



Asan Institute for Policy Studies

Webinar

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**“Preventing Nuclear Proliferation and
Reassuring America’s Allies”**

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Participants

Moderator

Han Sung-joo

Chairman, Asan Institute for Policy Studies

Speakers

Curtis M. Scaparrotti

Former Supreme Allied Commander, Europe; Commander, U.S. Forces Korea

Yun Byung-se

Former Foreign Minister, ROK

Go Myung-hyun

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Welcoming and Introductory Remarks

Choi Kang:

Good morning everyone. I'd like to thank all of you for joining Asan-CCGA webinar titled, Preventing Nuclear Proliferation and Reassuring America's Allies. I am Choi Kang, Vice President of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies. This webinar will be moderated by Chairman Han Sung-joo. He's very well-known practitioner and scholar in Korea as well as in other parts of the world. Without further ado, let me turn over to Chairman Han Sung-joo so that he can say a few words for introduction.

Han Sung-joo:

Thank you very much, Dr. Choi. I'm pleased to open this Asan-Chicago Council web seminar meeting on Preventing Nuclear Proliferation and Reassuring America's Allies. As you all know, this is the result of very thoughtful deliberation on the subject by experienced, insightful and wise persons in the world. It was organized by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs with the leadership of its president, Ambassador Ivo Daalder, my good friend. The task force report was finished only a few weeks ago, which we will discuss today. Two of the members of the task force will be participating in the seminar: General Scaparrotti who was Supreme Allied Commander of Europe and Commander of U.S. Forces Korea and Minister Yun Byung-se. He was the Minister of Foreign Affairs until 4 years ago.

I have, with the shortage of time, just three questions, I hope, our participants will have in mind as they make presentations and conduct discussions. The first is about the title of the project which is Preventing Nuclear Proliferation on one hand, and Reassuring America's Allies on the other. Is it that the two are related items or items that are having some causation to each other?

The second question has to do with a comparison between the situation in Europe and in Asia. For one thing, Europe has NATO. Asia does not have a security mechanism such as NATO, although there are some other loosely-organized - not really organizations - dialogues or exercises. The third is the implications of this report to Korea, to the Korean situation, to the North Korean nuclear weapons and what South Korea, together with the United States, can do to deal with it.

With this introduction, I trust and hope that the webinar we will have today with experts, particularly including its authors with their insights and wisdom, will shed light on how we enhance our sense of security and reduce our sense of insecurity. Let us now turn first to General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, former Supreme

Allied Commander Europe and Commander of U.S. Forces in Korea. General Scaparrotti, please.

Session 1. Discussion

Curtis M. Scaparrotti:

Minister Han, thank you. I'm pleased to participate in this important webinar on Preventing Nuclear Proliferation and Reassuring America's Allies. It's a particular privilege to join two great statesmen that I've had the privilege to work with in the past, Minister Han and Minister Yun. It's good to see you both as well. I want to thank the Asan Institute and Chicago Council on Global Affairs for making this webinar possible and for sponsoring it. The task force met, for the first time in person, just over a year ago at Munich Security Conference. In that first meeting, we discussed the history of nuclear non-proliferation and our concerns as allies in Europe and Asia confronted by growing military threats from a resurgent Russia, a rising China and a nuclear North Korea.

In the next seven minutes, I'll do my best to summarize the task force's report and the report's key points here. In the early 1960s, intelligence officials projected that by the mid-1970s, there would likely be 10 to 15 nuclear powers in the world within a decade, and the U.S. President John F. Kennedy actually warned about just such a proliferated world. The nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968 successfully prevented this in large part because of the concerted U.S. effort since the 1960s to reassure its allies around the world that America's nuclear umbrella would extend to their territories and ensure their security. Since the NPT entered into force in 1970, just four countries - India, Israel, Pakistan, and North Korea- have acquired nuclear weapons. However, I confirm, for my recent time in uniform, questions about the credibility of the American nuclear guarantee have arisen again in Europe and Asia, as our allies face growing military threats from Russia, China and a nuclear North Korea. At the same time, successive U.S. administrations have sought to retreat from longstanding commitments, leaving America's allies around the world uncertain whether they can still rely on the United States.

Therefore, two fundamental conclusions in the report are as follows: First, in order to prevent new nuclear proliferation among these allies, it is essential to acknowledge that what has long been unthinkable, the idea that the threat of nuclear proliferation that is becoming thinkable once again or once more. Although the Biden administration has pledged to reaffirm long-standing U.S. security commitments to its allies, a change in administration alone is unlikely to reestablish the credibility of the U.S. security guarantee, including the nuclear umbrella, in the eyes of most allies. In the light of this reality, I'll now briefly cover the task force recommendations with a focus on Asia.

