

DEBATE

Donald JOHNSTON

I have long had an interest in this subject as Secretary-General of the OECD. I had many meetings with Kim Dae-jung in particular, who by the way did win the Nobel Prize for the 'sunshine policy'. I am not sure you can say there was no progress in the past, because after the Joint Declaration of 2000, there was a period when Kaesong Park was established, investments were being made by numerous South Korean companies in the Park. During that period, I suggested that one of the problems – which takes me to your idea of reconstruction from Japan – was that the economy was a black box, and it remains a black box.

What is important for anybody other than mining companies to go in there – because there are some important minerals – is to understand the North Korean economy, and that will require an economic review, which I was pushing for at the time. The Americans resisted, but finally they came around. I got a call from Christopher Hill of the State Department at the six-party talks, who said that the North Koreans now wanted development capital, not just humanitarian aid, and I said that would need a review. I was thinking of an OECD review, and I was told later that the North Koreans would never accept that because of the background of the OECD and so on.

Nonetheless, that will be essential. Who will put capital into reconstructing North Korea without a better idea of how that economy functions? That is on the issue of a review. The last point I would make is one that you raised, Professor, just now, that of securitisation. I read a book, when I was making a speech on the 10th anniversary of the Joint Declaration, from Lim Dong-won, I think it was, who at one time was the Minister of Reunification. The book was called *Peacemaker*, and when I read the translation of it, I was very surprised to see that during the six-party talks, Russia had stepped forward and proposed that North Korea be made, not a protectorate, but a protected state, guaranteed by the US, Russia and China.

That struck me as being a very sensible approach to denuclearisation, but they are not going to give up their nuclear weapons at this point. I was impressed when Lim Dong-won said, 'Let's just get on with it. Can you get on with it?' He was referring to helping develop North Korea while they still had nuclear weapons, separating those two issues. The Americans have never separated those two issues. Therefore, if you separate those two issues, if you have an economic review, and Japan and everyone else contributes, invite investors in, that may be the way to go, but you people are the experts on this.

Jawad KERDOUDI

Je disais tout simplement que ce problème de Corée du Nord est vraiment un cas d'école en matière de relations internationales, parce qu'on a tout d'abord, au premier plan, les Etats-Unis, la Corée du Sud et la Corée du Nord et, au second plan, le Japon, la Chine, la Russie et la Mongolie. Et chacun de ces pays défend ses propres intérêts, et ça, c'est normal dans les relations internationales. Alors, ma question au représentant de la Corée du Sud : est-ce que vous n'avez pas plus d'intérêts à vous entendre avec la Corée du Nord pour diminuer l'influence des Etats-Unis et est-ce que l'idéal – bien sûr, je rêve un petit peu – ne serait pas une conférence internationale regroupant à la fois les pays de premier plan – les Etats-Unis et les deux Corées – et également Japon, Chine, Russie et Mongolie, pour essayer de trouver une solution à long terme ? Merci.

YIM Sung-joon

Thank you for the excellent question. South Korea was always faced with the question of how to resolve the Korean Peninsula issues. As you know, geopolitically, the Korean Peninsula was surrounded by big countries like China, Russia and Japan and – far away – the United States. So, we made various sets of countries to get together to resolve the Korean issues: three countries – North and South Korea and the United States; and sometimes four countries –



North and South Korea, China and the United States; and Six-party talks. We have tried to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue.

Therefore, there is not only one formula in which we can put these questions and resolve the issue. Now, the problem and the threat comes from North Korea. I think we have to have some international formula and institutions to take care of the denuclearisation problem. President Moon is an ideologue and wants to pursue inter-Korean peace through three countries, North and South and the US, after which we can be supported by China, Japan and Russia. There is no fixed formula for doing this, but for the moment my President tries to mediate between North Korea and the US.

It is quite a difficult job for him to assume. North Korea has not changed in terms of tactics, brinkmanship and salami-slicing tactics, and until we see a change in North Korea, it is a difficult task for my President. We would like to see some breakthrough on this issue of denuclearisation, and then other countries need to join in order to see some kind of peace regime on the Korean Peninsula. China was a party to the Korean War, so it should participate, and Japan is the closest neighbour, so it could play some role at the later stages, and Russia as well.

Vuk JEREMIĆ

Thank you very much. I'm going to ask the last question, because we are running out of time but I do want to ask my friend President Elbegdorj this question: what do you expect from the second summit if it happens? It seems like it will happen.

Tsakhia ELBEGDORJ

You know, before the first summit, I wrote a piece on my Twitter and said: "Don't rush with summit." We are always charmed at the leaders' meeting, and we forget the people of North Korea. Do not forget those poor people. Our leaders think that they can do business with the North Korean leader, and there was only one winner of the first summit, Kim Jong-un, the North Korean dictator. He had plenty of video and photo opportunities, and there is no control over North Korean public relations inside of North Korea.

Vuk JEREMIĆ

Surely he was not the only winner; there may be another winner next week in America.

Tsakhia ELBEGDORJ

There is no control over North Korean public relations inside of North Korea. An ordinary person from North Korea who has been detained in a gulag might say, 'Do not be fooled by our leaders.' There might be a solution if there is more continued pressure on North Korea, but there is no solution when you have such a meeting. Do not forget those poor people, if there is economic assistance. There are three circles – the Kim family circle, with 10 000 people, the Pyongyang circle, and then the rest of the country. The rest of the country will never get that assistance. Assistance will become the weapon against them, and because of that, when you meet with the North Korean leader, you have to raise issues related to human rights, in terms of how the poor North Korean people have been suffering from the Kim dynasty for three generations. There has been no other such dictatorship in modern history – from the grandfather to the father and then to the grandson. He might kneel if you put the issue of the North Korean people before him; if you discuss with him the nuclear issue and put him at an equal level with the American President, he will always win. Do not be drawn into that; it is a really bad idea. I am really hurt by these kinds of meetings, negotiations and photo opportunities, while the ordinary North Korean people are not getting anything from that.

Vuk JEREMIĆ

Thank you, Mister President, and thank you everybody for this, it was a fascinating discussion. Join me in a round of applause for our panellists. Thank you.