

Korean Peninsula: is a turn from armistice to peace possible?

Glyn Ford

As with all peace settlements, negotiations are dependent on attempting to understand the position of the other side.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has technically been at war with the US and UN Command since 1950: the 1953 armistice marked a pause in hostilities, but it was never followed by a negotiated peace settlement. The North is not a surrendered state, like Japan in 1945, nor is its situation similar to that of the Central and Eastern European remnants of the Soviet Empire in the 1990s. The DPRK thus sees the transition from a martial armistice to a sustainable peace regime as a process, not a procession. If there is ever to be a final peace settlement on the peninsula, understanding this viewpoint is crucial. As with any settlement, negotiations will depend on a willingness to understand the position of both parties. Here the aim is to explore the current potential for a peace settlement, with a main focus on the need to better understand the DPRK's position.

The most fundamental of the deeply rooted misconceptions that Washington and Pyongyang hold about each other concerns the issue of denuclearisation, which has proved an incommensurable difference since at least the time of Clinton's presidency. The US views Complete, Verifiable, and Irreversible Denuclearisation (CVID) in North Korea as the *precondition* for a peace settlement, whereas the DPRK understands CVID as the final instalment of the process, to be delivered after all

Soundings

other promises within the agreement have been delivered. The reasoning behind this stance is explored below; as is the context of other global settlements.

As with any peace process, a meeting of minds also requires a recognition by both sides that the journey is as important as the destination, that the waystations in the process can yield more than any final step. An 'End of War Declaration', to replace the armistice, would be a good starting point for this: it could open up the pathway towards the long and winding road that could one day lead to 'the complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula'.¹

So, what are the issues at stake for both sides? What would be the contours of any deal that could take us from armistice to peace regime?

Conditions for a new deal

There are two necessary conditions for a deal. Pyongyang requires robust multilateral security guarantees before it will consider any final surrender of its nuclear capability. For Washington, there is the question of finding the wherewithal for the \$15-20 billion required to finance the 'Infrastructure Fund' that Pyongyang sees as a necessary part of the deal, to offset the tangible and intangible costs of phased denuclearisation. The main problem is that covering this cost through finding donors will be neither easy nor automatic.

But there are also a number of other difficult issues.

First is the question of the unification of the Korean peninsula. Here, the North is interested in principle, but only when the time is propitious - and there are economic and political imperatives for its lack of interest in fast track unification. Pyongyang is all too aware that its economy is forty to fifty times smaller than that of the South (they attribute this as being the consequence of US hostility policy). Moreover, they believe that early unification equals assimilation. The German model does not fit. The presumption in Pyongyang is that, once the US abandons this 'hostile policy', the domestic economy will take off, mirroring the growth rates of the Asian tigers in the 1980s and 1990s. With sanctions swept away by a peace settlement, they expect that a period of twenty-five years double-digit growth will allow the North to join the same economic league as the South. Only at that point could the knot of unification be tied.

A second issue, as the global record of successful peace settlements suggests,

Korean Peninsula

is the necessary accounting for historic crimes. There can be no path to peaceful unification in circumstances which demand that thousands of North Koreans, the country's leadership included, face imprisonment for human rights abuses. Restorative justice may well form a part in the process on both sides of the Demilitarised Zone, with South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission serving as a model. But a peaceful unification will not be possible if Kim Jong Un, the Party Politburo or the Cabinet face prosecution. A minimum requirement will be for the leaders of the North to have some equivalent of the controversial 'get out of jail free' letters which the British government provided for the Irish Republican Army and the congruent protestant militias in the Irish Peace Process, allowing them immunity from prosecution. As John Godfrey Saxe said in 1869, 'laws are like sausages. Better not to see them made'. The same applies to peace processes.