To your point, Minister Han, yes, there is a relationship in the title that the strength of the allies, that are nuclear guarantee, is actually tied to the non-

proliferation, particularly among our allies, to the extent of our nuclear extension and our guarantee is trusted. So now we're rebuilding U.S. leadership. The U.S. can take three major steps to rebuild confidence in the U.S. security commitments to its allies, including recommitting to extended nuclear deterrence.

First, the president of the United States should reaffirm the foundational cornerstones of America's security commitments, including reaffirming its treaty-based collective defense commitments unequivocally, reverse the decision to remove U.S. troops from Germany and elsewhere, and negotiate long-term, balanced cost-sharing arrangements with U.S. forces based in Europe and Asia. On this last point, I note the administration's quick, along with the Republic of Korea together, and successful negotiation with Republic of Korea on a mutually acceptable, multi-year Special Measures Agreement, is very important, I think.

Second, U.S. needs to proactively raise the salience of nuclear weapons issues in its alliance relations, including by bringing allies into the nuclear planning process from the outset, increasing alliance crisis-management exercises, and involving alliance leaders at the highest level in regular wargaming.

And then finally third, U.S. needs to take steps to bolster the deterrence and defense capabilities of the European and Asian alliances, including increasing conventional defense capabilities, deploying additional missile defense capabilities, and, if needed, reviewing its non-strategic nuclear weapons posture in consultations with our allies. Now these three measures are only the first step in strengthening reassurance and deterrence with alliance systems.

The task force also outlined actions and multilateral deterrence in Asia, and multilateral arms control to help rebuild U.S. leadership. With respect to multilateral deterrence in Asia, with Asia increasingly seen in Washington as the primary strategic and geopolitical theater of its global engagements, it's increasingly critical for the United States and its principal allies to coordinate strategy and combine efforts.

Therefore, the United States should prioritize reestablishing strong trilateral security cooperation with Japan and South Korea, which is a prerequisite both to address the North Korean threat and to build a multilateral security framework within Asia as a whole. The United States should create an Asian Nuclear Planning Group, bringing Australia, Japan and South Korea into the U.S. nuclear planning processes and providing a platform for these allies to discuss specific policies associated with U.S. nuclear forces.

With respect to multilateral arms control, the biggest nuclear unknown is in fact the scope and eventual scale of the Chinese nuclear deterrent forces. Arms control can play a role in penetrating China's nuclear capacities, providing greater transparency about its capabilities, an exchange of views on intentions, and enhanced stability in the overall nuclear relationship. An expanded arms control

framework should include a multi-pronged effort in the following points. Following the extension of New START, the United States and Russia should negotiate a new bilateral arms control agreement.

The five permanent members of the UN Security Council should engage in a strategic dialogue on nuclear weapons issues, the impact of new technologies, and other critical issues. The P5 should negotiate nuclear confidence-building and transparency measures, which could include as a first step invitations by the United States and Russia to representatives of the other nuclear powers to observe inspections that both countries conduct as part of our existing arms control obligations. Finally, efforts to multilateralize nuclear arms control should place particular emphasis on engaging China, which could include engaging China in a dialogue akin to the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks and allowing China to participate in New START monitoring as first steps.

What has been laid out, what I just covered in the report is a challenging agenda, but an urgent one. If the alliance structures that have been the foundation of security in Europe and Asia are not rebuilt, the question of nuclear proliferation among our allies can once again be on agenda. Again, Minister Han, thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

Han Sung-joo:

Thank you very much, General Scaparrotti. Now I see the faces of former Prime Minister Lee Hong-koo, and former Minister of Foreign Affairs Yun Byung-se who is scheduled to be the next speaker of this meeting. Without further ado, let me ask Minister Yun to give his thoughts on the issue and the report.

Yun Byung-se:

Good morning Seoul and good evening Washington. Let me first thank Minister Han, Chairman of the Asan Institute as well as the Chicago Council for hosting this timely webinar. And I am happy to join General Scaparrotti, a longtime friend of Korea, in presenting this report. General Scaparrotti gave an excellent presentation on the U.S., Europe and Asia in general and he covered part of my presentation as well.

