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Peace on the Peninsula?

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Peter Kwong: Good afternoon. I hope everyone had a great break. My name is Peter Kwong and I'm the founder of Campaign for America and a student at Yale University. I'm excited to be a scholar at this year's 2018 Aspen Security Forum and even more delighted to introduce this next panel, Peace on the Peninsula. I'm a proud US citizen and a proud Korean immigrant. Like many Korean Americans, I only have to go back one, two generations to find family members on both sides of the border.

It was only a few years ago when I was a public service scholar with the Council of Korean Americans interning on the hill for then Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth. I had the opportunity to speak and meet with a number of Korea experts, policymakers, academics, but there's no better advocate for strong US role on the Korean Peninsula, the brave North Korean defectors, many my age, who understand acutely what's at stake.

They'd be very excited to be here with me and introducing today's moderator, Gordon Chang. Gordon is the author of *The Coming Collapse of China* and *Nuclear Showdown: North Korea Takes on the World*. Gordon is a contributing writer for the *New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Forbes Magazine*, and of course he's a columnist with *The Daily Beast*. His work has taken him to capitals around the world, including Seoul, Beijing, Tokyo, Taipei, and Singapore. Please join me in a warm welcome for Gordon Chang and the rest of the panel for what will surely be a timely discussion.

Gordon Chang: Well thank you, Peter. In the last few days, Lydia, my wife, and I have enjoyed meeting with and learning from Peter and the other Aspen scholars. Especially at a time like this, it is so heartening to know that there are people in school or just out of school who are devoting their careers to the defense of the American homeland. I would like the Aspen scholars to please stand up.

Now we turn to the Korean Peninsula. General Brooks, thank you for taking the time to be with us today and especially thank you for doing this at 6:30 in your morning. I know that-

Vincent Brooks: Good morning from Korea.

Gordon Chang: I know, General, that you've not had the opportunity to walk around and talk to people on the forum, but if I can set the scene, there is of course interest in North Korea and there's also great concern. The concern is two types really. First of all, people are troubled by the policies of the Trump administration, also the policies of Moon Jae-in, the South Korean president, but these are issues that we will cover only in the panel discussion following our conversation.

What I'd also like to do is talk about the concerns I've heard in the last few days about the threat from North Korea. I know that you have personally faced that threat twice. First two were duty on the Korean Peninsula starting in the mid 1990s and, of course, your second tour starting in 2016 when you came to take

over command of US forces Korea, UN command, and the Republic of Korea US combined forces command. Of course, a lot has changed since the mid 1990s, but also a lot has changed since 2016. What I'd like to do is get your assessment of the threats from the Korean Peninsula. General Brooks, what has changed and what hasn't changed?

Vincent Brooks:

Gordon, thanks for the great privilege of being able to go and view electronically the Security Forum. That's such a tremendous event, and I wish I could be there in person, but thanks for your patience and your willingness to let me do this electronically to share some thoughts. To be sure, the last 27 months, which is the period of time of my command, has been a time of extraordinary circumstances.

We've seen a rising set of challenges and demonstrated capabilities of North Korea, particularly the missile and nuclear technologies. We've seen changes in administration. Really, I'm now working for the third and fourth administrations that I've been exposed to during those 27 months. One of those, of course, changed as a result of a very challenging and difficult impeachment, but the institutions of democratic government survived in the Republic of Korea throughout that.

We saw a build up of our military capability in terms of enhancing the defense of the Republic of Korea, all the while under some intense challenges and pressures from abroad in the northeast Asia region and with those continuing challenges, by North Korea, a desire to try to change the calculus of Kim Jong-un himself as to the direction he would take into the future, making it very clear that the direction that he was choosing was an extremely dangerous one and one that needed to change.

As we continue to enhance our defense posture, we also saw an extraordinary set of actions by the international community to create what we now call the Pressure Campaign, but it was that rising pressure on North Korea, making it clear that their actions were not going to be accepted or tolerated by the world and that great pressure was gonna be brought to bear on them. The sanctions that have come in place that time, the unanimity that we have seen out of the Security Council really set conditions for the military actions here to be able to enable the diplomatic actions that we saw. Those are difficult to come by, obviously, with tremendously hard work by our diplomats and with our military instruments in support of trying to create traction, if you will.

We've gone now 235 days without a provocation, so we saw big change occur after the 29th of November missile launch. It's the 29th for us, often referred to as the 28th to people in the United States. Not only in terms of the demonstrated capability, but also in terms of the statement that followed it from North Korea that Kim Jong-un had gone as far as he needed to go in his development. That signaled a change in direction, perhaps a change in calculus

that we had been looking for for those many months leading up to that point in time. Since that time, we've seen indeed a change of at least the approach.

To be sure, the physical threats and capabilities are still in place, but it's evident through words and actions that the intent to use them has changed. That has opened a new era of diplomatic engagement and dialogue has been added to pressure. That's been very important, and I would say that as the United Nations commander, we are not only the enforcer of the armistice, but we're also the enabler of dialogue, leading up to the 27th April summit between North Korea and South Korea at [inaudible 00:07:35] a United Nations controlled area, the 26th of May subsequent summit, and then of course, the coordination that led to the 12th of June summit in Singapore.

This has been an extraordinary time. Our challenge now, candidly, is to continue to make progress, but to make that progress in an environment that is essentially void of trust. Without trust, we'll find it difficult to move forward. Building that trust while the pressure continues and while the efforts for diplomacy continue is the order of the day. In many ways, the lack of trust is the enemy we now have to defeat. We've seen some changes in the way North Korea's actions and postures look, but to be sure, they have significant asymmetric capabilities, that is things that could be used in a way that is not traditionally military, cyber capabilities, some special operations capabilities.

Even their missile capabilities could be used to threaten the populated areas, not just the threat in military forces. But their dialogue, their actions have changed and moved in a different direction, so we have to take some stock of that and have sufficient confidence to move forward with some risky decisions that have to be taken. There has to be some risk taking in order to build trust, and that's really where we are right now. Militarily, we're still in support of diplomacy. That will continue, and of course, that's always the best alternative, but maintaining a credible readiness that is evidence of resolve as well as evidence of options available to the national leaders of the United States and the Republic of Korea.

Thanks once again for letting me join you. I look forward to the questions and the chance to engage.

Gordon Chang: General, thank you so much. You talked about Kim Jong-un's calculus changing. Clearly, as you say, we haven't seen anything since the November 29th launch of the inter-continental ballistic missile. When we look at North Korea's other capabilities, its conventional capabilities, have we seen changes, let's say, since the June 12th summit, or maybe changes since the beginning of this year on the deployment of their conventional forces close up to the militarized zone?