Nuclear deterrence signals weakness, not strength

The road to denuclearisation also depends on understanding the logic that determines DPRK actions. There is a serious gap between what Washington believes about North Korea and the reality: it sees the North's nuclear programme as proof of Pyongyang's commitment to military expansionism. But the North's nuclear deterrent should be seen as a weakness, not a strength. It is the upshot of an increasingly asymmetric balance of forces; and, given Pyongyang's limited options, it is in many ways an understandable response to Washington's and Seoul's activities. In addition, Pyongyang's drive for nuclear weapons and Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles is the direct consequence of the wider policy and actions of the US during the last quarter of a century. Burnt deep in Pyongyang's vision of the world are the Western interventions in Iraq, Libya and Syria. Russia's invasion of Ukraine only reinforces the point. The lesson Pyongyang has learnt is that the problem is not *having* weapons of mass destruction, but rather *not* having them. For Kim, a nuclear deterrent is a more effective guarantee of regime survival than any *billet-doux* from a term-limited US President in a divided polity.

Since the late 1960s - the last time when North and South Korea were on a par in terms of economic development - the South has surged past the North: its GDP has rapidly pulled ahead, and its military capacity has benefitted from the resulting prosperity. The North's nuclear doctrine could thus be seen as the illegitimate offspring of the South's economic success, as well as its military tithe. Pyongyang's

Soundings

attempts at nuclear weapons development in the 1990s were a reaction to the speed at which they were losing the conventional arms race on the peninsula.

Today, the North devotes a quarter of its budget to military expenditure, but it is still outspent by the South - whose economy is nearly fifty times larger - by a factor of five, and the gap is growing year on year. Seoul's current military budget is bigger than Pyongyang's GDP. And the gap is wider still when Pyongyang's military budget is set against the combined military spending of Washington, Tokyo and Seoul. What the North spends on arms represents less than 2 per cent of the overall expenditure of the South and its allies. In this situation, the North believes that - in the absence of a secure peace settlement - its nuclear deterrent is the only option which guarantees the survival of the nation.

Moreover, for Pyongyang nuclear deterrence can provide an answer to two of their longstanding impediments to economic production: shortages of both energy and labour. Its coal mining industry has limited capacity for expansion, while its hydro-electricity projects are showing sharply diminishing returns. The future for an autarkic energy supply is thus seen to lie with a civil nuclear programme based on Light Water Reactors, fuelled from a domestic uranium enrichment programme. Nuclear deterrence also permits the release into the labour market of a hundred thousand and more conscripts, who can then be shepherded into factories and workshops. For Pyongyang, strategic defence and economic imperatives are two sides of the same coin.

In terms of negotiating a peace settlement, the efforts of the North's Military-Industrial Complex to seek closer technological parity illustrate a more fundamental problem. Time is not on Washington's side. For its nuclear deterrent to remain credible, the North works hard to develop its capacity, and this leads to a post-innovative proliferation of products. After successful demonstration of a prototype nuclear weapon there follows a dialectic of upgrading and downsizing: a hydrogen bomb in one direction, miniaturisation in the other. This is all accompanied by the introduction of bigger launch-platforms - ICBMs and submarine launch technology. Quite how fast Pyongyang is moving was shown by the series of missile tests in March 2022, which culminated in the launch of an ICBM with extended range and enhanced payload; many believe this missile capable of hitting anywhere in the US with multiple warheads. Such is the logic of nuclear deterrence.

Korean Peninsula

Sooner or later, this progress in R&D requires demonstration. These tests in themselves are not intended as provocations aimed at the threatening triad of Washington, Seoul and Tokyo. They are the consequence of Kim's desire to maintain an increasingly 'credible' nuclear deterrent. This threatens to open the door to wider perilous proliferation, as South Korea, Japan and Taiwan think to follow the North's rash move. Perception is a crucial issue. The question is whether the current political mindset in Washington is willing and able to make the distinction between deliberate provocation, on the one hand, and *al fresco* testing driven by the perceived logic of the need for technological advance, on the other.

