

The Amateur Computerist

<http://www.ais.org/~jrh/acn/>

Summer 2019

Upholding the Singapore Kim-Trump Statement

Volume 32 No. 1

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Introduction

Something very special began to develop on the Korean Peninsula. From January 1, 2018 through January 2019, a different spirit and practice dominated the activities on the Korean Peninsula. This issue of

the *Amateur Computerist* is an effort to document this important development in order to see if there are lessons that can be identified. We want to strengthen and continue the important precedent of successfully working for peace that the DPRK, the ROK and the U.S. succeeded in establishing.

The Singapore U.S.-DPRK Summit held on June 12, 2018 demonstrated this spirit and practice when it ended with the agreement by the U.S. and the DPRK to the following main principles:

1. To establish new U.S.-DPRK relations.
2. To build a lasting and stable peace regime on the Korean Peninsula.
3. To work toward the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

In a letter sent to the UN Security Council by 55 NGOs concerned with building a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula, the civic organizations pointed to the important insight revealed by the recent peace activities:¹

In Korea, we have recently witnessed that peace can be built through peaceful means and problems can be solved through dialogue and negotiation.

Their conclusion is that, “Denuclearization as a peace process’ must be observed as a principle.”

But then, an ill wind was introduced by U.S. negotiators at the Hanoi U.S.-DPRK Summit held on February 27-28, 2019.

In place of the three principles the U.S. had formerly agreed to, the U.S. insisted on a Libyan- style denuclearization putting the third principle of the Singapore Summit in the primary position and requiring the DPRK to subordinate the other two principles to the principle of denuclearization. This action by the U.S. represented a near abrogation of the agreement the two nations had reached at the Singapore summit.

The letter from the 55 civic groups sent to the UN Security Council explained the problem with this change:

For the countries who have been enemies to each other for almost 70 years, it is not easy at all to trust and begin to have open talks with each other. This is why it is neither realistic nor appropriate for the U.S. to demand that

the DPRK completely denuclearize at once. The DPRK needs to consider the fact that deep-rooted mistrust is also alive despite her stated willingness to denuclearize.

This issue of the *Amateur Computerist* presents a collection including the documents quoted above and articles that appeared on the netizenblog at taz.de during this period of peaceful negotiations. The articles document several of the different steps taken by the various parties which contributed to the peace process during this brief period from January 1, 2018 through January 2019. It is hoped that a review of these articles and the situation they document, will contribute to a strengthened determination and set of insights to provide a foundation for further peace-generating actions.

This issue begins with the presentation made to the *2019 Prep-Com for the 2020 NPT Review Conference* meeting at the UN in New York on May 1, 2019 by two NGOs, Peoples Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD) and International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR). Sooyoung Hwang of PSPD presented the statement on behalf of the two NGOs.²

Also in the issue is the letter sent by 55 Civil Society groups to the UN Security Council in April 2019, shortly after the failure of the Hanoi U.S.- DPRK Summit which took place February 27-28, 2019.

The presentation by the two NGOs which is included in this issue represents an effort to draw the lessons that they propose are needed to be able to contribute to a continuation of the “the most peaceful time ever since the signing of the Korean War Armistice Agreement in 1953.”

Expressing their disappointment “that the second U.S.-DPRK Summit ended without any agreement in Hanoi this February,” the two NGOs propose that “the two parties recall and recommit to the original goals and general approach they had agreed to in the Singapore Summit.”

They argue that the “big deal” denuclearization that the U.S. was requiring at the Hanoi Summit, “would be like building a shining castle on sands,” as it would have failed to build the further confidences and security guarantees needed given the long history of distrust and

threats that make up the past 70 years of conflict between the two parties. As such the NGOs claim such a “quick deal will not last long.”

Discussion of such issues is needed at the UN. The UN Security Council would do well to consider both the Letter from the 55 NGOs and the Statement by PSPD and IFOR to the UN *2019 PrepCom for the 2020 NPT Review Conference* as important input to how they determine what actions on their part can help to restore and maintain peace on the Korean Peninsula.

Notes

1. Open Letter to the UN Security Council Members, p. 5 this issue.
 2. Sooyoung Hwang on behalf of People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD) and John Kim NGO Representative, UN Headquarters, International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR). See below.
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[Editor’s Note: The following statement by People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD) and International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) was delivered at the UN Headquarters in NYC on May 1, 2019 to the *2019 PrepCom for the 2020 NPT Review Conference*. It is online at: <https://www.peoplepower21.org/English/1628437>.]

End the Korean War and Move Towards Nuclear-Weapon-Free Northeast Asia

by Sooyoung Hwang, PSPD

Mr. Chair, delegates and civil society colleagues!

Thank you for this opportunity to speak at this conference.

1. Our key message here is that the Korean people, whether they live in the South or North, want to end the long, costly Korean War, the last

remaining vestige of the Cold War, and to move toward a nuclear-weapon-free Northeast Asia. We sincerely believe that the Korean Peninsula represents the best hope and opportunity at this time, in terms of promoting the international community's desire to create a world without nuclear weapons. Thus, we appeal to the UN community to help the Korean people to establish a permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula. Securing peace first will be also the best way to bring about a peaceful denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

2. In 2018, there were significant, positive changes in the security situation on the Korean Peninsula. The leaders of the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) held their historic summit in Singapore last June. They issued an important Joint Statement, which outlined their joint goals to be achieved in the future talks, including "establishing new U.S.-DPRK relations," "building a lasting and stable peace regime on the Korean Peninsula," and "to work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula." In the same Statement, President Trump and Chairman Kim also recognized the general approach to realizing a nuclear-weapon-free Korea by stating that "mutual confidence-building can promote the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula." Moreover, the two countries are now observing an informal "freeze for freeze" deal in which the DPRK stopped its nuclear weapon and ballistic missile tests, while the U.S. ended its large-scale joint war drills with ROK.

3. Likewise, there was also a remarkable reduction in military tensions between the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the DPRK. Through the three inter-Korean Summits last year, the two governments of Korea have ceased all hostile activities against each other and shared the view that the Korean Peninsula must be turned into "a land of peace free from nuclear weapons and nuclear threats." Thus, the Korean people are enjoying at present the most peaceful time ever since the signing of the Korean War Armistice Agreement in 1953. We have witnessed that "peace can be achieved through peaceful means" and that problems can be solved through dialogue and negotiation. Under no circumstances

can we return to the past, which was riddled with heightened military tension and repeated threats of nuclear war.

4. However, it is certainly disappointing that the second U.S.-DPRK Summit ended without any agreement in Hanoi this February. We urge both governments to continue their talks to find a new path forward. In this regard, we believe it is critical that the two parties recall and re-commit to the original goals and general approach they had agreed in the Singapore Summit. The general approach already agreed requires building “mutual confidence” between the U.S. and DPRK first. To aim for a “big deal” on denuclearization of the DPRK at this time, without building further confidences and security guarantees between the two long running adversaries, would be like building a shining castle on sands. Such a quick deal will not last long.

5. The nuclear conflict on the Korean Peninsula is inherent in the long-standing, unstable armistice regime on the Korean Peninsula. In order to induce the DPRK to give up its nuclear weapons, it is essential for the U.S. and the international community to understand that the DPRK’s missile and nuclear development program stems from the decades-long military conflict and arms race on the Korean Peninsula. Moreover, the nuclear issue in Korea is deeply related to the fact that the neighboring countries of Korea have continued to strengthen their military reliance on nuclear weapons ever since the horrendous fighting in Korea was halted with a ceasefire agreement. This is why the process of denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula must go hand-in-hand with the building of a permanent peace in Korea, including the establishment of diplomatic relations between the DPRK and the U.S., along with efforts to fundamentally eradicate any source of nuclear threats surrounding the Peninsula.

6. Indeed, it will be very difficult to address the nuclear issue in Korea by solely focusing on the “denuclearization of the DPRK” as the starting point for negotiations in any future talks between the U.S. and the DPRK or between the two Koreas. We urge all the concerned countries in Korea to adjust their demands and expectations, aim for smaller

deals, and build the momentum by implementing such deals in a phased and simultaneous manner. Once mutual trust is built, more difficult issues can be resolved and bigger deals can be agreed to.

7. Furthermore, it is also critical to recognize that the nuclear issue of the DPRK cannot be resolved by sanctions and pressure only. It is about time for the U.S. and the UN to take active steps to lift some of their harsh sanctions imposed on the DPRK, not only as an incentive for the DPRK to take further steps for giving up its nuclear weapon program, but also to stop a growing danger that the draconian U.S. and UN economic sanctions may have undermined the general health and welfare of the DPRK people in general. The UN agencies have already reported that about 40% of the DPRK population is “undernourished” (see Paragraph 24, SCR 2397). In fact, some of the tough UN sanctions, such as prohibiting any export of the DPRK’s seafood, agricultural products, textiles or minerals may well violate the UN Charter, as well as the international human rights and humanitarian law.

8. In addition, these draconian economic sanctions are creating huge obstacles to the implementation of the inter-Korean agreements as well as inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation in general. A good example of this problem is seen in the inability of the ROK government to connect its transportation system with the DPRK. In this regard, it is to be noted that the latest resolutions of the UN Security Council emphasized the concerned parties’ commitment to “a peaceful, diplomatic, and political solution to the situation” and that economic sanctions were “not intended to have adverse humanitarian consequences for the civilian population of the DPRK or to affect negatively or restrict those activities, including economic activities and cooperation, food aid and humanitarian assistance...”. (e.g. SCR 2375 and 2397)

9. Finally, we would like to discuss our understanding of the meaning of the “denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.” The kind of complete denuclearization that the Korean people want to achieve in Korea is a state where all nuclear threats surrounding the Korean Peninsula are removed. This cannot be achieved by a “CVID of the DPRK” alone. It

is also necessary for the U.S., ROK, and Japan to drop their “extended nuclear deterrence” policy on which they base their military strategy in Northeast Asia. This is the only way for a nuclear-weapon-free Korean Peninsula can also serve as a stepping stone toward the creation of a Northeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.

10. In this regard, it is very disturbing that the U.S. administration’s 2018 Nuclear Posture Review has reaffirmed its commitment “to maintain a credible nuclear umbrella extended to over thirty allies and partners” as well as to modernize its nuclear weapons and their infrastructure. Moreover, the U.S. is continuing its rejection of the “no first use” policy, as well as its refusal to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). These regretful measures show that the U.S. is not in compliance with its legal obligations under the NPT’s Article 6 to “pursue negotiations in good faith” for nuclear disarmament in the world. And these negative policies will also hinder the process of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

11. Ladies and gentlemen, the time has come to end the Korean War fully with a peace agreement and thereby take a step closer to a nuclear-weapon-free Northeast Asia. We would like to urge all the participants in this conference to support our sincere appeal for ending officially the costly war on the Korean Peninsula now. Such a development will be a big step forward for the two States of Korea to join the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty (TPNW) in the near future.

Thank you.

Endorsed by the following civil society groups:

Abolition 2000 working group on Nuclear Weapon Free Zones
American Friends Service Committee
Article 9 Canada
Atisha Dipankar Peace Trust Bangladesh
Basel Peace Office
Campaign for Peace Disarmament and Common Security
Channing and Popai Liem Education Foundation
Church of What’s Happenin’ Now

Environmentalists Against War
Hawaii Peace and Justice
Human Survival Project
International Peace Bureau
Kaua`i Alliance for Peace and Social Justice
Korea Peace & Unification Action of Boston
Korea Peace Network
Korean Quarterly
MA Korea Peace Campaign
Mālama Mākua
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Massachusetts Peace Action
Maui Peace Action
Nuclear Age Peace Foundation
Oceania Rising
One Corea Now
Pacific Earth Institute
Pax Christi International
Peace Action
Peace Boat
Peace Depot
Peace Philosophy Centre
Peaceworkers
People for Nuclear Disarmament
RootsAction
Veterans For Peace
War Prevention Initiative
Western States Legal Foundation
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
World BEYOND War
World Can't Wait Hawaii
World Future Council

[Editor's Note: On March 21, 2019 55 South Korean civil society organizations sent the following letter to the UN Security Council. They sent this open letter to raise their concerns on the deadlock between the DPRK and the U.S. after the last summit in Vietnam. They appealed to the Members of the UN Security Council, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718, and the international community to ensure that the peace process on the Korean Peninsula is firmly sustained. The letter can be accessed online at: <http://www.peoplepower21.org/English/1619256>.]

