Center for Strategic and International Studies

TRANSCRIPT

Event
ROK-U.S. Strategic Forum 2025
“Panel 1: Is Denuclearization Dead?”

DATE

Wednesday, December 3, 2025 at 9:45 a.m. ET

FEATURING

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Former Chancellor, Korea National Diplomatic Academy

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Sydney Seiler: All right. Am I waiting for a cue? I got my cue. Welcome, everybody, to our first panel this morning. It's got a very gloomy title of Is Denuclearization Dead? One thing's for certain, debate about that question is certainly alive. And we've got a great set of panelists here today to answer kind of three broad questions. Is denuclearization dead? If not, how do we revive it? And if so, how do we deter and now do we keep the door open going forward? What is the best posture toward the DPRK.

Our format today will be three rounds. I sent a large number of questions, overwhelming according to some of the panelists, but they were really thought-producers to allow them to kind of get off their chest everything they wanted to say about where we are and what the lessons of the past have been, what type of talks may be possible and helpful, and how do we mitigate risk. Each of the panelists will have five to seven minutes, which means probably 10 minutes in D.C. roundtable time. And we've got an opportunity to go a second round and a third round. I hope for a very dynamic discussion.

Because if you've heard me speak, I tend to, like, go on for five, 10, 15 minutes even about the history, the last 35 years of how we got where we are. And, you know, we've got history here with us today on the panel.

We've got – when you think of Agreed Framework, I don't know about you, I think of two things: light-water reactors and Bob Gallucci. (Laughter.) Not necessarily in that order, but we have with us today Bob, who at the time was our lead negotiator, and whose signature is at the bottom of that Agreed Framework, and who had spent a career as a diplomat. Currently now you're a distinguished university professor at Georgetown University. And, you know, again, you were ambassador-at-large and head of delegation at that time.

Steve Biegun is – maybe if you have at the beginning of the Leap Day and then at the other end of the spectrum Hanoi, here's Hanoi – a representative of Hanoi. We've had a great little chat in the back. Steve was our special representative for North Korea policy, and then eventually the deputy under Mike Pompeo, right? Deputy secretary of state. More than three years of international affairs. Won't go through the resume, but in addition to be fellow University of Michiganers here, and graduating from University of Michigan. That's where you're at right now, teaching.

Stephen Biegun: Part-time.

Mr. Seiler: Part-time. And over three decades of international affairs experience, in the legislative, in the executive, and the private sector. So, you know, a lot of both theoretical, experiential, and practical experience in the realm of foreign affairs.

From the Republic of Korea we have former chancellor of the Korea National Diplomatic Academy, Dr. Cho Byung Jae. I think you're right now working as a chancellor – your final position was as chancellor of KNDA, and right now you're serving as a –

Cho Byung Jae: Currently I'm at Kyungnam University.

Mr. Seiler: At Kyungnam University Institute for Far Eastern Studies. A career in which you were the director general for North American affairs. You had to handle a lot of heavy lifting on the full range of bilateral issues with the United States. Chief negotiator for the U.S.-ROK Defense Cost Sharing Agreement. Was that the one during the Trump administration?

Mr. Cho: No, it was post-Trump administration.

Mr Seiler: OK, so a little bit easier then. (Laughter.) But your counterpart –

Mr: Cho: But it weren't that easy.

Mr. Seiler: Never easy, but not as – not as –

Mr. Cho: Your negotiators are always quite tough, you know.

Mr. Seiler: That's fair. That's fair.

Mr. Cho: Yeah.

Mr. Seiler: Master's degree from the University of Sussex, and Ph.D. from the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul.

And Jun Bong-geun, whose number-one line item here says Facebook friend of Syd Seiler. (Laughter.) But we are. I read everything that Bong-geun writes. He's currently the president of the Korean Nuclear Policy Society. Professor emeritus at KNDA, since 2023. Served previously as a policy advisor to the minister of unification. A professional staffer at KEDO, the Korea Energy Development Office – speaking of the Agreed Framework era. Secretary at the Blue House for international security affairs. And visiting fellow at Keio, Asia Foundation for U.S.-ROK Policy, and Geneva Center for Security Studies. And expert on North Korea, the North Korea nuclear issue, inter-Korea relations, Northeast Asian

politics, and everything that goes along with the question of denuclearization.

So with that, we'll go in the order that we're seated here. And, again, for session one, the question is, where do we stand with North Korea now? It light of, in particular, tapping into your own personal experiences, and why the Agreed Framework, why six-party talks, why Leap Day Understanding, why the Singapore/Hanoi progress – in each of these cases where, you know, good-faith efforts were being taken to advance denuclearization through diplomacy, and all of them eventually lost momentum. What are the – you know, why did Pyongyang walk away from these various opportunities? More currently, are there any serious elements of Singapore/Hanoi process worth resuscitating? If you saw the joint fact sheet from the recent summit, the Singapore agreement was explicitly included in there. Is it revivable? How can we use that going forward? And, you know, how do we weigh the two broad approaches of engagement versus pressure? And how does that drive our recommendations?

So if you could stay within that, like I said, 10-ish – 10 minute time limit, I think we can cover a lot of ground. So, Bob, you want to start?

Robert Gallucci: I would be delighted. First, let me thank Korea Foundation and CSIS for bringing us all together. I'm honored to be with these colleagues. The other thing that strikes me, before I get to substance, is that meetings like this, particularly with a long and wonderful introduction like Syd's, makes me feel very old. (Laughter.) That was 30 years ago, or so. So we're covering some time here.

So the question, as I got it, is, is denuclearization still the relevant objective for the ROK and the USA, were it to enter talks again with North Korea? And we had the deputy assistant secretary here who I think at the end, unless I misheard him, said it was still the U.S. objective. I actually don't think that's the most interesting question, because I think the answer to that is, no, it's not. I think the interesting question is, was it ever? And I want to put that out there, because I have kind of a role here of history, being the old guy. And the role here in history is to remember what I learned at the National War College over three years teaching there. And that is, look at both intentions and capabilities.

And if you look at intentions and capabilities of the DPRK right now, the capabilities are quite impressive. There's how many nuclear weapons? A lot. You know, under 200, maybe tens at least. And very diverse in terms of quality and character of weapons, different ranges. Almost certainly true thermonuclear, if the estimates of yield are right. Could have been

boosted, but almost certainly thermonuclear weapons. And with the relationship that they have with the Russians, quite plausibly now a higher confidence in the newest of their ICBMs. So all I'm saying here is there's lot of nuclear weapons capability in North Korea. And we'd be crazy not to recognize that as a reality, that they're there. This is not a new nuclear weapons state with a couple of nuclear weapons. It's not that at all. That's capability.