Developments under Donald Trump

Kim's New Year's Address in 2018 was all bombast and bravado, threats and ultimatums, as he proclaimed he was 'ready for immediate nuclear counterattack' and bragged about his capacity to 'strike anywhere in mainland US'.² Yet, this bellicose temper was overlooked: the focus of world media was on the part of his address in which he offered to re-open dialogue with Seoul, and subsequently on the diplomacy with South Korea and the US that followed. There was little institutional memory of the tone and timbre of 2018 when he came to make his 2019 Address a year later, but the contrast between the two speeches was black and white.

In 2019, Kim offered a paradigm shift when he declared that the mass production of ICBMs and nuclear weapons had been abandoned in favour of arms conversion as the 'munitions industry ... produced a variety of farm machinery, construction equipment, cooperative products and consumer goods'.³ This marked a tanks-into-tractors moment. The North also announced the cessation of sales of civil and military nuclear technology to third countries, including Syria, and the abandonment of its 'first use' doctrine: 'we declared at home and abroad that we would neither make and test nuclear weapons any longer nor use and proliferate them'. The sword of Damocles was sheaved in a bold gesture of peace.

This change of tone was an immediate consequence of the 2018 Singapore Summit with Donald Trump. (There is not space here to detail all the twists and turns of Trump's policy towards North Korea. The main concern is with understanding Kim's own shifts in response.) For Kim, the Summit had offered a shortcut: 'If the US responds to our proactive, prior efforts ... I want to believe that our relations with the United States will bear good fruit this year'. But: 'if the United

Soundings

States ... persists in imposing sanctions and pressure ... we may be compelled to find a new way for defending the sovereignty of the country'. What did Kim want? He was hoping for concessions in return: an end both to joint military exercises on the Peninsula and to US and Western arms sales to the South. He was looking for 'a peace mechanism in close contact with the signatories to the armistice agreement' - by which he meant the US, China and the DPRK (the three countries that signed the 1953 armistice).

However, John Bolton became Trump's National Security Adviser in April 2018, and this led to a more confrontational stance towards the DPRK, as became evident in the collapse of the second Trump-Kim summit in Hanoi in February 2019. Just two weeks prior to summit, the US Special Representative for North Korea, Steve Biegun, had laid out expectations in a speech at Stanford University.⁴ Pyongyang paid close attention and had duly rehearsed its response. But then, in what looked like a deliberate snub, the agenda was suddenly changed during the talks. Trump arbitrarily changed Washington's demands, not merely moving the goalposts but introducing an entirely new game. The US wanted more for less. The key issue was how the timetables and nature of sanctions withdrawal and denuclearisation would be linked. The US now demanded progress on complete denuclearisation before any sanctions would be lifted.

The months after Trump's walk-out from the summit confirmed the collapse of the peace process. By July, US and South Korean Joint Military Exercises were underway, with new strategic assets entering the arena in the form of 40 F-35A stealth fighters. Seoul's military budget - which had already doubled in the preceding decade - saw its biggest one-year surge. This further reconfirmed for Pyongyang that the North's nuclear deterrent - which it saw as the only way to short-circuit the long-lost arms race - was the answer, not the problem.⁵ Denuclearisation was taken off the table.

Late in the Trump Administration, in February 2020, Deputy Special Representative on North Korea Alex Wong drew up a new 'Balanced Roadmap', sketching the President's vision at that point.⁶ This was based on a Comprehensive Agreement, designed over time to transform the North and the Peninsula into a denuclearised and peaceful region, fostering economic, security and political co-operation, with more open sea lanes, more overflights, high quality infrastructure investment. In short, the country would be transformed by US Inward Investment

Korean Peninsula

into a new Asian Tiger of free-market capitalism.

