peninsula without proper consultation... or consent by the ROK.” These assessments underscore the importance of more consultations, so that common understandings can be established. They also suggest a greater role for military-to-military exchanges and exercises, such as the *Pacific Dragon* exercises held by US, ROK, and Japanese maritime forces in summer of 2016. Notably, one group highlights the fact that while trilateral exercises are important, only bilateral exercises between the ROK and Japan can succeed in closing gaps in understanding.

Finally, one group drew attention to the importance of domestic politics, noting that during any crisis situation, the political leaderships of all three countries would be pressured to act in certain ways, which may not be fully understood by the governments

of the other two nations. Their implicit recommendation is that all three nations make a concerted effort to ensure that officials from the other two countries are fully conversant with the domestic political pressures within their countries. This is even more important given the significant political changes in both the United States and Republic of Korea since the TTX was held.

Paper I:

Federica Dall'Arche, Gibum Kim, and Masashi Murano

The aim of the TTX was to assess the status of trilateral cooperation between the United States, Japan, and South Korea, in the event of a crisis on the Korean Peninsula. The TTX analyzed the countries' different reactions to a possible crisis, underlining obstacles and areas for improvement in cooperation. The scenario of this year's TTX had North Korea initiate a military campaign against South Korea by invading Daechong Island, and later against Japan as well by creating a low-level nuclear blast near Niigata port. Confirmed reports suggested that there was an internal power struggle in Pyongyang and that China had started military operations inside the DPRK for its own purposes. North Korean responses were embedded into the scenario, enabling all sides to save time guessing and predicting the DPRK's motives and reactions. This exercise wasn't designed to verify whether our political decisions could deter provocations and attacks from North Korea, but rather questioned how much the trilateral partnership could and should do in an armed conflict.

Overall, the TTX demonstrated the lack of mutual trust among the two US allies, Japan and South Korea, as well as a sense of distrust in regards to the US commitment to its allies and its capability to effectively deter North Korea. South Korea and Japan both showed a willingness to provide the necessary available support to each other during the crisis, but concerns over fierce negative public reactions and consumptive political brawls prompted both states to be overly cautious in tapping the potential benefit of enhanced bilateral cooperation. Question marks hung over the credibility of US extended deterrence, largely due to domestic signs of a more isolationist foreign policy emerging in the US, and also because of the damage done by the Ukrainian crisis. These elements strongly obstruct efficient and successful cooperation among the three countries.

The response from South Korea to North Korean military aggression was embedded in the scenario, thus there was not much for the South Koreans to decide except for the end state of the US-ROK allied counteroffensive on the Peninsula. The Japanese choice not to intervene physically in the Korean theater, nor to ask for US intervention after North Korea's provocations and attacks, did not come as a surprise. However, it further exacerbated the frustration of the South Koreans. Afraid of losing credibility amongst its allies and anticipating the allies' frustration, the US opted for a much stronger response and did not exclude any option from the table. South Korea was satisfied with the United States' initial response to the scenario. However, the possibility of the two allies having different end states in mind did stir concerns on the South Korean side.

The North Korean invasion of Daechong Island and the underwater nuclear detonation near Niigata port could all be seen as failures of the alliance's deterrence strategy. In the scenario, the overwhelming military strength of the alliance failed to deter a North Korean blitz, the scale of which was unprecedented since the end of the Korean War. By threatening further use of nuclear weapons, North Korea also tried to deter Japan from intervening in the crisis. During discussions of the TTX, this was understood as a

message to South Korea and the US that it was not bluffing when it talked about nuclear strikes. The scenario being purely hypothetical notwithstanding, even if bilateral and trilateral cooperation works and the alliances' countermeasures were successful, it would be very difficult to claim that extended deterrence worked. As a Japanese participant mentioned in the TTX, such a situation could be seen as a test of US reassurance of its allies, including NATO. Furthermore, it would send signals to potential adversaries.

The US team deployed conventional forces while also mobilizing nuclear-capable strategic assets to deter further WMD use by North Korea and to remove the current regime. They argued that it would be extremely difficult to use nuclear weapons as it would be likely to incur a nuclear response from North Korea and thus would not achieve goals set by the allies. While the other teams welcomed swift and firm US action, there were uncertainties with regards to the mode of retaliation under the extended deterrence strategy. Some believed that even if the US conventional counter-force capability is sufficient to neutralize the opponent's second-strike capability and deliver proportional retaliation, deterrence credibility in some ways dictates the necessity of a nuclear response. The fact that using nuclear weapons on targets on the Korean Peninsula would have unanticipated consequences for reunification ensured that most participants were content with conventional retaliation. However, some Japanese participants did raise concern that if the US did not use nuclear weapons, this could send the wrong signal to adversaries and might even initiate movement among US allies to develop an indigenous nuclear weapons capability to better defend themselves.

While the TTX underlined the countries' frustration and the obstacles to effective joint intervention, it also underscored fertile areas for improvement, particularly in terms of intelligence and information sharing. Also important to note is that the frustrations and obstacles identified during the discussions were mainly about functional details, not strategic goals and objectives. The teams did not show significant disagreements regarding goals, nor did they change their overall assessment of the crisis. Everyone agreed that the counteroffensive should continue and prioritize eliminating the possibility of further North Korean nuclear and other WMD attacks. Different factions fighting over control in Pyongyang was an issue to pay attention to, but it did not even briefly stop the campaign.