Vincent Brooks: Thanks, Gordon. We've seen some changes. The numbers haven't changed, so there's still a huge military force with somewhere in order of 1.2 to 1.5 million people under arms at any given point in time and able to be mobilized and

expanded to much greater sizes up into 3 millions. Most of those forces are conventional forces, and they are within the distance between Seoul and Pyeongchang, which is about 70 miles or so, concentrated in that area, about 70% of their force.

Those conventional forces have challenges in conducting training. They do have training cycles just as we do, and they tend to match ours. Winter and summer training cycles, they have to alternate their training with actual planting and harvesting, which the Korea people's army is actively engaged in pretty much the labor force to get that work done. So we've seen some changes in terms of how much time they're spending in the field. Some of that is likely attributed to the limitations of fuel that have been available, fuel has been available in North Korea.

Some of that may be a result of the engagements in summitry. It's difficult to determine exactly what the root cause is, but some diminution of training for military readiness, but they're still training. They're still conducting exercises, they're still conducting operations, but what's more important is the additional activity beyond the conventional was the pace setter for the last several years. Missile launches, demonstrations of capability, engine tests, nuclear tests, and detonations, submarine launch, ballistic missiles, and the ejection tests that lead up to that.

All these things are the other activity we saw, if you want to accept that as military capability. That is what we haven't seen really since the 29th. There is some activity still, so to be sure, it's not all gone, but the pace of action and the purpose of the action is clearly different at this point in time.

Gordon Chang: General, you can't see me, but I'm opening up my folder, which means we're gonna get a question from the Twitterverse. A couple days ago, I've asked Twitter, what would you want to know from General Vincent Brooks? A guy named @lippy730, that just strikes me as crazy that there's at least 730 lippy's in Twitter, but @lippy730 asked, is NK still continuing to produce nuclear weapons/materials? If so, what is our estimate on how many nuclear weapons they can produce on a yearly basis? General, can you give us some enlightenment on that particular question?

Vincent Brooks: I'll give you some insights on it, Gordon. Obviously, I'm not gonna go into details on what we assess to be the number of weapons or how fast they can produce them, as that would be obviously very sensitive in communicating to them what it is we know or perhaps even that we don't know.

Gordon Chang: Sure.

Vincent Brooks: Let's say that their production capability is still intact. Their testing capability, we just saw affected a few months ago in the destruction of the Punggye-ri testing site, but production is a different question. We haven't seen the

complete shut down of production yet. We have not seen a removal of fuel rods. These types of things tell us that there are still steps that must be taken on the road to de-nuclearization, which Chairman Kim Jong-un has said he will do. He's given his word on that, and we will take him on his word. He has demonstrated he really is a man of his word in a number of ways, but thus far, those steps have not been taken.

That says that we have work to do. Again, I go back to the idea of developing mutual trust. We have the cultural conundrum, if you will, of seeing an end the same way, but seeing the ways to achieve the end very differently. That is not only in this matter of de-nuclearization. It really is in everything we do.

We have to take that into account as we're seeking to build some kind of condition of trust that can make progress while also making it very clear that de-nuclearization is where we're going. There has to be demonstrable action in that direction or we cannot be satisfied, and we probably can't be friends, and we probably won't be at peace. We have to see something moving in both directions simultaneously in order to get us there. That's the way I would respond to the question about their current capability.

Gordon Chang: There have been some reports that North Korea has actually increased its production of [inaudible 00:14:43] material, though those clearly have not been dated to a specific week or whatever. Of course, there are the reports of the completion of the missile facility, the additions to the cooling system of the five megawatt reactor at [inaudible 00:14:56]. How do you take intention from that?

Vincent Brooks: I would say first, it's back to that same idea. It's clear we have work to do in achieving the steps of de-nuclearization. Whether all those reports are accurate or not, I wouldn't care to comment on, but I think we can take confidence in recognition that the systems and capabilities that we have are not gone. All of the capability, really, that was there before is still in place, is still intact. What is the intention that goes with it? We have to also recognize that North Korea will signal to us.

I've often highlighted and described North Korea like a two-sided coin. The side of the coin that you see is the side they want you to see, but there's another side to the coin that maybe is more the reality of what they want and who they are. If we see activity like that, does that fundamentally mean they're not going to change, or is that a signal that they still have capability and they want us to be cognizant of that?

I take that into account and look at it that way as I lead the military commands here and try to enable our efforts to support the diplomatic action. We don't overreact to things like that. Those types of reports are okay. That's the environment as we see it. If those things are true, what does it mean to us as we go forward? I think taking into account that it could mean several things and not excluding any one of those potential messages is very important.

We know what our aim point is, and we know what it is that the President of the United States and Chairman Kim Jung-un have agreed to. Let's keep our eyes on that and not get distracted by the things that might say we're not there it.

Gordon Chang: My friend, Josh Rogan, of The Washington Post buttonholed me about 11 or 12 minutes ago, wouldn't let me move until I promised to ask you a question that he had, which was, how is diplomacy going? You've talked about this trust building process, so how do you see that occurring up until now, and where do you see it going in the future?

Vincent Brooks: I'm happy to help your relationship with Josh.

Gordon Chang: Thank you.

Vincent Brooks: I'm gonna answer the question. Diplomacy is moving forward. This is another one. Our expectations have to be tempered properly. Diplomacy is a process that takes time, it takes engagement, and it's founded on dialogue and then trust. The great news is dialogue has opened. We didn't see dialogue through the many months leading up to November and really up until about March of 2018. I took command at the end of April, 2016 and the spiral we were on was a very dangerous one, particularly because of the absence of dialogue.

While our efforts were, the whole time, to enable diplomatic action to get its traction, what we had very little of was direct dialogue, and we have that now. So we have several channels. This is like tulips blooming in the spring. The channels of communication now are abundant. Whether it's North Korea, South Korea communications, US North Korea communications, the ongoing alliance communications between the United States and South Korea, and even the United States and Japan, so the alliance structure here, discussions with Russia and with China among all the other players, this is an active period of diplomacy right now.

Because of that, because it's really the onset of diplomatic actions, there's much posturing, there's much sensing, and there has to be sufficient room for our diplomats, especially our Secretary of State, Secretary Pompeo, to be able to gain the traction, and find the opportunity, and be able to maneuver toward the outcomes we all seek, recognizing all the while that every one of those players that I named, the five countries around North Korea and North Korea itself, have their own interests and will be maneuvering and posturing also.

This is a very dynamic time. I'd say that we should be pleased with the traction that has now emerged, especially since about the early May timeframe and through the summit season that has begun and maybe will continue, and that there is still a need to create room for those discussions to have their effect.

We're very carefully managing the use of the military instrument, as you saw with President Trump's directive to us to suspend the spring exercises of

combined exercises. That's an important action, to try to build trust and to demonstrate the same kind of resolve in moving toward a trusting relationship that has de-nuclearization at its end as it was to demonstrate our willingness to not accept North Korea and its nuclear efforts and developments. This is really where we are right now, and I hope that helps you and Josh both.

