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All Out to Oppose U.S. War Preparations on Korean Peninsula!

To Denuclearize the Korean Peninsula the U.S. Must Formally End the Korean War and Make Peace with the DPRK

- Philip Fernandez -

The Biden administration announced on April 30 that it had completed its review of U.S. policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). While providing no details, the White House spokesperson stated, "Our goal remains the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. With a clear understanding that the efforts of the past four administrations have not achieved this objective [...] Our policy calls for a calibrated, practical approach that is open to and will explore diplomacy with the DPRK [...]"

If the U.S. was truly interested in denuclearizing the Korean peninsula, there is no mystery about what must be done. The U.S. must formally end its state of war against the DPRK by signing a peace treaty, and engage in peaceful relations with that country. It means ending the constant threats of military aggression including close to 100 small and large-scale joint-military exercises that the U.S. carries out with the Republic of Korea (ROK), Japan and other of its allies, including Canada, as well as threats of "decapitating" the DPRK leadership, and threats of nuclear annihilation. It means ending the U.S.-led brutal and illegal economic and political sanctions imposed on the DPRK which are a form of economic warfare and collective punishment against a small country that affirms it's right to be and will not capitulate. These are part of the U.S. strategy to divide the Korean people, and justify the U.S. military presence on the Korean Peninsula with the overall aim of regime change in the DPRK so that the entire Korean Peninsula can be nuclearized under U.S. dictate right at the doorstep of China and Russia.



Activists in south Korea have been marching, for more than 40 days for the One Korea Peace Railway, with the aim of reviving and expanding the intra-Korean railway project that was undermined by U.S. interference in intra-Korean relations. Participants in the march include railway workers, those whose families have been separated by the U.S. division of Korea, as well as trade unionists, religious and civil society organizations. Shown here, the marchers in Cheonan on June 12, 2021.

The DPRK has time and again made it clear that it wants peace; it wants the Korean nation, north and south, to sort out the contradictions on the Korean Peninsula by their own efforts, without foreign interference and intervention. It participated in the Six-Party Talks hosted by China between 2003 and 2009 involving itself, China, Russia, Japan, the U.S. and the ROK to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula but withdrew when it became clear that the U.S. wanted the denuclearization of the DPRK, but not the Korean Peninsula. Furthermore the U.S. consistently violated every signed agreement of the negotiations at every stage while continuing to weaponize the entire ROK. Today, 28,500 U.S. troops remain alongside a massive arsenal of deadly weapons including conventional, nuclear and chemical, making south Korea the most militarized outpost of U.S. imperialism in the world.

In the interests of peace the DPRK has also signed agreements on several occasions with the

government of the ROK to end hostilities, build trust and strengthen ties so as to overcome more than 70 years of division forcefully imposed by the U.S. and against the will of the Korean people. The DPRK has committed to work with the ROK toward the peaceful reunification of Korea based on a confederation of the two different socioeconomic systems of north and south. The DPRK is still waiting for the ROK to fulfill its obligations to end the joint military exercises and other acts of aggressions based on the historic Panmunjom Declaration signed by the two Koreas in April 2018.



The only reason the DPRK acquired nuclear weapons in the first place -- developed through its own science and technology -- was to defend itself against the constant nuclear and conventional war threats and rehearsals for aggression by the U.S. and the ROK armed forces, the latter which remain under U.S. not ROK command. Furthermore, it was the U.S. that brought the first nuclear weapons into the ROK in 1958 in violation of the 1953 Korean Armistice Agreement, and it has continued to do so.

In his Report to the 8th Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) in January of this year, DPRK leader Kim Jong Un emphasized that the key to establishing a new DPRK-U.S. relationship lies in the U.S.

withdrawal of its hostile policy toward the DPRK. Among other things, the Report clarified the WPK's stand that it would approach the U.S. on the principle of power for power and goodwill for goodwill in the future.

However the DPRK leader, speaking from the experience of the Korean people with successive U.S. administrations, also said the DPRK had a very realistic assessment of what to expect from the outcome of the U.S. presidential elections. In his Report to the 8th Congress of the WPK, he noted "that whoever took power in the U.S., the real intentions of its policy toward the DPRK would never change." The Report stressed the need for an "adroit" strategy towards the U.S. while at the same time steadily expanding solidarity with the anti-imperialist, independent forces around the world.

He reaffirmed that the DPRK, has achieved such a high national defence capability that "it can pre-emptively contain the threat of hostile forces outside our territory, and in the future any heightening of tensions on the Korean Peninsula would lead to the instability of security on the part of the forces posing a threat to us." Kim Jong Un also emphasized that the DPRK, unlike the U.S., is "a responsible nuclear weapons state" that "will not use its nuclear weapons unless the aggressive hostile forces try to have recourse to their nuclear weapons against the DPRK."