However, the Administration had missed the boat. By now the roadmap was neither credible, desired, or deliverable. Although denuclearisation still represents the most fundamental misunderstanding between Washington and Pyongyang, the economy comes a close second. The US and the North have different conceptions of what economic reform means. Washington's approach represents an attempt to force its version of free-market capitalism on the North. But Kim has a different model in mind, which matches East Asian precepts - and this features neither McDonald's on Pyongyang's street corners, nor condos overlooking Majon beach. The economy for Pyongyang means market-Leninism, with small-scale private enterprise operating under the close watch of the Party. Kim wants - and needs - economic growth. But he wants growth to be controlled beneath the umbrellas of Party, ministries, and military. There is therefore a completely different perspective on what economic reform means.⁷

Challenges facing the Biden Administration

In 2021 the arrival in office of President Biden changed the situation. His interim national security strategic guidance focused on threat reduction rather than outright denuclearisation, indicating a recognition of the need for process rather than performance. This, if it is ever put into practice, shows a reach for realism, in its recognition that Complete and Verifiable Denuclearisation is, in the short-term, impossible. On the downside, Biden faced four new challenges: Seoul, Tokyo, Congress, and semantics.

Biden's first task was to repair the relations with Seoul that had been torn by Trump. One source of friction was the dispute over the bounty Seoul was to pay to keep US soldiers in the South for the following five years, and this was settled by the Special Measures Agreement (SMA), adopted in March 2021. Equally, the fact that for three consecutive years (2020 to 2022) - largely because of the Covid pandemic - Joint Military Exercises in the peninsula took the form of virtual computer simulations, rather than comprising the usual boots on the ground, did not hurt relations with Pyongyang.

At the Moon-Biden Summit in May 2021, the Singapore joint statement between Trump and Kim was brought back onto the table and the appointment of a new

Soundings

Special Representative on North Korea, Sun Kim, was announced - although it should be noted that he already has a busy day job as US Ambassador to Indonesia.

More recently, in early March 2022, things were made further complicated by the election of the conservative South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol (Yoon had won the People Power Party's primary as a political interloper, on a populist platform). Although the victory was narrow, and on domestic policy Yoon will be constrained by the opposition's substantial majority in the National Assembly, he will have a relatively free hand on North Korea. And his plan is to cleave close to Washington: his ambition is to join the Quad (the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue countries made up of the United States, Australia, India and Japan). In the campaign, Yoon spoke as a hawk, threatening pre-emptive attacks against the North and suggesting the re-deployment of US nuclear weapons to the South. If there are to be future nuclear tests on the Peninsula, it is just possible that some will be in the South. In the run-up to the election President Moon - unable to run again because of the South's one term limit - had been proposing an End of War Declaration, but Pyongyang waited to see the results before engaging. Such a declaration is off the agenda for now.

As regards Tokyo, the relationship has been dire for well over a decade. In addition to the historic antipathy of both Korean states towards Japanese colonial occupation before and during the second world war, there is a specific animus in the North over Japan's perceived role in sabotaging the earlier Chinese brokered Six Party Talks in Beijing (China, US, ROK, DPRK, Japan and Russia) because of its position on the abduction issue. (In 2002, Kim Jong Il admitted that the North had abducted thirteen Japanese citizens between 1977 and 1983, declaring that eight of them had since died but allowing the survivors to return to Japan. Under pressure from public opinion, Tokyo claimed that there had been at least seventeen abductees and possibly many hundreds of others: it stated that they were all alive and all had to be returned.)

Prime Minister Abe Shinzo (2006-7, 2012-20) made the issue of the abductees a centrepiece of his hard-line policy towards the DPRK, and Prime Minister Suga Yoshihide continued this policy during his short period in office (2020-21). This led to pressure on the US to adopt a similar stance. During his first visit to Tokyo, in March 2021, Biden's Secretary of State Antony Blinken was branded on the lapel with the blue ribbon of the abductee campaign. But Suga's early departure from

Korean Peninsula

office in autumn 2021 signalled the demise of the Abe dynasty, as Fumio Kishida took over as prime minister. Kishida is the last senior Japanese politician to have had experience of directly negotiating with the North Koreans: during his time as Foreign Minister he met with Kang Suk Ju, the International Secretary of the Workers Party of Korea, in Berlin in 2014. The fact that Beijing has recently started to raise again the prospect of regional talks suggests that Pyongyang has - for the moment at least - lifted its veto on Japanese participation, presumably in the hope of a possible new line from Tokyo.