In intentions, I don't think Kim Jong-un could have been any clear than what he said most recently, the remarks I read anyway. This is part – the nuclear weapons state status of the DPRK is part of the constitution of the country. It's permanent. It's there. I don't want to hear that, he says – I don't want to hear "denuclearization" anymore. So I don't – it doesn't seem to me that if we truly wished to reengage the North in talks, as I think we should want, it doesn't seem like it's a very useful thing to say, well, let's go in and insist that we're aiming in these talks at denuclearization. So I'm answering the question, no, that's not a good idea.

Is it a good idea to have as a long-term objective? Yes. Because if one looks at – as the question does, this says, are we interested in denuclearization or should we fall back to something, a set of objectives that is characterized as arms control? Now, for those of us who were raised in the era of arms control, there's a lot there. There's a lot to do. And generally, arms control was aimed at stability at the lowest levels possible. Crisis stability and arms race stability, two kinds of stability, at the lowest level possible. So disarmament wasn't excluded, but disarmament was not the first objective. Stability, avoiding first use of nuclear weapons, that seems to me not too bad as an opening objective for conversation.

It doesn't mean that we are not doing what even the arms control between the Soviet Union – the then-Soviet Union and the United States had, which was eventual disarmament. Formally, a treaty committed to it as a nuclear weapons state in the NPT. That's what we committed to. OK. No one thought it was going to come anytime soon, but that had to be the deal. And in the meantime, arms control had stability at the lowest possible level. That seems quite reasonable. That could mean, were we to begin discussions with the North, that, you know, we would have objectives that are traditional, classic arms control. We could be looking for confidence and security-building measures, and there's a long list of what those look like, in order to avoid mistakes, accidents, escalation.

So there's lots to be done. We could imagine stuff that would be on the table, were we to do this. And some of the old stuff could be there –

sanctions relief. A lot of us have lost enthusiasm for sanctions as the decades have gone by. We don't really need that, maybe, anymore. Could we adjust the ROK-USA military exercises? Of course we can. Can we abandon them? Of course we can't. (Laughs.) But we can adjust them. We don't have to be provocative. As Kang Sok-ju once said to me, do you have to call that part of the exercise "decapitation"? (Laughter.) He said, it's offensive. I think the short answer, no, we don't have to call this part of the exercise's aim the decapitation of the leadership of the DPRK. I don't think that's particularly useful.

So there are lots of things that can be done that are classic. A peace treaty to replace the armistice that's been around for thirty years. It was certainly thought to be on the table eventually when I was talking to the North Koreans in the context of an Agreed Framework. Anyway, what I'm saying here is, long term goal remains denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, right? That's de-weapons-nuclearization. And, in the meantime, trying to avoid the risks of war. I think there's still lots to talk about. I, myself, think there's a third question here. Do we have any lessons to be learned? We've got some people in this room and at this – on the podium here who've had experience negotiating. What did we learn? What's useful?

I would say, the thing I like as a message – some of you might know Joel Wit's most recent book, where he attempts to go through all this negotiation from the Agreed Framework right up through Steve's negotiations, the ones that he supported. And I think one thing comes out of that. And that is preparation. I am no fan of let's meet for lunch and solve a 30-year problem. I think that's not prudent. I know that's also not fair to put it that way, particularly sitting next to someone who put so much effort into that preparation. But I think that has to happen again. So we can't rush to what is the shiny objective, which is to have the heads of state actually meet.

So, anyway. I think the answer to the question is actually pretty clear. I think there's a lot to be said about what we ought to do and how we ought to do it. And I hope we do get to discussions. But I hope we don't make the discussions impossible by pushing nuclearization, when it ought to be held rather than pushed. Thank you.

Mr. Seiler: We'll get into a lot of great questions to follow up on that, you know, in particular, as somebody who kind of owned that initial progress – additional progress with North Korea over the years, you know, wherever the mistakes we made that derailed it. But I think, as we hand it off to Steve, I got to tell you, one of the questions I get most today is, you know, what – how does Donald Trump see the issue? And there's one of the issues that's, like, still controversial is, what was the

president trying to achieve at Hanoi? What did he achieve in terms of developing the relationship? What happened in Hanoi? And what does that speak about where we are today? So I know you've probably got a number of issues you want to speak about, Steve, but I think there can be some real clarification as we look at possibilities in the future under President Trump, based upon Hanoi lessons learned and where we are today. So, please.

Hon. Biegun: Thanks, Syd. And I'd like to add my thanks to Bob's to CSIS and the Korea Foundation for hosting us today. I'd also like to thank you, Bob. You know, there is a certain fraternity and sorority among those of us who have led engagement on behalf of the United States with North Korea across all those years, men and women. And there's a real camaraderie in that group, and willingness to share. And more often than not, those conversations amongst us are almost confessionals about where we – where we failed to make progress, or why we might have failed to make progress. And it's cathartic, in a way, and also extremely gracious to be able to glean the advice of now 30 years. And it's a part that I happily play now as a former diplomat myself. So thanks, Bob, for being so accessible during those times.

You know, Syd, I'm going to start with your first question. And then, in the course of this conversation, I think, we'll roll back to some of the things. But, you know, your headline question, of course, is, is denuclearization dead? And the answer is, no. I don't think denuclearization is dead. Dead is a pretty absolute judgement. And it's not dead. But for a lot of reasons, it's not very promising right now either, needless to say. You know, when I was – when I was leading U.S. engagement with North Korea on behalf of President Trump, it was hard for me to fight off the envy of the generations of diplomats who preceded me at their ability to pick up the phone and speak to North Koreans, to use what we refer to as the New York channel to communicate with Pyongyang.

Whereas, during the period of diplomacy where I was in that position we would go weeks, months with the North Koreans refusing to even respond. They literally wouldn't pick up the phone. And on the rare occasion where you'd catch them off guard, they'd hang it up very quickly. (Laughter.) And they – and this was not by accident. This was by design. This was a tool of North Korean diplomacy, to ration contact. But I would think back to the six-party talks and Agreed Framework, you know, where to me, at least, sitting there in 2018, '19, and '20, I envied that level of engagement.

But if I envied the level of engagement that my predecessors had, I pity the current set of diplomats. The North Koreans simply aren't

responding in any way, shape, or form. We sent four full years of President Biden's administration without a single communication between the United States and North Korea – not one. Not one letter, not one phone call, not one side conversation. At least to my knowledge. And I think my knowledge is pretty complete on this. And so if I envied my predecessors, I have great empathy for my successors on this.