In his address to the Joint Session of Congress on April 29, U.S. President Biden targeted Iran and the DPRK as "threats to American security and the security of the world" and pledged to address

these "threats posed by both of these countries through diplomacy, as well as stern deterrence." Thus, the DPRK leader's assessment that there would be no change to the U.S. policy toward the DPRK with the new administration was shown to be correct. Biden's "pragmatic approach" of "diplomacy" and "stern deterrence" is that the ends -- which is to have the DPRK give up its right to be -- justify the means. Such an approach fools no one, least of all the Korean people, and like the various self-serving approaches of previous administrations, it will fail. No blackmail nor self-serving trickery or use of force will succeed in getting the DPRK to come to heel.

The "human rights" disinformation that the U.S. churns out against the DPRK is part of its arsenal to demonize the latter and maintain a state of war to justify its occupation of the Korean Peninsula, to encircle China and project U.S. domination in the Indo-Pacific region. It is also intended to deflect from its own crimes at home and abroad, and attempt to arrest the movement of the Korean people for peace and reunification, and divert the world's opposition to U.S. imperialism, which is the biggest threat to humanity and to world peace.



Speaking on May 2 in opposition to the crude remarks from the State Department spokesperson on April 28, stating that the Biden administration will work with its allies "to raise awareness of North Korea's egregious human rights situation, investigate abuses and violations" on so-called "North Korea Freedom Week,"[1] the DPRK Foreign Ministry underscored that the U.S. is hardly qualified to speak on the matter human rights, as "it has inflicted unspeakable suffering and pain on the people of the DPRK with its vicious hostile policy."

The DPRK Foreign Ministry cited the daily death tolls in the U.S. of "innocent people due to social inequality and racial discrimination," and the latter's horrific record of more than half a million deaths because of the inadequate intervention to stem the COVID-19 pandemic and protect human life. The DPRK also noted that there are more than 40,000 gun-related deaths a year in the U.S. and pointed out that it is the U.S. that needs to be investigated and sanctioned for gross human rights violations at home and abroad. The DPRK condemned the U.S. as a "human rights wasteland."

The Canadian people and the world can attest that these observations by the DPRK are factual, and that the DPRK's call for the U.S. to be investigated for widespread human rights crimes at home and abroad is just.

From the time of its founding in 1948, the DPRK has stood on principle to defend its sovereignty and independence and the honor of the Korean nation. It has called for an end to the U.S. military occupation of Korea and an end to all hostile acts and acts of aggression aimed at it by the U.S. and its allies. Its heroic efforts to maintain peace on the Korean peninsula are a contribution to world peace and deserve the unconditional and unstinting support of all justice- and peace-loving peoples of Canada and the world.