The third challenge for Biden is Congress. Biden wants to involve Congress in his policy, but there is little, if any, support for meaningful engagement on either side of the aisle. During the Trump presidency, the Democrats were hostile to Trump's 'grandstanding' while the Republicans tolerated it with woeful countenance. The new Administration lets the latter off the leash, and they will not accept from Biden what they once condoned with Trump. Nor is there the slightest prospect of sanctions relief being approved by Congress. The North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act (2016), which passed the House of Representatives 418-2 and the Senate 96-0, and was signed into law by President Obama, includes a Section (4012) forbidding the lifting of US sanctions until all political prisoners have been released, censorship ended, and a free and open society created.⁸ Section 401 of the Act blocks the President from suspending sanctions for twelve months unless the Japanese abductees have been accounted for and repatriated and there has been a verified transformation of the prison camps.

The fourth problem for Biden has resulted from the attempts of his administration to distance itself from Trump. Difficulties have been created by its abandonment of the language of 'work towards the complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula', and adoption instead of reference to the 'denuclearisation of North Korea'. This is at best tactless and at worst retrogressive. For Washington this may be lexical semantics, but for Pyongyang it is the very crux of the issue. The North believes that the final surrender of its military nuclear programme will come at the close of any peace settlement. But it wants to retain its civil nuclear capacities. Biden's new on-off phraseology calls this into question. On this issue the Administration seems more unaware than unconcerned. The situation was made worse when Washington suggested additional demands, for the removal and destruction of all Weapons of Mass Destruction and ballistic missiles.

Soundings

From armistice to peace: a multilateral performance

To recover the situation, the two main protagonists must talk. As the US is the more powerful of the two, the first move lies with Washington. In 2002, President George W. Bush tore up the Agreed Framework of 1994, the most significant peace process to have been agreed between the US and North Korea since 1953. Since then, not only has it been incumbent upon the US to restart the process, but Pyongyang has also made it clear that future security guarantees will need to be based on more than a simple letter signed by a sitting US President.

The problem of policy reversals by successive US presidents - and the consequent need for any agreement to have a political mortsafe of multilateral guarantees - is clearly illustrated by Trump's action with respect to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) agreement on denuclearisation agreed between Iran and what became known as P5+2 (the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus the European Union and Germany). Trump arbitrarily disavowed this deal, which had been agreed in good faith by his predecessor, and the agreement was then (though with some difficulty) kept alive by the remaining parties. The same kind of multilateral guarantee will need to be reflected in the institutional anatomy of any deal on the Peninsula. However arrived at, the negotiated outcome will need to go up to a UNSC+ to be endorsed and guaranteed, if Pyongyang is ever to have the confidence to trade away its deterrent. The 'Plus' would not be the same for Korea as it was for Iran. For example, it would need to include South Korea for security and economic reasons: it will have no choice but to do the bulk of the heavy financial lifting; while the EU will be needed as a donor.⁹

Pyongyang was interested in the political architecture of the Iran Nuclear Deal because the multilateral endorsement gave it a robustness and resilience entirely missing from the 1994 Agreed Framework; and its timetable on sanctions and denuclearisation was also a potential model. The renegotiations with Iran are all but over and include a roadmap with detailed sequential steps that would roll back sanctions that freeze Iranian assets in foreign banks and limit oil exports, as Iran complies with strict limits and inspections of its nuclear programme.

After the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 there was a danger of talks collapsing, but, slightly surprisingly, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov signed off on the deal in early April. At the time of writing, Tehran is saying that

Korean Peninsula

it is just waiting for the EU senior negotiator to confirm US agreement on the last outstanding points. While everyone waits for Washington, the White House is under enormous pressure from the Israeli lobby to renege and make fresh demands on Iran to kill the bill. The US Treasury - as previously with North Korea - is doing its best to sabotage the operation with fresh sanctions at the end of March against Iranian companies and individuals associated with Tehran's ballistic missile programme.

From Pyongyang's perspective, the final outcome of Biden's negotiations will determine whether or not Trump was aberration. Is the prospect of random revision to rest with the vagaries of American presidential elections or is there a sufficient institutional memory of past negotiations, to which there can be a return?