It's a very different world in which we would try to pursue any sort of engagement with North Korea today. Needless to say, the geopolitical environment is substantially harder to penetrate. North Korea's engagement in Russia's war against Ukraine, the state of the U.S.-China relationship, political instability that at least prevailed for the past year in the Republic of Korea, and to some extent even in Japan where there's been a series of leadership changes, all of these contribute to a much deteriorated geopolitical environment in which this type of engagement might happen. Because those other countries, those other parties, are central to our ability to engage with the North Koreans. North Korea's sense that those other parties are aligned, in a loose sense, is essential to creating the right incentives for the North Koreans to engage as well.

So I'm not – I'm not very optimistic. Of course, there are the other factors, many, innumerable factors that also make it much harder. It's often mentioned that the North Koreans have enshrined their nuclear weapons status in their constitution. And this is true. But when you have a constitution that's crafted to reflect the wishes of a single individual, what is changed yesterday could change again tomorrow. And so I'm not persuaded that that is necessarily any sort of permanent obstacle to denuclearization.

I do believe, for better or for worse, from at least a Pyongyang perspective, that Chairman Kim Jong-un has personally associated himself with that position as well. Which does set up the question, in order to return to denuclearization does there need to be new leadership in North Korea? Now, the United States is not going to – not going to embark upon regime change, but I think we, like the North Koreans, have to have a longer-term view of events on the Korean Peninsula.

And so our policy at the moment also needs to be anchored in our expectations over the course of time. North Koreans have been extraordinarily good at leveraging time to their advantage. It's one of the strategic assets they have, along with, of course, rationing direct interaction with outside parties, like the United States of America. And one of our – one of our challenges was how to compress their notion of time in the course of our diplomacy, because the North Koreans have demonstrated with the Biden administration, if they don't like a

president's policies they'll just – they'll just take a seat for four years and they'll have a new president – or eight years.

Kim Jong-un, when we were engaging with him, approximately 35 years old, could look at the trajectory of his grandfather's life, you know, into his early eighties. And he could think, I have 45 more years to fool around with this if I need to. I don't need to act now. So there are a lot of things here that mitigate against any sort of engagement.

Let me just end with a comment on the alternatives, and we'll explore these more. You know, Bob is a very experienced negotiator – far more so than me. And I agree completely that intentions and capabilities are essential to understanding the other party. Getting the incentives right is another one I'd add. You have to have a clear understanding of what the incentives are. And in the case of the U.S.-North Korea negotiations, I'm not sure – you know, we had – we had a pretty clear idea of what we thought we wanted. But I think one of the things you have to fight in any negotiation, but particularly with North Koreans, is to project upon them what you think they want.

And I'm not even sure, at the end of the day, they understood exactly what they wanted in this negotiation. But there's one thing that I think they want above all, which is regime stability and survival of the dynasty. The questions that we have to ask ourselves as we embark upon some future engagement with the North Koreans is whether our solutions are the right incentives for them. We designed in Hanoi a roadmap for economic and diplomatic normalization that would be – would move in parallel with denuclearization. But that was our projection of what the North Koreans wanted.

If you think about it just logically, where's the upside for the North Korean dynasty, for the Kim dynasty, to have citizens traveling in and out of their own country, the foreign businesspeople coming in and out, of investors investing in North Korea, of information coming in, of student exchanges, people-to-people engagements with great breadth and magnitude? How does that contribute to regime stability and security? It's antithetical to it. Our policy was never regime change. President Trump was very clear that he expected the transformation of U.S.-North Korean relations to happen under Kim Jong-un's leadership.

But Kim Jong-un could be forgiven for having possibly thought, how do I maintain a totalitarian dictatorship in an environment in which I can't characterize outside countries as posing an imminent threat to my nation? How can I control the behavior and thinking of my people when they're exposed to so many foreign influences and incentives for their own wellbeing? How can the regime survive in that environment? Now,

there are examples where nondemocratic systems have been sustained through periods of transition. We have collective leadership in Vietnam, for example. China is another example, for that matter.

But the North Korean regime is very different than any of those. It's not comparable. And if we project to the North Koreans that the outcome that we think they want is the incentive to do what we want on denuclearization, I fear that – I fear that we're headed for – we would be headed for failure again.

Mr. Seiler: Steve, thanks. I mean, the lessons learned – because, as Victor will attest to as well, we had a roadmap. We had a list of energy, economic projects. We had, you know, timelines for establishing liaison offices, diplomatic relations. And, you know, press the repeat button during the Obama era, where, you know, both in terms of our secret dialogue with North Korea, as well as what eventually led to the leap day understanding. You know, we had made an elaborate list of things that we would be willing to do as a country, and then what U.S. companies were looking to go into North Korea. And they were just waiting for a flashing yellow, at least, or a green light from the White House on that.

And again, the Hanoi – each one was flavored a little differently. And there was a lot of fanfare – the DVD and all that. But, you know, it was clear that an alternative path was being laid out of options – options that North Korea sees as peaceful evolution, to use the Chinese and North Korea, Vietnam language, or color revolution to use the Russian language. It's this fear that everything that we might possibly do to them is exactly what is antithetical to the nature of the regime and the path they wanted to pursue. But, you know, it gets frustrating when people say, North Korea doesn't know what we expect of them when we ask for denuclearization, and North Korea doesn't know what it will get if it goes down that path. It knows, and simply chooses an alternative. And we can get more into that.

And so from the Korean perspective, you know, I'd like to hear, you know, your reflections both on the questions, on what Steve and Bob have laid out. You know, I think the sunshine policy efforts stand as one era's efforts to try this same type of approach. We saw it under Moon Jae-in. We're seeing it under Lee Jae Myung with the E.N.D. initiative. And so with that, Cho Byung Jae, would you like to?

Mr. Cho: : Yes. Thank you. Thank you for your introduction. And thank you for Korea Foundation. Thank you to CSIS for having this opportunity, and inviting me here. And also, very good to see you all.

And I'm particularly delighted to meet Dr. Gallucci here. You know, I first

met him in early 1990s. And it was during the first North Korean nuclear crisis. He was assistant secretary at that time, leading U.S. in negotiation with North Koreans, of course, as you know. I was a junior officer at Korean Foreign Ministry. So we occasionally met, but I was sitting usually on the second row taking notes when he was talking to my seniors. (Laughter.) Topic was, of course, nuclear issue, how we can denuclearize North Korea. At the time, the issue was inspection on very, very small tool, undeclared size at that time. But after that, 30 more years have passed. And today we are sitting here and talking about the same subject, how we can denuclearize North Korea. So I think it can feel quite surreal for me.