Gordon Chang: Well, it's really important because I was trying to go to the bathroom at the time. Thank you, General. I want to switch gears a moment because you talked about a dynamic situation. There seems to be no more dynamism in a country called South Korea. We have a missile defense system called the Terminal High Altitude Area of Defense built by Lockheed Martin. We have placed one battery in South Korea, but it seems that we've met some resistance from the new government in Seoul. I thought if you could just talk a little bit about how the resistance of Moon Jae-in's government affects our ability to defend against North Korean missiles.

Vincent Brooks: Let me say first that this has been a successful deployment that enhanced the Republic of Korea against several categories of missiles that threatened very important parts and very important numbers of people on the Korean Peninsula. This was an alliance decision that was taken first by President Park Geun-hye, but was sustained by President Moon Jae-in. So it's probably not an accurate characterization to say that there's resistance from the government or President Moon Jae-in. They're the ones who enabled the deployment. They have also been very effective in helping us sustain that unit out where it is.

There's some popular pressure against it, and there's clearly international pressure exerted by China against the Republic of Korea and secondarily, thus to the United States and against the ROK US alliance. It was clear that China wanted to use that deployment as a way to drive a wedge into the ironclad ROK US alliance. They were not successful in that, and with President Moon Jae-in's support, that system was deployed here. We now have a full battery deployed here. That's the largest full battery deployment anywhere in the world and the second one in this region directed against North Korea and only North Korea.

So many concerns about this being an effect on China's security, that's really not accurate and may well be a reflection of an attempt to save face when perhaps communications came out too quickly in 2016 about the deployment of THAAD that were not founded on fact. It's 100% about defending against North Korean missiles, and we couldn't have done it without the South Korean government being a key partner as an alliance decision maker on this. I'm confident that that's not been an issue.

How the government here works through the popular concerns, and by and large the population well over 50-60% is in support if they had deployment here, that there is a small percentage that must be attended to. This is a strong democracy here. They must attend to that concern as well. The pace at which we make changes to the already fully deployed unit, the pace is what is actually

being impacted and guided by the South Korean government as they deal with their own national politics. We work with them on that. They have that right, they should be doing that, and they are doing that very, very well.

Gordon Chang: At the end of October, the South Korean and the Chinese foreign minister issued joint statements which have sort of become known as the Three No's. The Three No's being no more THAAD missile deployments in South Korea, no South Korean participation in ballistic missile defense, and no South Korean participation in a US Japan South Korea alliance. If you could just comment on the Three No's because that seems to be a matter of concern that I've heard here today and elsewhere, of course.

Vincent Brooks: I think that was very much a reflection of how China saw the meeting. I have met with the foreign minister, Foreign Minister [Kong 00:24:08] shortly after that trip, and I was also in Japan shortly after that trip and met with many of the leaders there, both diplomatic and military. I think we should not overreact to that description of the Three No's. There had already been no intention to expand the THAAD deployment, so nothing changed in that regard. The alliance had already decided that and China will not and cannot dictate what the alliance does or does not do, especially in the defense of the Republic of Korea.

The issues of ballistic missile defense are understandable. They don't want to see a large integrated shield because it might hinder some of their options, but that too was the voice of China and not the voice of South Korea, which had not been pursuing an integrated ballistic missile defense system. Finally on the alliance related matters, there is no alliances that joins the Republic of Korea, the United States, and Japan as one. That too was an affirmation that such a thing doesn't exist.

Whether it will ever exist or not, I don't know that that's even being pursued, but that's obviously a concern that China has, and that's what I believe you saw coming out of that. My view, the South Korean government changed nothing in terms of their positions and it still remains very much devoted to the alliance. It is ironclad, it has been tested indeed. As I describe it, the tensile strength of this ironclad alliance has been put to the test many times, and it has come out still ironclad. I'm very confident in where we are.

Gordon Chang: Given the fact that we've got a THAAD battery in South Korea and our other assets in the region, can we defend against a North Korean missile attack against South Korea, whether it's nuclear tipped or not?

Vincent Brooks: Short answer is yes. I'm a military commander, so I'm never satisfied with the degree of military preparation and the degree of advantage. We're always looking for more of that, but at the present time, we have to find a balance between overly arming to defeat every threat every time or having some degree of risk while defending as much as we are able to at the present time. Without a

doubt, the THAAD system significantly enhanced our defensive posture, but that wasn't all.

We were also very carefully making sure that we were enhancing our readiness in our forces and strengthening the quality of the alliance, especially the commanding control relationships of military forces that really resides in the combined forces command, which we view as the heart of the ROK Us alliance. So that's a sword that is sharp and in readiness.

At the present time, we've been told to put the sword back in the sheath, which we can do. We're professional militaries and very able to do that while not forgetting how to use that sword and also not forgetting ...

PART 1 OF 3 ENDS [00:27:04]

Vincent Brooks: ... while not forgetting how to use that sword, and also not forgetting, if you will, Sun Tzu's advice that even a good sword put in saltwater will eventually corrode. We have to keep the sword in readiness. All this has been the condition and the posture we've gone through over the last year.

I would say also we've significantly enhanced the quality of our communication with the international community, principally through our engagement with the United Nations' sending states. Those were the United Nations' members who sent forces to South Korea during the Korean War 1950 to 1953. UN Command has been a key player in enhancing that dialogue, keeping them posted and informed on what the current situation is, as well as gaining additional support from those countries with staff officers and others to help ensure that that United Nations' Command, as the protector of the armistice but also as the enabler for dialogue while being the home for international commitments, endures that way.

Finally, the United States Forces Korea staying in readiness also, enabling the diplomacy of United States, but also the diplomacy of the Republic of Korea all the while and keeping our US forces who are here in the proper posture and readiness, but under excellent control. We maintained our discipline through challenging and provocative times, and didn't tip over the circumstances that were trying to be developed, that attempt to gain traction that I continue to refer to. That's been very important as well. All three commands have played an important role in the circumstances that lead us up to the present.

Moderator: I've only got 30 seconds left, but John Rood, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, yesterday talked about your moving words at the ceremony on Friday on the return of two sets of Korean War remains. You mentioned not only the remains, but also missing in action and prisoners of war. Could you just in a very short period just tell us what you're doing in terms of trying to get accounting for POWs because there is a sense that North Korea did not return all Americans in 1953.

Vincent Brooks: First point is that our nations, and I say that plurally because there were 17 nations that fought here, our nations will not forget their fallen, and especially the ones who are unaccounted for. All are relentless in finding a way to answer the question and return the remains. The good news is we now have traction. We have dialogue with the Korean People's Army. This is an aftermath of President Trump and Chairman Kim Jung-un's meeting in Singapore. We are confident that we will succeed in transferring a number of remains. Probably not all of them, but we need some of them.