Open Letter to the UN Security Council Members

The Peace Process on the Korean Peninsula must Go on

We are 55 civil society organizations that act for peace on the Korean Peninsula. Since the last summit in Vietnam between the DPRK and the U.S. ended without result, concerns have been raised that the deadlock between the two countries will be prolonged. We wish to make it clear that there must be no further action to aggravate the situation. We appeal to the Members of the UN Security Council, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718, and the international community to ensure that the peace process on the Korean Peninsula is firmly sustained.

We request the Members of the UN Security Council to publicly announce in support of the following: the reopening of the DPRK-U.S. dialogue; the lifting all the sanctions related to humanitarian assistance; and the starting of negotiations to build a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula.

We also request the 1718 Committee to lift all the sanctions against humanitarian support to the DPRK.

The dialogue between the DPRK and the U.S. must continue

The second DPRK-U.S. summit clearly showed that removing tensions from the Korean Peninsula, where the Cold War still runs, is not an easy task. For the countries who have been enemies of each other for almost 70 years, it is not easy at all to trust and begin to have open talks with each other. This is why it is neither realistic nor appropriate for the U.S. to demand that the DPRK completely denuclearize at once. The DPRK needs to consider the fact that deep-rooted mistrust is also alive despite her stated willingness to denuclearize.

We would like to highlight that the DPRK and the U.S. committed in Singapore “to establish new relations, to build a lasting and stable peace regime on the Korean Peninsula and to work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.” We expect the two countries will adjust their demands and expectations to start phased and simultaneous implementation of their promises at the smallest level they feel comfortable with. Once they start building trust in the process, they will be able to agree on larger issues. The DPRK and the U.S. must earnestly listen to each other and continue their dialogue.

At least, the sanctions against the DPRK that are related to humanitarian assistance must be lifted

The UN says that the sanctions against the DPRK are not the end, but the means. In the same light, all resolutions of the UN Security Council on the sanctions emphasize the commitment to “a peaceful, diplomatic, and political solution to the situation.” The true purposes of such resolutions are to urge “the DPRK and the U.S. to respect each other’s sovereignty and exist peacefully together” and also “the council members as well as other states to facilitate a peaceful and comprehensive solution through dialogue.” Humanitarian assistance is a universal and non-derogable value and spirit in the work of the UN. As the UN Security Council resolutions clarify that these resolutions “are not intended to have adverse humanitarian consequences for the civilian population of the DPRK or to affect negatively or restrict those activities, ...the work of international and non-governmental organizations carry-

ing out assistance and relief activities in the DPRK for the benefit of the civilian population of the DPRK.” However, the sanctions against the DPRK by the UN and the stronger ones imposed by the U.S. after the first DPRK-U.S. summit have aggravated the conditions for humanitarian assistance to the DPRK. We urge the 1718 Committee to lift all the sanctions that prevent humanitarian assistance to the DPRK.

These sanctions hamper implementation of inter-Korean agreements for exchange and cooperation. They even made it difficult to resume operation of Mount Geumgang tours and Gaeseong Industrial Complex, which are stopped activities unrelated to the UN sanctions. As initial steps for peace, the two Koreas need to expand meetings and cooperation in order to end military tension and confrontation, thus paving the way for peace on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia. The sanctions against the DPRK which impede the conduct of humanitarian assistance and the building of cooperative relationships between the two Koreas must be relieved as soon as possible.

‘Denuclearization as Peacemaking Process’ must be observed as a principle

The nuclear conflict on the Korean Peninsula is a product of the instability inherent to an armistice regime, grown out of the decades-long military confrontation and arms race. Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is closely connected to building a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula with normalizing relations between the DPRK and the U.S. The denuclearization of the DPRK alone cannot be the entry point for negotiations to begin. Peace on the Peninsula cannot be achieved only through denuclearization. It can only be achieved, instead, when it becomes part of a peace-building process. Efforts to build a permanent peace regime, such as signing a peace treaty or a non-aggression agreement, and normalizing relations between the DPRK and the U.S. must be paralleled.

The kind of complete denuclearization that people in the two Koreas sincerely wish to achieve is a state where all nuclear threats surrounding the Peninsula are removed. This cannot be achieved only by ‘Complete, Verifiable, Irreversible Denuclearization’ of the DPRK

alone. Abolishment of the extended deterrence strategy on which the ROK, the U.S., and Japan rely is one of the associated and necessary tasks. Nuclear-Free Korean Peninsula can become a stepping stone for Northeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and Nuclear-Free world.

There is no other way to achieve peace but through peaceful means

Achieving peace on the Korean Peninsula will serve as a test case for whether humanity will be able to peacefully resolve the accumulated conflicts of today's world, or not. In Korea, we have recently witnessed that peace can be achieved through peaceful means and problems can be solved through dialogue and negotiation. Since the inter-Korean summit last year, the two Koreas have ceased all hostile activities, cherishing the most peaceful time ever since the armistice began. We should never return to the repeated threats of nuclear war and heightened military tension under any circumstances.

Once again, we urge the UN Security Council and the international community to support the painstaking efforts to bring peace to the Korean Peninsula. Cooperation from the international community is absolutely crucial. We plead that you do your utmost to ensure the continuity of the peace process on the Korean Peninsula. For its part, Korean civil society will spare no effort.

55 Civil Society Organizations in ROK:

80 Million Koreans Community Preparing for Reunification (K.P.R.)

Asia Peace & History Education Network

Chuncheon Womenlink

Citizens' Coalition for Democratic Media

Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice

Civil Peace Forum

Civil Society Organizations Network in Korea

Civilian Military Watch

Conference for Peace in East Asia

Daejeon Differently Abled Women Solidarity

Daejeon Women' Association for Better Aging Society

Daejeon Women's Association United

Daejeon Women's Association for Democracy

Daejeon Women's Association for Peace-Making

Dongbuk Womenlink
Eco Horizon Institute
Green Korea
Gunpo Womenlink
Gwangju Womenlink
Incheon Womenlink
Jeju Peace Human Rights Center
Jeju Peace Human Rights Institute WHAT
Korea Federation for Environmental Movements
Korea NGO Council for Cooperation with North Korea
Korea Veterans for Peace
Korea Women's Associations United
Korea Women's Hot Line
Korean Sharing Movement
MINBYUN-Lawyers for a Democratic Society
Movement for One Korea
Namseo Womenlink
National YWCA of Korea
NCYK (National Council of YMCA'S of Korea)
Networks for Greentransport
Ok Tree
Peace Network
Peace Sharing Association
PEACEMOMO
People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD)
Professors for Democracy
Pyeongtaek Peace Center
Reconciliation and Reunification Committee, NCKC (The National Council of Churches in Korea)
Research Institute for Peace and Reunification of Korea
Sejong Women's Corporation
Solidarity for Peace and Reunification of Korea (SPARK)
The Corea Peace 3000
The Headquarters of National Unification Movement of Young Korean Academy
The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan
The Research Institute of the Differently Abled Person's Right in Korea
The Righteous People for Korean Unification
Women in Action for Life PAN
Women Making Peace
Womenlink
Won-Buddhism Diocese of Pyongyang
World Without War

[Editor's Note: The following is the text of the Joint Statement signed in Singapore on June 12, 2018 by the U.S. President and the DPRK Chairman after the first ever summit between the leaders of the two countries.]

Joint Statement of President Donald J. Trump of the United States of America and Chairman Kim Jong Un of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at the Singapore Summit

President Donald J. Trump of the United States of America and Chairman Kim Jong Un of the State Affairs Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) held a first, historic summit in Singapore on June 12, 2018.

President Trump and Chairman Kim Jong Un conducted a comprehensive, in-depth, and sincere exchange of opinions on the issues related to the establishment of new U.S.–DPRK relations and the building of a lasting and robust peace regime on the Korean Peninsula. President Trump committed to provide security guarantees to the DPRK, and Chairman Kim Jong Un reaffirmed his firm and unwavering commitment to complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Convinced that the establishment of new U.S.-DPRK relations will contribute to the peace and prosperity of the Korean Peninsula and of the world, and recognizing that mutual confidence building can promote the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, President Trump and Chairman Kim Jong Un state the following:

1. The United States and the DPRK commit to establish new U.S.–DPRK relations in accordance with the desire of the peoples of the two countries for peace and prosperity.
2. The United States and the DPRK will join their efforts to build a lasting and stable peace regime on the Korean Peninsula.
3. Reaffirming the April 27, 2018 Panmunjom Declaration, the DPRK commits to work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.
4. The United States and the DPRK commit to recovering POW/MIA remains, including the immediate repatriation of those already identified.

Having acknowledged that the U.S.–DPRK summit – the first in history – was an epochal event of great significance in overcoming decades of tensions and hostilities between the two countries and for the opening up of a new future, President Trump and Chairman Kim Jong Un commit to implement the stipulations in this joint statement fully and expeditiously. The United States and the DPRK commit to hold follow-on negotiations, led by the U.S. Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, and a relevant high-level DPRK official, at the earliest possible date, to implement the outcomes of the U.S.–DPRK summit.

President Donald J. Trump of the United States of America and Chairman Kim Jong Un of the State Affairs Commission of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea have committed to cooperate for the development of new U.S.–DPRK relations and for the promotion of peace, prosperity, and security of the Korean Peninsula and of the world.

DONALD J. TRUMP

President of the United States of America

KIM JONG UN

Chairman of the State Affairs Commission of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea

June 12, 2018

Sentosa Island

Singapore

[Editor's Note: The following article first appeared on January 29, 2017 on the netizenblog at: <http://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2017/01/29/channel-for-communication-to-unsc/>.]

Channel for Individuals or NGOs to Send Communication to the UN Security Council

by Ronda Hauben

Since the early days of the UN Security Council there has been a procedure for private individuals and non-governmental organizations to be able to send communications to the Security Council on matters of which it is seized.¹ The procedure has been referred to by its library classification symbol which is S/NC.

I first came across this procedure when an NGO in South Korea had been accused of being unpatriotic to the South Korean government because that NGO (and others as well) sent a critique to the Security Council about something the South Korean government was presenting to the Security Council.²

It seemed particularly inappropriate for the South Korean government to accuse an NGO of disloyalty because of a letter sent to members of the Security Council as there is a long tradition from 1946 to the present for private individuals or NGO's to write to the Security Council. Security Council documents show that there are lists of probably thousands of such communications.

In doing some research at the UN into the background of this procedure of the UN, I came to realize that in the early days of the Security Council, lists of such communications were issued by the Secretariat on a frequent basis. The procedure is described in the Appendix of the *Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Security Council*. It states:

Provisional Procedure for Dealing with Communications from Private Individuals and Non-Governmental Bodies

A. A list of all communications from private individuals and non-governmental bodies relating to matters of which the Security Council is seized shall be circulated to all representatives on the Security Council.

B. A copy of any communication on the list shall be given by the Secretariat to any representative on the Security Council at his request.

The lists published by the UN Secretariat of the communications received by the Security Council from individuals or non-governmental entities included the name and organization of the sender, the date of the communication, the city or town and country of the sender, and originally whether the communication was a telegram, letter, petition etc. The communications were grouped according to the Security Council agenda item that the communication referred to.

If a Security Council member saw some communication on a list that was of interest, the Security Council member could request a copy of the communication from the Secretariat.

