

Mission Impossible or Possible? Establishing a Permanent and Solid Peace Regime on the Korean Peninsula

Mandy Hsiao-chuan Liao

*Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science,
National Taiwan University*

Abstract

The joint statements of Moon-Kim and Trump-Kim both disclose a desire to establish a permanent and solid peace regime, which suggests the promise of durable peace on the Korean Peninsula. Institutionists argue that a nuclear-free peninsula has gradually been accepted as the principle of this regime. With continuing talks and the implementation of the two statements, a peace regime is possible and feasible. However, three factors influence the establishment of a peace regime. First, power distribution between the two Koreas and among Northeast Asia defines the power and international role of states. The increasing power of North Korea relies on its nuclear capability and sophisticated ballistic missiles. Without a promise of assured protection, Kim will not sincerely go nuclear-free and make himself a weak stakeholder. Second, the intensive China-US trade war discourages the development of a peace regime. China will not expect to promote this regime and lose the North Korean card during negotiations with the US. Last, the agendas and personalities of the

leaders of the two Koreas, China, and the US influence the formation of a peace regime. Kim and Xi focus more on domestic needs and on consolidating their regime than on the peace of the peninsula. Moon has a willingness to try but his presidency is limited to a five-year term. Trump is capricious and cares more about whether the US will benefit. Overall, a peace regime remains an impossible mission in the near future.

Keywords: Peace Regime, Korean Peninsula, Nuclear-free, Trump-Kim Summit, Inter-Korean Reconciliation

I. The Possibility of a Peace Regime on the Korean Peninsula

Since the young and bold leader of North Korea, Kim Jong-un, took office, Northeast Asia has been in turbulence. From 2016 a series of missile and nuclear tests conducted by North Korea has made neighboring countries uneasy and insecure. Donald Trump, another bold though old leader, became President of America in 2017. The situation has become heated. Trump threatened North Korea “will be met with fire and fury” and tweeted that Kim Jong-un was a little rocket man. Kim fought back and called Trump a dotard. It seemed more dangerous when both of them threatened each other by implying the possibility of using nuclear weapons.

However, after South Korea offered an olive branch and invited North Korea to attend the Winter Olympic Games in 2018, the international situation improved. Trump showed good intentions to Kim and so did North Korea. In March of 2018, Trump revealed to a South Korean mission to the White House that a summit between the US and North Korea was being arranged. Then came the Inter-Korean Summit on April 27, 2018. Kim Jong-un and Moon Jae-in

agreed that they would endeavor to establish a permanent and solid peace regime on the Korean Peninsula in the *Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity, and Unification of the Korean Peninsula*.¹ The first step is to declare the end of war this year and actively promote a peace treaty to replace the *Armistice Agreement*. It is believed that thanks to Moon's efforts, Trump and Kim Jong-un finally met in Singapore on June 12. The Trump-Kim summit meeting is a historic moment, not only because the two originally hostile leaders were harmoniously reconciled but also because it suggests a promise of peace for the Korean Peninsula. After the meeting, Trump and Kim agreed on four items including to establish a new relationship between the US and North Korea, to establish a stable and peaceful regime in the Korean Peninsula, to reaffirm the goal of a nuclear-free peninsula set out in the *Panmunjom Declaration*, and to return the remains of each other's soldiers who died during the Korean War.

The joint statements made by Kim and Moon in April and by Kim and Trump in June both encourage scholars and practitioners that are concerned for peace on the Korean Peninsula. The phrases in the statements, especially in the *Panmunjom Declaration*, seem concrete and feasible. Institutionists argue that a regime has four components: principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures.² It seems

1. The full context of the *Declaration* can be read at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea, "Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Unification of the Korean Peninsula," April 27, 2018, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea*, <http://www.mofa.go.kr/eng/brd/m_5478/view.do?seq=319130&srchFr=&srchTo=&srchWord=&srchTp=&multi_itm_seq=0&itm_seq_1=0&itm_seq_2=0&company_cd=&company_nm=&page=1&titleNm=>>.