It also means that this is really a tough question. And during the last twenty or thirty years, there were a lot of diplomatic efforts, and a lot of people have returned, and have spoken on this subject, and so on. So I was wondering what I could add, if anything, plus on this question. So before I came here I asked my ChatGPT – (laughter) – you know, what new element can I give to this discussion? The answer, it was quite smart, told me that, Dr. Cho, there can be two ways of creating something. One is that you can create something really big, like Dr. Einstein, something like that. But the other way of creation is that you can combine some existing things in different ways, how you can view some things from a different angle that can also be called creation or newness. So, Dr. Cho, you can try that one. So I was a little bit encouraged to hear that from my ChatGPT, my very smart assistant.

About five years ago, it was in 2019, I wrote a book. And that book title was "North Korea's Searching for Survival." And the subtitle was, "United States, China, North Korea, the Strategic Triangle." You know, the strategic triangle is some vocabulary that came from the 1970s in the relationship between Soviet Union, China, the United States. But what I tried to argue in this book is that, OK, North Korea tried to move in nuclear proliferation. And the United States found that unacceptable to see that proliferation. So it put pressure on North Korea quite hard. North Korea pushed back very hard, and then tried to create a crisis, and escalated it, which, in its turn, highlighted the strategic value of North Korea, particularly as a buffer to China. And then China, which saw it rather unacceptable to see the whole peninsula, including North Korea, to fall under the influence of the United States, so it decided to step in.

To highlight my point, I drew a case from the June 1994. At that time, you know that the rumors of war was already spreading in South Korea. And some foreign embassies there were advising their nationals to evacuate. So it was quite a scary time. At that time, suddenly, you know, General Choe Kwang, who was the chief of staff of North Korean

People's Army, suddenly showed up in Beijing. And China's President Jiang Zemin welcomed him with some ceremony. And the Chinese newspapers published it quite prominently. And there was a quote in the newspaper, that Jiang Zemin mentioned in public that strengthening the blood bond relationship between China and North Korean is China's unwavering, unshakable policy.

So I thought that that moment was when the U.S. pressure on North Korea, and China's intervention, put this whole situation into another higher level of strategic rivalry between two big powers. And I thought that North Korea mostly have learned a very important lesson from this episode. We are asking what kinds of lessons we can draw from our experiences with North Korea, but North Korea also have drawn its experiences from its own contacts with us. That lesson which North Korea drew, from what I can see, is that, well, this is really great. This is a huge leverage which I can use. Nuclear development, this can move the United States. So United States came to resolve this one. Can move the United States.

And, at the same time, it can force China to step in. So you see that, with this nuclear leverage, we see the United States coming here, and China coming to counter the influence so we can create a certain kind of balance of power, which would not allow North Korea to collapse. I think that is something taking place around that time. And after that, since then, we've been seeing quite similar patterns repeating many times. For example, we can see that from time to time, of course, you will ask me that North Korea has been engaged in diplomacy. But you will see that North Korea has been engaged in diplomacy only when it found that it is standing in a certain comfort zone – comfort zone – diplomatic comfort zone.

For example, after the framework – Agreed Framework we signed in 1994, we had several years – several interval until the IAEA inspectors would come to check all these facilities, including the undeclared facilities. When we constructed the light-water reactor, to a certain extent, then before we provide the core components then IAEA inspectors were supposed to go in and to check the undeclared facilities. So that interval was a quite comfortable zone for North Korea. So it was quite actively engaged in diplomacy. Another case would be during the six-party process. North Korea found it somewhat comfortable, until that sampling issue popped up to the fore. It was in 2008, right? And in 2009, it had a nuclear test again.

And through this process, China intervened to ameliorate the tensions, and so on. And in 2010, you'll remember that North Korea sank our Cheonan naval ship in western coast. And also it launched an artillery

shelling around Yeonpyeong Island. Then, at the time, also China intervened to calm down the situation. And in 2018, I think when Secretary Biegun was there, North Korea felt comfortable when the Trump administration linked denuclearization to a peace arrangement. It was in Singapore, not Vietnam. So these are cases where we are not touching the core of North Korea's nuclear leverage, in this case verifications. And otherwise, when we are touching on this limit, that North Korea walked away, or created crisis.

It walked away in 2002 when Jim Kelly presented HEU evidence. It walked away in 2008 when sampling issue was creeping up. And it walked away in 2012 when the Leap Day deal collapsed over the satellite launch. This was an important moment for North Korea, because one year after, in April 2013, Kim Jong-un declared Byungjin Line qualifying nuclear development as the – one of the essential pillar of the national security. Since then, North Korea has never again accepted a verifiable freeze. And in 2019, North Korea rejected – of course, I mean, Trump stood up first – but North Korea also rejected the full declaration. So we see that here is a pattern.

And the effect of China – whenever crisis – there is a crisis, China is there. China stepped in in 2003, after the HEU confrontation. It led the way to six-party talks. And China mediated again in 2008, through the sampling crisis, and during the 2009 nuclear crisis, nuclear test, and also through the 2010 inter-Korean crisis. These two crises, China intervened quite heavily. And you know that in 2018 and '19, through the Singapore summit and the Hanoi summit, Xi Jinping conducted five summit meetings with Kim Jong-un, before and after. That was a Chinese effort to intervene in every step of this U.S.-DPRK contact.

So we see that here is a framework. North Korea negotiate when it sees an opportunity to gain, and as long as the talks remain within this comfort zone. But whenever the external pressure pushes it beyond that limit, then Pyongyang walks away, or creates a crisis – confident that China will ultimately step in to save it. I think that's the pattern we have seen for the last 30 years. And I think this mechanism still works. Whatever we plan for the future, then I think we have to talk this point – this point into our consideration very closely. So I'll stop here.

Mr. Seiler: Excellent points. You know, it's interesting, in that there is a school of thought that there's a school of thought that tries to attribute North Korea's return to dialogues along the way as more when they're in a discomfort zone. 1993-94, when it looked like the U.S. was moving to the military option, 2002-2003 when the Bush administration was putting heavy pressure on China to bring it back to the table because of, you know, the HEU program. You know, and that each and every

engagement is when North Korea feels discomforted, or that it's not sufficiently deterring external pressure, then it comes to the table. And then, not surprisingly, when that pressure is lifted, because they've come to the table, they've lost the incentive to sit at the table. So that can be a good discussion, you know, after our final presentation. So.