From 1946 and for several years afterwards, lists were issued on a frequent basis. By the mid 1990's the lists would be issued on a quarterly basis by the UN Secretariat. Then for some reason not yet understood, starting from the 2000 list, lists by the Secretariat would only be issued once a year, around April.

Along with the less frequent issuing of the lists of communications sent to the Security Council, there appears to be no publicly available information indicating how or where an individual or non-governmental entity can send a communication to the Security Council.

Recently when asking some Security Council members if they were aware of this procedure, only one indicated he remembered seeing some correspondence from individuals or NGO's sent to the Security Council. Others appeared to have no knowledge of this process. While this brief survey was only based on a small sample, it demonstrated a breakdown in one of the few publicly available channels of communi-

cation between members of the public and members of the Security Council.

In 2010 some NGOs and some academic scientists attempted to send communication to the Security Council about a matter being considered by the Security Council. They sent email to all the member states then on the Security Council. None of these communications, however, appeared on the annual S/NC list published by the UN Secretariat for 2010.

More recently, during the press conference marking the beginning of the Russian Federation's Presidency of the Security Council for the month of October 2016, Ambassador Vitaly Churkin responded to a question raised by a journalist. He said that he would support, "the greater involvement of women" in line with Security Council Resolution 1325 to help address the high level of tension on the Korean Peninsula.

In response to his statement, Christine Ahn, the International Coordinator for the NGO "Women Cross DMZ" wrote to the Security Council asking that several recommendations the group proposed be raised at the Security Council Debate on Resolution 1325 planned for October 25, 2016. When she tried to find where to send her letter to have it considered as a communication to the Security Council, however, there was no clear information publicly available about where an individual or NGO should send their communication. A press inquiry demonstrated that such information was not easy to locate.

Similarly, a press inquiry to some Security Council members yielded little help with how to find such information. It was only a month later, at the press conference held by the Spanish Ambassador on the occasion of assuming the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of December 2016, that there was an offer of help to find the answer to the mystery.

Ambassador Román Oyarzun Marchesi, the Spanish Ambassador to the UN, welcomed the question on how to send communication to the Security Council saying that his delegation "really believed in the participation of civil society." He promised that if information was sent to him documenting the problem, "I'll do my best...I'll see what I can do."³

An inquiry by his press secretary led to a response from the Secretariat. The email from the Office of the President of the Security Council in the UN Department of Political Affairs in the Secretariat stated that if an email or surface mail on a topic being considered by the Security Council is sent to the email address given in the UN Journal for communications for UN member nations to send their communication to the Security Council, or to the postal address provided, it will usually be informally circulated by the Security Council President via their “political coordinators’ network.” If the document “falls under one of the agenda items seized by the Security Council, it gets listed and published as a Security Council document under S/NC[year]/1.” Then it will appear on the list that is published for that year by the Secretariat.⁴

Looking at the earliest S/NC lists, one is impressed by the fact that there are communications from individuals and groups around the world. For example some of the earliest lists present communication received “Concerning Franco Regime in Spain.”

Looking at the names of those who are listed as sending communication to the UN Security Council from 1946 to the present, one gets a sense of the UN existing in the bigger world in a way that is different from what is conveyed when one just watches the workings of, for example, the Security Council. It would appear that more serious attention should be paid to making the address for sending communication to the Security Council publicly available. Also more frequent publication of the lists would make it possible for Security Council members to make timely requests for copies of the communications that interested them. That could help broaden the perspectives of Security Council members to enable them to be better able to find peaceful ways to resolve difficult conflicts.

Notes:

1. The term “seized” as used at the UN indicates, “that, while the Security Council is seized of a matter, no other organ of the United Nations may legally take it up, as under Article 12 of the UN Charter.” See: https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/be_seized_of
2. Ronda Hauben, “S. Korean Gov’t Urged to End Criminal Investigation of NGO for Questions on Cheonan Sent to UN” Netizenblog, June 26, 2010. <https://blogs.taz.de/>

netizenblog/2010/06/26/s_korean_govt_urged_to_end_criminal_investigation_of_ngo/

3. Román Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain), President of the Security Council for the month of December 2016 – Press Conference. See “1 Dec 2016 – Press Conference by H.E. Mr. Román Oyarzun Marchesi, Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations and President of the Security Council for the month of December 2016, on the Security Council Programme of work for the month”: <http://webtv.un.org/watch/rom%C3%A1n-oyarzun-marchesi-spain-president-of-the-security-council-for-the-month-of-december-2016-press-conference/5232207921001>

4. Communication from private individuals, NGO’s or other entities which relate to the work of the Security Council can be sent to the email address listed in the UN Journal, dppa-scsb3@un.org* or mailed to:

United Nations Security Council
405 East 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017

*Please note the email to the Security Council has changed from when this article was originally written. The current email address is as listed above. It is dppa-scsb3@un.org

[Editor’s Note: The following article first appeared on October 16, 2018 on the netizenblog at: <https://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2018/10/16/peace-and-the-korean-peninsula/>.]

The 2016-2017 Candlelight Revolution and the Support for Peaceful North-South Relations on the Korean Peninsula

by Ronda Hauben

[Author’s Note: The following article is my introduction to a collection of articles which explores the role of the 2016-2017 Candlelight Revolution in giving birth to the advance made in inter-Korean negotiations and joint work on the Korean Peninsula in 2018. Contrary to the view

put forward by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), UNSC sanctions are not the source of the DPRK commitment to work toward denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. This article explains how it is the candlelight demonstrations in the ROK that have set the foundation for the changed environment and actions of the ROK and DPRK on the Korean Peninsula. The collection of articles titled, “The Candlelight Revolution Continues” is online at:

<http://www.ais.org/~jrh/acn/ACn31-2.pdf>.]

I. Background

In May 2018, I returned from a one month visit to South Korea. The visit was remarkable in a number of ways that I want to document and discuss. In order to understand the current developments, however, some background is needed. That background is what I refer to as the netizen developments.¹

My attention was first drawn to South Korea early in 2003 when mainstream Western newspapers carried accounts of how in December 2002, Roh Moo-hyun had been elected President by the netizens.² This was a reference to the Internet users who were committed to exploring their civic responsibility having been empowered by their newly acquired Internet access.

Roh’s election was propelled by demonstrations called Candlelight demonstrations, in response to netizen anger after two South Korean middle school students had been killed by a vehicle driven by U.S. Military Personnel. Roh was a human rights lawyer whose election was the product of a broad ranging campaign by netizens challenging the conservative practices that have been common during South Korean elections.³

By 2008, Roh’s term was up. He was followed as president by Lee Myung-bak, a conservative business man who was elected to the presidency in part because the online campaigning that enabled Roh to win his election was now called illegal and forbidden and punished by big fines or even a potential jail term. Such restrictions took several more years to be overturned by the South Korean Constitutional Court. Lee Myung-bak served as the President of South Korea from 2008-2012.

Just a few weeks after he took office, President Lee introduced a number of programs that drew vehement opposition, particularly from netizens. This led to a 106-day Candlelight demonstration in Seoul along with other demonstrations around the country. Among the studies of the 2008 Candlelight demonstrations is one by Min Kyung-bae titled “Analog Government Digital Citizens.”⁴

In his article, Min describes the growing gap between the netizens who have mastered digital technology and new ways of focusing on communication as opposed to the government officials who are stuck in the old patterns of analog technology. Min’s article describes how government officials had closed off some of the offline open areas where students and others could discuss and debate issues. In response, netizens set up online forums where they could have discussion and debate. Then netizens took the frameworks they had created online and recreated them offline.

One example of this process was a debate held outdoors around midnight on June 10, 2008 which continued into the early morning hours on June 11. The issue of the debate was whether or not the demonstrators should climb over the shipping containers that the police had used to erect a barricade in front of the Blue House where the President lived and worked. During the offline debate that night many people online also participated by being in online contact with those who were out at the plaza participating in the debate. The result of the debate is that a decision was made for several protesters to climb onto the top of the shipping container barricade with their organization flags to demonstrate that they could have gone over the barricade but that they had publicly come to the conclusion they should not do that.

Their action demonstrated that such a debate/discussion which could be carried out online, now could also occur offline. In this situation demonstrators learned that their online practice could be used to create such actions offline.

Such experience and lessons learned during the 2008 Candlelight demonstrations served the citizens and netizens of South Korea well when in 2016 they began six months of non violent Saturday demonstrations in their fight to impeach Park Geun-hye who had become the President of South Korea in the 2012 election.

II. The Inter-Korean Summit

When I arrived in Seoul late in April 2018, everyone's attention was focused on the upcoming Inter-Korean Summit which was to take place on April 27.

Once the Summit began, the attention of all the South Koreans I observed in stores nearby or elsewhere was focused on the streaming TV programs broadcasting the Summit. The details of the unfolding event were impressive as the commitment of both President Moon Jae-in of South Korea and Chairman Kim Jong-un of North Korea demonstrated a determination to work toward a peaceful future. A warm and friendly relationship showed signs of developing between the two and between their wives.

Several days later when I was having dinner with a Korean friend, the friend observed, "Who would have expected any of this to happen even just two years ago?"

III. The 2016-2017 Candlelight Demonstrations

My decision to take a trip to South Korea was in part motivated by the desire to hear the discussion and debates among activists and researchers about how they understood the 2016-2017 Candlelight demonstrations. When I arrived in Seoul, I learned that there were several conferences planned to analyze the 2016-2017 Candlelight demonstrations. One of the conferences was to be held toward the end of my visit, but it would all be in the Korean language without translation.

Fortunately, I was able to arrange interviews in English with a few of the researchers at that conference to hear about their work. One professor did a brief translation for me of the keynote presentation on the first day of the conference. He also arranged for a student to translate some presentations the second day of the conference. This conference was on the recent Candlelight demonstrations and their impact. I found the keynote especially interesting but since there was no written version available and the translation I was given was informal, I will share some of the notes I made with the proviso that these are my notes and not the result of any official or formal translation.

The title of the conference as rendered in the informal translation was: “Symposium on Candlelight Protest.” It was held in a National Assembly building in Seoul on May 18-19, 2018. The title of the keynote presented on May 18 by Kim Jung-bae was “Historical Significance and Challenges of Candlelight.”

In the keynote, Kim pointed to a book written a few years earlier about how around the world, democracy has been in retreat, for example in India and Turkey. Kim Jung-bae wondered, if democracy was in retreat everywhere, then how was it that the Candlelight protest was possible in South Korea? He said he was still seeking answers to this puzzle. He proposed that the drama of the Candlelight and its ramifications needed to be studied. He also described how he had attended a demonstration called by middle school students. He was surprised that they had come from across South Korea and that they put forward the need for a revolution. Kim Jung-bae made a number of other observations and raised issues to be explored. Then he returned to his concern that even after the Candlelight demonstrations, there was still a danger of South Korea retreating from democracy. He proposed there was a need to identify the fundamental motivation driving the Candlelight so as to keep it alive. Other papers at the conference explored various aspects of the Candlelight phenomenon. In general, the issues in contention revolved around two different views. One was that the candlelight was part of a revolutionary development. The other was that it was perhaps a form of populism.

One of the reasons I have offered this background is that I felt it would be helpful to understand the kind of analysis and discussion that characterize the papers presented at another conference that took place on May 23, 2018. That conference was titled “International Forum: The Role of Civil Society for the Improvement of Inter-Korean Relations and the Process of Peacebuilding on the Korean Peninsula.”

I want to point to some observations and recommendations in one particular paper presented at this conference, the paper by Lee Taeho titled “The Role of Civil Society for Building Inter-Korean Trust and Peace on the Korean Peninsula.”⁵ There are other similarly interesting observations and recommendations in other papers presented at the

same conference, but for my summary Lee Taeho's paper makes some particularly useful observations and recommendations.