2. International Regime Theory is from the liberal tradition, and is also called Neo-liberal Institutionism. The theory argues that international cooperation is possible because states care about absolute interests, not relative interests. The formation

the involved parties of the Korean Peninsula—the two Koreas, the US, and China—are all agreed on the principle of denuclearization and the interests of a peaceful and stable regime. It will simply take more time, communication, and practice to form norms and rules, and to reach a decision-making procedure for a peace regime. Several developments support this argument. The just-ended inter-Korean summit signed *Pyeongyang Joint Declaration* of September 2018, and agreed on several concrete measures to improve the inter-Korean relations from the military, economic, and society aspects.³ North Korea promised to shut down its Dongchang-ri missile-test facility with foreign experts participating in the process. Kim further agreed to visit Seoul, “a first in history.”⁴ Another first in history is that Moon, South Korean leader, made a remark to North Korea publics during a sport performance. Secondly, Trump expressed he has received a very warm and positive letter from Kim to seek for the second summit. It is expected the second meeting will set up concrete steps for denuclearization and normalization of relations between the

of institutions can reduce transaction costs and opportunities of being betrayed. Hence, states will stay and practice in international institutions. As time goes by, the institutions will be able to affect the behavior of states. See Stephen D. Krasner, ed., *International Regimes* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp.1-368; Yu-Kuo Chang & Bai Ruo-Chun, “Construction of a Permanent Peace Regime on the Korean Peninsula: Energy and Dilemma,” *Contemporary Asia Pacific Studies* (Beijing), January 2007, Vol. 1, pp. 30-35, 43.

3. The two Koreas plan to connect railroads, make a buffer zone in the West Sea, and co-host a bid for the Olympic Summer Games in 2032. See “Pyeongyang Joint Declaration: North Korea agrees concrete measures of denuclearization and connect railroads for the reunions of war-separated families,” *Mirror Media*, September 19, 2018, <<https://www.mirrormedia.mg/story/koreasummitday2/>>.

4. North Korea also agreed to close the nuclear facilities in Yongbyon in corresponding with US action. See Cheong Wa Dae, “Pyeongyang Joint Declaration Presents New Future,” September 19, 2018, *Cheong Wa Dae, Republic of Korea*, <<http://english1.president.go.kr/President/News/447>>.

US and North Korea. Finally, the conclusive development of a peace regime will be a peace treaty signed by the four parties to the Korean War, calling for an end of the war and a reduction in mutual animosity. This is scheduled for the end of the year in the *Declaration*. After the first step is done, following agreements on reducing military hostility and military exercises can be negotiated on the foundation of the peace treaty. The setting-up of a joint liaison office and regular defense meetings by general-level officers will also advance the formation of an inter-Korean confidence-building mechanism. These practices, if realized, will nurture norms of free-from-force between the two Koreas. Correspondingly, the rules for denuclearization and assuring the security of the North Korean regime will be easier to agree on. Consequently, with equality, trust, and safety, the two Koreas will be able to agree on an institutionalized decision-making procedure to deal with any conflictual issues about the safety of the Korean Peninsula along with relevant parties such as the US and China. This will be the realization of a permanent and solid peace regime. Moon Jae-in, the South Korean president, as well as institutionists, have drawn up this blueprint which removes all threats, war, and nuclear weapons from the peninsula.⁵

II. Is a Peace Regime a Mission Impossible?

One of the main weaknesses of this blueprint is that its realization involves at least four parties that each has its own axe to grind: the two Koreas, China, and the US. Two of the parties, China and the US, have a much greater influence on the formation of this regime

5. Moon further dreams that the peninsula can compose an economic community after denuclearization. See “Moon Jae-In: after denuclearization two Koreas will establish an economic community,” *Economic Daily News*, July 13, 2018, <<https://money.udn.com/money/story/5641/3251294>>.

than the direct stakeholders—the two Koreas—do. Kim met Xi Jinping, the Chinese leader, before and right after the summit meeting with Trump, which demonstrates the importance of China in this event. In addition, Trump cancelled the visit of US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, to North Korea on August 24 and admitted that there was no progress in denuclearization by North Korea. He further implied that China is an impediment to the development.⁶ These setbacks to a peace regime may not be abnormal but show the perspective of institutionism is too optimistic. Three critical factors for the formation of a peace regime are neglected in an institutionist approach and they decisively influence the possibility of a peace regime.

1. Power Distribution

The first factor is the power structure of the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia. According to structural realism, international society is anarchical. States are selfish and have to help themselves. In order to survive, states struggle for power. Power distribution among states defines international structure, and the structure constrains states' behavior.⁷ In this case, a state has to gain as much power as possible to avoid being violated. There are two ways to increase state power: strengthen national capability, and form alliances with other states.