On my part, I will try to focus more on the policy implications for the Korean Peninsula and Asia, including the ROK-US Alliance. Speaking straight, this report is about what has been long unthinkable has become thinkable as General Scaparrotti mentioned, meaning, a nuclear genie can come out of the bottle of US, allies, and partners, not just of trouble-makers. This is related to the question Minister Han asked about the report's title. The situation calls for an urgent option

to reverse the trend, especially through strengthening nuclear deterrence of US alliance in diverse ways. France's De Gaulle raised a famous question 60 years ago before France went nuclear: can the U.S. sacrifice New York for Paris? In the Asia context, we could ask: can the U.S. sacrifice New York or LA for Seoul or Tokyo? The risks have become very clear, as General Scaparrotti mentioned, as nuclear threats or challenges from a resurgent Russia, a rising China and a nuclear North Korea are greater than before, but the credibility of US nuclear and security guarantee is low especially during the Trump administration. Trump dismissed North Korea's short-range missile tests, which were the violations of UN Security Council resolutions and raised the worries about U.S. abandonment of allies and decoupling. As a consequence, deterrence and reassurance dilemma arises in a new form for America's European and Asian allies.

A salient case in point is North Korea. This is related to the second question raised by Minister Han. This report argues that growing North Korea nuclear missile capabilities, including estimated between 50 to 70 nuclear warheads, cause an existential threat to South Korea, Japan and beyond. Recently, we have witnessed a series of worse developments such as, one, North Korea's missile tests; two, its announced plan to further develop tactical nuclear weapons; and three, an UN Security Council's Expert Panel report that DPRK will seek its nuclear warheads with longer-range missiles.

Combined together, the temptation of North Korea to use or to threaten to use nuclear weapons is also increasing. This means that the whole Koreans every day will be in a missile crisis. Under these circumstances, this report points out opinions among the South Korean public, ranging from forming a multilateral nuclear planning and sharing arrangement with redeployment of US non-strategic weapons to South Korea, and to developing a national nuclear deterrent capability.

This report makes many action-oriented recommendations for the Biden administration with ready implications for South Korea. Some of them are mentioned by General Scaparrotti: rebuild US leadership in four different areas. I will describe the areas in my own way: Number one, commitments; Number two, capabilities; Number three, nuclear dimension; Number four regional framework. I describe them as "four ups."

Firstly, commitment up. This report recommends the United States to reaffirm America's security commitments to its allies in Europe and Asia to reestablish the credibility of US security guarantee, at the earliest possible opportunity, to demonstrate that commitment in new and evident ways, including the nuclear dimension. It is recommended that the United States to re-commit and retain existing US troops in Asia for the foreseeable future.

Secondly, nuclear dimension up. This report recommends the United States, as General Scaparrotti mentioned, to collectively raise the salience of nuclear issues

to allies, including, one by including allies in nuclear planning process from the outset; two, by including allies in crisis-management exercises that involves nuclear dimension; and three, by involving allies at the highest level in regular wargaming.

Thirdly, capabilities up – both conventional and nuclear. This report recommends the United States to take at least three key steps to build deterrence and defense capabilities of Asian alliances – this has been mentioned by General Scaparrotti, but I will repeat it once again, including building conventional defense capabilities in Asia; two, deploying additional missile defense capabilities; and three, reviewing its non-strategic nuclear posture with careful, yet serious consultation with all relevant regional allies to assure the adequacy of treaty-based defense systems and commitments.

As we understand, the forward deployment of US non-strategic nuclear weapons and dual capable system in Asia, if realized in the future, is compatible with the NPT, like in Europe. This is a much better option than independent nuclear deterrent of Asian allies. For example, conditional redeployment of tactical nuclear weapons until North Korea's denuclearization would be pragmatic for lopsided strategic environment in the peninsula.

Fourthly, regional framework, meaning going multilateral. This report recommends the United States to renew or rebuild alliance structures and make three key recommendations for collective deterrence in Asia, which is mentioned by General Scaparrotti as well. I will explain that in my own way; I used to call them three-, four-, or five-pronged approaches. First, three-pronged approach. This report recommends the United States to prioritize establishing strong trilateral security cooperation with Japan and South Korea, which is a prerequisite to reduce military threats and to build multilateral security framework in Asia as a whole. As we all know, the United States is now working very hard through two-plus-two ministerial meeting last month as well as Trilateral NSC meeting last week.

Second, four-pronged approaches, which is very innovative idea. The report recommends the United States to create an Asian nuclear planning group (ANPG) to embrace multilateral nuclear planning and deterrence, much as the one in NATO context. This ANPG will bring Australia, Japan, and South Korea into the U.S. nuclear processes and provide a platform for these allies to discuss specific policies associated with U.S. nuclear policies, and conduct wargames and exercises including the highest-level political participation.

This idea of ANPG now enjoys growing international support including many opinion leaders within South Korea. My standpoint is that the ANPG will serve as the first-ever regional framework to deal with North Korean nuclear threats, reassuring America's key regional allies, including South Korea, and reinforcing

existing working-level consultation mechanisms. It could hopefully give a way for another pillar, NATO-type nuclear-assuring arrangement in the future.