***U.S. Troops Out of Korea!
All Out for Peace on the Korean Peninsula!***

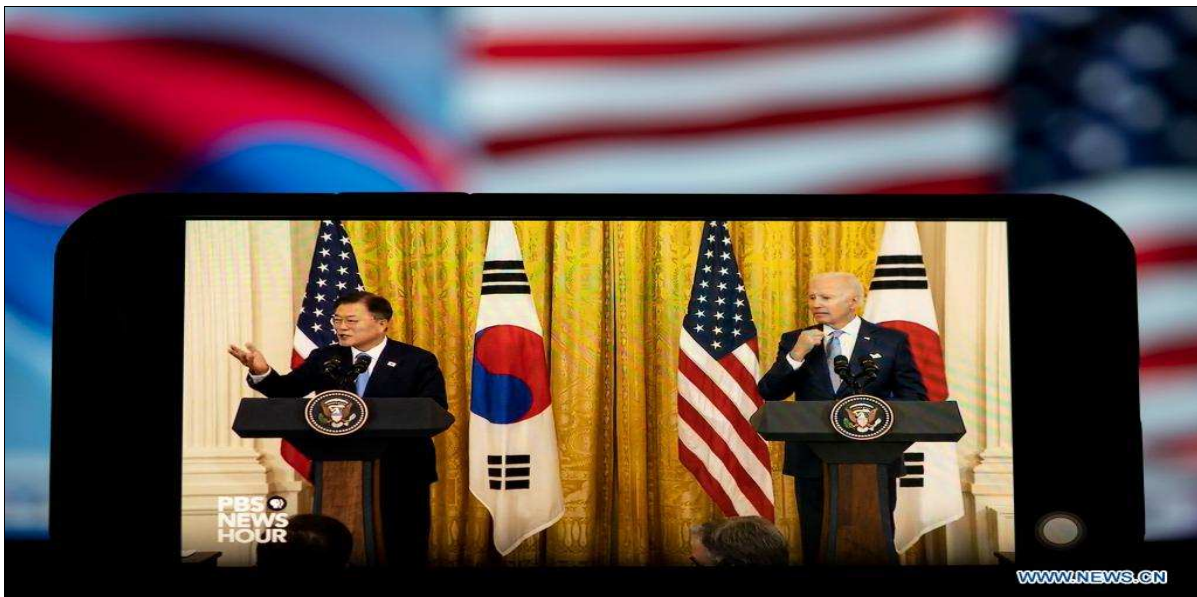
Note

1. "North Korea Freedom Week" is organized and sponsored by the Defence Forum Foundation a so-called NGO led by former U.S. military personnel, politicians, religious leaders and private sector executives whose mission is "Keeping America Strong. Promoting Freedom, Democracy and Human Rights Abroad." The President of the organization is Suzanne Shultz, who is also the Honorary Chairman of Free North Korea Radio, the North Korea People's Liberation Front and a Vice- Chair of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea. She is also a Board member of Christian Solidarity Worldwide-USA, all of which are involved in constantly spewing anti-communist lies about human right abuses in the DPRK in order to justify illegal sanctions and other acts of war and aggression against that small country, and to assist U.S. "diplomacy" to achieve regime change in the DPRK.

(With files from TML Monthly, KCNA, U.S. State Department, White House)

U.S. Increases Integration of Republic of Korea into U.S. War Machine

- Nick Lin -



Screenshot from press conference at the conclusion of the May 21, 2021 meeting between President Moon Jae-in of the Republic of Korea (ROK) and U.S. President Joe Biden.

On May 21, President Moon Jae-in of the Republic of Korea (ROK) met with U.S. President Joe Biden at the White House. This was the second head of state that Biden met face to face following the visit of the Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga of Japan on April 16. The main aim for giving priority to these two heads of state is for U.S. imperialism under Biden's watch to further militarize these U.S. "allies" and integrate them more deeply into the U.S. imperialist war machine. This bodes ill for the peace on the Korean Peninsula, the region and the world.

At the press conference at the conclusion of the meeting, Biden stated, among things, that "Our partnership is grounded in our ironclad commitment to shared security. Our alliance has long been the linchpin of peace, security, prosperity, and the region growing more prominent and us being together [...] I was grateful that our two nations were able to quickly conclude a new cost-sharing agreement for forces in Korea in March which will benefit both our peoples."



He spoke about a "shared approach to the Democratic People's Republic in Korea and continuing threat of the DPRK's nuclear and missile programs... our two nations also share a willingness to engage diplomatically with the DPRK to take pragmatic steps that will reduce tensions as we move toward our ultimate goal of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula."

Biden added, "The U.S.-ROK partnership also extends beyond the goals of the Peninsula. They address issues of regional and global concern through stronger cooperation with partners in the region, including the ASEAN, the Quad [the U.S., Japan, Australia and India], and trilateral cooperation with Japan."

President Moon for his part stated that "building on past agreements, including the Singapore joint statement, while taking a calibrated and practical approach to seeking diplomacy with north Korea is indeed a welcome direction of the Biden administration's north Korea policy. During the course of the review, our two countries closely coordinated with each other in lockstep, which I note with much appreciation [...] President Biden also expressed his support for the inter-Korean dialogue and cooperation. Under close cooperation with the U.S., we will work to facilitate progress in inter-Korean relations so as to achieve a virtuous cycle with U.S.-DPRK dialogue. When strong security is firmly in place, we can preserve and make peace. Two of us agreed to further reinforce our combined defence posture and reaffirmed our commitment to a conditions-based transition to wartime operational control."

Moon added: "It is also with pleasure that I deliver the news on the termination of the revised missile guidelines. The signing of ROK-U.S. Special Measures Agreement on burden sharing in the early days of the Biden administration displays for the world the robustness of our alliance as a symbolic and practical measure."



Picket outside the White House, February 15, 2021

The "Special Measures Agreement" forces the people of the ROK to foot the increasing cost of maintaining 28,500 U.S. troops and their weapons in their country by 13 per cent to \$1.3 billion

U.S. this year and by 6.1 per cent annually for the next four years, an extremely unpopular agreement with the Korean people, many of whom want the U.S. military out of Korea. The "revised missile guidelines" refers to the lifting of an agreement imposed in 1979 in which the U.S. "restricted" the ROK's ability to develop ballistic missiles of more than the current 500 km range. The "revised guidelines" will allow the ROK to develop intermediate-range ballistic missiles with a range of 1,000-1,500 kilometres to reach targets outside the Korean Peninsula.

These statements made by Biden and Moon are a blatant provocation against the Korean people, the peoples of East Asia and the world. These war plans will destabilize the fragile peace on the Korean Peninsula and are a direct act of aggression against the DPRK and China. Moon's servility at the White House reveals once again the level of U.S. domination of the ROK. More crucially, what Moon said is a violation of all the agreements to date between the two Koreas, including the June 15, 2000 North South Joint Declaration whose anniversary is this month. When Moon put his name to the historic Panmunjom Declaration on Peace, Prosperity and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula on April 27, 2018, he pledged that the ROK would work with the DPRK to promote peace on the Korean Peninsula. All that meant nothing at the White House.