Two power structures significantly decide the formation of a peace regime on the Peninsula. The first is the inter-Korean structure. The second is power distribution in Northeast Asia. In both power

6. "Trump insinuates that China does not help denuclearization, China responds: irresponsible accusation," *TVBS News*, August 26, 2018, <<https://news.tvbs.com.tw/focus/980753>>.

7. Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Long Grove: Waveland Press, 1979), pp. 1-256.

structures, North Korea has faced dwindling capability owing to its poor economic performance and out-dated military capability. In the inter-Korean structure, the economic gap between South and North Korea is increasing. The GDP per capita of North Korea was estimated at only 3.4% of that of South Korea in 2012 when Kim came to power.⁸ The economic growth rate was poor: 1.1% in 2013, 1% in 2014, and -1.1% in 2015, according to the World Factbook issued by the US Central Intelligence Agency.⁹ Kim has not brought much economic revenue into the country, while economic sanctions on North Korea have hardened. In military terms, South Korea has abundant capital to upgrade its equipment and more importantly, the US army remains deployed in South Korea. It can be said the power structure leans toward South Korea.

The poor capability of North Korea also discourages its role in the power structure of Northeast Asia. The six-party meetings were set up to deal with denuclearization issues in the peninsula from 2003 to 2007. North Korea is the weakest of the six parties—the US, China, Russia, Japan, South and North Korea. During negotiations North Korea has not much leverage, and, finally, the meetings were suspended indefinitely.

Power distribution has changed for North Korea's growing nuclear technology and increasingly sophisticated ballistic missile

8. The data is from the *Yonhap News Agency* of South Korea, which is quoted by Epochtimes. See "GDP per capita of North Korea is far more backward than that of South Korea," *Epochtimes*, December 18, 2013, <<http://www.epochtimes.com/b5/13/12/18/n4036967.htm>>.

9. The figures are estimated since North Korea does not publish credible national economic data. See Central Intelligence Agency, "North Korea," August 20, 2018, Accessed, *The World Factbook*, <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kn.html>>.

programs. Kim has strengthened North Korea by developing nuclear weapons, which has given him the opportunity to talk with the US on a one to one basis, something his father, Kim Jong-il, longed for but failed to achieve.¹⁰ Kim has also improved his relationships with China and Russia. By making his enemy's enemies friends, North Korea can be backed up by these allies in future negotiations. In this case, why should Kim Jong-un give up nuclear weapons and assign an insignificant role to North Korea? Hence, it is doubtful that the nuclear-free principle is sincere. On August 20, the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) indicated that North Korea has not stopped its nuclear development.¹¹ On August 29, the South Korean press revealed that North Korea refused American requests to reduce the number of its nuclear warheads.¹² This shows that considerations of power matter for North Korea. In sum, the power structure of Northeast Asia, especially between the two Koreas, constrains states' policy choices. The dynamic of power distribution shapes the ups and downs of the situation on the peninsula. The Chinese word for 'peace' combines the characters for "harmony (*he*)" and "equality (*ping*)," and harmony is founded on equality. Hence,

10. Kim Jong-il focused on nuclear and missile tests in order to press the US to negotiate with him directly. However, the US refused to do so and insisted that North Korea resume participation in the six-party meetings. See "A high-profile visit, pull China together, realize bilateral meetings between the US and North Korea, Kim Jong-il greets Wen Jiabao in person," *Apple Daily News*, October 5, 2009, <<https://hk.news.appledaily.com/international/daily/article/20091005/13278911>>.

11. IAEA, "Application of Safeguards in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea," August 20, 2018, pp. 1-5, *Institute for Science and International Security*, <http://isis-online.org/uploads/iaea-reports/documents/IAEA_Report_North_Korea_Aug2017.pdf>.

12. "South Korean Press: North Korea writes a letter to the United States and refuses to reduce warheads," *Central News Agency*, August 29, 2018, <<http://www.cna.com.tw/news/aopl/201808290025-1.aspx>>.

a durable peace regime will not hold unless North Korea has ways to be equal in the Northeast Asian power structure other than by possessing nuclear weapons.