There are of course differences between prospective agreements with Iran and North Korea. Iran is giving up process development, while for the North it is a question of product placement. The DPRK needs resources but has viable nuclear weapons and new ICBMs, while Iran is seeking to spend its own money and continue a civil nuclear programme. In fact, Tehran's missile programme was bought off the shelf from Pyongyang.

Yet an agreement on Iran, though reassuring to Pyongyang, will exacerbate Republican angst. It is very likely that, after the mid-term elections at the end of 2022, and long before any deal on the Peninsula can be delivered, the Republicans will be back in control of the House of Representatives and probably the Senate. Having chosen to pursue a Republican marriage, Biden will then come under pressure to demand of Pyongyang the undeliverable.

Sanctions mitigation and 'compensations'

Any settlement will only be possible with the phased end of the 'full spectrum' UN economic sanctions. A limited level of smart sanctions against individuals over human rights abuses could be contained. Two tiers of 'compensation' will be sought by the North. First, the North will seek payment for the costs of the artefacts and institutions surrendered; and, second, it will seek financial compensation for the material, political and psychological costs of the long-term US 'hostile policy' towards its people.

Compensation for monies spent and reparations for opportunities lost will require handling via a new international institution which will carry the colours

Soundings

of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), which was born of the Agreed Framework. Allowing for Pyongyang's nuclear progress, and the equivalent in today's money of the \$4.5 billion promised by KEDO more than a quarter of a century ago, the bill this time will be around \$15-20 billion. As I indicated above, this money will not be coming from Washington. Even though Seoul is expected, and expects, to cover up to 70 per cent of the bill, additional paying partners will be needed.

It seems that Washington blithely assumes that Tokyo will be willing to fill most of the shortfall, through agreeing a reparation payment broadly equivalent to the sums paid to the South in the 1960s, as recompense for Japan's colonial and wartime record in the peninsula. The EU could then chip in to bridge the financial gap. The maths fit, with Tokyo owing \$3-4 billion, but the politics may well not. Japanese premier Kishida will need to be bold to face down his own domestic public opinion, while hostility to North Korea has been heavily stoked by his predecessors.

America's honeyed words have flattered France - and the UK - into offering to pay in order to be seen as active agents in the dismantling of Pyongyang's nuclear weapons, while the EU is seen as a serial soft touch. After Seoul and Tokyo, Brussels was the third largest funder of the Agreed Framework. Europe would undoubtedly contribute again, but not necessarily on the same basis. Last time the EU had no voice in the negotiations and yet still got landed with the bill. The European Parliament will not be short-changed twice.

In theory, the payers' contributions will be more or less matched with construction and infrastructure contracts, but Washington will make sure it receives a hefty cut of such bounty. One current suggestion is that the North could benefit from hosting the route for a South Korean rail by-pass to Eurasia, but Pyongyang is more likely to want rent for its construction and use rather than seeing it as part of the peace deal. Beijing might also chip in with a short branch of its Belt and Road Initiative to provide Northeast China with ready access to Rason, the country's ice-free and Northern passage port. Until recently, Moscow was likely to take the opportunity to serve its own interests in developing Russia's far east as part of any deal: Russian pipelines from orphan gas reserves across the North, running to Seoul and on to Japan, would allow Pyongyang to bleed off a welcome share. However, Russia's role in any future negotiations, let alone any deal, is moot.

Korean Peninsula

Solutions?

The history of peace negotiations in the peninsula is replete with initial success and subsequent failure. There is, nonetheless, a narrow path that can still be walked to deliver a durable and lasting peace, provided there is the acknowledgement that it will necessarily require an intricately timetabled and phased denuclearisation partnered with sanctions mitigation, economic underpinning and a changed security environment. Although the foundations for this will be built by the US and the DPRK, the superstructure, delivery and guarantees, will have to be multilateral. This will provide Pyongyang's security umbrella while also being acceptable to Washington as the necessary price of peace. Any such agreement is likely to include elements from both the Agreed Framework of 1994 and the JCPOA deal with Iran.