To symbolize the U.S.-ROK military alliance, Moon awarded a Medal of Honour at the White House to 93-year-old U.S. Korean War veteran Colonel Ralph Puckett Jr., and then shamelessly announced, "...based on the ROK-U.S. alliance, rooted in the noble sacrifices of our heroes, our two nations will usher a new future together without a doubt."

On May 31, the DPRK denounced the U.S. for lifting the "revised missiles guidelines" as providing its "ally" the ROK with a "green light" to rapidly build up its ballistic missile arsenal for aggression and war with neighbouring countries. It made the observation, through international affairs expert Kim Myong Chol, that such a decision shows who is responsible for raising tensions on the Korean Peninsula and maintaining a double standard -- sanctioning the DPRK for its self-defence missile arsenal while enabling its "allies" to build up their missile arsenal with impunity. Kim astutely made the observation that this "concession" to the ROK is actually for purposes of the U.S. tightening its grip on south Korea. He added that the plan will backfire because the target of the DPRK is not the ROK army but the U.S. and underscored that the DPRK will boost its defence capability to meet this new threat. He warned the U.S. that "those who sow the wind will reap the whirlwind."

All peace- and justice-loving people in Canada and around the world must denounce this latest provocation by the U.S. and its "ally" the ROK against the Korean people. It poses grave dangers on the Korean Peninsula and world peace. It is the principled stand of the DPRK and firm defence of the Korean people's right to be that has maintained peace and an equilibrium on the Korean Peninsula. The aggressive U.S.-ROK alliance must be dismantled and the U.S. war mongers expelled by the efforts of the Korean people supported by all peace- and justice-loving humanity.

(With files from White House, Korean Central News Agency)

Crime Against the Peace -- Canada Extends "Operation Neon" Against the DPRK

- Margaret Villamizar -

Since 2019, the Canadian military has been deployed in enforcing the UN Security Council sanctions regime against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in what is called

Operation Neon. It is said to build upon "previous ad hoc sanctions enforcement operations conducted in 2018." *Operation Neon* is not a UN-mandated operation but a U.S. attempt to impose a naval blockade against the DPRK with its own posse of "voluntary" enforcers on the high seas.[1] A recent press release from the Department of National Defence (DND) announced that *Operation Neon* has been extended until April 20, 2023.



According to the DND, *Operation Neon* is "Canada's contribution to multinational efforts to monitor and deter North Korean maritime sanctions evasion activities and consists of Canadian Armed Forces air and maritime assets, as well as personnel." DND cites this operation as "a tangible and high-profile example of Canada's commitment to the Asia-Pacific region and to countering threats that challenge the rules-based international order." [2] The operation is said to involve about 300 personnel and "a naval frigate, a supply vessel, and long range patrol aircraft to monitor maritime areas where North Korean sanctions evasion activities are taking place, including the East China Sea." The East China Sea is bounded by China to the west, Korea to the North, Japan to the east and Taiwan to the south. DND further states that "These military assets and personnel work to locate, deter, and collect evidence on ship-to-ship transfers of sanctioned materials (primarily, refined petroleum products such as diesel)." The annual cost of the operation is said to be \$8.3 million.

Canada's appeasement of U.S. imperialist policy in Korea and elsewhere is nothing new and has been long opposed by Canadians from all walks of life who do not agree with making Canada subservient to the U.S. and its warmongering. The Canadian government to its shame participated in the Korean War to further the aims of the U.S. imperialists to enforce their takeover of the Korean nation and against the Chinese people's newly founded People's Republic. Through *Operation Neon*, amongst all the other measures Canadian governments have taken to integrate Canada into the U.S. war machine, Canada is enforcing the unjust sanctions regime which causes severe deprivations that constitute violations of the human rights of the people of the DPRK. Logic is turned on its head when the Canadian government claims that the enforcement of arbitrary and unjust sanctions imposed by the U.S. and others on the DPRK constitutes upholding a rules-based international order and defence of human rights, when in reality they violate international law.

Canada has been part of imposing sanctions on the DPRK since 2006. Sanctions include ones against transfer of funds to the DPRK, export of materials deemed to be related to arms, petroleum and natural gas products, electronics, vehicles; the import of arms-related materials, construction materials, ore and minerals, seafood, agricultural produce and more. It should be kept in mind

however, that despite Canada nominally establishing official diplomatic relations with the DPRK in 2000, it has effectively done nothing to realize relations in practice. All of it is to give legitimacy to the U.S. imperialists' disinformation about the DPRK.