IV. Observations and Recommendations

One significant observation made in Lee's paper was that the relationship between the two Koreas had to be different after the 2016-2017 Candlelight Revolution from what it had been before. Some of the reasoning behind this observation was that the Candlelight Revolution provided for the democratic legitimacy of the Moon Jae-in government. The election that Moon Jae-in won shortly after the victory of the Candlelight was a direct result of the Candlelight Revolution's winning the impeachment of Park Geun-hye. The Candlelight demonstrations provided support for the political authority of what would shortly afterwards become the Moon government. The success of the Candlelight Revolution resulted in part from the important role played by South Korean Civil Society. With this support, one can argue that Korean Civil Society has won the right to work together with the government to find solutions to difficult problems. But for that partnership to continue the government will have to work for better relations with the North since reconciliation and eventual reunification are crucial goals of many who are part of South Korean Civil Society.

Another basis for a different relationship between the government and the citizens, Lee's paper proposes, is based on the experience demonstrating that the safety and well being of the people who live on the Korean Peninsula is dependent on decisions made by them, not by outside experts.

Drawing its conclusions from the success of the Candlelight demonstrations, the paper proposes "broad and open discussions" by the ordinary people "without limitation" on debate.

Lee's paper calls for the government to form a discussion forum to make it possible for citizens to participate in the reviews and discussion of the direction the government should take to improve the relationship between the two Koreas so as to be able to resolve controversial issues. It proposes that civil society in South Korea work to "open a space where citizens as sovereign can have a discussion altogether and participate to build a peaceful consensus for coexistence."

Lee's paper argues that the legacy of the years of the division of Korea has created a challenging situation. In order not to continue the harm of this legacy, civil society has to work to create a process which will require not just finding the middle ground between different views but a space to encourage free discussion of various visions and methods so as to arrive at processes to unify those with diverse experiences.

The paper concludes that, with the "dramatic change...unfolding on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia," the role for civil society, is to "freely imagine, share, and boldly embody practices to overcome the division of the Korean Peninsula and to further the coexistence in East Asia while confronting old stereotypes, prejudice, and taboos that the division system emphasized to us, armed with a strong belief in changes that the participation and solidarity of the citizens of the Korean Peninsula and the entire world will help us draw out."

V. Summary

A question is raised by the review of the Candlelight Revolution that has been going on in South Korea over the past 15 years. Is there a new political process unfolding in South Korea which can help forge a new relationship between the two Koreas. The experience of the Candlelights has helped to create a digital form of citizenship which is also a more participatory form of citizenship. Min Kyung-bae's article about the 2008 Candlelight helped to document the nature of this new form of citizenship. Lee Taeho's article documents some of the new processes that South Korean netizens and citizens have learned from the Candlelight experience which can be applied to the inter-Korean processes.

Another article, "Ushering in an Era of Great Transformation on the Korean Peninsula through Citizen Participation" by Lee Hyeuk-hee, demonstrates that there are other activists and researchers in South Korea trying to define this new political process and determine how it can help to forge a new relationship between the two Koreas. "A different era requires different thinking" writes the author, who is Chairperson of the Operation Committee of the NGO One Korea Action. Lee Hyeuk-hee describes what is happening on the Korean Peninsula as "this great

transformation.” At its core, he writes, was the “Candlelight Revolution.”

While Lee Myung-bak and Park Geun-hye sought to pursue a policy of confrontation with the DPRK, leading to a military crisis, earlier South Korean Presidents, Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun had begun the process of working toward a more long range and peace supporting inter-Korean policy. They instituted an engagement policy.

With a new government in the South put in place due to the success of the Candlelight Revolution, it became possible for the new president, Moon Jae-in, to return to an engagement policy. This involves economic, social and cultural interaction rather than Lee Myung-bak’s and Park Geun-hye’s policy of reunification through absorption.

In 2018 Moon Jae-in and Kim Jong-un put in place a top down approach toward rapidly normalizing relations through “negotiation and dialogue between high ranking officials” which then is to be “expanded downward.” The goal of this process is to institutionalize inter-Korean relations via the creation of a confederation of the North and South. A confederation means the North and the South can exist as two sovereign states for a period of time as they prepare for reunification, by first forming an economic community, then to a socio-cultural community and then finally to a political community.

Lee Hyeuk-hee argues that the previous failure of inter-Korean exchanges was the failure to “attract the masses” to be part of the process. He explains, their participation was needed in order to succeed in building a solidarity between the peoples of the two Koreas. The Inter-Korean Joint Liaison Office which opened in September 2018 could provide a means to create the structures to make possible the needed exchanges and cooperation. Lee Hyeuk-hee proposes the need for many contributions to forge the solidarity between the two cultures of the North and the South. Such contributions, he suggests, could be made by those who had been part of the Candlelight Revolution and by ‘regular’ citizens. Lee Hyeuk-hee argues, such wide ranging contributions and involvement is needed in order to finally end the cold war system still dividing the Korean people.

Min Kyung-bae, Lee Taeho, and Lee Hyeuk-hee all see the Candlelight Revolution as setting the basis for the new political processes

that will make possible the new relationship to be built between the two Koreas.

The papers by Lee Taeho, and Lee Hyeuk-hee provide a set of proposals for how the two Koreas learning from the candlelight experience, can approach each other. This is a start. But also needed is continued study of the candlelight experience so as to broaden the insights and lessons that civil society and government can learn from so as to build a mass based solidarity among the peoples of the two Koreas. There is some experience that the Korean people have had, in both the North and the South to help with this. What is needed is discussion among the citizens and netizens of Korea and research efforts to meet the demands of such challenges.

Notes:

1. See e.g., Michael Hauben, “The Net and Netizens: The Impact the Net has on People’s Lives.” Online at <http://www.colu.mbia.edu/~rh120/ch106.x01>
 2. See e.g., Barbara Demick, “Netizens’ Crusade Buys New South Korean Leader: An unofficial online fan club is credited with helping Roh Moo Hyun into office by attracting young voters. It may continue to play a role.” *L.A. Times*, Feb 10, 2003. Online at: <http://articles.latimes.com/2003/feb/10/world/fg-cyber10>
 3. Yun Young Min, “An Analysis of Cyber-Electioneering: Focusing on the 2002 Presidential Election in Korea,” *Korea Journal*, Vol. 43. No. 3 Autumn, 2003 pp.141-164. Online at: https://www.ekoreajournal.net/issue/view_pop.htm?Idx=3258
 4. Min Kyung Bae, “Analog Government Digital Citizens,” *Global Asia* Vol. 3 No. 3, Fall 2008, pp. 94-103. Online at: http://www.globalasia.org/v3no3/feature/analog-government-digital-citizens_kyung-bae-min
 5. Lee Taeho, “The Role of Civil Society for Building Inter-Korean Trust and Peace on the Korean Peninsula,” at “The International Forum: The Role of Civil Society for the Improvement of Inter-Korean Relations and the Process of Peacebuilding on the Korean Peninsula” on May 23, 2018 in Seoul.
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[Editor's Note: The following article first appeared on January 14, 2018 on the netizenblog at: <https://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2018/01/14/toward-2018-winter-olympics/>.]

On the Korean Peninsula Unusual Signs of Hope: Toward Joint Participation in 2018 Winter Olympics

by Ronda Hauben

Part I.

A set of important developments in the conflict on the Korean Peninsula was initiated by the DPRK's Kim Jong-un using his New Year's Address on January 1, 2018.

In his address, he said:¹

This year is significant for the north and the south...in the south the Winter Olympic Games will take place. In order to not only celebrate great national events in a splendid manner but also demonstrate the dignity and spirit of the nation at home and abroad, we should improve the frozen inter-Korean relations and glorify this meaningful year as an eventful one noteworthy in the history of the nation.

He proposed that: "A climate favorable for national reconciliation and reunification should be established." To create such a climate, he urged:

The improvement of inter-Korean relations is a pressing matter of concern not only to authorities but to all other Koreans, and it is a crucial task to be carried out through a concerted effort by the entire nation. The north and south should promote bilateral contact, travel, cooperation and exchange on a broad scale to remove mutual misunderstanding and distrust, and fulfil their responsi-

bility and role as the motive force of national reunification.

As a means to accomplish this, he offered:

We will open our doors to anyone from south Korea, including the ruling party and opposition parties, organizations and individual personages of all backgrounds, for dialogue, contact, travel, if they sincerely wish national concord and unity.

Such action however, he explained would need to be the work solely of the two Koreas:

Inter-Korean relations are, to all intents and purposes an internal matter of our nation, which the north and the south should resolve on their own responsibility. Therefore they should acquire a steadfast stand and viewpoint that they will resolve all the issues arising in bilateral relations on the principle of By Our Nation Itself.

Hence, he cautioned:

(...) Now it is not time for the north and the south to turn their backs on each other and merely express their respective standpoints; it is time that they sit face to face with a view to holding sincere discussions over the issue of improving inter-Korean relations by our nation itself and seek a way out for its settlement in a bold manner.

As a practical measure to accomplish such ends, he noted that:

As for the Winter Olympic Games to be held soon in south Korea, it will serve as a good occasion for demonstrating our nation's prestige and we earnestly wish the Olympic Games a success. From this point of view we are willing to dispatch our delegation and adopt other necessary measures: with regard to this matter, the authorities of the north and the south may meet together soon. Since we are compatriots of the same blood as south Koreans, it is natural for us to share their pleasure over the auspicious event and help them.

Such actions would not be limited to this example. He explained:

We will in the future, too, resolve all issues by the efforts of our nation itself under the unfurled banner of national independence and frustrate the schemes by anti-reunification forces within and without on the strength of national unity, thereby opening up a new history of national reunification.

Part II.

ROK President Moon Jae-in greeted the possibility of the DPRK participating in the Olympics with an eager response.

Very soon after the New Year's Speech, the two Koreas reestablished a hot line communication system to make it possible for there to be communications between them.

Similarly, Moon soon announced that he had had a phone conversation with the U.S. President Donald Trump who agreed to postpone the military maneuver that had been planned to take place during the Olympic period, until after the Olympics.

There is a tradition to declare the period seven days before the Games start until seven days after they end as a time of an Olympic truce where hostilities between nations are temporarily stopped as a way to protect the security of both the athletes and the spectators so they can participate and or watch the games. This tradition goes back to the Greek notion of an Olympic truce (ekecheiria) which some maintain "was a legendary oracle of Delphi, to replace the cycle of conflict with a friendly athletic competition every four years."²

In November, 2017 the UN General Assembly had passed a resolution, GA Res A/72/L.5 (3 November 2017), urging the member nations of the UN to honor this tradition.

Almost immediately after Kim Jong-un's New Year's Address, the ROK welcomed the proposal and suggested Tuesday, January 9, 2018 as the first date for Inter-Korean negotiations. The DPRK accepted this date.

A momentum appeared to be building up to support negotiations between the two Koreas. Both Koreas appointed negotiating teams.

The sports representative of the DPRK flew to Lausanne, Switzerland to meet with Olympic officials who promised to do what they could to make it possible for the DPRK to participate in the Olympics.

Moon announced that he would make his New Year's Speech on Wednesday, January 10 and then hold a press conference.

Given the concern around the world over the growing tension on the Korean Peninsula, these events have been greeted hopefully by many who expressed their support for the negotiations to continue. There is support for a breakthrough in the situation toward the development of a peaceful process to overcome the impasse that had only recently seemed insurmountable.

Part III.

There were a few developments toward the end of 2017 that may have contributed to bring this situation about. One was the invitation by the DPRK to the UN to send a team to the DPRK for a visit and discussion. The acceptance of the invitation by the UN with the visit of Under Secretary General for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman and his two colleagues, Sam Martell and Katrin Hett to Pyongyang from December 5 to 8, 2017, was one small sign that perhaps some change was possible to replace the tense situation previously prevailing in the region.

Around the same period, Choi Moon-soon, the governor of Gangwon, the province which includes the major site of the 2018 Winter Olympics, at Pyeongchang, where a number of Winter Olympic Games will be held, met on the sidelines of an international sports event with the DPRK Sport Club president Mun Ung and encouraged the DPRK to attend the Games.³ An article in *Hankyoreh* describes such efforts:

Choi has previously made several efforts to encourage North Korea's participation in the Pyeongchang Olympics, including a meeting with North Korea's April 25 Sports Club president Mun Ung during the Ari Sports Cup 15-and-under international youth football championship in Kunming on Dec. 19–22.