Jun Bong-geun: Yeah. I'm really glad and honored to be with, you know, celebrated diplomats with me. (Laughs.) In fact, I was also not in front, but behind, I was working for this North Korean nuclear issue for three decades, just like all of you. And in early 1990s, I worked at the Blue House about four years, and also at the KEDO project. And I worked at the New York office, and visited North Korea about 10 times, and I worked with – (inaudible). And also I worked at the Unification Ministry. And since then I worked at – I started at KNDA.

So I have my own reflection of how things went wrong. And, in fact, I found a very interesting one phrase from geopolitician Tim Marhshall, who wrote the bestseller, "Prisoners of Geography." And he allocated one chapter on Korean issue – Korea. And the very first line begins with this, "How do we solve a problem like Korea?" How do you solve it? He answered that, you don't. You just manage it. The problem was that we even failed to manage it. In those early 1990s, North Korea was such a weak, fragile country, and we are such as, you know, upper hand. But now things have changed.

And also, I also reflect that if we had heard his advice carefully, we might be in a better position. At the time, we tried to solve it. We tried to end North Korean regime. We tried to solve denuclearization once and for all. We are too hasty. But it makes a good contrast with the U.S. effort when you are dealing with collapsing Soviet Union. I heard so many stories of U.S. approach to Soviet Union. You were extremely cautious not to provoke collapsing, dying Soviet Union. You do not want to provoke the hawks in the Soviet Union. So let them, you know, die slowly. But in case of South Korea, we are eager to, you know, try to provoke North Korea. And you're waiting for an activated – they're trying to, you know, accelerate their demise. But so in that way, we couldn't really wisely manage it – wisely.

And when I'm looking back, I would define that our 35 years of denuclearization diplomacy, of course there is – are partial success stories, but overall we have failed. It's a big, big failure. Then what went wrong? What went wrong? I would come up with a couple reasons. First, we overly underestimated the North Korean system and the regime's durability. They are far too resilient and resistant beyond our imagination. And the problem was that not only our conservative governments, but also our liberal government also expecting DPRK

complete transformation changes coming. So that's one of the reason behind sunshine policy and all this maximum pressure policies.

So we expected the DPRK to change, transformation, ultimately collapsing, and ultimately our unification by absorption. But that didn't happen. And also, secondly, we overly underestimated the DPRK's will and the capability to nuclear arms, and their missile development capabilities. And, on the other hand, we overestimated our – the effect of sanctions pressures against North Korea. It didn't work. Then why it didn't work? And most people open – attribute all those – DPRK's resistance to the DPRK's own unique political system. I think that explains only part of it.

And so, lastly, I would say that Northeast Asian geopolitics is very rigid. Despite that we had, you know, so-called Francis Fukuyama moment, whole world, you know, the globe, and we have that moment in Europe. Soviet Union is gone. Eastern European countries are all transformed. There is the German unification. I think we expected exactly that's going to happen in Northeast Asia, but we never had a post-Cold War era in Northeast Asia. China was weak, but still very strong. And, you know, when North Korea was about to collapse, throughout our history if I look back 500 years of our history, there was three regional warfare.

And in all these occasions, China intervened to maintain North Korea or Korea as a strategic buffer zone against, you know, enemies coming from the sea world, sea side. 1891, when Japan invaded Korea, the Ming intervened. At the time, Ming was very weak. They were about to be overthrown by the Qing. But still, they had to intervene. And also during the Cold War time, you know, at the time the communist China was very weak, but still they intervened. And also I think that, you know, if we had a very careful perspective on this rigidity of Northeast Asia, we might have much lower expectation of the collapse of North Korea. And you might have managed this denuclearization process more cautiously.

But we didn't. But the problem was still someone have a little bit of over-expectation, or over-exaggeration, or underestimation. Still, we have that problem. So I think what I'm going to – what I want to say here is that we need to see why North Korea, who he is. And we need to have a real perspective of Northeast Asia geopolitics. Then I hope to – then, you know, after failing on North Korean nuclear issues – I think we have, you know, four North Korean issues.

One is how to deter nuclear armed North Korea. It's a big, big issue to us. That's why we are asking U.S., you know, more stronger nuclear umbrella, a stronger extended deterrence. And also, we want to enhance our national defense capabilities. That's why you are asking for nuclear-

powered submarine, all those thing. Despite all those things, still Koreans are feeling very nervous about a nuclear-armed North Korea, how they're going to use their, you know, weapons against us. I don't think that there will be any total pre-planned warfare, but there is still very high chance of some – you know, various conflicts and confrontation.

And secondly, still we need to have this denuclearization issue. It's not dead. I don't think so. We cannot solve it overnight. In short term, it's a very low possibility for us to push, you know, successful denuclearization. But, however, if we are going to have the current position of hands-off position – you know, kind of, you know, deny and deflect or whatever it is – that North Korea is increasing its nuclear arsenal about 10 to 15 every year.

And also rather big problem is North Korea's nuclear status is really more accepted by the people. We know that North Korea can't have nuclear weapons. So we all know it's illegal, illegitimate. But some – you know, when I talk to young people, North Korea just have nuclear weapons. What's wrong? You know, Iran, you know, Pakistan, India, these are – so I think we need to throw out this denuclearization diplomacy while having this long-term goal of complete denuclearization. Short and near term, we need to freeze nuclear activities and also, you know, delegitimize their nuclear status.

And, thirdly, there is a very high risk of nuclear use on the Korean Peninsula. North Korea has extremely dangerous nuclear posture and nuclear doctrine, like any other nuclear-armed state. So I think also in the confronting that, North Korea – also, South Korea has an extremely forward or, you know, standing defense posture. So there is kind of a dangerous situation. So I think of how do we reduce nuclear risk and also all those things?

And finally, I'll be short here. And South Korea has our nuclear self-armament opinions, a lot of them. But this current Lee Jae Myung government made it very clear that we are loyal member of – loyal member of NPT. And if we are going to violate the NPT, our economy will be collapsing. So it's impossible option to us. But still, there's lots of people who are working – you know, demanding. So we need to deal with it. I will stop here. Thank you.

Mr. Seiler: Thank you so very much for that. Great comments across the board. They, of course, not surprisingly, generate even more questions. I'd like to, you know, start with Steve. And what I want to do is, during this round, ask each of the questions one by one, and of course leave it open if you want to interject. Steve, you are probably best positioned to

discuss what President Trump is thinking about – how President Trump sees the North Korea issue today, and within the realms of the possible what he may seek to pursue. Are his overtures sincere? Is he hedging on the likelihood that he could face the same four years? And trust me, as far as unanswered phone calls and unanswered email, we can share a lot of war stories. You know, knowing what it's like to be cut off. What happens if that happens during the Trump team? What might the president be thinking of?