Canada's involvement in the enforcement of sanctions in 2018 goes back to a agreement signed on January 12 of that year in which 17 countries effectively declared an all-out naval blockade against the DPRK. The DPRK, which has not aggressed other countries but is only doing its utmost to affirm its right to be, called these sanctions an act of war. As *TML Weekly* pointed out at that time, "Since the 1909 London Naval Conference, it is an accepted principle in international law that a blockade is an act of war. As such, its use is only permissible between belligerents. There is no rule of international law to justify a so-called peaceful blockade, which refers to a practice of the colonial powers of the 19th century and early 20th century. In 1916 the United States government itself warned France: "The United States does not recognize that right of any foreign power to obstruct the exercise of commercial rights of non-interested countries, resorting to blockade when there is no state of war."^[3]

In this way, through its participation in *Operation Neon* that constitutes an act of war, Canada is violating the terms of the Armistice Agreement that ended the fighting in the Korean War whose ultimate objective is to conclude a peace treaty between the DPRK and the U.S. This is a crime against the peace, considered the most serious war crime under international law. Criminal activities such as *Operation Neon* must not pass and underscore the necessity for Canada to have an anti-war government, in which Canadians can take part in setting foreign policy that upholds international law and peaceful relations between peoples and countries, and does not embroil Canada in the U.S imperialist war machine.

Note

1. According to the Department of National Defence, other countries involved include Australia, France, Japan, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States.
2. "The Conception of a Rules-Based International Order and the Role of Measuring, Standards and Human Agency to Advance from Opening to Opening," Ideological Studies Centre, *TML Supplement*, June 11, 2021.
3. "Sanctions Against the DPRK," Margaret Villamizar, *TML Weekly Supplement*, January 13, 2018.

International Webinar Discusses Present Situation and Developments in DPRK

On May 21, the Friends of Korea (Britain) hosted a lively and informative webinar on the current situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Korean Peninsula. Participants from Britain and Canada took part in the discussion which provided a chance to learn about and exchange views on the topic.

Andy Brooks, General Secretary of the New Communist Party of Britain and Chair of Friends of Korea (Britain), welcomed everyone and thanked them for joining in, especially those from Canada. He introduced Michael Chant, General Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist) and Secretary of Friends of Korea (Britain), who chaired the program. Chant set out the plan for the proceedings and introduced Leslie Larkam -- a composer, violinist and teacher -- who played the Korean folk song *Arirang*, the anthem of the Korean reunification movement, which everyone appreciated.



Celebration in Pyongyang of the successful conclusion of the 8th Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea in January 2021.

In the first presentation, Michael Chant provided a historical overview of the DPRK's struggle for its right to be during the last more than 70 years in the face of U.S. aggression, war and brutal sanctions. He highlighted the principled stand of the DPRK to uphold its sovereignty and dignity under all conditions and discussed recent developments in that country brought into focus by the decisions taken at the 8th Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea held in Pyongyang this past January. The main thrust of the 8th Congress, he noted, was that it reiterated the DPRK's determination to uphold its self-reliant *Juche* outlook, strengthen its independent economy to counter the brutal sanctions regime of the Anglo-Americans, and defend itself against threats and aggression from the U.S. and others. Britain is participating in the illegal sanctions the European Union has imposed against the DPRK, Chant pointed out, despite having withdrawn from the EU. He noted that in the current period, the DPRK will be developing and strengthening its international relations in support of the cause of peace and justice everywhere, extending a hand of friendship to all who reciprocate. Chant underscored that in terms of its relations with the U.S., the DPRK has no illusions and will engage in relations on the basis of "goodwill for goodwill and power for power."

The next speaker was Dermot Hudson, the Chair of the Korean Friendship Association in Great Britain. He informed participants of the Association's work to build people-to-people relations between the two countries to support the just stands of the DPRK in defence of peace on the Korean Peninsula and to oppose disinformation about the DPRK carried out by the monopoly media. One of the things Hudson noted, in light of the atrocities that Israel is committing against the Palestinians, is that the DPRK has always stood with the Palestinian people, rendering material and political support over many decades. He reminded participants that the meeting was being held on the 41st anniversary of the Gwangju Uprising when students and workers in that city rose up and held power for several days in May 1980 to defy the U.S.-backed Chun Doo Hwan military dictatorship in south Korea, and affirmed their right to democracy and empowerment. Hudson observed that May 21 too was the first day of the Moon-Biden meeting in Washington, DC and expressed doubt that anything good for the Korean people would come of it.

The last presenter was Philip Fernandez, spokesperson of the Korea Truth Commission (Canadian Chapter). He spoke of how the framework of the Biden administration's new DPRK policy, based on a pragmatic approach of "diplomacy and stern deterrence," is doomed to fail because the DPRK conducts its foreign relations on the basis of principle and upholding its right to be. Contrary to the disinformation carried by the imperialist system of states that the DPRK is a violator of human rights, Fernandez pointed out that it is the crippling sanctions imposed by the U.S, Canada, Britain and others that constitute gross human rights violations and collective punishment against the people of the DPRK, which is doing its utmost to defend the rights of its people against this aggression.