Every single one that comes back, like that ceremony a few weeks ago where we had two sets of remains, one still unknown and one certainly Korean, tells us that the pain of those families is as acute today as it was the day when the incident actually occurred. It's as though they were still in our midst. I watched the sister of the Korean colleague who was passed back to his country as she encountered her brother for the first time in 65 years. That's moving. We have to stay on that. We're confident that it's going to happen. We have some progress. This will be a good outcome.

Moderator: For about 150 years US policymakers have drawn our western defense perimeter not off the coast of California, not even off the coast of Hawaii, but off the coast of Asia. For 70 years we have anchored that defense perimeter in South Korea. General Brooks, thank you for standing strong in South Korea. Thank you so much for your time today.

Now for the easy part. There's been a lot of concern, as I mentioned, that we've heard, not only about Trump policy, not only about Chinese and Russian sanctions-busting, the North Korean threat. I think we should start in South Korea. Woongsoon Lim, you're the Deputy Chief of Mission in DC for the South Korean government. You heard General Brooks talking about THAAD, the anti-missile system. If you can just run us through your government's position on missile defense, South Korea's participation in American missile defense.

Woongsoon Lim: Okay. Even though General Brooks has left the session and he's not hearing me, I want to say ...

Moderator: That means he's not going to contradict you.

Woongsoon Lim: No, no. I want to say ... I have to say how grateful the South Koreans are to General Brooks for his dedicated service. He's widely respected not only for his professionalism but also for his love of South Korea. I'm really happy to have a chance to set the record straight. From the interview you just had with General Brooks, I guess that you seem to have some misunderstanding about our government's position on [inaudible 00:32:34]. This is what really happened. The US, they want to have the THAAD system deployed in South Korea. After close consultation with Seoul, we decided to deploy THAAD in South Korea. That decision was made in the reigning days of the previous South Korean government. It became a very controversial issue during the presidential

campaign. When the opposition leader, Moon Jae-in, ran, he won the election. He was pressured to overcome the original decision to deploy the THAAD. In the period of testing the alliance system, he just went full ahead with the deployment of the THAAD system.

After that decision was announced, there was a strong backlash from Beijing. Actually, we had made that decision even in the face of strong opposition and the threat of massive retaliation against us from China. In the end, when we estimate the economy cost we have paid for the deployment of THAAD system, estimated that up to eight billion US dollars. In spite of that, President Moon, he will respect the decision that had been made under the previous government. After that, we have engaged in close coordination ... Not coordination. Close consultation with the Chinese. As a result of that consultation, we were able to announce the final outcome of the consultation in Beijing.

You just described sort of statement. There was no joint statement. We just made unilateral statement in Seoul and in Beijing. It's not a negotiation. It's just consultation since we believe the THAAD is not something that can be open to negotiation with Beijing. That is our sovereign issue. That is the matter between Korea and United States as an alliance. We just call it just final outcome of the consultation with Beijing. The city knows it's not something we pledge or we promise to Beijing. That is just a factual discretion of our existing policies. [inaudible 00:35:17] means South Korea is not considering considering additional THAAD deployment. South Korea is not going to join the US-led global missile defense system.

The last one is [inaudible 00:35:34] cooperation among Korea, Japan, and United States will not be developed into military alliance. That was said by our foreign minister when a member of the Korean National Assembly asked that question. That is not the promise we have made to China. The Chinese Foreign Ministry, they had made a mistake when they announced the statement. They used the word promise. They said South Korea promised [inaudible 00:36:07] to Beijing. We made a strong protest to Beijing so they'd retract. They changed the word from promise to declare. That part has caused some confusion in Washington.

I'm very happy to have a change to clear that misunderstanding today. The missile defense system, we have developed and upgraded our own missile defense system called KAMD. It stands for Korea Air Missile Defense System. We have upgraded our system in response to advancement in North Korea's missile program. In addition to that, we are now trying to increase interoperability with the American asset. Deployment of the THAAD system is part of our efforts to increase interoperability between our asset and the American asset. We believe that, as of now, as General Brooks indicated, we have enough capability to intersect any missiles coming out of North Korea. Thank you.

Moderator: Sue Mi Terry, you're Korea Chair at CSIS. You're MSNBC's newest contributor. Congratulations. You're in Washington. Do you get the sense that policymakers in Washington are concerned about the drift of South Korea in the last, let's say, year and a half?

Sue Mi Terry: I think there was concern, to be very honest, when the Moon administration came in just because of some of the things President Moon said as a candidate such as potentially reopening the [inaudible 00:37:49] Complex or not having THAAD deployment. I do think now there's a sense that President Moon is trying to balance all his interests, and that he is trying to be somewhat pragmatic. I do think President Moon is in a very difficult situation trying to now be an intermediary between North Korea, dealing with Kim Jong-un and the Trump administration. Again, as we talked about, there's China, there's all these competing interests. On China-US, honestly South Korea policy is a little bit of hedging policy. While you have a very good alliance commitment with United States, you also have to deal with China's interests. China is number one trading partner to South Korea. The trade volume between China and South Korea is double that of South Korea-Japan and South Korea-United States combined. You can understand the situation that South Korea is in.

To answer this question right now about how we see the Moon administration, President Moon played a very critical role in diplomacy. He's the one who opened the door for North Koreans to participate in [inaudible 00:38:54] which opened the door to diplomacy in [inaudible 00:38:56]. We'll see. I think alliance is strong for now. I am concerned for a number of things, not only because of the Moon administration but also because of, for example, what President Trump's approach is. Example, when President Trump unilaterally suspended joint exercises, US and South Korea joint exercises, in the aftermath of the summit with Kim Jong-un, that was unilateral. I don't think South Korea was consulted in that.

I am also not happy about the language that President Trump used to suspend the joint exercises. It's not the issue with suspending the joint exercises. That's fine. You can explain that. But he used the words that North Koreans used saying that they are too expensive, that they are war games, that they are provocative. This is the North Korean language. Also, President Trump has talked about in the past potentially withdrawing troops from South Korea. There are a number of concerns. If I'm very candid about it, there are a number of concerns that I have with alliance. No matter what, when we're trying to solve the North Korean crisis, one thing has to be done, which is US and South Korea alliance has to be strong. There has to be no daylight between Seoul and Washington when we deal with North Korea.

Moderator: That's an important point about daylight. Sue Mi Terry, when we look at, for instance, South Korea's policy towards the North, towards denuclearization, do you see that as being different from the Trump policy? Are either of those policies too optimistic?