Third, five-pronged approach: The Quint or the Quad plus. The report recommends the quadrilateral security dialogue partners to consider the eventual inclusion of South Korea in the dialogue. For South Korea, the Quad or the trilateral security cooperation among the U.S., Japan, and South Korea would serve as a key platform to address issues and concerns in the free and open or inclusive Indo-Pacific including North Korean nuclear threat. At this stage, the current Korean government seems to be cautious on early participation. In due course, South Korea could join the Quad or separately the Quint with two other potential candidates. The longer the delay, the bigger security cost will be borne.

In concluding, South Korea will benefit from working closely with the United States and partners in Asia and Europe, rebuilding alliance structures and enhancing nuclear posture. This is actually related to another question raised by Minister Han on relationship between Asia and Europe. We have to rebuild alliance structures and enhance nuclear postures, both Trans-Atlantic and Trans-Pacific. Finally, these recommendations reflect individual views, not representing the governments. But I believe that the outcome of the report contains collective wisdom of the members having gone through turbulent times inside and outside the government. Thank you very much.

Han Sung-joo:

Thank you very much. We will have time to discuss the presentations that have been made by the General Scaparrotti and Minister Yun, both of whom participated in the task force that issued the report a few weeks ago. The third person to speak will be Dr. Go Myung-hyun, senior fellow at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies.

Go Myung-hyun:

Thank you, Minister Han. It is nice to meet you all and it is a great honor for me to be able to participate in an event with so many statesmen I've been looking up to for such a long time. Even though we're meeting virtually, but someday I look forward to meeting you in person.

I guess my role here, my contribution to the event, will be more about commenting on the outcome of the report that the Chicago Council has published. In making comments, I'll draw upon complements, some of the research that we have conducted at the Asan in collaboration with the RAND corporation in Santa Monica, the United States, that we have been looking into how to counter the

increase of North Korea nuclear threats and missile threats over the last decade or so.

So, I think the greatest contribution of this report in many ways will be the reaffirmation of the fact that allies' trust in the U.S. policy, especially extended deterrence is broken. The last 4 years in many ways have shown that the U.S. commitment to extending nuclear deterrence has deteriorated around the world. It is very healthy for the Chicago Council to try to restore the balance and credibility by putting on the table the three important recommendations.

One of the recommendations in the report, on constituting an Asian Nuclear Planning Group to reassure the allies, is very much welcome. Also, the emphasis on the trilateral security cooperation, among Korea, Japan and the United States as Minister Yun has emphasized in his presentation, is very much agreeable from my point of view. In addition, what is very refreshing is reconciliation of bringing back non-strategic and tactical nuclear weapon to the Korean peninsula.

This is something that the Asan Institute has been advocating all this time and it's very welcome and nice to hear it. It's also very good to hear that there's an emerging consensus about the need to counter the nuclear threat posed by North Korea by engaging in what has been a hitherto unthinkable idea of bringing back tactical nukes.

But having said all these, I think the recommendations outlined in the report, were pretty much constituted based on and responses to growing serious threat posed by not just North Korea, but other nuclear states such as China and Russia. There is a recommendation about rebuilding the multilateral security framework in terms of rendering reassurance to other allies in Asia-Pacific region, but I think that we will have to think about this more carefully and in a more tailored manner.

I think there is still a tendency to isolate North Korea's nuclear threat from the overall picture in the globe right now. A great deal of comments has been made in policy circles about how to counter the rise of China and then the wrong behavior by Russia, especially in European side, I would say. At the same time, we try to think of North Korea as an isolated case, some sort of an outlier, that has to be handled in a different way.

That could be problematic because North Korea is going to play a major spoiler in the overall strategic picture for next 5 years or so. We are estimating that North Korea already has between 60 to 120 nuclear warheads. You have to put this in the comparison with the strategic capability of China. China is estimated to have 300 nuclear warheads and we expect North Korea to reach that level actually very quickly in 5 or 10 years, probably 10 years at the latest. Not just that, North Korea is developing and improving its ICBM capability and is likely to possess between 15 and 25 ICBMs in 5 years at the latest.

The implication of this is that North Korea's nuclear missile capability will soon be able to overwhelm the missile defense system of the United States. The report made a strong recommendation to improve and enhance the missile defense system. But then it's likely that North Korea's capability will soon overwhelm the current missile defense capability and put the United States under tremendous pressure to expand its existing capability. This is not only a technological challenge, but also a strategical one. North Korea is going to be a spoiler in a sense that it will not only counters the U.S. and its allies' deterrence posture in the region, but also that of China.