The article also describes the efforts of representatives of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to welcome DPRK participation in the 2018 Winter Olympics.

Then, Japan as president of the Security Council for the month of December, invited the DPRK and the ROK to attend the December 15, 2017 Security Council meeting discussing non-proliferation and the DPRK. The invitation made it possible for the DPRK Ambassador to UN to present his nation's view of the dispute, and of the security problem facing his nation. The ROK Ambassador, as part of his presentation, urged the DPRK to participate in the upcoming Winter Olympics.

These were but some of the signs that something might happen to support interaction among the various parties to the tension on the Korean Peninsula so that they would find a way to begin to interact, especially with respect to the desire of the ROK to have the DPRK participate in the upcoming Olympic events.

Part IV.

The UN Secretary General and the President of the General Assembly greeted these developments with welcoming messages for the inter-Korean efforts to make it possible to have a joint DPRK-ROK contribution to the upcoming Winter Olympics in February and March 2018.

The UN Secretary General's response was to welcome the reopening of the inter-Korean communication channel. On January 3, 2018, the Deputy Spokesman for Secretary General Guterres said it was always a positive development to have dialogue between the DPRK and the Republic of Korea. The statement said it was "In that context, the Secretary-General welcomes the reopening of the inter-Korean communication channel."

Also, on January 3, the President of the General Assembly met with the DPRK Ambassador to the UN. He issued the following statement:⁴

The President of the 72nd session of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, met today with H.E. Mr. Ja Song Nam, Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to the United

Nations, at the request of the Permanent Representative. The President of the General Assembly said he was pleased with the readiness of DPRK to constructively engage in a dialogue with the Republic of Korea, including a possible participation of a delegation from DPRK in the Winter Olympic Games in PyeongChang, Republic of Korea, as well as with the reopening of the communication channels. New York.

Given the dangerous hostile environment that has existed regarding this dispute, these recent events appear remarkable. Whether they can be continued or whether they just end in a return to the previous more hostile environment one cannot know at this juncture. But it is important that peace loving people carefully watch what is happening on the Korean Peninsula and find a way to give whatever support they can to the forces for peace who are trying to make an impact on the current situation.

Notes:

1. From Kim Jong-un's New Year Address, Jan. 1, 2018
 2. See General Assembly Resolution A/72/L.5 (3 November 2017), "Sport for development and peace: building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal," p. 1.
 3. Kim Chang-keum, and Park Soo-hyun, "Gangwon governor raises possibility of joint South-North skating team," January 3, 2018, *Hankyoreh*. http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_northkorea/826186.html See also http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_north_korea/827349.html
 4. See transcript of the Press Briefing January 3, 2018 by the Spokesperson for the UN Secretary General at UN Headquarters in New York. <http://www.un.org/press/en/2018/db180103.doc.htm>
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[Editor's Note: The following article first appeared on January 30, 2018 on the netizenblog at: <https://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2018/01/30/olympic-truce-as-support-for-peace/>.]

UN Appeal for Olympic Truce as a Support for Peace

by Ronda Hauben

On Friday, January 26, 2018, the President of the UN General Assembly opened the meeting of the GA with a “solemn appeal” for the observance of the Olympic Truce.

While the event at the UN was only sparsely attended, it carried an importance that should be noted and celebrated.

In his remarks, GA President Miroslav Lajčák appealed to all UN Member States to observe the historic ‘Olympic Truce’ during the period of the Olympic Games. The GA President was referring to the ancient Greek tradition of the ekecheira, or ‘Olympic Truce,’ which began in the Eighth Century B.C., and is a cherished tradition of the Olympic Games. In 1992 the International Olympic Committee (IOC) honored this tradition by calling all nations to observe the Truce.

In a resolution passed by the UN General Assembly on November 13, 2017, the GA called on all UN member states to observe the UN truce individually or collectively, from a period from the 7th day before the start of the Winter Olympic Games until the seventh day following the end of the Paralympic Winter Games which were to be held in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea.

The truce has a special meaning in the context of the 2018 Winter Olympic Games.

The truce that has been called for on the Korean Peninsula will mean that the two Koreas will have some unified inter-Korean activities in this upcoming Olympics. For this Olympics the “first unified inter-Korean women’s hockey team” is already in training. When the North Korean athletes and coaches arrived at the training center in the Republic of Korea (ROK), they were given a warm welcome by the South Korean team. The South Korean women’s ice hockey coach Sarah Murray

became the coach of the unified team. Newspaper accounts report that coach Pak Chul-ho who accompanied the players from the Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK) is working together with Coach Murray helping the players from the North with their training under her.

Such experiences carried out by Koreans from both parts of the peninsula help to demonstrate why the tradition of the Olympic truce is so important.

The truce has provided a reprieve of a period with less tension between the two Koreas. It is a gift to the world from the tradition of the Olympics. Also the pause in tension it provided makes it possible for the parties to the conflict to consider alternatives that may make it possible to find a peaceful resolution for the conflict.

An article in the English language edition of the South Korean newspaper *Hankyoreh* reported about a recent Congressional hearing in the U.S.¹ Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger proposed that the U.S. support reinstating the six-party talks to seek a means of resolving the conflict with the DPRK. Could this be an example of how alternative perspectives may be explored during the period when the Olympic Truce provides for a pause in the hostile rhetoric among the belligerent parties?

UN actions which help to support concrete efforts toward peace provide an example for the role the UN should play in the world.

Note:

1. "Henry Kissinger suggests a return to the Six Party Talks," *Hankyoreh*, January 28, 2018. http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_northkorea/829736.html

[Editor's Note: The following article first appeared on January 23, 2018 on the netizenblog at: <https://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2018/01/23/korean-peninsula-a-ray-of-hope/>.]

Korean Peninsula Provides A Ray of Hope

by Ronda Hauben

In some newspaper accounts of a meeting held on January 20, 2018 by Thomas Bach, the President of the International Olympics Committee (IOC), Bach is quoted congratulating the North and South Korea for the inter Korean achievements that he recognizes “would have seemed impossible just a few weeks ago.”

Thomas Bach was describing a meeting at IOC headquarters that he held with North Korean Sports Minister Kim Il-Guk and his South Korean counterpart, Do Jong-hwan South Korea's Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism on January 20, 2018.

He was responding to recent events which were working to make a peace Olympics a reality.

What are some of these achievements?

A resolution, GA Res (A/72/L.5) approving a peace Olympics, was passed by the UN General Assembly on November 3, 2017. The resolution encouraged the cessation of any military activities during the period from 10 days before the beginning of the Olympic Games to 10 days after the Games end. The Olympic Games begin Friday February 9, 2018 and last until Sunday, February 25, 2018.

Then the Paralympic games are scheduled starting on Thursday, March 8 and ending on Sunday, March 18. This makes the peace period from 10 days before the Winter Olympics starting on Wednesday, January 31, 2018 until 10 days after the Paralympics ending on Wednesday, March 28.

Republic of Korea President Moon Jae-in asked the U.S. to postpone the joint military maneuvers it was planning for the Korean Peninsula during the time of the Olympics. The U.S. agreed. Also, the *Chosun Ilbo* conservative newspaper reported that a U.S. nuclear pow-

ered submarine was trying to dock at Buson at the southern end of the Korean Peninsula. Instead it was sent to Jinhae to be out of international view. In the end it did not call at that Korean port either.

At face-to-face talks between representatives of the two Koreas, and also at the January 20 meeting with the IOC, some of the arrangements agreed upon included: Three inter Korean routes that have been closed are being opened for travel by North Koreans coming to the games.

An Olympic Korean Declaration stated the agreement that for 22 athletes, 24 government officials and 21 media representatives from the DPRK will attend the games.

At the opening ceremony on February 9, both Koreas will march under the Unification flag, white with a blue silhouette of the peninsula in the middle of the flag.

Athletes from both Koreas will wear special uniforms similar to the Unification flag.

The acronym for team will be COR.

The original team of 23 South Koreans on the Women's ice hockey team will have 12 North Korean members added to make it a joint team. Their anthem will be the folk song Arirang.

The DPRK figure skater pair Ryom Tae-ok and Kim Ju-Sil will be permitted to compete.

There will be performances of cultural events. The 140 member Samjiyon Orchestra from the DPRK will perform once in Seoul and once in Gangneung.

These are but some of the important developments that have been achieved in a relatively short period of time.

On January 19, the First Vice Foreign Minister from the ROK Lim Sung-nam met with the U.N Secretary General in New York. He asked for the Secretary General's support and attention to these important developments between the Koreas. Secretary General Guterres promised the UN would do all in its power to help to produce progress in the inter-Korean talks.

Referring to the planned joint entrance by the Korean athletes, IOC President Bach is quoted as saying:

“I am sure this will be a very emotional moment not only for all Koreans but also for the entire world.” Bach added, “Coming myself from a formerly divided country (Germany), it is a moment that I am also personally looking forward to with great anticipation and great emotion.”

All Koreans and all peace loving people deserve this ray of hope.

[Editor’s Note: The following article first appeared on January 31, 2018 on the netizenblog at: <https://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2018/01/31/unsc-members-support-inter-korean-dialogue-under-kazakhstan-presidency/>]

Security Council Members Support Dialogue

by Ronda Hauben

At the press conference at the beginning of the Kazakhstan presidency of the Security Council for the month of January 2018, Kairat Umarov, the Kazakhstan Ambassador to the UN, said that the Security Council meeting on non-proliferation would provide a helpful alternative on how to deal with the problem on the Korean Peninsula. He was proposing that “trust and confidence building” would provide a basis to resolve such conflicts.

Presiding at the January 18 Security Council meeting on non-proliferation, the President of Kazakhstan, Abdrakhmanov Nazarbayev presented a statement about his proposal for an alternative process to deal with nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. He gave the example of his country which had owned what he said was the world’s fourth largest nuclear arsenal transitioning his country to a nuclear-free status voluntarily. President Nazarbayev called on other nations with nuclear weapons to follow his country’s example. In the process he proposed that “the way to counter the threat of nuclear weapons throughout the world is through trust.” He called for a “revival of political trust and

systematic dialogue.” He described meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump and discussing the issue, and offering “to engage in mediation and provide a platform for negotiations should the need arise among stakeholders.”¹

A part of his proposal was the call for the participation of the U.S., Russia and China in seeking a solution to the North Korean issues. He proposed that “We advocate that the five nuclear-weapon states grant security assurances to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea as a key prerequisite for establishing an atmosphere of trust for Pyongyang to return to the negotiating table.”

This was different from just calling for “trust” as a means for a solution. Considering that the U.S. provides a nuclear umbrella to the Republic of Korea and Japan as part of its alliance with them in opposition to the DPRK, it is significant that the President of Kazakhstan recognized the need for guarantees to the DPRK that nuclear weapons will not be used against it.

The Kazakhstan president also recognized the need for the “great nuclear Powers” to lead by example in WMD reduction. However, he recognized the contradiction that will occur “if the great nuclear Powers state that they intend to maintain and strengthen their nuclear capacities and prevent others from acquiring the same.” He said, “I believe that that will backfire.”

It is rare but helpful that the need to reduce not increase or upgrade the capabilities of the nuclear powers was recognized.

These issues are important to understand as a basis for “trust.” But “trust” cannot replace actual efforts to downgrade the nuclear threat posed by the five nuclear-weapon states which are the permanent members of the UN Security Council.

This concern was also recognized in the presentation by Sergey Lavrov, the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation. He referred to a problem that he said occurred at the 2015 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, which he characterized as “the misguided and dangerous trend prevailing at the time involving attempts to compel nuclear Powers to abandon their nuclear arsenals without accounting for their security interests or strategic realities.”