Sue Mi Terry: I do think right now we're being optimistic because I don't see any signs that North Koreans have committed to denuclearization. We don't have a deal yet between United States and North Korea. We only have the Singapore declaration, which everybody knows is vague, is aspirational. They're talking about North Korea committed to working towards denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. We got more out of North Koreans in the past when North Korea agreed to unilaterally give up nuclear weapons. This is a very aspirational statement. That's all we have right now, to be very frank about it. Secretary Pompeo's third visit to Pyongyang did not go well. Kim Jong-un did not meet with him. He met with Secretary Pompeo in his two previous visits.

Right now, I don't think we even have agreement whether it's North Korea, South Korea, or United States on definition of denuclearization itself. Is it the Korean Peninsula how North Korea describes it, which always is talking about non-unilaterally dismantling their nuclear program like we want it. Complete verified dismantlement of their program. When North Korea says denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, they're talking about South Korea too. US-South Korea alliance commitment, US troops in South Korea, US nuclear umbrella that we have over South Korea and Japan. Do we even have an agreement on that? I don't think so. We don't have an agreement. We don't have a deal. We don't have a roadmap. We don't have a timeline. We don't have a declaration. Right now we have nothing.

Moderator: Suzanne DiMaggio, New America Foundation. I'm going to give you the very difficult task of following Sue Mi Terry. You were actually instrumental in getting Trump and North Korean officials together for the first time last year in Oslo. How do you see this whole process of denuclearization?

Suzanne DiMaggi: Let me first of all say what a pleasure it is to be here in Aspen. Thank you all for coming today. Let me begin with the positives. I do think that the approach President Trump has taken, a leader-to-leader summit, really focused on changing the fundamental character of the relationship with North Korea is an interesting one. It's one we haven't seen before. In that sense, I know it's unusual to have a summit first before tackling the basics. Given what we know about Chairman Kim and his personality and the top-down authoritarian system he heads, I think it's worth trying. On that effort, I say yay to diplomacy and we have to give it all we got.

However, and on this point I do think that we did go into the summit without proper preparation. We are seeing some of the problems emerging from that lack of preparation. For example, I would describe the state that we're in now is actually a pre-negotiation state. By that I mean, there are some fundamentals, some essentials, to negotiation, particularly with an adversary where there is zero trust, that are missing. I would beg to differ a bit with Admiral Brooks. I do not think the bilateral channels between Washington and Pyongyang are very solid. We have seen instances where we've had a set meeting with the North Koreans and they haven't shown up. My understanding is the New York channel,

which are the North Korean diplomats based at the UN, don't always pick up the phone yet. These channels are essential to moving the diplomat role forward. They're not there yet.

Second, I don't think the messaging on the US side is going well. On the one hand, you hear President Trump say it was a great summit. We had great chemistry and North Korea is no longer a nuclear threat. I just don't see it that way. On the other hand, you have National Security Advisor Bolton saying we expect to denuclearize North Korea within a year. As we heard DNI Coats say on this very stage, he doesn't think that's going to be the case. We need to get the messaging right too.

Moderator: Just quickly, General Brooks talked about building of trust as a part of this process. Do you think that we're actually making any progress in that regard?

Suzanne DiMaggi: I don't see any substantial progress. Next week we're supposed to get the first remains back if all goes according to plan. That would be a major step forward. That would be a signal things are moving ahead. We have to understand, this is going to be a long, arduous, slog. It's going to take years, in my estimation. It's not going to happen in one year or even two. When I hear President Trump say suddenly this is a process, I think that's helpful. However, when he says we're in no rush. I don't think that's helpful. I think by saying North Korea is no longer a nuclear threat, that we're not in any hurry, it actually undercuts the leverage of our negotiators.

The problems that I'm laying out ... Sue Mi pointed to a very big problems in my estimation. We're not coordinating well enough with our allies yet and with the other major players. She covered the alliance part, but we're also not coordinating well with China on the maximum pressure part. Just this past weekend, these past few days, we saw the US attempt to bring to the UN Security Council, Secretary Pompeo and Ambassador Haley, a discussion on these refined petroleum exports that are going into North Korea. How are they getting there? People are loosening up on the sanctions, so we're losing that leverage too.

These aren't insurmountable problems but, I think, in order to move forward, we have to have an honest discussion. We're probably in a pre-negotiation stage. We need to get all these things in order. We need to have a discussion with the North Koreans and come to an agreement. What does denuclearization mean? What is the format? What is the timeline? What is the sequencing? We haven't done that yet. These are the immediate things that need to be tackled.

Moderator: Michael McCaul, you're the Chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee. We heard General Brooks talk about sanctions and how we're keeping the pressure on. Yet, there are these indications that we haven't done that. As you know, Secretary of State Pompeo went to the UN Security Council. He doesn't seem to have gotten a terribly warm reception. In terms of the

position of the House, clearly you're in a position of being able to deliver maybe remedies, or at least pushing the administration along. Where do you see the sanctions enforcement campaign going?

Michael McCaul: Let me say first it's great to be at Aspen. I get the worldwide threat briefings. There's probably no greater threat to the homeland than North Korea. With their ICBM capability being able to reach mainland United States attacking the region. We take this very seriously. Secretary Mattis told me that we want to apply maximum pressure so the diplomats can do their job. I couldn't agree more. Nobody wants war, but I think the maximum pressure campaign, both the sanctions that, by the way, Congress passed as well in 2016, naming after Otto Warmbier, who is the American student who was killed at the hands of the North Koreans. That put so much pressure on Kim Jong-un that he finally came to the table.

I would agree with the comments made here. This is not the time to be putting the brakes on maximum pressure. This is a time to be putting the accelerator on. When a nuclear power has it, when they're in the club, it's very difficult to take it away. Pakistan is a good example. ATCOM proliferated, Tehran, North Korea. North Korea helped build Syria's reactor that the Israelis took out. It's not going to be an easy thing to do. With respect to the sanctions, and we saw Secretary Pompeo talk about this today, and he's very frustrated as Ambassador Nikki Haley is as well. China and Russia agreed to nine of these resolutions that apply the sanctions, albeit a little bit watered down.

Now we're seeing through satellite imagery clear and convincing evidence that they are violating these sanctions. As you mentioned, 90% of this going to and from China. The Russians are violating it as well. What I've seen since Singapore is actually a ... It's not maximum pressure, but rather a loosening of the sanctions in terms of enforcement. The sanctions are there. Congress passed the sanctions. The administration has to put the pressure on China and Russia and the United Nations to enforce these sanctions. Otherwise, Kim Jong-un will never give up the most valuable thing he has that he thinks is self-preservation. I would argue it will be his peril and that is a nuclear North Korea.

Moderator: Yeah. Clearly, the nucs did not save the Soviet Union. I'd like to get to questions, but just in a moment. Mr. Lim, South Korea has been having these discussion with North Korea about inter-Korean relations and cooperation projects. Wouldn't that undercut President Trump's sanctions campaign?