The US and South Korea demanded that China "get out of the way." The majority decided that, considering the size of the Chinese troops deployed along the border between China and North Korea, China was not thinking of a full-scale intervention. Rather, the small number of soldiers operating within North Korea was regarded as an indication that China wanted to maintain its military buffer zone, secure North Korean WMD facilities, and keep political influence by helping one of the factions in Pyongyang. Nevertheless, the South Korean and US teams showed different responses, with the former wanting to speed up operations to secure strategic sites before the Chinese did, and the latter preferring to have dialogue with the Chinese and gain more clarity of their intentions. The Japanese side worried about limited armed clashes between allied forces and Chinese troops as they proceed, while the US and South Korea thought it was unlikely. In addition, the Japanese team worried that the US would hesitate to

execute massive air strikes on North Korean targets since Chinese troops could be hit. Taking all of this into account, each side feels differently about Chinese intervention.

Going forward, the gaps in our intelligence assessment and the different reactions and approaches during the counteroffensive are strong evidence for better information sharing and more frequent exchange of views among the three states. A shared situational awareness would lead to more effective, efficient, and coordinated actions. Japanese and South Korean leaders should consider a GSOMIA or other options to directly share intelligence and assessment on North Korean nuclear and missile threats at the government level. For advanced trilateral Joint OPLANs and common operational pictures, the three states should improve the current Trilateral Information Sharing Arrangement (TISA), and an ROK-Japan intelligence sharing mechanism is the missing link. But, there should also be more exchange between the political and military leaderships of both countries to better understand the concept and the impact of such an agreement. Furthermore, the two governments should invest more heavily in explaining to their domestic audiences why they need better bilateral and trilateral information sharing in the first place.

Lastly, the three governments should consider recommendations about expanding current military exercises and ballistic missile defense networks. Proving that a rapid and efficient response by the allies is supported by an effective allied network of systems – sensor systems (including USFK’s AN/TPY-2 radars), aegis systems, interceptors and many more – could be a way to deter reckless North Korean provocation and military aggression. This would be a sensitive and difficult issue, as the Japan-ROK relationship is still on a rocky road. China would also look at this with deep suspicion, considering it an effort to contain its rise. Nonetheless, as North Korea progresses with its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile development, it is ever more important for the US, South Korea, and Japan to build interoperable defense architecture to enhance the credibility of US extended deterrence.

Paper II: Brian Moore, Julia Oh, and Yusuke Saito¹

As North Korea continues to test nuclear weapons, submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM), and conduct various other missile launches – seemingly unprovoked – planning for a crisis is of critical importance to the ROK, Japan, and the United States. While the threat of North Korea is rapidly increasing, the countries it targets with future attacks do not have cohesive or robust plans to respond. The US-ROK-JPN Strategic Dialogue, hosted on August 28-31, 2016 in Maui, Hawaii, brought together senior experts from each country to discuss such a response. The goal of the conference was to find areas of convergence, existing gaps in interests and risk tolerance, and ultimately to improve functional cooperation. Participants discussed a nuclear crisis simulation in North Korea – specifically an unprovoked attack by the regime that resulted in the deaths of South Korean and Japanese soldiers, including an underwater nuclear explosion. The simulation was intentionally ambiguous in that it fell short of a large-scale attack that would call for an overwhelming military response from the US, ROK, and Japan. While any response will depend on the situation, the simulation resulted in the following critical findings:

Convergence

The United States, South Korea, and Japan found common ground and shared interests in several ways. First, they agreed that the provocation, although short of a large-scale attack, warranted war. Kim Jung-un had crossed a threshold where the continued existence of the regime was unacceptable to all three governments. South Korea sought reunification under Seoul – and nothing less. And while the United States was fearful of entrapment and being pulled into war, the decision was made that the support of Seoul trumped any concerns. Japan, also pushing for a strong US response that eliminated any future nuclear threat, was willing to play whatever role South Korea asked of it.

Second, and welcomed by the United States, was agreement by all governments that a nuclear response was both undesirable and inefficient, even though a minority expressed doubts about allowing nuclear aggression without proportionate retaliation. A nuclear response was found to be too costly an international response, and insufficient in that it would take a number of nuclear bombs to destroy all of North Korea's weapons locations. It was agreed that conventional means would be the best choice in meeting the objectives of securing WMD and achieving reunification.

Third, all three countries would not go through the United Nations or seek international approval. That process was viewed as slowing a swift and comprehensive military reaction. There was also agreement that China and Russia would use their veto

¹ The views expressed in this paper are of the authors alone, and may not necessarily reflect the stance of any organization including Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and Japanese Government.

power in the UNSC. Fourth, a strongly worded and direct message would be sent to China and Russia – “Stay out. And if you’re there, get out.”

Divergences

Japan

After Japan passed new security legislation in 2015, the SDF has been allowed to cooperate with USFK and ROK forces on a new level to cope with the threat posed by North Korea. This new legislation allows collective self-defense under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations if the situation meets three conditions. But there are still limitations, and the “military assets” Japan is capable of providing are limited. For example, Japan cannot strike North Korean bases nor conduct offensive operations in North Korean territory. Japan can aid in anti-submarine warfare, mine-sweeping and laying, a maritime blockade, escorting commercial ships, search and rescue, and humanitarian assistance. However, the ROK must be clear as to whether they ask for Japan’s support. The Japanese delegation explained that there is no intention to send troops without the ROK’s request as it will violate international law. The historical issues between the two countries and the issue of public sentiment in South Korea continue to be obstacles if Seoul considers asking for Japan’s assistance. The willingness to allow Japanese forces on South Korean soil is still unknown. To overcome these challenges, moving forward on constructive relations between the three countries is key.