Lavrov explained that “the total eradication of nuclear weapons is possible only in a context of comprehensive, full disarmament, with equitable, equal and indivisible security for all, including those possessing nuclear weapons....” He referred to Russia and China’s proposals for a “road map aimed at reaching an exclusively peaceful settlement” of the nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula.

Other proposals from the Security Council meeting included from Bolivia’s Ambassador Llorentty Soliz who pointed to “political dialogue” as the only way to achieve the denuclearization of the region.” Llorentty Soliz proposed the need for “the development of mutual confidence building measures.” And he complimented “the willingness shown by the Governments of the Republic of Korea and of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to begin negotiations in order to facilitate the attendance of a North Korean delegation in the upcoming Winter Olympics and the participation of both countries in the inaugural ceremony under the same flag.”

Among other comments was one from Sweden’s Ambassador Skoog who maintained:

“...(S)anctions alone will not solve the current crisis on the Korean peninsula.” The Swedish Ambassador noted that, “We welcome the developments on the peninsula, including the steps taken to reopen channels of communication, such as military to military dialogue. That is an important means to avoid misunderstanding and reduce tensions. We also welcome the decision of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to participate in the Olympic Games. Those are positive developments. It is important to seize that window of opportunity and support all efforts that can lead to denuclearization and peaceful relations on the Korean peninsula.”

Cote d’Ivoire also welcomed the “thaw in the relations between the two Koreas....” Ambassador Tanoh-Boutchoue of Cote d’Ivoire proposed that “That thaw augurs well for the Olympic Winter Games in South Korea. It should be welcomed and encouraged in order to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.”

Ambassador Alemu of Ethiopia noted that “It is increasingly apparent that there is no other option but a peaceful and diplomatic path to resolving the crisis in the Korean peninsula.... In that regard, we

welcome the recent high-level intra-Korean talks and the agreement reached to ease military tensions, hold military-to-military talks and reopen the inter-Korean military hotline, which we hope will help to reduce tensions on the Korean peninsula. We also welcome the agreement reached between the United States and the Republic of Korea to postpone their joint military exercises.”

China’s contribution to the meeting from Ambassador Wu Haitao was to encourage the resolution of “non-proliferation hotspot issues by political and diplomatic means.” He applauded the very recent positive changes that have emerged on the Korean Peninsula. “All parties should make a concerted effort to maintain the hard-won momentum of reduced tensions, create the conditions for relaunching dialogue and negotiations and return the nuclear issue of the Korean Peninsula to dialogue and negotiations,” he said.

China’s Representative also referred to the “suspension-for-suspension initiative and two-track approach as well as the road map jointly proposed by Russia and China” as “realistic and feasible” for “resolving the nuclear issue of the Korean Peninsula.”

While other issues were also raised at the meeting, it is significant to see how much support there was for the current inter-Korean dialogue that has taken place between the DPRK and the ROK.

Sometimes the UN serves as a venue where ideas and proposals for a more peaceful resolution of difficult tensions are proposed and discussed with some seriousness. If only it happened more often and mechanisms for implementation were developed.

Note:

1. The quotes used in this article are from the transcript of the January 18, 2018 Security Council meeting S/PV.8160 at the UNSC website. The url is:

http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/PV.8160

[Editor's Note: The following article first appeared on January 21, 2019 on the netizenblog at: <https://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2019/01/21/hungarian-ambassador-to-un-sponsors-opera/>.]

Hungarian Ambassador to UN Sponsors Opera Performance for UN Delegates

by Ronda Hauben

Several years ago I had the privilege of visiting Budapest, Hungary and attending both an opera and a ballet. The prices for the tickets were low compared to U.S. prices and the performances were top notch. When I returned home I vowed to attend the opera in Lincoln Center when I could, which was not so often given the higher prices for the tickets.

One of the cultural highlights of 2018 was a special event sponsored in part by the Hungarian Mission to the UN. At the end of October through the beginning of November, 2018, the amazing event was that the Hungarian State Opera and the Hungarian National Ballet came to New York making top notch performances available to New Yorkers. The U.S. tour by the Hungarian artists was initiated on the occasion of the renovation of the Hungarian State Opera House

On October 30, the Hungarian State Opera opened their visit to New York with a performance of Ferenc Erkel's *Bank Ban* (The Vice-roy Bank). The evening represented a splendid continuation of the many cultural salons held at the Hungarian Mission to the UN to celebrate the music and other cultural achievements of Hungary. It was therefore fitting that Katalin Annamaria Bogyay, the Hungarian Ambassador to the UN opened the program on October 30 at the Koch Theater in New York's Lincoln Center.

Ambassador Bogyay told the audience that this performance in New York was part of the 2018 celebration of Hungary's National Day. She explained that the performance provided her with the opportunity to invite ambassadors and other leaders of the United Nations to be part of the evening so as to celebrate Hungary's national day together with drama and music.

The Ambassador described the role music and culture has played in the Hungarian struggle against oppression. She also recalled how the libretto for the opera which was written in Hungarian had been censored in Hungary for a long time.

The opera is based on a 13th Century historical event when the Hungarian people fought against foreign oppression. The opera presented the abuse of the people of Hungary by Queen Gertrud of Merania who came to Hungary via her marriage to King Endre. Accompanying Queen Gertrud in the Hungarian Court were many of her Meranian retainers. They came with her to Hungary and she entertained them instead of attending to the obligation to alleviate the hardships in the lives of her Hungarian subjects. The result was widespread popular discontent with the activities of the Court.

The opera recounts the tragic story of how the Queen and her brother schemed against the wife of Viceroy Bank who was a popular leader opposing the suffering of the Hungarian People. The opera documents how such treachery can take its toll on those trying to challenge ruthless leaders, but it also demonstrates the resistance of those who oppose the cruelty and praises their efforts.

The cast, the performance and its staging were outstanding. The music was lovely. Also there were subtitles written in English and Hungarian for those who couldn't understand the Hungarian performance. This opening program was the beginning of a series of several other performances by the Hungarian State Opera in Lincoln Center along with some performances by the Hungarian National Ballet. Also a Gala Concert performed on November 4, 2018 featured selections from different operas and from different ballets providing a broad panorama of Hungarian culture for the New York audience. Several of the selections presented were greeted with enthusiast 'bravos' by members of the audience. The tour by the Hungarian artists was a demonstration of how music and art can help the UN encourage the struggle for peace and against tyranny.

[Editor's Note: The following article first appeared on January 27, 2019 on the netizenblog at: <https://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2019/01/27/korea-society-with-glyn-ford/>.]

Korea Society Sponsors Conversation with Glyn Ford on his Recent Book *Talking with North Korea*

by Ronda Hauben

On Friday, January 25 the Korea Society in New York had a program featuring Glyn Ford, former U.K. Labour Party member of the European Parliament (1984–2009), discussing his new book *Talking to North Korea: Ending the Nuclear Standoff* published in 2018 by Pluto Press.

The format for the program was a conversation with Korea Society senior director Stephen Noerper.

Ford said he had visited North Korea almost 50 times in the past 20 years. As such he has a broad perspective of both the changes he has observed over that period and how to view the current developments on the Korean Peninsula.

Responding to a series of questions from Noerper, Ford pointed to the substantial change in North Korea he has seen since 2017 just after the second ICBM launch. That was a time of great hostility and high tension. There was a real prospect of slipping accidentally into a war. That was quite a dangerous period, he noted. Viewing the developments from that perspective, he pointed out that “it is amazing how quickly we have moved” to the current situation.

Ford also noted that before 2011, North Korea had been encouraged to follow the model of Libya, giving up its nuclear weapons. But one month before Kim Jong Un came to power in North Korea he saw the head of Libya killed in a very cruel way.

Ford made several references to what he felt were helpful considerations that were highlighted by being included in Kim Jong Un's 2019 New Year's speech. One such highlight was the emphasis put on

the need for a multilateral process as a way to resolve the conflict on the peninsula. He related how the North Koreans he knows speak about when the U.S. withdrew from the 1990s Agreed Framework, that was the end of the agreement. But when the U.S. withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) negotiated with Iran, it did not end there because the JCPOA had been negotiated with other countries which still backed it even after the U.S. withdrew.

Also, Ford pointed to the references in Kim's New Year's speech to North Korea's need to solve its energy problem and how Kim refers to tidal, wind and atomic power as possible ways, along with coal, that North Korea can provide part of a solution to its need for more energy.

Ford explained the advantage he had as a member of the British Labor Party. That gave him access to the Workers Party of Korea in North Korea.

During the question period, there was a question about what security guarantees would be needed to satisfy North Korea to make a deal about denuclearization. Once again Kim Jong Un's 2019 New Year's speech was helpful. It proposed that guarantees that were broader than the bilateral model of the U.S. negotiations with North Korea or with South Korea were needed. Instead a multilateral model was more appropriate. Ford pointed to the Iran deal which had a Security Council resolution, and various countries to provide security guarantees. In the case of North Korea that could include China, Russia, and South Korea.

Ford's discussion offered a way of looking at what is happening on the Korean Peninsula with optimism. In the past such optimism has been in short supply among many of those who are the usual advisers and commentators in the West about the Korean situation.

[Editor's Note: The following article first appeared on January 29, 2019 on the netizenblog at: <https://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2019/01/29/reviewing-kim-jong-uns-2019-new-years-speech/>.]

Reviewing Kim Jong Un's 2019 New Year's Speech

by Ronda Hauben

Kim Jong Un's 2019 New Year's Speech provides a valuable resource through which to understand the events of the past year and what we can expect in the coming year.¹

Kim opened his speech referring to "The year 2018" as "a historic year, in which remarkable changes took place in internal and external situations."

"Last year," he recalled referring to the history of the division of Korea "was a stirring year which witnessed a dramatic change unprecedented in the history of national division spanning over 70 years."

Explaining what made the year so remarkable, he writes:

With a determination to usher in an era of national reconciliation, peace and prosperity by putting an end to the abnormal state on the Korean Peninsula which had suffered a constant war crisis, we took proactive and bold measures to effect a great turn in north-south relations from the outset of last year.

He points to "eye-opening achievements which were unimaginable in the past," and were made in a "short time."

The events of last year, he proposes were "unprecedented events," which can be expanded by "thoroughly implementing the historic north-south declarations."

It is our steadfast will to eradicate military hostility between north and south and make the Korean Peninsula a durable and lasting peace zone.

Among the means to accomplish this goal, he maintains is "to actively promote multi-party negotiations for replacing the current cease fire on the Korean Peninsula with a peace mechanism in close

contact with the signatures to the armistice agreement so as to lay a lasting and substantial peace-keeping foundation.”

In particular, Kim Jong Un points to the “historic, first-ever DPRK-U.S. summit meeting and talks” that he believes “brought a dramatic turn in the bilateral relationship” between the U.S. and the DPRK, a relationship that he characterizes as “the most hostile on the earth.” The summit meeting and talks “made a great contribution to ensuring peace and security of the Korean Peninsula and the region,” Kim notes.

Based on that achievement, he proposes “to establish a new bilateral relationship that meets the demand of the new era as clarified in the June 12 DPRK-U.S. Joint Statement” to “build a lasting and durable peace regime and advance toward complete denuclearization.”

Referring to the “reality of north-south relations that made rapid progress last year,” Kim explains that he “wants to believe that our relations with the United States will bear good fruit this year, as inter-Korean relations have greeted a great turn, by the efforts of the two sides.”

He points to the “meeting and holding talks beneficial to both sides with the U.S. president in June last year,” where “we exchanged constructive views and reached a consensus of understanding for a shortcut to removing each other’s apprehensions and resolving the entangled problems.”

Kim Jong Un emphasizes, “I am ready to meet the U.S. president again anytime, and will make efforts to obtain without fail results which can be welcomed by the international community.”

He provides, however, one important qualification to his offer. Kim noted:

But if the United States does not keep the promise it made in the eyes of the world, and out of miscalculation of our people’s patience, it attempts to unilaterally enforce something upon us and persists in imposing sanctions and pressure against our Republic, we may be compelled to find a new way for defending the sovereignty of the country and the supreme interests of the state and for achieving peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula.