Woongsoon Lim: We believe that our inter-Korean talks and denuclearization talks are like two wheels of the bicycle. As long as we are moving at almost the same speed, then they can be mutually important to each other. According to President Trump's approach to denuclearize North Korea, we believe that it's going to empower President Trump in his effort to engage North Korea on the diplomatic path to denuclearization. We are now trying to improve inter-Korean relations within the frame of international sanction regime. We are not undermining the

sanction regime. To a certain extent, [inaudible 00:51:11] is like restoration of the military hotline, military communication line between south and north. The other project we are now working on is the reunion of the [inaudible 00:51:23]. They have nothing to do with undermining the sanction regime.

Moderator: There's a question in the back, at least I saw one. Okay, then you.

Jamie: Thank you. Jamie [inaudible 00:51:39] from CNN. I'm based in Hong Kong, so we've been really watching the North Korea story for at least the last year or so, for me anyway. Everyone that I speak to has said that North Korea will never give up its weapons. There's no indication that they ever would. Their endgame is that they want to be a member of the nuclear club. That immediately puts them at odds with anything that the international community led by the US would want them to do. When we talk about denuclearization, exactly as you say, Sue Mi, it could be anything and everything.

There's also the argument that all of the sanctions are only becoming effective now. The reason that North Korea has begun to engage is because it's done everything it wants to in terms of its nuclear testing. How do we ... Literally, even after all of this talk and all this dialogue and all these wonderful concessions and the movement and everything that North Korea is making, it could sit and do the human remains swap for years and years and years. It is not in their interest for them to have to disarm or dismantle or anything. The long game for them is inclusion into the nuclear club. Will they ever, and if not, does this mean that we are going to be in this perennial sort of mutual deterrents ad infinitum? Thank you.

Moderator: Mr. Chairman, I know that you've thought long and hard about sanctions because sanctions could be the way to get the North Koreans to give up their weapons. If you could respond to that question about how we do that.

Michael McCaul: Yes. Excellent question. You have to look at the Kim dynasty. It's been one of deception for three prior administrations, three prior presidents. Are they operating in good faith? I [inaudible 00:53:34] eternal optimist. In this case, I have a healthy amount of skepticism. In the past, we've always given them concessions, whether it be sanction relief, and then they roll us at the negotiation table and continue their nuclear program. They lost a non-nuclear proliferation treaty because they were in violation of it. The history is not very good here. I agree with the comments about what does denuclearization really mean? The North Koreans do view it as, you get out of our peninsula, Americans.

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Michael McCaul: View it as, you get out of our peninsula, American's, and your nuclear capability. We view it as, Kim Jung-un, you dismantle your nuclear capabilities. They did stop their missile testing, that's positive. Yeah, the inspection of that one site is

a little bit deceptive as well, because they detonated the equivalent of a high energy bomb which imploded the whole facility. And then they let the reporters in as they closed down the tunnels. What you have to, and I'm sure you know this, it's a complete underground network and what we can see by satellite in terms of what China and Russia are doing, so much of it we're blind to. We can't see what they are doing underground, in these tunnels and their nuclear site.

So I think, at the end of the day, no power wants to give it up unless they feel that self preservation is at risk. So it's a combination of the sanctions, because he does want a more vibrant economic vitality. But I think at the end of the day he has to feel the heat and the threat of the military option on the table. I think that's what got his attention and without that I don't think he will ever give it up.

Gordon Chang: Just a couple comments on this. If we go after the sanctions busters, Russia and China, go after their big four banks, which have all been handling money for North Korea, put them out of business. That would make a big impression. Not only on [inaudible 00:55:28] but it would also make an impression on Kim Jung Un, that for the first time an America administration was really serious about stopping the flow of money to North Korea.

There's a question right behind you.

Pamela Brown: Thank you, Gordon. Thanks to the panel, Pamela Brown from Fox News. Quick question for anyone who would like to comment. On the tracking of Iranian scientists in North Korea, in helping North Korea build their program, perhaps via A.Q. Khan's network from Pakistan, any insight on movement of scientists, in or out of North Korea? Thank you?

Michael McCaul: There's a clear connection and it goes back to China and A.Q. Khan, Pakistan to Iran and North Korea giving Iran, Iran's watching this whole thing play out by the way, in terms of their calculations. And then North Korea helping Syria out. What I worry about, too, is a black market here. Because they're going to do anything for money. And if they got nuclear materials they can proliferate to chemical and biological weapons. If they're helping out Libia and Syria and people, rogue nations, and people in the middle east that aren't our friends, that is a real threat long term. And that's why we have to stop them, I think Gordon's point was very interesting and that is these Chinese banks. If we can sanction these banks and it'd be very proactive and it would come at a price to the United States as well. But that would shut down China's trade, I think, with North Korea and get them to the table to put the maximum pressure.

Suzanne DiMaggi: On this point, on Iran, we do know that there was active cooperation on missiles dating back to the Iran/Iraq war. North Korean's were the only ones that would help the Iranians during that period, but as far as I know and talking to experts there's been no evidence that there's been cooperation on the nuclear program. But this gets to the other questioner, is denuclearization ever going to happen?

We just don't know. What I would suggest is we set it as our end goal, but there are many things we can do in between to deescalate and make this a safer place. This is an example. The North Korean's in track 2 settings, have consistently said that they would be willing and open to provide assurances that they not transfer nuclear material, nuclear weapons, even biological and chemical weapons. These are the sorts of agreements we can pursue on the way to denuclearization, in fact, we could see it as part of a process. A series of agreements. This is what we should be doing.

Gordon Chang: Over here and over here. And while we are waiting for the microphone to get here I should point out that Pamela Brown knows more about Iranian scientists travel plans between China and North Korea than anybody that I know. So thanks very much for the question Pam. Yes, ma'am?

Allison Peters: Hi, I'm Allison Peters with the think tank third way in Washington D.C. The issue of the halted military exercises with South Korea was brought up in the language that was used around that announcement. So Congressman McCaul, I'm just wondering if you can weigh in, in terms of your position on that announcement and whether or not you supported the administration in halting the exercises.

Michael McCaul: And I think your comments are correct, that it mimics what the North Korean's say and I don't think it was very astute or helpful. However, I think it's helping bring them to the table. What I worry the most, about it, and what I've talked about previously is under three prior administrations, making concessions and then not getting what we want. I don't think we ought to be making, really, any concessions until they really start moving forward in a very strong, concrete positive way towards denuclearization, which I interpret to mean they dismantle their nuclear capability.

They're not going to do it without maximum pressure, without the threat of the economic sanctions, which are not being enforced, or the idea that our military, as a last option, could hit what is the biggest threat to the homeland. I would not want to see that happen and General Mattis said that would be catastrophic. And I don't think anybody wants that, it would light up the entire peninsula. But if he has a fear factor that we're even contemplating it, and I know the fire and fury language is extremely controversial, but you know what? It got attention.