And so a lot of this tracks back to Hanoi. And, you know, the president experienced. Hanoi. He saw the limits of what flexibility Kim Jong-un had at that time. We saw a year, 2019, in which – another meeting in Panmunjom, your meeting up in Stockholm yielded no progress. And then since then, that continued growth of the program and refusal to talk has marked it. You know, what is it about Hanoi that shaped the president's thinking about North Korea today? And what do you think he's, you know, contemplating in terms of a way ahead?

Hon. Biegun: Yeah. So it's very important, that sequence that you just mentioned of meetings, because the common perception is that this period of diplomacy ended with the failure to arrive at an agreement at Hanoi. But, as you rightly point out, there was the surprise visit of Kim Jong-un to the Panmunjom village to meet with President Trump just a few months later, which would defy that assessment.

And our meeting in October in Stockholm was very unproductive, for sure. But it was – in the larger context, it wasn't – it wasn't the end of anything. It may – it wasn't necessarily the end of anything. It may have simply been performative on the part of North Korea. There was some thought even that it was payback for Hanoi, that they needed to – needed to snakebite us once because we snakebit them, kind of would be the thinking there.

You know, the other thing that I would – I would absolutely emphasize coming out of Hanoi that it did not end in acrimony. President Trump's embrace, handshake with Chairman Kim at the end of the Hanoi meeting was in the context of let's keep trying. We're getting closer, but the gap is too big today for us to reach an agreement. And so Hanoi has been characterized in many ways as a failure, as a rejection. And the – I think the truest description would be that it simply didn't end in an agreement.

Now, systemically, for the United States, that's, you know, pretty easy for us to digest. You know, we'll try again. Let's get together in a couple weeks, figure out, you know, how we make progress. In the context of the North Korean system, and the buildup in advance of a leader-level

engagement like this, it's a very different treatment. And so, despite the fact that it didn't end in acrimony, it certainly had political reverberations in North Korea that were quite obvious.

You know, I want to – you know, President Trump does have, like so many including our diplomats – perhaps me too – has the conceit of the negotiator that everything is negotiable. But not everything is negotiable. Sometimes things are not negotiable. It's not simply a failure of negotiating. It just may not be solvable through negotiation. But President Trump continues to believe for sure, I can see this in his public remarks, that continued engagement with North Korea could produce an outcome. And so he's open to that. He's got a lot on his foreign policy agenda right now.

And it has kept North Korea from becoming a central issue, but the president periodically returns to it, including in his recent discussions with Xi Jinping, but also his public musings and commentary during his campaign last year, and even earlier this year. And of course, in his meeting with President Lee he – they very much discussed this as well. So he's interested, but I don't think he's – it has the focus that other issues, like the war in Gaza or the war in Ukraine, in seizing his attention.

You know, the challenge with be the North Koreans have no – there's no upside for the North Koreans to engage with the United States right now, particularly at a time in which they are a participant in the conflict in Ukraine. The risk for the North Koreans to get whipsawed between U.S. and Russian expectations is so high that it's very unlikely, in my view, that the North Koreans would even contemplate engagement before there's some outcome, steady state resolution at least – or interim resolution to the war in Ukraine. I simply don't see the upside for the North Koreans. So I wasn't at all surprised that they didn't take up the president's clear hints during his last visit to South Korea that it might be another opportunity to meet, perhaps in Panmunjom village.

But President Trump, I think, is convinced that this is a solvable problem. And you have to – you have to understand President Trump, see through his perspective, to understand the logic. You know, here's a – here's a gentleman, a businessperson, who took the American presidency in 2016, with a fair amount of international awareness and certainly some strongly held views, but not a lot of experience in global affairs. And he was handed off this portfolio on North Korea by President Obama, who characterized it in a convincing manner as the number-one threat facing the United States of America in 2016 and '17.

And President Trump, in his first year, took that to heart. But as he

scrutinized the issue, you could see him also beginning to gain confidence in his own instincts and his own views on matters relating to North Korea. And at some point, he surely asked himself, how is it that 75 years, at the time, after the end of the Korean War that we still have nearly 30,000 U.S. troops on the Korean Peninsula, we have a nuclear weapons program that's out of control in North Korea, the United States homeland is at risk from a potential ICBM delivery of a nuclear weapon? You know, he could be – he could be understood for asking himself, what bumbling fools were in charge of this issue for the last 75 years that, here we are in 2016, and we're still essentially in a state of war? I mean, you have to try to get that outcome. That outcome doesn't just accidentally happen.

And that kind of informed how he approaches this. He sees this as an anachronism. And for those of you who have been to Panmunjom village, it reeks of the 1950s. It literally is the musky smell of a half-century ago. The buildings, the crumbling concrete. You know, here and there interspersed with gleaming glass buildings, to send messages to each other. But nonetheless, you know, President Trump sees this as a solvable problem. And so that's going to inform his view on this. What will that mean? When the administration cites denuclearization in their public commentary, which they have consistently since President Trump resumed office, it feels to me to be a little bit mechanical and robotic, almost going through – going through the motions.

I'm not sure. I'm not sure that were the United States and North Korea to sit down today the expectations would be the same as they were in Hanoi or in Singapore, just a few years ago. So we'll see, but I wouldn't hold my breath. Not because President Trump has lost interest in North Korea. I wouldn't hold my breath because I don't see the upside for the North Koreans at this point to engage.

Mr. Seiler: I think that's a good way of explaining a phenomena we've had to explain repeatedly being associated with the Obama era on North Korea policy, and the accusations of strategic patience, and never once was that actually the term we used for our policy. What we did say is we weren't going to chase. We were going to leave the door open – credibly leave the door open, while maintaining deterrence and while seeking to increase pressure to leave North Korea to make the right decision. And I think this is the same challenge that the president's facing today.

And I think he's pragmatic in terms of not wanting to chase, without any evidence before him that Pyongyang is going to change its currently desire not to engage the United States. So he's got a credible approach, but one that will be subject to criticism, which is relatively easy to dismiss, that he's not doing enough. But it's because, again, as an

experienced negotiator, one, he sees every issue has a potential solution. Or, at the very least, he doesn't want to weaken his hand by chasing. So, no, thank you for that.

Bob, I have a question here. I mean, this is a broader sense, if you look at the challenge that policymakers in Seoul and Washington have today. You know, you've got these competing demand signals. On the one hand, a demand signal for engagement and reconciliation, outreach to North Korea. Lee Jae Myung has, among other things, you know, put a halt to broadcasts, halt to leaflets, halt to loudspeakers, halt to discussion of unification through absorption. And, according to the newspaper overnight, is getting prepared to apologize for drone flights and everything. He is doing everything to address the demand made by Kim Jong-un through the National Security Office director, Chung Eui-yong at the time, that the system be guaranteed to survive – that regime change would not be pursued, that things would be done to less threaten the North Korean system.