One analyst points to this statement as being probably deliberately vague, but yet offering the U.S. a precaution in how it acts with respect to the attitude the “dialogue partners” bring to the negotiations.² As Kim argues earlier in his New Year’s address, “nothing is impossible to a willing heart, and dialogue partners will reach the destinations that are beneficial to each other without fail if they put forward fair proposals on the principle of recognizing and respecting each other by abandoning their dogged insistence broad mindedly and conduct negotiations with a proper stand and the will to settle issues.”

Kim Jong Un demonstrates that he doesn’t underestimate the challenges and difficulties that lie ahead. But by recognizing the important progress made in 2018, it becomes clear that further progress has a strong foundation to build on, and thus can be an achievable goal.

Notes:

1. “DPRK Leader Kim Jong-Un’s 2019 New Year Address,” January 3, 2019 at:

<http://www.zoominkorea.org/dprk-chair-man-kim-jong-uns-2019-new-year-address/>

2. Robert Carlin, “Hints for 2019: Kim Jong Un’s New Year’s Address” at:

<https://www.38north.org/2019/01/rcarlin010319/>

[Editor’s Note: The following article first appeared on January 31, 2019 on the netizenblog at: <https://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2019/01/31/on-korea-in-press-conference-at-un/>.]

UN Secretary General Treats the Question of the Korean Peninsula in his New Year’s Press Conference

by Ronda Hauben

UN Secretary General, António Guterres held his first press conference of the New Year on January 18, 2019 in the press briefing room at UN Headquarters in New York City.

The press conference covered a number of issues. In his introductory remarks, Secretary General Guterres described how in the 1990s he had an unrealistic expectation that the problems of the world would be solved by “globalization and the new technology.”¹ But this was “a naïve sense.” Now he sees that the result of the last 20 years of globalization was a disappointment especially for those “left behind.” This reality needs attention and action.

The trouble with Secretary General Guterres’ emphasis, however, is that it stressed the negative. Events like the Candlelight Revolution in South Korea in 2016-2017, the inter-Korean summits in 2018 between South Korea and North Korea, and the June 12, 2018 Summit between the U.S. and the DPRK, are significant events of our times. These are hopeful events which provide a basis for the coming year to be one where long standing problems and conflicts that for many years the UN has not succeeded in solving, are within reach of some resolution.

While what Guterres described is one possible phenomena of our current times, it would be more all sided to include some description of more positive developments like those that occurred on the Korean Peninsula. This would have provided a way of including some review of the role the UN played in making these possible, including for example the UN Olympic Truce² during the winter games at Pyeongchang, South Korea, in 2018.

A few questions raised by journalists during the press conference also called the Secretary General’s attention to the situation on the Korean Peninsula. One question was about the current sanctions and whether some relief from them was possible to help encourage some steps toward denuclearization by North Korea.³

The journalist also pointed to the fact that humanitarian aid had been cut by the sanctions. The journalist asked the Secretary General for his view of Japan’s statement that it was too early in the dialogue process to grant humanitarian exemptions to North Korea.

The Secretary General responded explaining that there is a clear distinction between humanitarian aid and other areas of negotiations in a conflict. That humanitarian aid should be provided whenever it is possible and it must be exempt from political considerations.⁴

But then the Secretary General Guterres called for a roadmap for the activities in resolving the conflict and contradicting himself, said the two aspects of the resolution should be linked as part of the roadmap.⁵

Another question on the conflict was whether the Secretary General would consider sending an envoy to North Korea as he did in 2017 when he sent Jeffery Feltman to persuade North Korea to give up their nuclear weapons. Or would the Secretary General consider making a trip himself?⁶ His response was that since the U.S. and the DPRK were both willing to negotiate, it was to encourage that to happen not to have any other initiatives just to get into news articles. Such initiatives are not needed. And he again called for a roadmap to help establish a sense of predictability about the process of the negotiations.⁷

But Jeffrey Feltman's trip showed that the UN can contribute to peace efforts, while the do-nothing mode during some periods of UN activity just contributed to letting the peace efforts deteriorate.

Lately, however, when I have gone to programs outside of the UN where there were efforts to analyze what is needed to promote peace on the Korean Peninsula, I have seen members of the UN staff or officials attending the programs. It seems there is an effort by the UN Secretariat to understand what is happening and hopefully to be able to contribute constructively. Perhaps if the Secretary General held more frequent press conferences at UN headquarters as was the situation in the past, that could help to clarify what contributions the Secretariat could make to the efforts toward peace on the Korean Peninsula.

When I first came to the UN in October 2006, it was common practice for the Secretary General to hold monthly press conferences in the press briefing room. Over the years, however, the practice has changed. Lately, press conferences with the Secretary General are not only less frequent, but they have also diminished in length and breadth. The New Year's press conference with the Secretary General in the press briefing room where a number of journalists were called on to ask their questions was indeed a relatively unusual occasion. Will the Secretary General have more like this? Or will he slip back to his more common practice of coming to the podium of the stakeout area of the

Security Council where he introduces a subject and then takes questions from a few journalists.

To start off the New Year with a substantial press event as this, was a welcomed event and one which hopefully signals a desire on the part of the Secretary General for an improved interaction between the Secretary General and the UN press corps.

Notes:

1. Full transcript Press Conference:

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/press-encounter/2019-01-18/secretary-generals-press-conference> The Secretary General said: “When I served in government in Portugal in the 1990s, there was a sense – a naïve sense as it turned out – that globalization and technological progress would solve all our problems in the world and the benefits would ultimately reach all.”

2. Olympic Truce: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olympic_Truce

3. Question: “Thank you, Secretary General. I’m Motokura Kazushige, Japan. My question is about DPRK (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea). So, what will happen next will have much to do with the ongoing meeting between DPRK, U.S. high ranking officials today in Washington. But I’d like to ask you, if...do you think it’s a good time to start...from the point of view of the United Nations, it’s good time to start discussing easing sanctions of Security Council against DPRK to push this process of denuclearization forward? And, also, what would be your opinion about restarting humanitarian aid for DPRK? So, last years, there have been lot of effort to restart the humanitarian...addressing humanitarian necessity in DPRK, but, for example, Japan is strongly...well, Japan is still saying that it’s too early to apply humanitarian exemption for DPRK. What would be your opinion? Thank you.”

4. Secretary-General: “I like to separate things. Humanitarian aid is based on humanitarian principles, and the basic humanitarian principle is that humanitarian aid doesn’t follow political objectives. So, in our opinion, we should never refuse humanitarian aid to any country in the world in any circumstance for the people of that country, if the humanitarian aid can be distributed to the people of that country. This is clear for us in all circumstances. So, it’s not a matter applied to each country in each moment according to political observations.”

5. Secretary General: “Having said so, we believe it’s high time to make sure that the negotiations between the United States and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea start again seriously and that a roadmap is clearly defined for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. So, we wouldn’t advocate for any anticipation of other measures before a clear negotiation is put in place, aiming at the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula with a roadmap, and then, of course, the two things will be inevitably interlinked.”

6. Question: “Mr. Secretary General, I wanted to get back to North Korea. Many important discussions (are) going on in Washington today. Basically, do you think that in 2019, it will be possible to persuade North Korea to give up their weapons programs? You’ve come up with a suggestion a while ago to send an envoy to Pyongyang to try to open the door. Is this something that you’d be willing to do again, or would you, yourself, be willing to travel to Pyongyang to advance that dossier?”

7. Secretary-General: “I am not a supporter of having initiatives just to be in the newspapers. I think initiatives need to be taken when they are useful. At the present moment, I don’t think that it makes sense to try to push both the DPRK and the United States for a negotiation, because I believe both sides are willing to do so. And I believe that the DPRK has already accepted that the objective of the negotiation, a central objective of the negotiation would be the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. So, we encourage both countries to move on with the negotiations. I think we need a clear roadmap, as I said, to clarify things and to allow to know exactly what the next steps will be and to have predictability in the way negotiations take place. But I don’t think the UN at the present moment can have much added value. I think it’s important for the two parties to come together in an effective way...”

[Editor’s Note: The following article first appeared on January 23, 2019 on the netizenblog at: <https://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2019/01/23/in-memory-of-dumisani-kumalo/>.]

In Memory of Dumisani Kumalo, South African Ambassador to the UN

by Ronda Hauben

My delegation believes that silence on the situation in the Middle East is more dangerous than even meetings where there might be a raising of temperatures or heat.

Dumisani Kumalo

It was with great sadness that I learned the news of the passing of Dumisani Kumalo on Sunday, January 20, 2019. Ambassador Kumalo had been appointed by Nelson Mandela in 1999 to serve as South Africa’s UN Ambassador, which he did until February 2009.

For me it was the end of an era when, ten years ago, Dumisani Kumalo left the UN. At that time, a farewell party held on the 4th floor in the Delegates Lounge, demonstrated why he was so special a figure at the UN. A number of delegates attended, some with their wives or husbands as well.

In the brief speech he gave to his friends and colleagues who had come to say how much he would be missed, Kumalo described how as a child growing up in apartheid South Africa his father told him that help for the people of South Africa in their fight against apartheid would come from the UN – from the United Nations. Little did his father know, Kumalo said, that the young boy would become the Ambassador from South Africa at the United Nations.

The significance of this memory, Kumalo explained, was that it was an example of the hope that many people around the world have in the UN. This is why it is so important, he said, that people at the UN strive to live up to that hope.

What Ambassador Kumalo represented at the UN is something I have found rare among UN officials. He was someone with a vision of the UN being the champion of the people. Moreover, he was willing to struggle against those for whom the UN only meant power politics rather than the fight for a better world.

One of my most memorable experiences at the UN was in early January 2007 when Kumalo stepped down as the head of the *G77 and China*. He was practically in tears as he recounted how during the South African presidency of the *G77 and China*, there had been a series of struggles against the U.S. Ambassador John Bolton's view of how to restructure the UN. The *G77* fought for a multilateral UN and won some important battles.

Kumalo was then leaving but one scene of struggle, the *G77*, to enter another, a new set of battles. As the Ambassador for South Africa, he was beginning a two year term (January 2007-December 2008) when South Africa became one of the ten elected members of the UN Security Council. I watched the first meeting of the newly constituted Security Council of 2007. I was surprised and delighted to see how several of the elected members (as opposed to the five permanent members)

took up to outline the problems they saw with the Security Council and the need for change.

When South Africa took over the rotating presidency of the Security Council for the month of March 2007, Kumalo made it clear he was there to answer questions from journalists, which he did diligently through the course of the month long presidency. Often during his term on the Security Council he shared his frustration when the Council failed to issue a needed statement or resolution. One such example, was when in January 2008, the Council failed to express its support for Palestinians suffering because of Israel's closure of the crossing points into Gaza.

Another striking memory is of the South African and Indonesian Ambassadors' speaking out in response to the British Ambassador's proposal that the Security Council only have consultations which are closed meetings, rather than having open meetings on the issue of Palestine. The British Ambassador argued the differences among the Ambassadors led to sharp exchanges. Kumalo disagreed, stating unequivocally that the disagreements made it ever more important to have open meetings as this was a subject of vital interest and importance to the public.

There is a body of international law and decisions of the International Court of Justice (ICJ). This forms a framework of law to determine issues the Security Council is considering. During South Africa's 2007-2008 term on the Security Council, several of the P-5 Ambassadors, especially the U.S. Ambassador, demonstrated little regard for this framework in determining the U.S. position on the issues before the Security Council. Kumalo's position would in general be consistent with the tenets of international law and the ICJ legal decisions.

For example, when Israel closed the crossing points to Gaza, the U.S. supported Israel in efforts at the Security Council, claiming that Israel's action was acceptable given its right to defend itself in retaliation for rockets being fired into Southern Israel from Gaza. Kumalo and others on the Security Council condemned Israel's actions as a form of collective punishment, forbidden under international law. Kumalo also argued that Israel as the occupying state had obligations to support and

provide for the well being of the Palestinians under the provisions of international law.