So, reassuring not only the U.S. allies, but also China so as to maintain a nuclear balance will be another challenge. Our efforts, therefore, to create and restore the trust and extend reassurance with allies in the Asia Pacific region is going to be further strained, not just from North Korea's growing nuclear and missile capability, but also pressures from the Chinese.

I think that's something we should stress in the near future because that's going to be a major dilemma not just for South Korea but also for the United States, and even the European allies. So, with that, I'm going to wrap up my remarks and address look forward to discussing some of the challenges outlined in a more in-depth manner during the Q&A. Thank you.

Session 2. Q&A

Han Sung-joo:

Thank you very much for the three presenters. It's time for discussion. I take my privilege as a moderator and would like to ask General Scaparrotti one more-detailed, concrete question. One of the things that the report emphasizes is the importance of multilateral deterrence. It seems that a nuclear planning group in Europe is something unique, something that Asia is totally missing. The report recommends, while strengthening the nuclear planning group, the U.S. should create an Asian nuclear planning group. I would like to know: what will it look like, who's going to be its members, what will they do, and what will be the feasibility of creating such a mechanism.

Curtis M. Scaparrotti:

Thank you, minister. I can only address that from my personal experience. If you go back to NATO, the nuclear planning group there has experts from each of the countries. Experts, I mean, from diplomatic and military experts that provide counsel within that group. And that group has a greater responsibility than reporting out to the North Atlantic Treaty Council. So, within that group, you address the posture you need, the capability you need, trainings that have to take place and when they should be done, any emerging threats and whether we have appropriate counters to that, and how we would do that. I mean, it's all issues that have to be dealt with as a group of allies.

Another part of that is that that the planning group extends to key ministers of each country as well. I think that's an important aspect because deterrence today, especially strategic deterrence, was much more difficult than it was in the Cold War, for instance. You had the speed of information, the speed of influence on people. You have to take into account that along with nuclear aspect. So, all of that have to be considered.

Within Asia, we don't have that group. We don't have a structured group of diplomats and experts from each of the countries that exchange information, that can consult on the best posture. Part of what we mentioned in the report was planning and wargaming. In the complexity of today's world and the complexity of deterrence in the 21st century, if our senior ministers don't sit down and discuss the environment and potential scenarios that could come about and, in the calm, have discussions about appropriate posture and response, if they do not do that, they will be caught in a very short, unexpected crisis with very little time then to discuss those matters.

So, within NATO, for instance, it was always helpful to do those exercises and they have the ministers from each of the countries to consider specific scenarios, educating them per se, but also giving tasks back to me as the Supreme Allied Commander of Europe to provide them information on appropriate posture and respond to questions that they had. Hopefully, I tried outlined for you. I do believe some type of planning group that is originating with Asia will be very helpful. And all of that just reinforce trust among allies and confidence in, as a group of allies, particularly the United States' ability to credibly provide extended deterrence they count on.

Han Sung-joo:

Basically, the members are all from NATO countries. Were there any outside of the NATO?

Curtis M. Scaparrotti:

No. Not within the NATO planning group. It was the alliance. And of course, you have within the NATO France and UK that have nuclear weapons as well. They have a particular role in that because obviously they have expert planners as well. And generally, as allies, we tried to ensure that we were open to communication, understanding, and planning.

Han Sung-joo:

Thank you very much. I sort of jumped the gun. Actually, we should've given some time for allowing speakers themselves to ask questions to each other and have a mini-discussion of some kind. I'll do that. I just saw a hand raised by Minister Yun. Minister Yun, you want to come in?

Yun Byung-Se:

Very briefly, following up on General Scaparrotti's explanation on nuclear planning group in Europe. In the case of the future ANPG, basically potential members are four countries: U.S., Japan, Australia, and South Korea because there are already existing bilateral mechanisms between Korea and US, US and Japan, and US and Australia. These are very natural candidates for the future ANPG. In Europe, as I understand it, this NPG is the most senior body that covers the most important issues. In case ANPG realizes, they can benchmark the European model. And then, finally as General Scaparrotti mentioned, one important recommendation in several part of the report emphasizes the need for

crisis-management exercises. In the case of this ANPG, they could talk about this kind of nuclear crisis management as well. Thank you very much.

Han Sung-joo:

Thank you. Any other comments or questions from the speakers themselves.

Curtis M. Scaparrotti:

Minister Han, I'll just reinforce what Minister Yun just said. When I mentioned wargaming, I more specifically meant crisis-management exercises. That's what we conduct within NATO and they are very, very enlightening. I think in today's world, they are necessary particularly at the highest level: the ministers themselves taking part in.