Fernandez mentioned, among other things, that whenever the Korean people have made headway in building inter-Korean relations and strengthening the movement for reunification, the U.S. imperialists have intervened to sabotage these efforts. In the context of next year's elections in south Korea, Fernandez noted that the U.S. is working behind the scenes to install the anti-communist People's Power Party in office. This is to undermine relations between north and south and push back the 2018 historic Panmunjom Declaration that raised the hopes of the whole Korean nation for the strengthening of inter-Korean relations. One of the sitting politicians of the People's Power Party in the legislature, Tae Yong-Ho, who defected from the DPRK Embassy in London in 2016, has now joined the anti-DPRK campaign to slander and isolate his birthplace, Fernandez noted. He pointed out that in a recent interview, Tae Yong-Ho called the DPRK a "slave state" while praising Britain as a land of "freedom, democracy and human rights."

The decisive factor in the future of Korea are the Korean people themselves, not anyone or any other power, and their drive for peace and reunification will eventually succeed, Fernandez underscored in concluding his presentation.

Following the presentations, Michael Chant informed participants that the DPRK's embassy in London had sent a message of greeting to the meeting and wished it success.

The discussion which ensued emphasized the importance of speaking out in defence of the DPRK and its right to be in the context of the continued attacks on it by the U.S. imperialists and their allies. There was strong sentiment to continue the fruitful discussion of this meeting.

The event concluded with a short video of a visit to a music school in Pyongyang in 2013 during the 60th anniversary celebrations of the Victory of the Fatherland Liberation War, followed by a clip of the playing of *The Internationale* at the close of the Workers' Party of Korea's 8th Congress.

Important Anniversaries

Legacy of Gwangju Uprising Demands that U.S. Be Driven Out of Korea

The Gwangju People's Uprising took place in the city of that name in the southwest of the Republic of Korea (ROK) May 18-28, 1980. It was a glorious revolutionary initiative undertaken by the students, workers, women and youth to affirm their right to govern their own country. They were rising up against the U.S. domination of Korea and the Chun Doo-hwan military dictatorship that represented it. From the time it forcefully divided Korea at the 38th parallel following the surrender of Japan in 1945, the U.S imperialists strove to maintain this division by force, including launching the Korean War on June 25, 1950 in which close to four million Korean men, women and children perished.



Thus, the Korean people, whose contribution to the victory of the Allies in the Second World War was second to none, were criminally deprived of their right to self-determination. Instead, a U.S.-style anti-communist government serving U.S. monopolies and Korean landlords and capitalists was imposed in the south in 1948, in the name of democracy, freedom and human rights. This is the same self-serving drivel the Biden administration is peddling now to maintain a military grip on Korea and to justify further militarizing and integrating the ROK into the U.S. war machine.



The Gwangju People's Uprising was a collective response to martial law imposed by the Chun dictatorship in May 1980. Chun had come to power in a coup engineered by the U.S. Carter administration after the assassination of President Park Chung-hee, the pro-U.S. anti-communist military dictator who ruled the ROK with an iron fist from 1963 until his death in 1979. Chun imposed martial law in an attempt to subdue popular actions by the south Korean people demanding democracy and a civilian government.

According to various news and eyewitness reports, the Gwangju People's Uprising was triggered by student demonstrations on the morning of May 18 when some 600 students gathered at Chonnam National University to defy the new military edict shutting down the universities and stifling any political dissent. The police were unable to hold the organized resistance of people so a Special Forces unit trained for assault missions was dispatched to quell the uprising. The Special Forces used tear gas, batons and rubber bullets which served to widen the resistance as workers, shopkeepers, and parents took to the streets to defend the youth. The soldiers then opened fire, killing some 200 people and wounding hundreds more.

On May 20, some 10,000 people demonstrated against this terror and violence. Due to the widespread militarization of the society, most major workplaces in south Korea held caches of weapons. Protestors seized these and commandeered buses, taxis and even armoured personnel carriers, forming armed militias to fight the army. A student-produced daily newspaper called *Militants' Bulletin* kept everyone informed against the disinformation of the mass media aimed at criminalizing the rebellion and splitting their ranks. In the face of determined armed opposition of the people, the Special Forces were forced to withdraw.



The next five days were unprecedented in ROK history. The people organized a Citizen's Settlement Committee and a Students' Settlement Committee which worked to organize the people and ensure the well-being of everyone. Food, medical and transportation systems were organized and lively political discussions took place where the people gathered to discuss and plan their opposition and continued resistance.