2. The Development of China-US Relations

Secondly, fluctuations in China-US relations complicate the possibility of a peace regime and its degree of feasibility. From a strategic perspective, a dominant power, the US, faces the rise of China. These are the number one and two states in the world, and both are in the process of accommodating to each other. If their relationship turns sour, North Korea, a longstanding enemy of the US, is an ideal troublemaker to keep the US distracted and force it to ask for China's help. Hence, a solid and permanent regime is not all good to China, in particular if this regime is designed mostly by the US.¹³ The emergency meeting of Xi and Kim before the Trump-Kim Summit is proof of this. Before Kim met South Korean President, Moon Jae-in, he went to Beijing. Unexpectedly Kim went to meet Xi again in May before the Trump-Kim Summit. Kim's attitude toward the possibility of meeting Trump suddenly turned harsh. This demonstrates the influence of China and China's attitude on the fast development of US and North Korea relations.

There is more evidence that China-US relations influence the situation on the peninsula. At the beginning of Trump's incumbency, he and Xi seemingly had a good relationship. Trump switched from attacking China to becoming Xi's good friend. In return for this good start, China promised to impose sanctions on North Korea. China

¹³ There are certain advantages for China if a regime is formed, such as a stable state border, a reduction of legitimacy for deploying the THAAD system in South Korea and for the continuation of US-South Korea and US-Japan alliances.

prohibited the import of North Korean coal and iron and also stopped offering North Korea petroleum and fuel, which made North Korea suffer heavily when winter came. China's action was undoubtedly the catalyst for the reconciliation of the two Koreas and for the Trump-Kim Summit. Trump expressed his appreciation for Xi's help on the matter of North Korea on twitter in April. Moreover, as the inter-Korean joint statement of 2018 implies, there might be a trilateral meeting—the two Koreas and the US, which excludes China. Kim secretly visited Xi and switched his attitude to the Trump-Kim summit. Trump responded by calling Xi a “world-class poker player” implying that China had manipulated North Korea.¹⁴ Recently, as the China-US trade war has become more intense, more and more reports from the UN and press agencies indicate that North Korea has not suspended its development of nuclear weapons. On August 29, Trump indicated that China had unilaterally lifted part of its sanctions on North Korea. He thereby implied that China is impeding progress on North Korean nuclear issues.

Overall, although a denuclearized Korean Peninsula would be good for China and is a goal it seeks, yet the timing and the context need to be under China's supervision. So long as China is the only reliable security and economic provider for North Korea, China will maintain its influence on North Korea and the Korean Peninsula. In other words, China will play the card of North Korea during its dramatic and stormy interactions with the US as the US plays the Taiwan card against China.¹⁵ Furthermore, China would also like to

14. “Xi-Kim Summit breaks Trump-Kim Summit? Trump implies ‘Xi manipulates Kim Jong-un,’” *United Evening News*, May 23, 2018, <<https://udn.com/news/story/11314/3157679>>.

15. Taiwan and the US have a similar relationship to that between China and North Korea. The US is the only security provider to Taiwan unofficially and Taiwan

keep North Korea as a buffer zone between itself and US military allies.

3. Agenda and Personality of Leaders

Last but not least is the leader factor. Four leaders contribute to the dim light of a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula: Moon Jae-in, Kim Jong-un, Donald Trump, and Xi Jinping. Among them, Moon makes the most effort. Being new in the position, Moon suffers stress from North Korean missiles and nuclear tests. Moon, in one way, cooperates with international society to strictly sanction North Korea; in another way, he reached out his hand to invite North Korea to the Winter Olympics, which was an opportunity for reconciliation. Moon's great patience and mild attitude makes him a reliable peacemaker and messenger-deliverer between the US and North Korea. Thanks to his efforts, the Trump-Kim summit was held. Although the biggest contributor, he did not show off or make his role obvious, which makes him more reliable. In fact, South Korea does not worry that North Korean nuclear missiles will be used against it. They are afraid that military conflict between the US and North Korea will make South Korea the first sacrifice. Hence, a permanent and solid peace regime will ensure South Korea against suffering the possibility of war. With this in mind, Moon will continue to do the most to bring about peace.

The other three leaders are different from Moon, and they intend to adopt strongman diplomacy. Ever since 2012, as Xi Jinping has gradually gained in power, he has drawn a blueprint to revive the greatness of China. In order to achieve this goal, a stable and friendly

asymmetrically relies on the US in many ways. Further, China is very sensitive about US-Taiwan relations so the US can manipulate this in order to press China on other things.

international environment is needed. An international war on the Chinese border is definitely the last thing he would welcome, but neither is a united and pro-US Korean Peninsula a priority for Chinese revival. Furthermore, Xi's characteristics, such as his caution and patience, due to his suffering at a young age make him inclined to show his cards at the last moment. When the Trump-Kim summit was going to be held without his involvement, he made Kim visit him first. It can be said, without Xi's acquiescence, the Trump-Kim summit could not have happened. In short, Xi may not oppose the formation of a peace regime but this regime cannot become pro-US or weaken China's influence on the peninsula.