Han Sung-joo:

So, you are saying something like a planning group which deals with not only nuclear issues but security issues generally.

Curtis M. Scaparrotti:

Well, yes. It has to have a view on the environment assessment. Come together on that. And from their assessments of the environment, they do appropriate planning with respect to nuclear forces. They report, in the case of NATO, to the ministers of defense. It is the nuclear planning group's job to do the work and the ministers discuss the outcome of that in terms of decision-making, et cetera.

Han Sung-joo:

I think I just saw a hand from Prime Minister Lee Hong-Koo. Please go ahead.

Lee Hong-koo:

Thank you very much. This is a wonderful meeting, which we very much need. The Asan-Chicago Council meeting just started in a series and I hope it continues. And as for the issues at hand, again, a central focus should be the U.S.-China relation because after the end of the Cold War between East and West, led by the United States and the Soviet Union, going back to 1980s and so on, the U.S. and the international community did not have a clear understanding on China. We all

welcomed China becoming an important member of the international community and also becoming one of the responsible P5 at the United Nations.

But I'm not sure if China had the same understanding on the developments at the time. For example, it became one of the P5 at the United Nations. As one of the superpowers, among other things, you have the responsibility to keep international agreements, for example, I like to cite nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT). So, NPT came about only because major powers as members of P5 at the United Nations fully supported its spirit and operation.

I am not sure if China had the same understanding with the United States and others. China knew that North Korea was becoming a nuclear country. China either did not have the power to stop it or decided not to do it. It seems like China considers North Korea as an exception to the NPT system, which is alright with China. This creates tremendous problems regionally and globally.

So, the new American administration, which has claimed that it will return to the leadership position and try to reassess international agreements and arrangements, I think, there has to be a very serious discussion between the US and China on this point. That is, if China thinks there could be an exception to the NPT system like North Korea, it will surprise other neighboring countries in Northeast Asia, for example, South Korea and Japan. Now I have the feeling that's not the Chinese position: North Korea is an exception, a single exception they'd like to support. And it doesn't make very much sense.

A basic rationale on the part of North Korea to become a nuclear power is because they have threats from the United States, a nuclear country. If that's the case, I think we have to now consider a possibility of doing something like Europe, as General Scaparrotti has just explained. that is, why North Korea and China don't sign international agreements like the United States, Japan and South Korea? If the United States attacks North Korea, China will automatically intervene and become a part of the conflict. As far as I know, there's no clear treaty between North Korea and China and North Korea and Russia.

What I'm saying is that it's about time that the international system has to be re-arranged and the NPT system has to be reviewed, and with full participation of China we have to revive initial commitments made by all members of the international community. That will help in Asia the new age of peace, which is somewhat modelled after the age of peace in Western Europe after the first Cold War because of understanding and agreement between Russia/Soviet Union and NATO countries or Western European countries.

The U.S. basically has to go into major discussion with China. It's very difficult for a country like South Korea to enter into this type of discussion with China. China is not used to talk with smaller countries. They only want to talk with bigger countries like the United States. We are hoping that there will be much

more serious conversation between the U.S. and China on this question. Thank you very much. I'll stop here.

Han Sung-joo:

Thank you. I think Ambassador Ahn who had served in the United States as Korean ambassador until two years ago has something to say.

Ahn Ho-young:

Thank you, Minister Han. General Scaparrotti, so glad to see you again. I very much appreciate the fact that you are sharing your time with us and at the same time, thank you so much for your very concise summary of all the important recommendations included in your report. And as you can see, one piece of recommendation, which is attracting a lot of attention, is something I would call an Asian version of a nuclear planning group. I was wondering if I could make one comment and two questions with respect to the Asian version of a nuclear planning group.

My comment would be this. As I was listening to you the way how NATO nuclear planning group worked, you said it was not about just narrowly defined nuclear issues as such. Its scope was much broader than that. I was listening to you and was reminded of something called, Extended Deterrence Strategy and Consultation Group (EDSCG), rather a lengthy name. That's something we agreed to establish between the US and South Korea, if you remember. That was during the time I was an ambassador in Washington and Minister Yun used to be the foreign minister.

That was precisely what we thought at the time in the sense that extended deterrence, that in fact, would be at the end of the day very sophisticated military planning, but at the same time, during normal time, an interface between diplomats and military generals, which could be enormously helpful. That, in fact, was the reason why we agreed between Korea and the United States to establish the Extended Deterrence Strategy and Consultation Group. What in fact is interesting about this is that after we agreed upon it, it has not been activated yet. So that's my comment.