ROK

The ROK considered a potential full-scale war and focused on North Korea’s preemptive use of a nuclear weapon, as well as the need to verify WMD sites. This led their discussion to focus on cooperation with the US by moving strategic assets, including nuclear weapons. Japan’s restrained reaction to a nuclear blast near Nigata port was a surprise for the ROK team, as their delegates did not initially consider responding with the SDF. Furthermore, there continue to be differences of opinion between the ROK and the US related to the timeliness of a response, with the former preferring a quick and substantial response and the latter preferring to act without reference to any perceived time constraint. Ultimately, the different objectives, despite overlap in strategic interests, require in-depth political and military assessments in areas such as assurance, deterrence, and retaliation. The ROK prioritized the prevention of a pro-China regime in North Korea and the securing of WMD, which could also be a Chinese objective. China could encourage the ROK to develop cooperation with Japan, which could result in Beijing lowering the priority of its relationship with Seoul and increasing support for the Kim regime. The conversation on THAAD takes place in a similar context, with Seoul recognizing the need for it, yet expressing concern about losses from China. Lastly, for future trilateral cooperation, Seoul will require a written guidance assuring that any contingency, including a direct threat to Japan, Japan would first discuss potential SDF action on the Korean Peninsula and its territory with ROK before proceeding.

United States

The convergence between the allies greatly exceeded the expectations of the United States. However, there continues to be discrepancies concerning the risk tolerance

of each allied country. First and foremost is the China problem. Given the importance of the US-China relationship, some in the US group were hesitant to act in ways that would increase the likelihood of Chinese intervention. Thus, the presence of Chinese troops in North Korea (presented in the latter half of the simulation) gave the United States pause, yet it seemed to give the ROK a sense of urgency to pursue objectives before China had the opportunity to fully respond. This gap represents a gamble – forcing both the US and ROK to find agreement on timeliness and risk tolerance toward a China contingency. Second, there seemed to be a high degree of hesitation among Japanese, who may be intentionally underplaying the capabilities and professionalism of the SDF – particularly under the guise of legal constraints. To overcome this disagreement, it is critical that more mil-mil exercises are undertaken to highlight actual potential. These exercises must also occur bilaterally between the ROK and Japan. Lastly, the continued confusion on whether Japanese forces would be allowed to play a role on the Korean Peninsula remains an obstacle. Given the advanced maritime capabilities of the SDF, maritime forces could be critical in sustaining a supply chain to frontline USFK-ROK forces, noncombatant evacuation exercises (NEO), medical treatment, etc. The ROK government must be clear with Japan about what is expected and what is too sensitive – even in the case of a nuclear crisis and wartime contingency.

The trilateral simulation highlighted the fact that the three countries have considerable more convergence than just a few years ago, and that increasing North Korean capabilities are driving the three countries closer together. Also, there appears to be little belief that China can help on this matter, and a response would be coordinated only by the US, ROK, and Japan. But, despite unprecedented closeness and interests, gaps remain. Political changes in the allied countries threaten to complicate matters further. The areas outlined (to increase functional cooperation) must be swiftly acknowledged and pursued.

Paper III:

Hyuk Kim, Rie Takezawa, Heather MacDonald

The US-ROK-Japan Strategic Dialogue produced a number of key findings. Among these findings were areas of convergence on how to improve functional cooperation during a North Korean nuclear crisis. These areas of convergence included:

Intelligence sharing. North Korea's provocation evoked consensus among the US, ROK, and Japan that increased intelligence sharing was essential not only during a crisis with North Korea, but also on a long-term basis. If the US, ROK, and Japan are to share a common operational picture of where North Korean nuclear and conventional assets are located and moving, disparities in intelligence sharing need to be reconciled. Historical differences notwithstanding, all parties agreed that sharing military intelligence was an exceedingly important element in keeping citizens safe and secure. Japan and the ROK should revisit the possibility of a Japan-ROK General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA). The signing of a US-Japan-ROK trilateral information sharing agreement in 2014 was a step in the right direction, however a GSOMIA would not only streamline the exchange of intelligence sharing between Japan and the ROK, but would also relieve pressure on the US in the role of intermediary between the two countries.

Differential risk tolerance. The US, ROK, and Japan agreed that differential risk tolerance against the backdrop of North Korean provocations is significant. Not only is understanding one another's risk tolerance essential to trilateral cooperation, but so too is clearer understanding of one's own risk tolerances and assessments of red lines. Historical and cultural factors, as well as geographical proximity to North Korea, contribute to each country's response to North Korea during a nuclear crisis. It is essential that the three countries agree on an appropriate response to North Korean aggression. Continuous dialogue between the three countries is of utmost importance. Such dialogue should focus on practical coordination to deal with shared concerns as well as military and nonmilitary aspects of contingency planning for a nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula.

Possible use of SDF forces without ROK coordination. The US, ROK, and Japan agreed that the scope of military participation by Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) was limited to rear support for joint US-ROK military actions such as mine-swiping and anti-submarine warfare. The South Korean participants showed concern over possible JSDF military actions on and around the Korean Peninsula without proper consultation with or consent by the ROK; they believed that a nuclear attack by the DPRK was serious enough to trigger a unilateral Japanese military offensive against the DPRK. Conversely, expressing a clear understanding of the concerns of the ROK, the Japanese participants drew a distinct line between what they can and cannot do due to the limited offensive military capabilities of JSDF. The South Korean participants were surprised by the limited actions taken by Japan while the US participants exhibited less surprise. In this regard, delineating military roles of the US, ROK, and Japan in future DPRK crises based on mutual understanding is an important area to be explored for better functional cooperation.

