

YUICHI HOSOYA

Professor, Department of Political Science, Keio University

Marcus NOLAND

Thank you very much for setting the table. Professor Hosoya.

Yuichi HOSOYA

I am very grateful to be included in this session with so many excellent speakers. When I first heard that I was included in this session to talk, I was so glad that I forgot that my flight departure here is at 6.25, so I have only three hours, so I have to be more brief than usual.

To start with, I would like to talk about the possibility of war, and then I will present three possible scenarios of the future of the North Korean crisis, finally I will talk a little about the Japanese strategy to settle this North Korean crisis.

First, I would like say that the possibility of war is much higher than before, since the last nuclear explosion of North Korea, two months ago in September. I think that many experts agree that the likelihood becomes much higher than before because of the hardening of the American stance on this issue, and because of Chinese participation to increase pressure on North Korea with sanctions. When I attended a conference a week ago in Tokyo, Ambassador Richard Armitage, former Deputy Secretary of State, mentioned that the likelihood of war is around 25%. Several days before that, when I was in Moscow to attend some conferences, I discussed this issue with Russian experts. As you know, the North Korean head of delegation on the six-party talks on this issue in the Ministry of Foreign affairs, recently visited Moscow to discuss some issues with Russian experts and officials. Some of Russian experts there told me that the likelihood of war is much higher than 25% and many of them told me that it is something like 50%. It would be perhaps meaningless to describe this kind of percentage, but what we want to focus on is that now the likelihood is much higher. That is why Japanese Defence Minister, Minister Onodera, recently commented that, from the end of this year onward to the next year, Japan may face a serious crisis in North Korea, so we have to prepare for that. Prime Minister Abe also said that for this reason, he will hold a snap election in October, last month, rather than to fulfil his tenure until next September. The likelihood of war is thus much larger.

Now I would like to describe three possible scenarios on the future of the North Korean crisis. There are three possible scenarios according to my account. The first one is: no war with a denuclearised North Korea. This is a goal set by the international community, this was decided by the United Nations Security Council resolution, and was agreed by the six-party talk's joint declaration nearly a decade ago. This scenario, however, is extremely unlikely because, as some of the previous speakers have already mentioned in different panels, that nuclearisation closely relates to the regime's survival. As long as the North Korean regime wants to survive, it is extremely unlikely to see the denuclearisation of North Korea.

The second scenario is: no war with a nuclearised North Korea. This means that North Korea would maintain its nuclear weapons with ICBM and some other ballistic missiles. It is quite dangerous because North Korea will continue to try to intimidate the United States, as well as Japan and South Korea or some other surrounding countries, so it is quite dangerous scenario, and many smaller states may think it safer, or the safest option, to have nuclear weapons to avoid an American military strike. It will be quite likely that we will see a rapid proliferation of nuclear weapons spread to these smaller states, so the second scenario is quite undesirable.

The third scenario is: a war with a nuclearised North Korea, which means that North Korea is likely to attack Seoul or Tokyo, perhaps with nuclear warheads and ballistic missiles. Of course, North Korea has the power to do that, and North Korea has a clear will to destroy Japan and South Korea. Of course, America would retaliate with all the strength of its military power, but it is quite necessary for the international community to denuclearise North Korea.



We have two quite undesirable scenarios; on the one hand, no war with a nuclearised North Korea, which will mean a rapid spread of nuclear weapons in the international community, and on the other hand a war. The situation is quite tense, because to think of a scenario such as no war with denuclearised North Korea is unlikely.

Finally, I will conclude my talk by describing the Japanese strategy for solving this difficult issue. Japanese strategy is, of course, to avoid war but, at the same time, Japanese strategy is to try to denuclearise North Korea. Is it possible to achieve these two goals simultaneously? Quite unlikely, but, still, we have to do that. Contrary to the expectation of many people, perhaps, I would say that Prime Minister Abe has been the leading player in this game for two reasons. Prime Minister Abe is very close to President Trump, but whilst it is difficult for many officials or establishments in Washington DC to influence the policy-making process of President Trump, Prime Minister Abe has some influence over the decision-making of President Trump. This is why some officials and experts in Washington DC told me that the safest option is to ask Prime Minister Abe to say something to President Trump. Prime Minister Abe is quite influential, this is one thing, and he is experienced. In 2002 Prime Minister Abe visited Pyongyang, to meet Kim Jong-un's father, Kim Jong-il. He knows a lot about the discussion in the six-party talks and that is why I think that among the leaders of the major countries Prime Minister Abe is the most experienced and most familiar with the details of the developments of the North Korean nuclear programme. That is why I think that Japan can still play a very important and influential role in trying to solve the issue.

Finally, I would like to say that to solve this question and difficulty, I think the Japanese strategy is to consolidate the international community to increase the pressure, and the key is China. I am really looking forward to listening to my friend Professor Jia's comments on that.

Thank you very much.

Marcus NOLAND

Thank you very much for your concise remarks.