Gordon Chang: [Andre Longcoft 00:59:57] who is, perhaps, the worlds leading expert on North Korea and I'm jealous because people call him that. But he has said that towards the end of last year the fire and fury language changed the foreign policies of South Korea, North Korea and China, because they were afraid of war and that's what brought everyone to the table. Yes, sir? If you can give the microphone to-
?

Tom Barren: Thank you. Tom Barren, Business Executives of National Security. Looking forward a good number of years, I'm puzzled about whether if you compare our situation here with our nuclear power and projection capabilities to our situation with Iran and the nuclear deal where they don't have those capabilities, where the deal was 15 years. Is it possible that we would consider it a reasonable solution if we ended up with an intermediate term deal, like this, with North Korea?

Gordon Chang: Sue Mi, that has your name written all over it.

Sue Mi Terry: I think it is possible and I think, frankly, that's a concern maybe South Korea and Japan has, actually, that U.S. would conclude a deal with North Korea, that deals with intercontinental [inaudible 01:01:20] missiles, because they are the threat to main land united states, but we don't really make a deal with all other nuclear weapons program, so that's the concern. That it's a partial deal. That it's not completely verified for irreversible dismantlement of all their nuclear and missile program. And so that partial deal, maybe some people think it's a good thing, but I would say that Japan and part of South Korea would say it's not a good deal because their threats are not taken care of.

I just want to quickly respond to the first question because it's kind of linked, about whether North Korea will truly get there. I'm highly, highly doubtful. I mean, I don't want to be such a pessimist about it, but there are not many nuclear weapons power and North Korea is a nuclear weapons power. They have up to 60 nuclear warheads, right? Give up nuclear weapons, maybe Ukraine, South Africa, but those, when they do that, it's usually by regime change or some sort of. It's not that a regime just gives up nuclear weapons program.

So I think North Korea's long game here is to draw this out. They want to be internationally accepted as a nuclear weapons power, like India, like Pakistan. But they will drag this out, but giving a little bit is like cutting the salami very, very thin and giving what looks like a concession, returning U.S. service men, maybe dismantling a test weapon's engine site that's no longer, it's kind of an obsolete. That looks like we're making a progress and their ultimate goal is to be accepted as a nuclear weapons power.

Gordon Chang: Right. Suzanne-

Suzanne DiMaggi: On the Iran Deal-

Gordon Chang: You're on the edge of your chair, I know you're dying to answer this question.

Suzanne DiMaggi: Let me just say, first of all there are two different cases. So Iran has never had nuclear weapons and we know North Korea has this capability. What was so short sided about us breaking this deal, even though it's a different animal than we're looking for with the North Korean's, is the verification requirements in the

Iran deal. If we could get anything that approaches that with North Korea, I think we would have a national day devoted to it. It was the most extension verification monitoring system that we have ever seen. IA, EA access still has 24/7 access to sites.

So I think its regrettable that we walked away from that deal, because actually, if I was a U.S. negotiator with North Korea, I would drop this 160 page agreement on the table and tell them this verification process is our model. This is our precedent, this is how we're moving forward now and this is what we expect of you. We can no longer do that and I think that's a shame.

Gordon Chang: Mister Chairman?

Michael McCaul: You know, Mike [Pompei 01:04:03], when he was my colleague we were some of the biggest critics, and I sit on the foreign affairs committee as well, because it didn't have the inspection capabilities we wanted and that was military sites. Any time, anywhere, it did not control ICBM capability, which the Ayatollah said he's ramping up as he cries out death to America and Israel and it didn't have any, the sunset provisions were a problem. I met with the E3, the ambassadors from France, Germany and the UK. I think they were getting very close to amending the JCPOA to include the ICBM and the inspections, it was a sunset clause issue that I think derailed it and maybe there's still hope to preserve it.

But to your question, I think, I would argue that it would send a message to North Korea that we're not going to settle for just any deal, as the Obama administration was so desperate to get, that we're willing to walk away from the table unless we get a good deal.

Gordon Chang: Question over here.

Marshall W.: Hi, good afternoon, Marshal Woodhead from [Equinor 01:05:06], a question as it relates to cyber and perhaps for Mister Chairman, how much tolerance is the U.S. going to have when it comes to continued bad North Korean behavior in cyber space, particularly if it proves, that actually, this is a very 21st century way of avoiding sanctions?

Michael McCaul: So China, Russian, North Korea, Iran getting very good at cyber capabilities. China is stealing 20 million security clearances, we know what Russia did in our elections. Iran's hitting our financial institutions now after we pulled out of the JCPOA and then North Korea, a highly destructive attack on Sony Pictures. Just degrading Sony Pictures and what was the response? Nothing. They got away with it. They stole 80 million dollars out of a Bangladesh account in cyber space. They're getting very good at cyber operations. So it's a combination of their nuclear threat, their cyber threat and their threats on the black market, for lack of a better word and proliferation of all these tools getting in the wrong hands. God forbid, the terrorists get that stuff. So, this, I think to your point, so

insightful. As we negotiate this agreement we need to include all these elements in there.

Suzanne DiMaggi:

Yes.

Gordon Chang:

I have a question for Mister Lim, just to change focus a little bit. We've been talking about threats and obviously that's really important, but also there's the issue of human rights, because we just heard about the Otto Warmbier legislation. There's concerns that South Korea has not been as forth right as it might be on North Korea human rights. If you could just walk us through Seoul's position on this.

Woongsoon Lim:

Well, a human life situation with North Korea is a great concern of our government and our National Assembly, there was a past legislation on North Korea of human rights bill, like the U.S congress did 8,000 years ago. But we cannot deal with all issues at once. We need sometimes prioritize the issues of the day. For now we believe that it's time for us to focus on denuclearization, it does not mean that we need to turn a blind eye to North Korea human rights situation. But there may be right time for all of us to raise that issue and on another front sometimes, when it comes to human rights diplomacy, [inaudible 01:07:51] diplomacy's not that effective. Maybe raising that issue in a back channel in a polite manner, we can induce more cooperation from the North Korea government on this issue.

Gordon Chang:

Sue Mi, I know that human rights is very close to your heart. How do you see this as effecting U.S. relations with North Korea, the human rights issues?

Sue Mi Terry:

Well, it's absolutely a big concern and I'm glad that President Trump, I think yesterday, just reauthorized the 2004 North Korea human rights act, which is very important. It's not the United States saying that North Korea is a human rights violator, United Nation's commission of inquiry came out a couple years ago with a 400 page report talking about North Korea's human rights abuses are like crimes against humanity. It names Kim Jung-un himself, by name, saying he's a man who commits crime against humanity.