On May 24, 15,000 people attended a memorial service in honour of those who died at the beginning of the uprising at the hands of the Special Forces. On May 25, about 50,000 people gathered for a rally in Gwangju and adopted a resolution calling for the abolition of martial law and the release of political prisoner Kim Dae-jung, who would eventually be elected the eighth President of the ROK.[1]

As the people in Gwangju continued to assert their political demands, U.S. President Jimmy Carter, who had campaigned on a platform for a "human rights foreign policy," intervened directly to crush what was perceived as a threat to U.S. strategic interests in the region. The U.S. National Security Council met at the White House on May 24 to plan a response. Subsequently, U.S. General John A. Wickham Jr., Commander of the U.S.-ROK Combined Forces Command, ordered General Chun Doo-hwan to redeploy the ROK army's 20th Division from the De-Militarized Zone (DMZ) separating the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the ROK, to Gwangju to crush the uprising. This plan was delayed three days while a U.S. navy flotilla led by the aircraft carrier *USS Midway* was deployed to Korean waters just in case reinforcements were necessary.[2]



On May 27, at 3:30 am, the ROK army attacked Gwangju in *Operation Fascinating Vacations*. The people of Gwangju resisted courageously against the U.S.-directed military assault against them. In the ensuing battle, thousands of civilians were killed and close to 15,000 people were injured. More than 1,500 people were taken into custody and countless others were tortured and summarily executed. Dozens of other activists were arrested, tried and executed and others were thrown in prison. Within a year General Chun had proclaimed himself President of the ROK, and began a campaign of terror against the communists, socialists, leftists and any other progressive forces that would challenge his U.S.-sanctioned military rule. However the workers and people of the ROK continued their organized opposition to U.S. imperialism and their local puppets, and eventually ended the military dictatorships in the ROK by the end of 1990.



Memorial wall to those killed during the Gwangju People's Uprising

On the 41st anniversary of the Gwangju People's Uprising, *TML* calls on everyone to intensify their support for the heroic Korean people in their just struggle to end the U.S. military occupation of south Korea, to resolutely oppose the U.S. nuclear blackmail and military provocations against the DPRK and to vigorously support their more than 70-year struggle to realize the independent

and peaceful reunification of their divided nation and affirm their right to be.

***Hail the Historic Legacy of the Gwangju Uprising!
U.S. Troops Out of Korea!
Korea Is One!***

Notes

1. As President of the ROK from 1998 to 2003, Kim Dae-jung was instrumental in co-operating with the leader of the DPRK Kim Jong Il, to strengthen inter-Korean relations which led to the signing of the historic June 15 North-South Joint Declaration in Pyongyang in 2000 which opened up a bold new chapter in the struggle of the Korean people for peace and reunification. Kim was also responsible for ensuring that the victims of U.S.-sponsored state violence and terror in Gwangju were honoured. He inaugurated annual memorial events for the victims beginning in 1997 and established the graveyard in Gwangju where hundreds of the victims are buried as the National Cemetery for the May 18th Democratic Uprising.

2. [Online database of the 4,000 declassified U.S. government documents on the U.S. role in the Gwangju Uprising of 1980](#)

(With files from TML Weekly, Encyclopedia Britannica)

North-South Joint Declarations Provide Guidelines for Resolving Outstanding Problems Facing the Korean People



Reunification arch in Pyongyang, DPRK

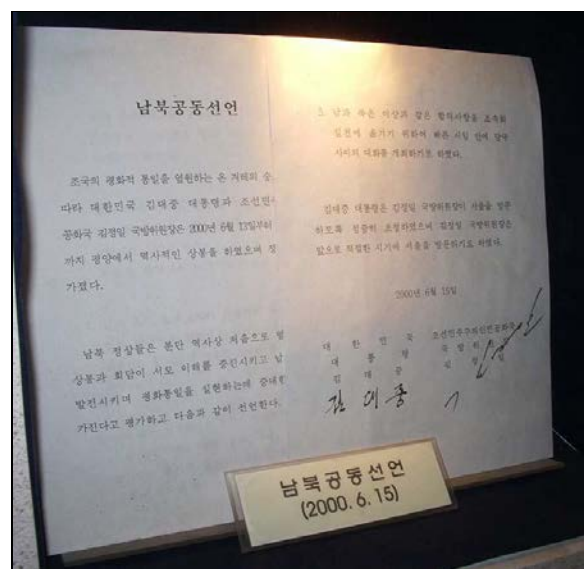
The anniversaries of two important joint declarations signed between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Republic of Korea (ROK) occur in April and June. On June 15, 2000, the North-South Joint Declaration was signed by the late DPRK leader Kim Jong Il and the late ROK President Kim Dae-jung, in Pyongyang, the capital of the DPRK. The June 15 Joint Declaration created the foundation for the Korean people in north and south to strengthen ties and work together to find solutions to common problems. In doing so they took practical measures to advance national reunification on their own terms, and move forward together as one united and independent country towards a bright, prosperous future.