My first question would be this: with all the ups and downs or benefits and certain difficulties in creating this group in Asia, I think there's a broad understanding of the benefits of this group. And as a matter of fact, I also support the creation of this kind of group. But, at the same time, getting back to what you discussed in your group in writing this recommendation, I'm pretty sure you must have come to consider a lot of challenges and difficulties we would have to face, going all

the way to the creation of this kind of group. So, I was curious, to the extent possible, if you could share with us disadvantages of such a group you foresaw in recommending it in the report.

My second question would be this. I was just listening to you and I can see a lot of benefits of an Asian version of nuclear planning group. And I think what we are assuming is that there'll be deployment of tactical nuclear weapons in the territories of Asian allies of the United States like Korea, Japan, and Australia. As I was listening to you, I told myself that even if we do not deploy tactical nuclear weapons to South Korea, Japan, and Australia, this kind of group could, in fact, bring us a lot of benefits. Those are my two rather specific questions and I want to raise them with you. Thank you so much.

Curtis M. Scaparrotti:

Thank you, ambassador. It's always good to see you again. I enjoyed our time as well together working on these tough issues. First of all, you noted the working group that we had in Korea. My memory is that the Republic of Korea requested that in order to have a greater insight into our planning on our nuclear systems. When I was the commander, we'd have bombers, excursions et cetera, would come in. I think Republic of Korea rightfully said we want more information on this. We want more information on how this fit into our overall plan. I think that's reasonable.

Having said that and being quite frank, what I experienced in Korea compared to what I experienced in Europe was quite different in terms of the level of information shared. And I think that's where we need to go because through that kind of exchange, one, there's a great deal of assurance built. Two, what I found in Europe was that a grouping of allies of the same mind actually comes out with a better outcome than say just the United States. That kind of planning between the United States and Republic of Korea – those two are usually better than one.

You have different frames of reference. You take into account different nations' concerns, and that'll be the same with more regional one in Asia. So, I found benefits from all those things as the commander.

Then what are the downsides? One of the downsides is this is sensitive information. So, it has to be done in a way that we know it can be secure. Every country will have that concern. It's not a thing that can be done quickly. It takes time to build that bond and trust. There's a risk involved. Some nations see this as more provocative than deterrent. I think you have to take that into account as well and that has to do with, you know, how forthright the allies will be about the purposes of this nuclear planning group and how they're going to use it.

But, personally, a deterrent factor is much more important to me, particularly in today's world. As I said, Republic of Korea is in a difficult spot and we have China involved in it as well. This is a very difficult problem, but I think this is the one that can be better dealt with as a group of allies with common objectives. It would have much greater deterrent effect than we do it separately or try to.

Han Sung-joo:

Thank you. I think General Chung Seung-Jo who worked with you wants to make a comment. Please, General Chung.

Chung Seung-Jo:

Thank you, Minister Han. Thank you for very good presentations by great persons. Especially I am glad to see General Scaparrotti. When I think about North Korean nuclear threats, I always have two important things. First one is how to denuclearize North Korea. Second one is how to deter their utilization of nuclear bombs.

From the military point of view, I think we need to give more weights to deterrence usage of nuclear capability against North Korea. I also think about deterrence. I think we need some lines of efforts. First one is, we need to have a more detailed extended deterrence plan especially by the United States. I hope it shares the plan with Republic of Korea. With that detailed extended deterrence plan, we need to exercise through sometimes PTX, sometimes CPX, and hopefully FTX. It will be much more helpful to deter North Korea by using nuclear capability. Second thought is that sometimes we talk about nuclear sharing. There's my question to General Scaparrotti. Based on your experience in Europe, how can the United States apply the nuclear-sharing plan to the Korean Peninsula? Let me stop here. Thank you.

Han Sung-joo:

Thank you very much. I saw two fingered-hands. Minister Yun, you want to come in now?

Yun Byung-Se:

Thank you. This is related to comments made by Ambassador Ahn as well as General Chung. As regards Extended Deterrence Strategy Consultation Group, I was actually the person who made a strong recommendation to create this group. This is a vice-ministerial level. Before, it was a deputy-ministerial level focused

on military affairs. I recommended the group to deal with not just military affairs, but also foreign policy areas as well. It was a great idea and there was a great resolve in the two leaders of the United States and South Korea.

With the change of government, it was not followed up until recently. We need to revitalize that group bilaterally. In the same context, there are separate nuclear consultation mechanisms between US and Japan, and US and Australia. As long as we are resolved to utilize this idea, it would not be very difficult for the United States to convene all these countries together because we have three separate, bilateral mechanisms and there's been an accumulation of regional experiences.