So you have that requirement that what we call in many assurance language. In deterrence language, that assurance dimension. You have an ROK public that's probably mixed. Some are happy to see this. Some are worried about deterrence. So you need reassurance. We need to be putting aircraft carriers in there every once in a while, B-52 bombers. And you need to have this credible deterrence. How do you calibrate that going forward, and the tradeoffs? Particularly if we're going to have five years of conservative, strengthening, muscle-flexing, you know, applauding drones being flown over North Korean territory, and then you're going to have five years of the exact opposite. What's a feasible way forward, given everything we've talked about?

Dr. Gallucci: Syd, I think that's a very reasonable way of approaching what we've all been talking about here this morning. I'm teaching a seminar that I keep teaching over and over again at Georgetown till I get it right. And it's not nuclear weapons and national security. And so when I think about, as you have just characterized the ROK's approach right now, which is to – as I understand it – to avoid unnecessarily sticking your finger in their eye. You know, doing – being smart about this. Nothing has to happen right now. We don't expect any great breakthroughs on denuclearization given their current position, as I said, plus the declaratory policy.

So what do want to do? I would have said, somewhat the way this panel was set up this morning, that we want to do what is useful to reducing the likelihood of catastrophe. I mean, if we don't do anything else, I would have said that what we would be aiming for was to avoid big mistakes, big accidents, big misperceptions, the United States – you know, I remember saying this 30-some years ago – we actually don't

have regime change in our mind when we think about North Korea. I don't think we did then. You know, I had conversations with the president at the time. I don't think we had then, and I don't think we have it now. As Steve has said, that's not where President Trump is. That's not what he's aiming for.

OK. So then what do want to do? We want to look – traditional arms control tells us, all right, what is the North doing that's provocative? Well, low-yield nuclear weapons, sometimes called tactical nuclear weapons. Well, what does that mean? That means they want to have nuclear weapons that they can use more readily in the event of conventional conflict in which they are overmatched by the ROK plus the USA, unless China comes in and joins on their side. Which eventually they might, if history is a guide. But in the meantime, the North is investing in fighting – being able to fight a nuclear war and lowering the nuclear threshold. And that tells me instinctively that's not good.

So, you know, this is – this is not saying denuclearization. This is saying traditional arms control. That was how this was set up, is that – so I think the stuff we can do that makes conflict less likely makes escalation to the use of nuclear weapons less likely. That's one. Another is simply command and control. What is it that we think we know – by "we" I mean the ROK and the USA together – about command and control of nuclear weapons in North Korea? We have talked in the U.S. about conversations with countries that have nuclear weapons that will have these conversations very much in an offline kind of way. You know, and I'm thinking of countries like India, and Pakistan, and Israel.

And those conversations can take place. And in the cognoscenti of nuclear weapons managers, it can be very useful in reducing the likelihood of very bad things happening. I mean, there's actually two conversations. There's this kind of conversation, which I am interested in right now, and then there's the conversation of the kind the rest of us have been having, and Steve particularly, about what's likely, in a political sense – in a political diplomatic sense, of both the United States and the DPRK? When are they going to both be ready to have some conversation that is going to improve relations? And if you can avoid saying "denuclearization," I think you're doing well.

It's not that we'll forget about it. We want to assure, certainly, our allies in Northeast Asia that we are looking for denuclearization ultimately as an outcome, not to have them isolated as the non-nuclear states and more than one enemy in the – potential enemy in the region, Beijing and Pyongyang, with nuclear weapons. That's not the long-term outlook that the United States has. We have a different view. And it's an arms control-informed view. So what I'm saying is, I think there are at least two

speeds here. There's the political-diplomatic speed, which I think has to be informed by the interests of both states. And we've already been warned about not being presumptuous about what the North wants. And then there's another conversation about weapons, particularly nuclear weapons, and the things that we have come to understand can reduce the likelihood of escalation to their use.

Mr. Seiler: Great. As a segue, let me interject – oh, go ahead.

Mr. Cho: Yeah, can I just add one point to what Dr. Gallucci just said? Of course, up here I'm not representing the Korean government, but, first of all, we see that denuclearization of North Korea will be quite tough and time-consuming job we have to do. And we don't know exactly how long that will take. We all agree that denuclearization should remain the end state of our diplomatic efforts. So meanwhile, until we manage the pathway to denuclearization, then what are we supposed to do? And particularly South Korean government should do? I think that's the question we have to – want to find here.

On that point, what I can observe now is that Lee Jae Myung government is trying to do its efforts in – there is three threads, you mentioned. One is that deterrence. Deterrence we all understand, extended deterrence of the United States and South Korea's far, I mean, extended conventional abilities, and also our two sides agreed to introduce nuclear powered submarine into Korean arsenal. That is a deterrence, of course. And another one, risk reduction, as you mentioned, particularly along the border area. We have taken – South Korean government has taken some unilateral measures, stop the broadcasting, stop the balloon launches, and so on. And recently proposed the military-to-military talks.

And also, we are leading the diplomatic track quite widely open. Particularly, I think, what we needed to notice is the November 14 fact sheet, where there is one line that both governments are committing to the 2018 Singapore Joint Statement between DPRK and the United States. Which document very particularly links the denuclearization with the peace regime on the Korean Peninsula. I think there is one document which Kim Jong-un boasted as his achievement. And, at that time, that there was a lot of criticism in Washington against that document. But this time – and I saw when it was published, then I didn't – I don't think there was so much criticism here. But, anyway, that is there. And that will be starting point when Mr. Trump meets Kim Jong-un, or whatever diplomatic initiative starts again.

And just last point. Arms control, I think whatever we engage in whatever way we engage with North Korea, from our perspective, there

cannot be arms control efforts, because in arms control you don't do that, as far as I understand, we would recognize North Korea as a nuclear weapon state, and North Korea as a kind of equal counterpart. So –

Dr. Gallucci: Not necessarily.

Mr. Cho: No?

Dr. Gallucci: I mean, I think – if I could – I don't mean to interrupt. But that phrase, recognize North Korea as a nuclear weapon state, that unfortunately creates the image of rejecting the language of the NPT. And we don't want to be there. But recognizing North Korea as a state possessing nuclear weapons, that we should do.

Mr. Seiler: Pragmatically.

Mr. Cho: Hmm.

Dr. Gallucci: If we didn't do that, we'd have to wonder about our sanity, I think.