Partner support for unification plans. The US, ROK, and Japan shared a clear understanding that if North Korea violated the nuclear taboo, the three countries would force regime change and secure all WMD in North Korea. Meanwhile, there were different levels of anticipation for reunification. ROK participants expressed resolute and determined position to achieve reunification by means of all-out war against North Korea. Although the US and Japan were generally in favor of reunification, they were more reticent in their approach. The US expressed the view that reunification was possible only after regime removal and securing WMD, while the Japanese participants showed concern over anticipated instability on unified Korean Peninsula. The three countries should examine ways to harmonize post-crisis plans as well as how to minimize potential political and military costs incurred from support of a unified Korean Peninsula. In addition, the ROK needs to incorporate a road map for stabilizing the Korean Peninsula into contingency planning to garner more robust support from both the US and Japan.

Managing domestic public opinion during a crisis. Managing domestic public opinion was an obstacle the US, ROK, and Japan are likely to face during a crisis. In particular, the Japanese team posited that its populace may raise strong objections to Japan's limited response, and demand stronger military retaliation. Not only would the Japanese populace be frustrated with its government's limited actions, but US and ROK citizens would likely be unsatisfied with Japan's response and cooperation during a crisis. With limited policy options, the Japanese prime minister needs to clearly signal to its citizens that limited actions are due to both a lack of resources and constrained offensive options. All three teams concluded that the crisis was a situation that satisfies the three conditions for Japan to exercise its right of collective self-defense. Japan should clarify its policies and take on the situation, while clearly signaling to the ROK and US populaces that it supports retaliatory measures by the ROK and the US and it is willing to cooperate by any means necessary at the request of the US and ROK governments. All three countries realized the importance of providing accurate information in a timely manner to minimize mass fear and anxiety during a crisis.

Contingency planning for China. The US, ROK, and Japan agreed that China should remain on the outskirts of a North Korean crisis as China's involvement would be unlawful and unjustifiable. However, there were divergent opinions among the three countries, particularly in regard to how to deal with China. The US participants placed an emphasis on consultation with China to signal there was no intention of diverting from two objectives; regime removal and securing WMD in North Korea. The South Koreans focused on signaling to China their objective of a "self-defense" retaliation plan that included either establishing a peaceful regime or reunification. While the US participants expressed a willingness to cooperate with China on securing WMD in North Korea, ROK participants were determined to confront China with military force if the Chinese sent troops to the Korean Peninsula. Meanwhile, Japanese participants raised concern over possible Chinese provocation in the Senkaku Islands that might divert resources from the Peninsula. Given that divergence occurred over securing WMD in North Korea, it is important to develop transparent protocols for securing WMD while maintaining open and transparent dialogue with China. In addition, the three countries should prepare a

contingency plan to deal with a provocation by China that could distract from trilateral cooperation.

Paper IV:

Jeeyoon Ashley Ahn, Akira Igata, and Joseph Z Wells

Our group identified three specific areas where increasing functional cooperation between the US, Japan, and ROK would better prepare the countries for North Korean contingency scenarios: (1) clarifying the timing of an NEO; (2) expansion of trilateral exercises; and (3) conclusion of an information sharing agreement.

Clarifying the timing of NEO

The Maui trilateral conference shed light on an area where prior coordination would be instrumental in a North Korean contingency – clarifying the timing of an NEO. One of the frequent questions during the simulation from the Japan team was when an NEO would be an appropriate response. While the Japanese team wanted to get citizens out of Seoul at an early stage in the crisis, the ROK team insisted that evacuation operations of any kind at an early stage would be a cause for ROK concern.

While premature evacuation may stir confusion and fear among the public, there is a point where an NEO would be appropriate. The evacuation would proceed in different stages: issuing a travel advisory to parts of the Korean Peninsula; expanding the travel advisory to the whole of the Peninsula; requesting private airline companies to fly Japanese citizens out of the ROK; ordering JSDF to fly Japanese citizens out of the ROK; and conducting a full NEO. While these different steps are clear, the appropriate time to raise them is not. Such timing would be contingent on numerous factors and thus would likely end up being, to a certain extent, ad hoc. However, close coordination between the two countries would be beneficial to facilitate smooth evacuation operations.

This need not be a one-way street. There may be a contingency in Japan that would prompt the ROK to request an NEO from Japan. The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster is an example. Japan and the ROK should clarify the timing of NEOs through discussions, exercises, and potentially an MoU.

Expansion of trilateral exercises

US Armed Forces conduct bilateral exercises with both the Republic of Korea and Japan but could further strengthen the alliance and increase defense capability by executing trilateral exercises. In June 2016, US, ROK, and Japanese maritime forces participated in exercise *Pacific Dragon* off the coast of Hawaii. This exercise focused on joint missile-tracking to defend against North Korean threats. Not only did this training increase interoperability between forces, but it also built trust among allies. During *Pacific Dragon*, alliance destroyers were able to detect and track simulated ballistic missiles and then codify how that information could be effectively shared. Future exercises that simulate sensor to shooter interoperability could yield measurable increases in ballistic missile defense.

Expanding trilateral participation to premier command post exercises (CPXs) such as *Courageous Channel* in the ROK or *Yama Sakura* in Japan could offer an opportunity to deepen interoperability and solidify support between Korea and Japan during future contingencies. For example, Japan could play a role in non-combatant evacuations from the Korean Peninsula and could formalize those actions within the context of *Courageous Channel*. In a similar vein, ROK forces could participate in *Yama Sakura* CPXs and examine ways they can coordinate maritime, cyber, or ballistic missile defense activities with the SDF.

Expanding meaningful engagement in military exercises and CPXs can build trust, increase interoperability, and enhance capacity to respond to contingencies. Moreover, future trilateral repetitions will build the muscle memory necessary to execute spur-of-the-moment responses to disaster relief or humanitarian assistance operations in and around the Pacific.