The deal would need to deliver early wins for both sides. The first step in the long process that would follow would be the cessation by North Korea of further production of nuclear weapons material in the form of plutonium or highly enriched uranium. The complexities of any deal will be enormous, and negotiating it will take many months, while its implementation will stretch over a decade and more. The current opportunity cannot be spurned, however, given that Pyongyang is at the point of no-return, and Seoul, Tokyo and Taipei are all threatening to become nuclear-weapons states in their own right.

In spite of the difficulties outlined above, an End of War Declaration remains a good starting point, as discussed at the beginning of this article. Going from armistice to Peace Treaty is a lawyer's dream but it is a political nightmare. Peace requires the elimination of the lawyers in favour of realpolitik. Yet a dialogue can only work if both sides agree on what they are talking about and what they want to achieve. Failure in this regard has been one of the main obstacles in the past, as the two sides have talked past each other. Both Washington and Pyongyang need now to confront their mutual misconceptions. This will take courage. All peace processes which work do so because both sides remember it is necessary to tolerate the intolerable, accept the unacceptable, and forgive the unforgivable. The Korean case will be no different.

Glyn Ford was a Labour Member of the European Parliament (1984-2009), where one focus was foreign affairs and trade in NE Asia. He visited North Korea for the first time in 1997 and was subsequently a member of the European Parliament's

Soundings

Korean Peninsula Delegation. He has continued to visit the country on a regular basis and has published two books *Talking to North Korea* (2018), translated into Korean, and *North Korea on the Brink* (2008), translated into Japanese and Korean, both with Pluto Press.

Notes

1. US White House, *Joint Statement of President Donald J. Trump of the United States of America and Chairman Kim Jong Un of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at the Singapore Summit*, Washington DC 2018: <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefings-statements/joint-statement-president-donald-j-trump-united-states-america-chairman-kim-jong-un-democratic-peoples-republic-korea-singapore-summit/>.
2. Kim Jong Un, 'Kim Jong Un's 2018 New Year's Address', speech, Pyongyang, 1 January 2018, The National Committee on North Korea: <https://www.ncnk.org/node/1427>. See also: Glyn Ford, 'Revisiting Kim Jong Un's New Year's Address: Missed Signals and Opportunities in 2019', 38 North, 2019: <https://www.38north.org/2019/12/gford122319/>.
3. Kim Jong Un, 'Kim Jong Un's 2019 New Year's Address', speech, Pyongyang, 1 January 2019, The National Committee on North Korea: https://www.ncnk.org/resources/publications/kimjongun_2019_newyearaddress.pdf/file_view. The quotes in this and the following paragraph are all from this text.
4. Stephen Biegun, 'Remarks on the DPRK', speech, 31 January 2019, Stanford University: https://fsi-live.s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/transcript_biegun_discussion_on_the_dprk_20190131.pdf.
5. Glyn Ford, 'Where are we, how did we get here and where are we going!?', paper presented at World Korea Forum 2020, Moscow, 13 September 2020.
6. 'Transcript: Prospects for a Stable Transformation of the Korean Peninsula', Hudson Institute: <https://www.hudson.org/research/15761-transcript-prospects-for-a-stable-transformation-of-the-korean-peninsula>.
7. Glyn Ford, *Talking to North Korea: Ending the Nuclear Standoff*, London, Pluto Press 2018, p140.
8. US Congress, *H.R.757 - North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016*, Washington DC 2016: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/757>. There is the possibility of a President overriding Congress with a waiver, but this would fly totally in the face of Biden's commitment to work with Congress.
9. The path to this deal will open with concurrent US-DPRK and DPRK-ROK negotiations before moving to a wider format of Four, Six or more Party Talks, where at least three 'baskets' – (1) Security, Arms Control & Denuclearisation, (2) Political, Humanitarian and Human Rights, and (3) Economic and Investment will be under negotiation, in order to arrive at a balanced outcome just barely acceptable to all major parties.