Mr. Cho: So in that way you can do some kind of arms control discussion with North Korea?

Dr. Gallucci: That's all that's required.

Mr. Seiler: It does risk legitimizing a nuclear –

Dr. Gallucci: Of course. And that's a risk. But the reality is – you begin the talks and end the talks by saying our long-term goal is –

Mr. Seiler: Remains, yeah.

Hon. Biegun: Could I interject on this too? Because this is – this is probably the central debate now about how we might proceed in the future, is the question of setting aside – if not forfeiting, at least setting aside – denuclearization as the ultimate objective, and instead focusing more on the interim, which is arms control. And arms control is indistinguishable, in many ways, from the interim phases of denuclearization. It's the same thing. And the question really turns on what the ultimate goal is, and outcome is. And that's why we were unable – ultimately, that's why we were unable to get an agreement in Hanoi, is defining that end state of complete denuclearization, which was in the Singapore agreement, was impossible for us to reconcile with the North Koreans.

The second- and third-order consequences of tacitly acknowledging, accepting North Korea as a state possessing nuclear weapons are still formidable. I think we need to recognize that that kind of shift in U.S. policy will have reverberations in Seoul, in Tokyo, and elsewhere.

Mr. Seiler: Globally, yeah.

Hon. Biegun: A second challenge is I'm not – I remain to be persuaded – I understand the logic of it completely – but I remain to be persuaded that the North Koreans would be any more enthusiastic about arms control discussion than complete denuclearization.

And the last issue is that once we do this, there's no going back. And so we really need to think long and hard about if this is a shift we are going to make on our approach to the Korean Peninsula. I'm not – the logic is not – doesn't elude me to what you and Bob are saying, just the permanence of the decision to do this is –

Mr. Seiler: Can I foot stomp –

Dr. Gallucci: Just an asterisk –

Mr. Seiler: OK, and I have a foot stomp after your asterisk.

Dr. Gallucci: Asterisk: The word "accept" and the word "acknowledge," those wors are different. If you say we'll – am I advocating accepting nuclear – that the DPRK is a nuclear weapon state, I would say no, OK? I would say, are you acknowledging that North Korea, DPRK, possesses nuclear weapons? I would say, yes, right? Now you ask, what is it I'd like to do tomorrow? I'd like to talk about a lot of things that are important, that I presume they could have an interest in too. It could be economic, it could be political, it could be security. It could be arms control and reducing the risks, given that you have nuclear weapons and we have nuclear weapons.

What does that mean for the long term? For the long term, my objective remains the same, all right? I'm not accepting the North Korean situation, the reality. I'm acknowledging it is the reality right now. But I'm not accepting it.

Hon. Biegun: It would take very deft diplomacy, but it's possible, to convince others of those distinctions. Because ultimately it's not us that we have to convince. We can convince ourselves very easily on almost anything. But our ability to convince out partners and allies around the world is going to be much more consequential. And convincing the North Koreans. But there's also – there are effects for us. I think it would be, I think, naïve

for us to believe that we would go into an arms control negotiation with the North Koreans where only their chips – only their chips are on the table.

They will have a point of view on our extended deterrence. They will have a point of view on our deployed forces in the Indo-Pacific. They'll have a point of view on our total number of warheads.

Dr. Gallucci: Bring it on.

Mr. Seiler: And exercises. An important point you make, Steve, is something I've repeated over and over. There's a myth out there that a laser-focus on complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization has blinded us to other – the perfect has blinded us to the good of what would be a gradual rollback of the North Korean program. And indeed, every approach – six-party talks, leap day understanding, and even Singapore/Hanoi, always had that flavor of arms control. It begins with a credible declaration, a halt to current activities, a discussion over arsenal size, rolling back the arsenal size, and then disable, dismantle, you know, abandon.

So there is no magical arms control solution out there. Because right now Kim Jong-un refuses to talk about anything. And I think the logic of the public messaging is we're a nuclear weapons power, state, you can call us what we want. Nobody else is putting their arsenal on the table, and why should we? And if anybody's arsenal is put on the table, it should be the true source of nuclear danger on the Korean Peninsula, the United States, and its extended. So we know the logic of what they'd have.

So I wanted to ask the question, Bong-geun, to you, and frame it, to the degree that you can, is peaceful coexistence really possible? And we say we don't have a regime change policy, right? Do we not want North Korea to denuclearize? Do we not want them to change their behavior? From Pyongyang's perspective, the United States, whether it admits it or not, has a regime change policy as long as it doesn't accept North Korea's nuclear weapons program and nuclear weapons writ large. But a peaceful coexistence vision, I think, in the back of his mind is Lee Jae Myung's proclaimed end. He might not articulate it. He may continue to give credence to denuclearization as a goal. But he realizes it highly unlikely. And getting to some area where at least the tensions on the peninsula can be removed is a commendable outcome.

Is it possible – and you can maybe wrap up your response because we've got about one minute left – (laughter) – maybe three if I cheat. Because it'll take them at least two minutes to come and pull us off the

stage. So if you could comment on that.

Mr. Jun: Yeah. What I'm seeing most unique and particular about this Lee Jae Myung North Korean policy is the emphasis on peaceful coexistence. Because all our previous North Korea policy have failed in denuclearization, and any changes, or economic cooperation, everything. So, you know, our principle was, first, the denuclearization, first. Peace regime second. But I think it's – we need to change our approach, our strategy. And, as you said, as long as North Korea is threatened of its system, its stated existence, it's a dynastic regime, it's not going to give up the weapons.

But the only way for them to be, you know, susceptible to our influence to have a certain level of peaceful coexistence on the Korean Peninsula, meaning that inter-Korean relations should normalized. But before that, U.S.-DPRK relations should be normalized. I don't think that it's normalization – full normalization first, and then denuclearization. But going hand-in-hand we have a much better success of denuclearization, and war avoidance on the Korean Peninsula.

Mr. Seiler: Well, we've got a Ninth Party Congress coming up, right? And it should provide us some language that amplifies the concept of the two Koreas. You know, we're separate. They're a perpetual hostile state – South Korea, as seen from North Korea. And maybe we'll see some language of whether there's any flexibility on it. The cynic in me wants to argue North Korea thrives on tension, and distrust, and hostility. It protects its system internally by portraying South Korea as an eternal sworn enemy. It's also a reason why, as Steve mentioned, it doesn't really want better relations with the U.S. These are all long-term obstacles. And I think we just licked the watermelon – (speaks in Korean) – here. (Laughter.) We just touched the surface of this issue.

But thank you all for some very good comments and presentations. And thank you all for listening. (Applause.)

(END.)