Conclusion of information sharing agreement

To facilitate trilateral cooperation and to better deter North Korea, the conclusion of a GSOMIA between Japan and the ROK is vital. GSOMIA between Japan and the ROK proposes the direct sharing of defense-related intelligence on threats to assess the North Korea's nuclear weapons and missiles programs, Chinese military modernization, and other potential regional threats. Although trilateral information sharing mechanisms have progressed with the signing of a Trilateral Information Sharing Arrangement (TISA), GSOMIA would allow for more comprehensive information sharing among the three countries. Currently, ROK has signed GSOMIA with more than 20 countries, and it is very unusual that it does not have one with Japan, a neighboring country that shares a common threat and a common ally.

The two countries almost signed the agreement in 2012, but failed when the ROK withdrew due to negative public opinion and national sentiment. This negative reaction stemmed from historical conflict, as well as worry over Japan's remilitarization. During a July 2016 bilateral meeting in Laos, President Park and Prime Minister Abe discussed this issue. However, the ROK once again refused to sign the agreement, despite agreement to develop a "future-oriented" relationship.

Under a situation where North Korean provocations are becoming more frequent, stronger measures to unite the two countries are essential. We must not let history prevent cooperation in enhanced security. Although many Koreans are wary that only Japan will benefit from the pact – gaining access to vast amount of information on North Korea where the ROK has less to gain – sharing of information could benefit the ROK. The ROK needs to acknowledge the reality, identify the greatest threat, look to the future, and make logical decisions for its national interests.

Paper V:

Clark Cully, Hana Jang, Amane Kobayashi

Coordination of Public Messaging

During an evolving DPRK crisis, it will be necessary to strengthen deterrence by showing alliance resolve in the face of DPRK provocations, while also reassuring the public. There may be very different public perceptions in the US, Japan, and ROK that place unique pressures on political leaders. For example, the ROK public may seek a very assertive military posture, the Japanese public may seek to downplay the risks and focus on defensive actions, and the US public may be most concerned with the nuclear threat to the US homeland. Each nation will experience and manage the threat of war differently. If public messages from government leaders are not thought through carefully and coordinated in advance, they may conflict and undermine their unity and resolve.

Therefore, in peacetime the three nations should practice how to identify and disseminate common messages that are mutually reinforcing. It is also important to ensure that TTXs don't simply look at strategic decisions, but how those decisions are communicated both internally and externally. The exercises should explore ways to keep our external messages (such as posture and signaling to the DPRK) in alignment with all our internal public messages (such as civil defense activities). By working through this challenge in peacetime, we can have clear communications plans in place for an actual crisis.

Managing Limited Resources

A conflict with the DPRK will stress all our nations' defensive resources. The limited assets like mobile missile defenses, WMD protective equipment, transportation for civilian evacuees, and medical supplies will be in high demand. If war occurs, the sharing of these resources could affect the distribution of civilian casualties. It is important that the process for determining who gets what is rapid, fair, and transparent.

The US, Japan, and ROK should identify these key resources, how they may be shared with others, and the process for reconciling competing requests. Practicing this decision-making should be a part of Combined Forces Command and alliance crisis exercises. They need to ensure everyone is ready to make tough decisions without unnecessary political posturing, confusion, or delay.

Coordinating Engagement with China despite Different Bilateral Relations

The US, ROK, and Japan agreed that sharing information with the Chinese is not only important from the perspective of intelligence gathering, but to avoid misperception and to help reduce tensions. If Japan dispatches SDF to the Sea of Japan/East Sea to provide rear-end support to the ROK and US upon their request, Japan should clarify its intention to deal only with the crisis on the Peninsula to avoid misperception as well as unexpected clashes with China. However, when incorporating a road map for stabilizing

the Korean Peninsula into the ROK's contingency plan, China must be considered a risk factor as its involvement and intentions in the crisis remain unclear. In dealing with the crisis, the US, ROK, and Japan should take in to consider the differing bilateral relationships with China to avoid unexpected clashes and further crisis escalation. Tabletop exercises are a useful tool for practicing this sophisticated coordination.

Building an Efficient Information Sharing Network

Even though tensions on the Korean Peninsula escalate in the wake of North Korea's nuclear tests, an efficient and direct information sharing network between the ROK and Japan is still missing. For instance, GSOMIA procedures facilitate the sharing of classified defense-related threat information regarding security challenges including North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. However, the GSOMIA signing between the ROK and Japan has been cancelled. This is because of their historical background and the comfort women issue, which has made it difficult for the two nations to reach agreement. The signing of a ROK-US-Japan trilateral information sharing agreement in 2014 was a step in the right direction, but a ROK-Japan GSOMIA would remove the United States as an intermediary and streamline the exchange of North Korea-related intelligence between the ROK and Japan. Real cooperation would be possible through an efficient and well established information sharing system. Given that North Korea continues to refine its nuclear technology and missile capabilities, it is time to revisit an information sharing system.

APPENDIX A

US-ROK-Japan Tabletop Exercise

Step 1

It is October 2016. North Korean amphibious forces seized Daechong, a small island 4.88 sq miles in size that is 12 mi from the coast of North Korea. It has a population of just over 1,200, with an additional 1,000 soldiers, primarily doing intelligence work. Half the soldiers were killed, while the other half and all civilians were taken hostage. The Pyongyang leadership calls the attack “the liberation of occupied territory, unjustly taken from the North by the so-called armistice authorities,” and a redrawing of the maritime boundary that divides the two countries. It has demanded that the ROK abandon the island of Baengnyeongdo as well, and warned that if Seoul does not do so, Pyongyang will render Daechong uninhabitable as a demonstration of its determination to redraw the Northern Limit Line. Concurrent with the initial attack was a massive cyberattack on ROK government computer networks, media and financial institutions.

