

Presentation on
The Jeju Conference and its Contribution to Disarmament and Non-proliferation

By

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**The 10th UN/ROK Joint Conference on
Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues**

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Ten years ago, at the proposal of the Government of the Republic of Korea, the United Nations and ROK jointly initiated the Jeju Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation. The overarching theme of the first joint conference was “Changing Security Dynamics and Implication for Disarmament and Non-proliferation”.

That inaugural conference took place at this very venue, the beautiful Shilla Hotel, on the “Island of Peace” known for its rich culture heritage and natural beauty.

My colleagues have informed me that we have in our midst today at least 1-2 participants from that first Conference, Professor Han Yong-sup, and Mr. Gary Samore who unfortunately could not make it here due to a last minute urgent assignment.

Since then, interest in the Jeju Conference has grown and it now occupies a prominent place in global disarmament and non-proliferation fields. It has evolved into a process featuring this important annual forum for experts and practitioners from international organizations, governmental or non-governmental entities, academia, and independent think tanks.

It is a special forum, enabling its participants to engage in—and benefit from—a frank exchange of views on a wide range of challenging issues facing the international community in disarmament and nonproliferation. These include both global and regional issues, and they also address both current and emerging challenges.

Over the last decade, the Jeju Conference agendas have covered a broad range of issues –

- from bolstering global disarmament and non-proliferation norms, to finding solutions to regional nuclear and missile proliferation challenges;
- from seeking practical means to restore confidence in multilateral disarmament processes, to strengthening “rule of law” in disarmament and non-proliferation;
- from addressing the nuclear non-proliferation challenge on the Korean Peninsula to addressing such challenges in Middle East;
- from strengthening export controls, to preventing WMD terrorism;
- from the “Nuclear Renaissance”, to strengthening nuclear safety and security; and
- from confidence-security building measures to exploring regional security mechanism/structure.

The past decade has certainly witnessed many ups and downs in disarmament and non-proliferation. It is time that we take stock of what we have achieved, what we failed to achieve and why, and what is in store for the international community. And the Jeju Process offers a common forum for undertaking precisely these tasks.

This particular anniversary of the Jeju Process offers a useful opportunity to look back over the last ten years, and more importantly to look ahead to future priority issues, with a view to seeking practical solutions—or key ingredients to solutions—that will advance both disarmament and non-proliferation goals.

We have listened with great interest to the views expressed already by some speakers in a broad review of the past decade and will continue to address all these and other important issues, especially future actions in the next two days.

I am proud to say that the Jeju Process has indeed contributed meaningfully to the global and regional efforts to address disarmament and non-proliferation challenges, and it continues to do so. It offers a channel for dialogue and cooperation on difficult issues, which are together crucial to the success of efforts in the multilateral process of identifying agreed goals and credible means to achieve them.

The distinguished retired American diplomat, Ambassador Thomas Pickering, once said that “diplomacy isn’t instant coffee”—and this is certainly true throughout the laborious process of developing practical and wise initiatives to achieve disarmament goals. The Jeju Process contributes to this important undertaking.

One invaluable feature of the Jeju Process is to invite some of the official practitioners who work on the most challenging disarmament and non-proliferation issues to share their “insider” views and experiences.

Yet these conferences also offer the opportunity for participants to step back from the prevailing views and positions held by States and to engage in wider—at times even philosophical—debates, as well as to look at some of the root causes of the various “symptoms” of specific problems. These include setbacks experienced in NPT arenas, the paralysis at the Conference on Disarmament, the slow pace of disarmament, new proliferation risks, and others).

I believe that the sustainable manner that the joint conference has been conducted is a good indication of the increasingly active role the Republic of Korea is playing in world affairs and its firm commitment to promoting global and regional disarmament and non-proliferation.

As we mark this 10th anniversary of the Jeju Process, we should also look forward by considering ways of expanding its contributions to international peace and security, through the exploration of new approaches to achieving disarmament and non-proliferation goals.

Overall, the conference has mainly focused on WMD-related issues. Yet because of the importance attached both in the Republic of Korea and at the UN to conventional arms control, I expect that future Conferences will address more of such issues, as the Process continues to adapt to the ever-changing realities of the global disarmament map. These include the UN Programme of Action on Combating the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, along with issues relating to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the Mine Ban Convention, the Cluster Munitions Convention, and the future Arms Trade Treaty. Jeju Conferences might perhaps focus on a key current issue in this field, given the limited time allocated to the session.

In closing, I would like to encourage all participants to share your thinking on strengthening this important Jeju Process. The information shared at these gatherings, the networks created, and yes, even the friendships made, will go far in advancing the great goals of disarmament and non-proliferation that have brought us all here today.