The third leader is Kim Jong-un, a young but realistic leader. As the young successor of a highly centralized authority, Kim has taken several cruel steps to ensure his regime. His insistence on developing nuclear weapons gives him more say in international society and has helped him win an opportunity to be seated with the president of America, the biggest country in the world, on an equal footing. This achievement has consolidated the legitimacy of his governance¹⁶ and proved that his "tightrope-walking diplomacy"¹⁷ is successful.¹⁸

16. Joseph Y. Yun, former US special representative for North Korean policy (2016-2018), argues that Kim has won an apparent and immediate victory at the time of meeting Trump. The reason is that this represents the recognition of North Korea from the US. See "Kim takes a flight with tricks. Win as meeting Trump in Singapore," June 11, 2018, *The News Lens*, <<https://www.thenewslens.com/article/97528>>.

17. Bonnie Glaser indicates that China always calls for two stops: the suspension of nuclear development in exchange for the suspension of US-South Korea drills. Kim Jong-un may be reminded of this and switches his attitudes to ask the US to increase attraction. See "Kim Jong-un change attitudes, 'Taught by Xi Jinping,'" *Apple Daily News*, May 17, 2018, <<https://tw.appledaily.com/international/daily/20180517/38015887#>>.

This all makes Kim more confident in his own judgment. A peace regime which may remove the US army from the peninsula benefits Kim. However, without sufficient protection for his own security and a commensurable international status, it is hard for this young and confident leader to sincerely work for peace.

Last, the American leader, Donald Trump, deals with North Korean nuclear issues in a non-traditional way. As a businessman, Trump expects to gain the biggest profit for the US at the lowest cost. Even faced by a malicious challenge from North Korea, Trump has claimed he will reduce the US military presence in South Korea, which made South Korea reluctantly increase its own share of deployment expenses. Regarding the North Korean nuclear threat, he has prompted other actors to do the job. Firstly, relying on friendship, he asked Xi to tackle this issue. When there was no progress, he called China an irresponsible stakeholder and pressed Xi to enforce strict sanctions on North Korea. He then had an oral fight with Kim to heat up the situation, which forced relevant actors to accelerate their action to make North Korea agree on denuclearization. Then, Trump switched tactics and greeted Kim chalking up a historical milestone at no material cost. Furthermore, Trump's personality is notoriously capricious and he is a bad promise-keeper. He reneged on US promises to Iran, which definitely discouraged Kim from believing in assurances given by the US. His calling off Secretary of State Pompeo's visit to North Korea but also expressing the possibility of a second Trump-Kim summit is considered a case of duplicity.¹⁹

18. The strategy is to utilize the ambiguity of the US and China toward North Korea and profit from the ambiguity.

19. North Korean TV reports that US special forces are secretly deployed in the American navy base in South Korea and conduct drills to attack North Korea. North Korean official press, *Labor News*, criticizes the US for being a smiling

Hence, although Trump may like to harvest a peace regime as a diplomatic achievement, the establishment of a peace regime endorsed by Trump may not be taken seriously.

Moreover, two out of the four leaders have a limitation on their terms of office. To form a peace regime needs lots of talks, negotiations, and more importantly, practice. The terms of Xi and Kim are unlimited. Hence, they can wait for bigger concessions during negotiations. Moon and Trump face the pressure of time before they can harvest diplomatic achievements in order to win the next election.²⁰ If the negotiations fail, Moon and Trump will face great domestic pressure and be shown to be incompetent. Therefore, limitations on term of office and electoral considerations also affect the possibility and development of a peace regime.

III. Conclusions

The six-party talks in the 2000s tried to become regular meetings and were expected to evolve into a peace regime eventually as some institutionists wished.²¹ However, this did not happen and the six-party talks were suspended. Now the handshake between Trump and Kim has revived the dream of institutionists again. The joint statement of Moon and Kim has indicated the direction for a peace regime; the

assassin that plays a two-faced strategy and is malicious to North Korea. See "Another falling-out between the US and North Korea! North calls the US a smiling assassin and plot to attack Pyongyang," *TVBS News*, August 27, 2018, <<https://news.tvbs.com.tw/world/981769>>.