South Korea has fully mobilized its forces, and responded with attacks against the DPRK military facilities that launched the assault, air defense batteries, and command and control nodes further up the command chain; proactive deterrence is being implemented. North Korean casualties are in the dozens, perhaps hundreds; the ROK has lost several planes and pilots. The ROK’s BMD batteries have been deployed. The US has declared its full support for the ROK (including financial stabilization measures), moved to DefCon 2 and begun to flow forces, and dispatched nuclear-capable aircraft to Guam. A carrier battle group is preparing to dispatch to the Korean Peninsula. Japan has moved its forces to alert as well, mobilized its BMD batteries, dispatched C4ISR capabilities, and activated the Alliance Coordination Mechanism.

North Korea has massed Army and special operations forces north of the DMZ, dispersed road mobile missiles, flushed mini submarines, and stepped up cyberattacks against ROK and allied targets. It continues to hold Daechong and the hostages have been taken back to the mainland. North Korea’s State Affairs Commission (formerly the National Defense Commission) warns that “all of the DPRK’s military might, including its awesome nuclear arsenal, will rain down upon any nation that challenges its territorial sovereignty.”

Eighty hours after the initial assault on Daechong, the morning of the fourth day after the attack, a large underwater explosion occurs just outside Niigata port: within a day it is assessed to have been a low-level nuclear blast. A little more than 1,000 people are killed in the explosion and resulting tidal wave, and several thousand more are injured. The port is closed, infrastructure destroyed, the city inundated.

Questions

1. Should any/all of the three countries declare war against the DPRK? Why or why not?
2. What is your country's objective now?
3. What is North Korea's objective?
4. What role does Japan play in this scenario?
5. What are your government's five immediate responses to these developments?

Step 2

It is 24 hours after the explosion in Niigata. North Korea has officially taken responsibility, saying that "the world now knows that North Korea does not bluff. We will strike merciless blows with nuclear hammers of justice to defend the national sovereignty and dignity of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The best way of escaping the deadly strike of the infuriated KPA is to refrain from hurting the dignity and security of the DPRK with prudence and self-control. If the warmongers do not immediately desist from their aggression, we will use even stronger weapons against them and their so-called allies." The US has increased the flow of forces to the Korean Peninsula and moved to DefCon 1. The ROK has paused military operations while it works out a response with the United States. Japan has mobilized its military and commenced emergency response procedures to deal with the victims of the Niigata attack. The United Nations Security Council has been called into emergency session to discuss unfolding events in Northeast Asia.

While intelligence suggests that the North Korean leadership is divided over how to proceed, the significance of those reports has been disputed. In the last 12 hours, however, there are confirmed reports of open fighting –including gunfire -- in Pyongyang, perhaps between leadership factions. There are alternative reports that Kim Jung Un has been wounded, killed or deposed. He has not been seen in public since the attack on Daechong.

Meanwhile, an estimated 50,000 Chinese troops have deployed to the border with North Korea. Sigint traffic indicates an unusually high volume of communications between the Chinese leadership and parts of the Pyongyang government that is not occurring through the usual channels. Traffic also suggests that small numbers of Chinese soldiers are already present within North Korea and may even be commencing offensive operations against discrete military targets in the country.

Questions

1. Does the North Korean statement change your thinking about the proper response in Move 1? How?
2. What is your government's first priority at this moment in the scenario?
3. What is China's objective? What is your message to the Chinese government?
4. How does Chinese engagement change your thinking?
5. What are your government's five immediate responses to these developments?

APPENDIX B

About the Authors

Ms. Jeeyoon Ashley AHN (ROK) was born in Seoul and moved to the United States when she was 13. She holds a BA from Wellesley College, and she is studying Public Policy at Harris School at the University of Chicago. She writes for the International Affairs section of the *Chicago Policy Review*. She has worked for the Political Affairs section under the Office of Director General at the United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG), and at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies, in Seoul as an intern. Her research interest is international security, with a specific focus on alliances, the rise of China, and Northeast Asia. Upon graduating from the University of Chicago, Jeeyoon will be a Junior Researcher at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington D.C., where she will study the US-ROK alliance, South Korea-Japan relations, and rise of China.

Dr. Clark CULLY (USA), as Director for Leadership & Organizational Development, oversees innovation and reform initiatives for the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. Clark has served as a foreign policy advisor on a wide range of a wide range of strategic issues, including the Nuclear Posture Review, US-Russia arms control, the Extended Deterrence Dialogue with Japan, and US counter-insurgency policy in Afghanistan. Clark has also worked for the Department of Energy, US Senate, and the National Academy of Sciences, and is a term member on the Council on Foreign Relations. Clark has a PhD in high-energy physics from the University of Michigan.

Ms. Federica DALL'ARCHE (ITA) is the Nonproliferation and Nuclear Security Fellow at Pacific Forum CSIS. After graduating Summa Cum Laude in Political Science at the University of Roma Tre, Italy, and winning a full merit scholarship for an exchange program at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, Federica recently obtained her Master's degree in Nonproliferation and Terrorism Studies and a Certificate in Conflict Resolution from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (MIIS), California. She won a prize for the best paper on Human Trafficking, concluded an internship at the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, a US Department of Defense academic institute, and a Fellowship as United Nations Security Council Monitor at PeaceWomen. She also worked as a Graduate Research Assistant at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation, at the William Tell Coleman Library, and as a freelance collaborator for the online magazine *Geopolitica.info*.