Human rights situation in North Korea we know is atrocious, they have political prison camps, they are separate from regular penal system that keeps hundreds of thousands of people for disloyalty against the regime. And I think as we just talked about, if you're going to involve, eventually, at least we were talking about normalization or peace treaty, where as having a greater relationship with North Korea. We cannot ignore human rights, it has to be part of it. So we've been only too focused on the nuclear missile crisis and we understand why and we talk about it, but beyond nuclear weapons missile program and chemical and biological and cyber, everything else, I think human rights have to be a component.

All this time I think we had separate track on trying to deal with nuclear crisis and human rights, but I think it has to be, all of it has to be integrated into a larger policy solution when we are dealing with North Korea. And I'll just end by saying I do think right now we need to have a human rights envoy, that position has not been filled.

Suzanne DiMaggi: Yes.

Gordon Chang: That's a good idea. Yes, ma'am?

Courtney Kube: Hi, Courtney Kube with NBC news. I wanted to get you to respond to something General Brooks said, I think it was Libby 370's question, actually, his response to that about North Korea still having their production capability, do any of you think that in this time they haven't been testing a missile that they've just been in a production phase and they've been making more missiles, but haven't actually been testing them? And then second, on the unilateral suspension of the joint exercise, and this might be a good question for you, Sue Mi Terry, do you think that the fact the President used the language very provocative and then the pentagon weighed in and called them war games, means that the U.S. can never actually turn those exercises back on? Are they now actually provocative war games if the U.S. and South Korea have these exercises again, like in the spring?

Gordon Chang: I'm very glad you raised that, because we ran out of time and I wanted to ask the question of readiness about the "war games." Who up here is going to handle those hot potatoes? Suzanne.

Suzanne DiMaggi: I'll handle the first part of the question. I think we should assume that the North Korean's are continuing to advance both the nuclear and missile program. I mean there are ways to make technical advances in these programs without testing. And don't forget in Kim Jung-un's New Year's Address, which is his big speech that sets the year going forward, he specifically said that he would continue to advance the program's strength and expand it.

So this is a important factor in terms of how we're expanding conducting diplomacy with North Korea. We're getting fixated on denuclearization to a point that I think it's clouding other issues. This is something we can address earlier and that is negotiations to, first of all, codify the testing suspension, send in some inspectors to confirm that. Also this test site that the destroyed, but then moving on to what I'd call the real meat on the bones, getting inspectors in there to take stock of the current program. But also, to put in place an agreement that stops the advancement of future capability of the current program. That should be a priority for us going into these negotiations.

Sue Mi Terry: And just, can I follow up with Suzanne or?

Gordon Chang: Very quickly we're-

Sue Mi Terry: No. Go ahead, go ahead. Ask your question.

Gordon Chang: What I want to do is, there's one other question from Twitter that I want to put to the entire panel.

Sue Mi Terry: Okay.

Gordon Chang: This is from someone in China, who's English, who's Chinese characters would translate as destroying Fatty the Third. This is a reference that in China, Kim Jung-un is known as Fatty the Third, or Kim Fat Fat Fat.

So, going back to this guy, destroying three fats-

Suzanne DiMaggi: [Crosstalk 01:12:33]

Michael McCaul: I don't know. It's Twitter.

Gordon Chang: Twitter, sorry. He writes, "I'm Chinese, living in Beijing, everyone in China knows that we are aiding and financing NK nukes and its ICBM is almost perfect. Do you believe Kim will be denuked without war?" Panelists get one minute a piece to answer that question, we start with Suzanne.

Suzanne DiMaggi: The simple answer is we do not know. It's an end goal we should not walk away from, we should keep it, we should set it, we should work towards it, we should constantly test them. As I've said there are many other goals we can accomplish along the way from non-proliferation, cyber advancement of their program, so forth.

Michael McCaul: Well we just passed the largest defense appropriations since World War II. So you talk about readiness. I think it's important that we show our strengths to achieve peace in the region. I'll tell you their capabilities are probably more than you think. I think you quoted the number 60? That's the estimates that I get and these are very dangerous ICBM missiles and I don't think their testing has stopped. Because so much of it underground that we cannot see from the satellites and we have limited assets on the ground. Although, the DNI talked about some human assets within. I don't know about calling him nicknames, the President's done a pretty good job of that. But I do think from a psychological behavioral profile, he's killed his own family, he kills his own people. The biggest human rights violations we've ever seen, but I also see a weakness within that I think we can exploit to take steps towards taking nuclear weapons away.

Gordon Chang: I'll take that as a yes.

Michael McCaul: I'm the eternal optimist.

Gordon Chang: Okay, great. Sue Mi Terry.

Sue Mi Terry: I think it's very, very, very, very, very unlikely. But I don't believe in any kind of preventive strike or military option being used on North Korea. It's one thing to say it rhetorically and to say so all options are on the table, I don't believe that. But it's also false to say the only options that we have with dealing with North Korea is this false hope. I'm not saying we shouldn't go through engagement of dialogue, but we got to be very realistic about what North Korea is doing or not doing, or preventive strike.

There's also deterrents, detainment, alliance relationship, missile defense. There's a whole lot of things that we can do to deal with North Korea. So I think, I sort of, I reject that you either have to be just very hopeful and just pretend that North Korea great nuclear threat is no more or there's this war. Those are not the only two options we have here.

Gordon Chang: DC Lim. You've had a tough time today-

Woongsoon Lim: Yeah.

Gordon Chang: So I'll give you a last one.

Woongsoon Lim: Yes, I can sense very strong skepticism and pessimism prevailing in this room. I know that North Korea has a track recorded of not abiding by the agreement they have made with international community and I know that we should not repeat the past mistakes we have made. But at the same time we should not be constrained by our past experience, otherwise we cannot make a breakthrough.

And we have employed all methods for the last several decades. And we have used all conventional and orthodox methods, but they have not worked well. And the only remaining option is the dialogue engagement at the summit level, between United States and North Korea and that's exactly what President Trump did. And we South Korean's strongly support the initiative taken by President Trump. And we believe that, well Chairman Kim Jung-un, he maybe very sensitive about denuclearization this time. And I hope that we can give diplomacy a chance until proven otherwise. And we need patience and we need persistence and we need pragmatism, and as long as those [inaudible 01:16:57] prevails, the chances of making a diplomatic breakthrough will get diminished.

Gordon Chang: Okay, thank you. Optimism from Seoul, but not all the wisdom in this room is up here. I'd love to hear what you guys think, can we disarm North Korea without war? Those who say no, please raise your hands. Oh, this surprises me.

And those who say yes? Wow, very good. May we all live in peace, we've run out of time. There's so many more things to talk about, but maybe some other time. First of all, I want you to give yourself a hearty round of applause, because you've been a terrific audience. I'd also like you to thank the fantastic four. There's also Superman Clark and as well, other superheroes, you've got Rob Walker, you've got John Hogan and the great staff of the Aspen institute.

PART 3 OF 3 ENDS [01:18:08]