Then, there'll be exchange of a lot of sensitive information as well just like NATO. Finally, this is about regarding the comments made by Ambassador Han. When I proposed this idea of ANPG, I was thinking about the possibility that this ANPG could exist even before the existence of a nuclear-sharing arrangement for the same reason as Ambassador Han just mentioned. Coming together of senior leaders through the ANPG itself will send very important signals to North Korea, China, Russia and all other countries. We can combine our wisdom together to tackle this North Korea nuclear threat. So even without the existence of a nuclear-sharing arrangement or tactical nuclear weapons, we could proceed with creating this ANPG. I think step by step, we can move toward the next level of cooperation. Thank you very much.

Han Sung-joo:

Thank you. Dr. Choi Kang?

Choi Kang:

Thank you. I really enjoyed this webinar and I wholeheartedly welcomed the recommendations you made. Actually, Asan has been advocating those recommendations for a long time. Now, those recommendations are accepted and well-printed in your report. I have a couple of questions, more technical questions. One of the recommendations in the report is upgrading missile defense.

Can you be more specific about upgrading and strengthening missile defense? Do you think we need to have, I don't know how many, more numbers of batteries deployed to the Korean peninsula? Because North Korea is developing tactical nuclear weapons with short-range missiles; they've conducted short-range missile tests a couple of weeks ago. So, how can we upgrade missile defense on the Korean peninsula or the Northeast Asian theater?

Second, when a nuclear-sharing mechanism is introduced, I think we need to think about what would be the proper structure of the combined forces command,

more integrated one, to carry out nuclear deterrence. Another related question is about wartime Operational Control (OPCON). I think the combined forces command and wartime OPCON go side-by-side. If we introduce a nuclear-sharing mechanism, do you think we need to have the current combined command forces structure and delay the OPCON transition? Thank you.

Han Sung-joo:

Thank you very much. Time is very near where we have to close, I'm supposed to make a closing remark but let me just raise one question before I do that.

This question is, again, to General Scaparrotti, any multilateral deterrence requires the need for the members of this group to have same or similar objective and outlook, and in this case, in dealing with North Korean nuclear issue. I'm not sure how much our own government shares all the objectives and concerns that some other governments in the alliance have.

We're going to have an election, a presidential election next year, a year from now, we don't know what the result of that election will be. Usually the Korean politics tends to have a pendulum-like movement, so we move from progressive to conservative back and forth with some intervals. In any case, on the issue of threat perception the South Korean government tended to coincide with that of former President Trump who didn't seem to feel that the threat is that great.

On missile defense issue, we have a problem in dealing with China and the South Korean government, the Moon government dealt with the issue in a way that has bound our hands. If an issue like Nuclear Planning Group comes up, I don't know the present government will support that kind of a plan, they have different views on joint U.S.-Korea military exercise or possibly on the issue of nuclear sharing.

I would like to ask you General. I hope the United States understands the prevailing view within Korea that we would like to work very closely with the United States and cooperate in this multilateral deterrence as much as possible. How much patience does the United States have in dealing with South Korea? One-year sounds like a very short time, but it could be a long time and if we cannot guarantee that after one year everything else will change, still we will have to work toward cooperating and sharing our views and concerns together. Do you think this is an unnecessary concern? Or what kind of atmosphere can you tell us about the United States?

Curtis M. Scaparrotti:

Well, obviously this is my personal opinion Minister, but I think actually the United States has a good deal of patience, if you consider it from the common

objectives that you know, our alliance with the Republic of Korea has been based upon. We know broad basic objectives. I don't think there's any argument about it, but it comes down to how do we – the real differences that come about are often about – how do we enact or what actions do we take to reach our broader objectives. My experience has been now into alliances is that's not unusual but strong alliances continue to talk and they do so candidly about their differences.

I experienced in Europe over the, my last tour, a great deal of different set of political level within the alliance and yet you saw them make major decisions time and again at 30. They came together on the very broad ones and because of that I tend to believe that as long as we're talking and we're candid and we can be trusted to be candid with each other, we actually strengthen that alliance. And in the longer term, we will get to where we need to be. It's that same perspective that I think if you look at a regional alliance that while many of the governments may have different views about the environment itself, the security environment, they can come together and at least understand each other's areas where they are aligned and where they're not, and that in and of itself is very helpful.

Closing Remarks

Han Sung-joo:

Thank you very much. I feel relieved about the patience that you talked about. I think this morning, well your evening, we had a very good discussion, very serious one and insightful and illuminating points have been made and thank you very much for all the participants. I hope that having read the report, the United States and its allies will take the points that the report makes and work very hard to realize both of this, which is preventing nuclear proliferation and reassuring American allies, but at the same time achieve multilateral deterrence. So, thank you very much all participants. I'll stop the webinar at this point. Thank you very much.

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