Mr. Akira IGATA (JPN) is a doctoral student at the Department of Law, Keio University. He received his undergraduate training at Georgetown University (Heiwa Nakajima Foundation scholar) and International Christian University (Chris-Wada scholar). Akira earned his MA in International Relations from Columbia University (Japanese government scholarship). He has been involved with various research institutions in academia, think-tanks, and consulting: Security Studies fellow at Research Institute for Peace and Security (RIPS); Research Assistant at the Center for the Promotion of Disarmament and Non-proliferation, Japan Institute of International Affairs

(JIIA); Researcher for several projects at Rebuild Japan Initiative Foundation (RJIF); Resident SPF fellow at Pacific Forum, CSIS; Aoi Global Researcher at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Cambridge University; and Visiting Scholar at Deloitte Tohmatsu Consulting. His research focus is on Japan's foreign and security policies, Japan-US relationship, and International politics of East Asia.

Ms. Hana JANG (ROK) is a Program Officer of External Relations at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies. Prior to joining the Asan Institute, she was an intern researcher at the Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP). She also worked as a research assistant at the Global Research Institute at Korea University. She received a BA in international relations from Chung-Ang University and her MA in international development and cooperation from Korea University. Her research interests include Official Development Assistance (ODA), inclusive growth, and human rights.

Mr. Gibum KIM (ROK) is a Research Associate at the Office of the Vice President for Research and the Center for Foreign Policy and National Security of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies. Prior to joining the Asan Institute, he was an intern researcher at the International Policy Studies Institute Korea. He had also worked as a professional researcher at the Research Institute for Language and Information at Korea University. Gibum has been a member of the Pacific Forum CSIS Young Leaders Program since 2014. He earned both an MA and a BA in Political Science at the College of Political Science and Economics, Korea University. His research interests include East Asian regional security, multilateral security cooperation, deterrence theory, alliance theory, weak states and human security.

Mr. Hyuk KIM (ROK) is a resident fellow for Nonproliferation and Nuclear Security and James A. Kelly Korean Studies programs at Pacific Forum CSIS. Prior to joining Pacific Forum, he served as a guest researcher at Dual-use and Arms Trade Control Programme of Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, research assistant at Export Control and Non-proliferation Program of the James Martin Center for Non-proliferation Studies, and international trader at Daewoo International Corporation. His research interests cover non-proliferation issues in East Asia, export controls, sanctions, and trade data analysis. Hyuk Kim holds a MA in Non-proliferation and Terrorism Studies, BS in Nuclear Engineering, and University Diploma in International Nuclear Law.

Mr. Amane KOBAYASHI (JPN) is a Research Fellow of the Global Environmental System Leaders Program of Keio University, Japan. He received his BA in policy management and MA in Media and Governance at Keio University. His research focuses on the politics and security in the Middle East and North Africa. He is also interested in the energy geopolitics and impact of climate change on the international security, particularly in the Middle Eastern and African countries. Amane previously worked at the Center for Strategic and International Studies as a Research Intern in the Energy and National Security Program from 2015 to 2016. He has also served at Japan International Cooperation Agency for industrial development of post-conflict Libya during 2013 to 2014.

Ms. Heather MacDONALD (USA) is a Regional Security Studies Intern at the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies in Honolulu, Hawaii. In this role, she facilitates courses and seminars for international diplomatic, military, academic, and law enforcement Fellows from the Asia-Pacific region. Previously, Heather worked as an intern with the Department of State in Vienna, Austria, where she oversaw the compilation of talking points and briefing memoranda for both the Ambassador and Deputy Chief of Mission. Heather is a recent graduate of the Willy Brandt School of Public Policy in Erfurt, Germany, where she received her Master of Public Policy degree. Her dissertation focused on visa security policies and interagency cooperation in the United States. Her areas of interest include US foreign policy, national security, and the nexus between migration and integration. Ms. MacDonald received her BA in International Studies and Economics from Colby College in Waterville, Maine.

Mr. Brian R. MOORE (USA) is a Resident Fellow at Pacific Forum CSIS in Honolulu, Hawaii and a member of the Pacific Council. He has previously held positions at the China Power Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Wilson Center's Kissinger Institute on China and the US; both in Washington, D.C. Brian focuses on Chinese domestic and foreign policy, North Korea, and US strategic policy in Northeast Asia. He has previously lived in Shanghai, China and Seoul, South Korea and speaks fluent Mandarin. Brian holds a BA in Politics from UC Santa Cruz and is an MA candidate at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in the Asian Studies program.

Mr. Masashi MURANO (JPN) is a Research Fellow at the Okazaki Institute, a Tokyo-based think tank that deals with intelligence, foreign affairs, and defense issues. He also serves as an analyst in the Intelligence and Analysis Service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan. His primary research interests include: Deterrence, Nuclear Strategy, US Defense Policy, and the US-Japan Alliance. Mr. Murano holds an MA in Security Studies from Takushoku University. He is a member of the working group that deals with crisis simulation exercises under the new security legislation and new US-Japan defense guideline at the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIJA). His recent publications and conference presentations includes, "Forward Deployment vs. Long-Range Strike: The Development of the US's Counter-A2/AD Measures in the Asia-Pacific Region" (*Journal of World Affairs*, 2016) and "A New Dimension of Extended Deterrence and Alliance Management in the Asia-Pacific Region" ISSS-ISAC Joint Annual Conference 2015.