On April 27, 2018, the historic Panmunjom Declaration on Peace, Prosperity and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula was signed by DPRK leader Kim Jong Un and ROK leader Moon Jae-in at Panmunjom where the U.S. divided Korea in 1945. These historic declarations inspire the Korean people whose desire to achieve the peaceful reunification of their country free of outside interference is paramount. The people and families which comprise the Korean nation which is one people, with a history of more than 5,000 years, have been divided since the Korean War as a result of the U.S. refusal to sign a peace treaty and implement the terms of the Armistice Agreement the U.S. was forced to sign with the DPRK when, despite all its military might and the crimes it committed against the people of Korea, it was not able to occupy the entire Korean Peninsula.

Subsequently, from 2000 to 2008 under the leadership of presidents Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun who adhered to the Joint Declaration, headway was made in strengthening inter-Korean relations, including the establishment of the Kaesong Industrial Complex just north of the Demilitarized Zone in 2002. This successful project undertaken by the DPRK and ROK for mutual benefit involved 123 south Korean companies, employing 800 workers from the ROK and 53,000 from the DPRK producing a wide variety of textiles, ceramics and other products for the domestic and export markets.

The June 15, 2000 Joint Declaration was followed by the October 4, 2007 Agreement between the ROK and DPRK, which further developed and strengthened the progress made as a result of the June 15, 2000 Joint Declaration.

The U.S., however, would not permit the peaceful resolution of outstanding problems on the Korean Peninsula. It stepped up its interference in the affairs of the ROK to get these positive developments rolled back. It got two anti-communist, corrupt people elected, as presidents of the ROK, Lee Myung-bak, a former mayor of Seoul, and then Park Gyeun-hye, daughter of the second ROK president Park Chung-hee, an anti-communist dictator who had served in the imperialist Japanese army. They began to sabotage the work done by the previous administrations to foster and normalize ties with the DPRK. This included Park Gyeun-hye's unilateral decision to end the joint project at Kaesong in 2016.



Copy of pages of North-South Joint Declaration

After Park Gyeun-hye was impeached for corruption, in the May 2017 ROK presidential election Moon Jae-in succeeded in becoming president based on his pledge to revitalize north-south relations. By cooperating with the leadership of the DPRK, this led to the adoption of the second historic joint declaration -- the Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Unification of the Korean Peninsula, signed between Kim Jong Un and Moon Jae-in on April 27, 2018. This historic agreement reaffirmed all previous agreements and went further, by declaring, among other important measures, that the two sides would refrain from engaging in military provocations. This declaration was justly celebrated by the Korean people and peace-loving humanity as a big step forward for inter-Korean relations and for peace on the Korean Peninsula and around the world.

What has continued to be a block to the aspirations of the Korean people and their nation-building

project is the machinations and perfidy of the U.S. imperialists, who were responsible for the division of Korea in the first place in 1945 and who continue to keep Korea divided today as well as a powder keg for U.S. weapons of all types, including nuclear arms.

Besides other things, the U.S. has systematically used the UN Security Council and its allies in the Korean War, such as Canada, to impose ever harsher economic sanctions on the DPRK to strangle it into submission. The military, economic and political domination and militarization of the ROK by the U.S. imperialists and their attempts to strangle the DPRK into submission are all aimed at realizing the striving of the U.S. imperialists to control all the affairs of the countries in East Asia and the Asia-Pacific region. In the process, the U.S. has further weaponized the ROK in order to maintain a foothold for its armed forces on the mainland of north-east Asia and to serve as a forward staging ground to threaten China and Russia.



The ROK is also one of the biggest purchasers of U.S. weapons. Despite the fact that Point 2 of the Panmunjom Declaration states that the ROK and DPRK will "make joint efforts to alleviate the acute military tension and practically eliminate the danger of war on the Korean Peninsula," in practice this has not yet been possible and activists for peace and reunification continue to work assiduously to disentangle the south from the U.S. military and its aggressive aims in the region.[1]



Korean athletes from the north and south enter opening ceremony of the Pyeongchang Olympics, February 9, 2018, under the reunification flag.

Whatever the self-serving machinations of the U.S. imperialists and their appeasers in Canada and elsewhere, the fact remains that the decisive factor for peace on the Korean Peninsula and the reunification of the Korean nation are the Korean people themselves, along with the peace-loving peoples of the world taking action in concert with them. It is this spirit that is enshrined in the

June 15, 2000 Joint Declaration, which the Korean people will never permit to be erased. It is their defiance of U.S. threats and dictate that give expression to the three principles guiding the Korean reunification movement: reunification will be achieved independently without outside interference, through the political unity of the Korean people despite their ideological differences, and peacefully.

There is no better time than the 21st anniversary of the June 15, 2000 Joint Declaration, for the Canadian people to step up providing support for the courageous and determined struggle of the Korean people to achieve peace, reunification and progress for Korea.

Note

1. In 1953 following the Korean War, the ROK-U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty was imposed by the U.S. which forces the ROK to take part in the annual Key Resolve and Foal Eagle war games that are thinly veiled attempts to threaten the DPRK and its supporters China and Russia.

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