

## Korea Chair Snapshot

August 25, 2015

### Korean Agreement Appears to Defuse Mini-Crisis

After more than 43 hours of high-level talks that began at 6:00 PM (KST) on Saturday, August 22, North and South Korea finally reached an agreement just before 1:00 AM (KST) on Tuesday, August 25 at Panmunjom to de-escalate recent tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

The four basic provisions announced by the ROK National Security Advisor Kim Kwan-jin basically accord with KCNA reporting: 1) South Korea promised to stop the loudspeaker broadcasts at 11 locations along the Military Demarcation Line (MDL) starting at noon on August 25. 2) North Korea expressed regret over the August 4 mine attack at the MDL, and agreed to lift its “semi-war state” ordered by Kim Jong-un last Thursday, August 20. 3) The two Koreas agreed to hold a Red Cross working-level meeting in early September with the aim of holding family reunions during this year’s Chuseok (Korean Thanksgiving). 4) The two Koreas agreed to hold further talks to improve inter-Korea relations and to increase civilian exchanges.

- The focus now will be on implementation of the agreement, which begins with working-level talks in early September to conduct a set of family reunions around the Chuseok holidays later that month.
- An important takeaway from the resolution of this mini-crisis is how much the North’s desire to stop the loudspeaker broadcasts impacted its stance in the talks. The regime is hypersensitive to criticism about Kim Jong-un’s legitimacy.
- Going forward, the agreement opens the possibility for progress in President Park Geun-hye’s *trustpolitik* efforts to engage North Korea, but it also provides a potential opportunity for Pyongyang to split the allies as it holds to a confrontational policy with Washington.

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