20. The South Korean Constitutions limits the President's term of office to five years and not be able to re-appointed. Moon cannot be President again but he has a duty to assist his party to win the next election.

21. Yu-Kuo Chang & Bai Ruo-Chun, "Construction of a Permanent Peace Regime on the Korean Peninsula: Energy and Dilemma," p. 34.

Trump-Kim Summit announced an agreement on the creation of this regime. That North Korea did not show off its ballistic missiles on its national day is considered as a good will gesture to the US. A peace regime on the Korean Peninsula is possible and may come in the way institutionists and practitioners claim.

This inference is too optimistic. Three fundamental factors influence the formation of a peace regime. The first one is the power structure both between the two Koreas and in Northeast Asia. North Korea increases its state power by nuclear warheads and gains equal standing in front of South Korea, the US, and China. If North Korea gives up nuclear power, can it still maintain its current international status? If North Korea can have a full say in negotiations and sufficient security guarantees in the regime, then it is possible.²² If not, it is impossible for North Korea to enter a regime which weakens its power. Secondly, there is an ongoing, intense China-US trade war. If North Korean nuclear issues are solved and Korea moves into a peace regime, China will have lost a useful card in its negotiations with the US. Furthermore, the premise of a peace regime may be denuclearization and the withdrawal of the US army. It is not clear how the US can retain its influence on the peninsula to endorse the implementation of a peace regime, but it is certain that the US will try to arrange the regime to suit its own preferences. Hence, it is worse for China if China also has to encounter the US and its allies at the Korean border while engaged in economic warfare with the US.

22. This also should be the starting point for denuclearization. See Nan-chou Lee, "Standing at the Cross-road: Korean Peninsula and Peace of East Asia," *The 21st Century Biannual*, Vol. 160, April 2017, pp. 119-128, *Chinese University of Hong Kong*, <<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/21c/media/articles/c160-201611014.pdf>>.

Thirdly, the four leaders directly involved have their own agenda toward the formation of a peace regime. Moon actively promotes the regime, and claims that bumps between the US and North Korea recently are normal for a dyad that have antagonized each other for 70 years.²³ Trump deals with the issues in a practical way and expects to solve them at the least cost. Hence, if forming a regime means reducing the US' duties on the peninsula and increasing his personal reputation, he will promote it. On the other hand, if this is going to cost the US a lot, he will give it up right away just as he denounced participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Further, both Moon and Trump face the pressure of term limitation and election considerations, which implies that time does not stand by them. They prefer an instant and obvious result rather than the gradual nurturing of a mutual trust regime.

China's peaceful rise is Xi Jinping's main goal. The China-US relationship has a great impact on achieving this goal. Hence, to keep more cards in hand is better than having no cards when he has to negotiate with the US. The North Korean card is useful since China has a unique influence on North Korea. Since China-US relations are intense now, to promote a peace regime is not a priority for the cautious Xi. The last leader, Kim Jong-un, though, has expressed his willingness to coordinate denuclearization. Is he sincere? Or, is it just another strategy to gain attention and more chips to be used in negotiations? Unless Kim is satisfied with the security of his regime and his international status, a peace regime is not feasible.²⁴

23. "Trump mentions the 2nd Trump-Kim summit, Cheong Wa Dae: wish good development between the US and North Korea," *TVBS News*, August 21, 2018, <<https://news.tvbs.com.tw/world/977741>>.

24. Yun argues that the priority of the four items agreed in the Trump-Kim Summit may imply the normalization of US-North Korea relationship should come

In sum, while some practitioners are positive about the development of a peace regime due to the Trump-Kim summit in June and maybe more in the near future, the three realistic factors set out above inhibit the formation of a peace regime. However, this does not mean peace will not come to the Korean Peninsula or that a peace treaty to end the Korean War is impossible. The three factors mark the importance of realistic strategies when dealing with North Korean nuclear issues. Progress and setbacks are inevitable. Hence, rational calculation and consideration of every step are needed for true peace on the Korean Peninsula.

before denuclearization. Hence, he suggests that the US should propose to set up a liaison office with North Korea in order to demonstrate the US is ready to implement the first item. See Joseph Yun, "How the U.S. and North Korea can break the cycle of disappointment," *The Washington Post*, August 15, 2018, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/how-the-us-and-north-korea-can-break-the-cycle-of-disappointment/2018/08/15/9a5cd122-9fef-11e8-83d2-70203b8d7b44_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.1faa83bead4e>.

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