

ANNEX F

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Northeast Asia Security Cooperation

Introduction

1. At the **ASEAN-PMC-SOM** held in Singapore in May 1993, it was understood that South Korea would prepare a paper on Northeast Asia security cooperation matters.

2. This paper broadly describes the Northeast Asian security situation in general and identifies the major security issues in the region. It suggests some basic approaches for consolidating regional peace and security and proposes initiating Northeast Asia Security Dialogue, which is to contribute to promoting security cooperation in Asia and the Pacific.

Northeast Asian Security Environment in General

3. Since the end of the Korean **War**, Northeast Asia was one of the main battlefields of the cold war. It still remains as one of the **tension-spots** of the world.

4. The end of the cold war has led to an overall improvement in the security environment in Northeast Asia. It has generally reduced international tension across the region and contributed to economic and trade relations among the countries in the region. The normalization of **Seoul's** relations with Moscow in 1990 and with Beijing in 1992 respectively **exemplifies** this change.

5. Trade among Northeast Asian countries has immensely increased in recent years. The combined trilateral trade among South Korea, China and Japan in 1993 totalled about US \$80 billion reflecting a 28% increase from 1990 (with Hong Kong and Taiwan included, the regional trade volume amounted to more than \$200 billion showing a 55% rise for the same period). Interdependence among the countries in the region is deepening year after year.

6. However the division of the Korean peninsula, a legacy of the cold war, remains the major source of tension in Northeast Asia. Inter-Korean relations in general remain at a standstill. No single substantive provision of the Agreement on Reconciliation, **Non-aggression**, Exchange and Cooperation between the North and South of Korea concluded on 13 December 1991 has been implemented.

7. North Korea's nuclear issue has emerged as the most serious security concern in Northeast Asia. Pyongyang's failure to comply with its **NPT-type** Safeguards Agreement is feared to endanger peace and security in Northeast Asia and global efforts for non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It could result in collective measures on North Korea by the international community including the Security Council of the United Nations.

8. **Futhermore**, North Korea's **chemical-biological** weapons capabilities coupled with its missile programme are also disturbing factors affecting the security environment of the region.

9. It is, meanwhile, to be noted that the countries in the region have been engaged in an active military build-up far from the peace dividend in the post-cold-war era. Remarkable increase in military spending of some countries in Northeast Asia over the last few years poses a potential threat to regional peace and security.

10. There are other issues likely to affect regional peace and security: political and territorial disputes between some countries in the region and the elements of domestic insecurity including succession problems. Recent sources of security concern include the environmental question of air-pollution and nuclear waste dumping in particular, refugees and humanitarian problems as well as drug trafficking and other transnational crimes.

11. A fragile peace was maintained in Northeast Asia during the cold-war years with the United States playing a pivotal role in maintaining peace and stability in the region. Its security commitment remains the linchpin of the **post-cold-war** Northeast Asian peace and stability under the present power relations and strategic **circumstances**. However anxieties arise over the future role of the United States in the **post-cold-war** Northeast Asia.

Proposed Approaches for Consolidating Peace and Security in Northeast Asia

12. With the above observations in mind and given the specific security equation, a multilateral framework is needed to further improve the security environment and consolidate peace in Northeast Asia.

13. A **gradual** approach should be made to take into account historical realities as well as differences in political system and economic development among the regional **countries**.

14. Multilateral security cooperation in Northeast Asia should be pursued on the basis of the following principles among others:

- respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity;
- **non-aggression** and no threat or use of force;
- **non-intervention** in internal affairs;
- peaceful settlement of disputes;
- peaceful coexistence; and
- democracy and respect for human dignity.

15. The conditions favorable for regional cooperation should first be created by removing mutual distrust and building mutual confidence. This process will help nurture the habits of regional consultation and establish the patterns of regional cooperation.

16. While making continued efforts to resolve North Korea's nuclear issue within the existing framework and on the basis of the international consensus, cooperation among the countries in the region is needed to strengthen at the regional level the present global regimes for the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Regional cooperation is also needed in other fields of arms control including the regulation of missile technology.

17. Security cooperation among the Northeast Asian countries will have to begin with the main emphasis placed on preventive diplomacy, particularly conflict prevention. In the area of military mutual reassurance measures (MRMs), initial endeavours would be concentrated on the following with a view to enhancing transparency:

- exchange and discussion of defence white papers;
- provision of data to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms;
- regular meetings of defence officials; and
- exchange of visits of military personnel and of naval vessels.

18. They might explore joint cooperation in non-combat activities such as search and rescue operations as well as emergency relief.

19. They can also coordinate in participating in the UN Peacekeeping Operations. A joint training programme could be worked out and implemented.

Northeast Asia Security Dialogue

20. A consultative forum is needed to create the favourable conditions for security cooperation among the countries in Northeast Asia and to develop a regional framework for peace on a step-by-step basis.

21. This forum is going to serve as a key instrument for promoting preventive diplomacy and cooperative security in the region.

22. The forum is expected to maintain a cooperative, consultative relationship with the ASEAN Regional Forum. The two organisations will work in parallel to promote security cooperation in the Asia and Pacific region.