Ms. Julia Jungmin OH (ROK) is an Associate at NBR. Julia is based in Seoul and provides guidance on Korea programming, business development, and strategic relationship building. She was previously a resident fellow for NBR in Washington, D.C. Prior to joining NBR, she worked for the ROK government in London as a Marketing Assistant Manager for the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency. She interned for one year in separate research role for the Korea Economic Institutes of America, in DC, and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, in NYC. While completing her MA, she contributed to the Centre for Science and Security Studies in London. Julia holds a BA in Communications from the University of Delaware and an MA in International Relations from the Department of War Studies at the King's College London, where her

dissertation focused on the role of North Korea's nuclear weapons program in domestic propaganda.

LCDR Yusuke SAITO (JPN) is a surface warfare officer specializing in Anti-Submarine Warfare in the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF). He has served on five ships including; Japanese BMD *AEGIS* ship, DDG *Kirishima*. Ashore he served as an interpreter to the Chief of Staff, JMSDF and staff of International Liaison Office, Maritime Staff Office (headquarters). On the occasion of the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, he was dispatched to Joint Task Force Command. Currently, he serves as researcher of the Institute for Future Warfare Studies in the JMSDF Command and Staff College. He earned BA in International Relations from the National Defense Academy of Japan. He is a master candidate of Georgetown's Master of Science in Foreign Service (MSFS) at the School of Foreign Service in D.C. The views expressed in this paper are of the authors alone, and may not necessarily reflect the stance of any organization including Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and Japanese Government.

Mr. Timothy STAFFORD (UK) is a Research Fellow at Pacific Forum CSIS, specializing in nuclear and deterrence policy. He previously worked in the British Parliament in the office of Theresa May prior to her ministerial career, before serving as the research assistant to the former Foreign Minister Sir Malcolm Rifkind. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in modern history and politics from Oxford University, and a Masters Degree in security studies from Georgetown University in Washington, DC.

Ms. Rie TAKEZAWA (JPN) is a Ph.D. Candidate (International Relations) at Hitotsubashi University Japan. Her areas of interests are peace keeping operations and the role of the military in nontraditional security issues, including Japan's decision-making process. Previously, Rie was a research associate at the Rebuild Japan Initiative Foundation, a Tokyo-based think-tank, where she analyzed Japan's crisis management systems. Rie is currently a part-time lecturer at Musashino University Tokyo and Research assistant at Institute for International Policy studies Tokyo. Rie received her MA in media and governance, and BA in policy management from Keio University.

MAJ. Joe WELLS (USA) is the chief of operations of the 18,000-Soldier 25TH Infantry Division. Recently, he served as the operations officer for 3/25 Infantry Brigade which is prepared to deploy no-notice as the Pacific's contingency response force. Previously, he served as the operations officer for an armored reconnaissance squadron forward-stationed in the Republic of Korea and as an exchange officer with the Dutch 11TH Luchtmobiele Brigade. While stationed in Washington, he commanded a rifle infantry company and served as a planner for 3-2 Stryker Brigade. His Company deployed to Iraq for ten months partnering with security forces and local leaders to improve security, governance, and development. MAJ Wells began his career in Italy with the 173rd Airborne Brigade and deployed to Afghanistan for 15 months. He trained, deployed, and led a 40-man rifle platoon in the contested Korengal Valley and later served as a Battalion staff officer in Kunar Province.

APPENDIX C



sponsored by the
US DEFENSE THREAT REDUCTION AGENCY

US-ROK-Japan Trilateral Strategic Dialogue
Royal Lahaina Resort, Maui, August 28-30, 2016

AGENDA

Sunday, August 28, 2016

5:30PM Mandatory opening Young Leader briefing

6:30PM Opening Trilateral Dinner

Monday, August 29, 2016

9:00AM Introductory remarks

9:15AM **Session 1: Assessing North Korea**

How does each country assess prospects for the DPRK over the next five years? How will sanctions impact economic developments and regime prospects? How will the Pyongyang government respond? How will its military and nuclear modernization efforts proceed and how will they influence North Korean behavior and its position in Northeast Asia?

ROK presenter: Beomchul Shin, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ROK

US presenter: Victor Cha, CSIS, Georgetown University

Japan presenter: Akutsu Hiroyasu, NIDS

10:30AM Coffee break

10:45AM **Session 2: North Korea's Nuclear Intentions**

A US presenter will outline Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program, focusing on how the DPRK intends to develop and use its nuclear arsenal. How will it signal with its nuclear capabilities? Who are its primary "targets" of that signaling? What is North Korea's "theory of victory"? How should the US, the ROK, and Japan respond?

US Presenter: Shane Smith, NDU

- 12:30PM ***Boxed Lunch in breakout rooms: Tabletop exercise: Groups get exercise, prepare answers to questions***
- 2:30PM **Round one assessment**
Plenary reconvenes to provide answers to questions and how each group reached those conclusions. After each presentation, the group is questioned by others on process and outcome.
- 5:00PM Session adjourns

Tuesday, August 30, 2016

- 8:30AM **Round two begins**
- 10:30AM Coffee Break
- 10:45AM **Round two assessment**
- 12:30PM Lunch meetings with country teams
- 2:00PM **Session 3: Assessing the TTX**
This session critically examines the outcomes of the TTX, focusing on expectations among all players, especially as identified in Session 2. What divergences among countries were revealed? How did responses differ from expectations? What are the key lessons learned from this exercise? What differences are there between this year's TTX and last year's?
- 4:00PM **Session 4: Next Steps**
What should be done to close those gaps, to move trilateral cooperation forward, as well as next steps for Pacific Forum and this DTRA process.
- 5:30PM Meeting *adjourns*
- 5:30PM* **YL conference project presentations**
*we will start immediately following the meeting, so if the session ends early, we will go straight into our presentations.
- 6:00PM Dinner