Kumalo supported the principles he argued were in line with international law. Often he would be criticized in South African newspapers for his actions. An example was his opposition to interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign country. When there was pressure in the Security Council to become involved with the vote for President in Zimbabwe, Kumalo argued this was not a proper issue for the Security Council to become involved with. He maintained that there were other UN organs that could be involved, not the Security Council.

When Miriam McKeba died, the South African Mission to the UN held a program to honor her life and contributions. A number of delegates spoke describing the important role McKeba had played in the struggle for South African independence. Kumalo's talk encouraged people to carry on her struggle and to dance to her music.

At his farewell gathering at the UN in 2009, Ambassador Kumalo danced with his guests. His farewell presented the challenge to others to carry on the struggle that he had been such an important part of in his ten years of service as the Ambassador to the UN from South Africa.

[Editor's Note: The following article first appeared on January 30, 2018 on the netizenblog at: <https://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2018/01/30/rapporteur-questions-legality/>]

UN Rapporteur Michael Lynk Questions Legality of Israeli Occupation

by Ronda Hauben

In 2016, the UN Human Rights Council appointed S. Michael Lynk, a law professor at Western University in London, Ontario, Canada, as the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied since 1967.

In October 2017, Lynk issued his first Report to the UN. This report raises a fundamental question about the nature of the Israeli occupation of Palestine. That question is:

Whether Israel's role as occupant of Palestinian territory has now reached the point of illegality under international law?

The Report establishes the criteria for the legality of an occupation under international law. Then it uses as precedent the International Court of Justice case regarding South Africa's occupation of Namibia. In that case, the International Court of Justice decided that South Africa did not satisfy the requirements for the occupation to be a legal occupation. As a result of that judgment, the international community was obligated to pressure South Africa to cease its occupation.

Lynk's criteria for a legal occupation are the satisfaction of four requirements. They are:

1. There is an absolute prohibition against annexation of any of the occupied territory.
2. The length of the occupation must be finite, meaning it must be ended in a reasonable period of time.
3. It must be carried out in good faith.
4. It must be carried out in a way that meets the best interests of the occupied.

Stated more formally, these principles are:

1. The Belligerent Occupier Cannot Annex Any of the Occupied Territory.
2. The Belligerent Occupation Must Be Temporary, and Cannot Be Either Permanent or Indefinite.
3. The Belligerent Occupation Must Be Carried Out in a Way to satisfy that it serves the best interests of the Occupied.
4. The Belligerent Occupier must administer the occupied territory in good faith including acting in full compliance with its duties and obligations under international law and as a member of the United Nations.

In his second Report, the Rapporteur takes up to demonstrate that Israel fails to satisfy all four of these requirements.

For example, Lynk proposes that the "extraordinary duration" of Israel's occupation of Palestine would be enough to place Israel in vio-

lation of this critical element for legality of occupation, especially as no persuasive justification has been provided for the excessive longevity of the occupation.

In his Report the Rapporteur makes the case documenting how the role of Israel as Occupier in the Palestinian territories “had crossed a red line” and that there is a need to free the Palestinian people from this illegal occupation.

In his conclusion, Lynk makes recommendations including:*

...that the Government of Israel bring a complete end to the 50 years of occupation of the Palestinian territories in as expeditious a time period as possible, under international supervision.

...that the United Nations General Assembly:

a. Commission a United Nations study on the legality of Israel’s continued occupation of the Palestinian territory;

b. Consider the advantages of seeking an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the question of the legality of the occupation;

c. Consider commissioning a legal study on the ways and means that UN Member States can and must fulfill their obligations and duties to ensure respect for international law, including the duty of non-recognition, the duty to cooperate to bring to an end a wrongful situation and the duty to investigate and prosecute grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions.

d. Consider the adoption of a Uniting for Peace resolution with respect to the Question of Palestine, in the event that there is a determination that Israel’s role as occupier is no longer lawful.

Lynk explained several reasons why the determination would play a helpful role in this situation:

First, it would encourage member states to take all reasonable steps to prevent or discourage national institutions, organizations and corporations within their jurisdiction from engaging in activities that would invest in, or sustain, the occupation. Second, it would encourage

national and international courts to apply the appropriate laws within their jurisdiction that would prevent or discourage cooperation with entities that invest in, or sustain, the occupation. Third, it would invite the international community to review its various forms of cooperation with the occupying power as long as it continues to administer the occupation unlawfully. Fourth, it would provide a solid precedent for the international community when judging other occupations of long duration. Most of all, such a determination would confirm the moral importance of upholding the international rule of law when aiding the besieged and the vulnerable.

While Rapporteur reports only document, analyze and recommend, they can carry a moral force and they can alert the governments and peoples of the world to injustices and situations that need attention and action toward their resolution. Prof Lynk in his second Report helps direct attention to the possibility that the Israeli-Palestine dispute and conflict lacks a solution because it is not properly understood. There are many calls for a peaceful resolution and for talks between the Israeli and Palestinian leaders, but maybe those are not possible as long as Israel is mistakenly seen as a legitimate occupier of the Palestinian Territories.

Note:

*Quotes in this article are from the Report “Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied Since 1967.” The Report is available online. The URL is: <https://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2019/02/01/on-israels-annexation-of-palestinian-territory-michael-lynks-report/>

[Editor's Note: The following article first appeared on February 1, 2019 on the netizenblog at: <https://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2019/02/01/on-israels-annexation-of-palestinian-territory-michael-lynks-report/>.]

On Israel's Annexation of Palestinian Territory: Michael Lynk's Report

by Ronda Hauben

In 2017 Michael Lynk presented his first Report to the United Nations General Assembly. Lynk's official title is the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied Since 1967. The 2017 report analyzed the obligations of an occupying nation and what happens when the occupier fails to fulfill the requirements of a legitimate occupier.¹

Lynk's report specified criteria for a legal occupation. They are the satisfaction of four requirements:

1. There is an absolute prohibition against annexation of any of the occupied territory.
2. The length of the occupation must be finite, meaning it must be ended in a reasonable period of time.
3. It must be carried out in good faith.
4. It must be carried out in a way that meets the best interests of the occupied.

Lynk demonstrated that Israel has failed to meet the requirements of a legal occupation, and he called for several actions by the UN. Among these actions was that the General Assembly commission a UN study on the legality of Israel's continued occupation of the Palestinian territory.

He proposed that one of the reasons that it has not been possible to resolve the Palestinian – Israeli conflict is because Israel is mistakenly seen as the legitimate occupier of the Palestinian Territories.

Lynk proposes that a more accurate understanding of the facts and how they apply given the principles of international law could help member states to act in accord with their obligations under International

law, and it could help to clarify what actions are possible at the UN and the International Court of Justice.

Lynk reported at a UN press briefing on Oct 24, 2018 that there has been considerable interest in his 2017 Report and that he had been invited to present the keynote at conferences discussing the issues it raises.

Recently, Lynk presented a related report. Even though Israel will not allow him to visit the area he is to investigate, in this 2018 Report he documented conditions based on information he gathered by various means including correspondence, video conferences, and meetings held in Amman, Jordan. Among his conclusions is that Israel “has twice formally annexed occupied territory under its control: East Jerusalem (1967, 1980) and the Golan Heights (1981).”²

Also, his 2018 report documents the deterioration of the Human Rights situation since his last report. And he described some of the gross ways that Israel has treated the Palestinians during the period since 2017.

In the process of documenting some of the most urgent concerns he identified, he observed the continuing expansion and development of the settlements, and the proposal of legislation and actions by various officials which are aimed at formally annexing parts of the West Bank and other Palestinian Territory.

Beyond his 2017 report, the 2018 report partly focused on an analysis of the issue of “the question of annexation, examining both the applicable legal framework as well as the current situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT).”

In modern international law, Lynk points out there is a general prohibition against annexation. Also Lynk documents several different ways that Israel has “entrenched its de facto annexation of the West Bank” toward “imposing intentionally-irreversible changes to occupied territory proscribed by international humanitarian law.” He refers specifically to the 230 settlements, to the 400,000 Israeli settlers, to the extension of Israeli laws to the West Bank to the unequal access to resources, to a discriminatory legal regime, and to “explicit statements by a wide circle of senior Israeli political leaders calling for the formal annexation of parts or all of the West Bank.”³

Lynk describes some of how the UN has helped stop some of the acts of annexation around the world since its founding. Particularly pointing to the principles of international law relating to occupation, Lynk writes, “Annexation is utterly incompatible with the foundational principles of the laws of occupation, which stipulates that the occupying power’s tenure is inherently temporary, not permanent or even indefinite, and that it must rule the territory as a trustee for the benefit of the protected population under occupation, and not for its own aggrandizement. Annexation is also profoundly in breach of the fundamental right to self-determination, an ‘erga omnes’ obligation under international law.”⁴

In his 2018 report, Lynk documents a number of specific ways that Israel’s actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories are effectively carrying out or have carried out an annexation of “a significant part of the West Bank and is treating this territory as its own.”⁵

On pages 18 and 19 of his 2018 report, Lynk lists a series of recommendations for Israel and for the International Community. To Israel he recommends compliance with international standards and laws, and to the international community he recommends holding Israel to international standards, accountability and to the obligations of international humanitarian law.

And Lynk recommends the international community “commission a United Nations study on the legality of Israel’s annexation and continued occupation of the Palestinian territory.”

For two years in a row, Michael Lynk has issued reports that give a better understanding of the Israel-Palestine question which may help in the effort to find a just and lasting solution to this major outstanding question.

Notes:

1. “UN Rapporteur Michael Lynk Questions Legality of Israeli Occupation,” Ronda Hauben, January 30, 2018.
2. See p. 7 https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/AboutUs/NY/G_A73/A_73_45717.docx
3. See pp. 7-8 https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/AboutUs/NY/GA73/A_73_45717.docx
4. See p. 8 https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/AboutUs/NY/G_A73/A_73_45717.docx

[Editor's Note: The following article first appeared on January 21, 2019 on the netizenblog at: <https://blogs.taz.de/netizenblog/2019/01/21/un-sc-presidency-on-frozen-dialogue/>]

Tackling the Problem of Frozen Dialogue

by Ronda Hauben

To start off the new year of Security Council meetings, the Dominican Republic as President of the Security Council for the month of January 2019 held a press conference for UN correspondents on January 2.

The Dominican Republic is one of the five new members of the Council elected for the two year term of 2019 to 2020. The other four elected members are Germany, Indonesia, South Africa and Belgium.

Its position in the monthly Security Council rotation put the Dominican Republic in line for the January 2019 presidency. Mr José Singer Weisinger had been appointed as a special representative by the President of the Dominican Republic to be the nation's representative on the Security Council. Mr Singer welcomed journalists to the press conference explaining that though the Dominican Republic is a founding member of the United Nations, this is the first time the nation has had a term on the Security Council.

He also explained that the practice of his country on the Council will be guided by the principles of its foreign policy and by the principles of the UN Charter.

After reviewing the planned schedule for the activities of the Council during the month of January, he opened the floor for questions.

Several of the questions referred to North Korea (the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)) and Palestine even though

there were no specific references to them in the schedule of the month's planned topics.

Referring to the special representative's introduction, a question was asked about the fact that the UN Charter requires certain due process procedures on the part of the Security Council but the Security Council does not act in accord with these charter obligations.¹

Specifically in Article 32 of Chapter 5 of the UN Charter, the Security Council is directed to invite any Member of the United Nations, if it is a party to a dispute under consideration by the Security Council, to the meeting where the dispute is being discussed so that the member can participate, without vote in the discussion relating to the dispute.²

In practice this would mean that the Security Council should invite to a meeting a country that is subjected to sanctions and would direct the Council to include that country in the discussion in the Council about the dispute. Such a process would make it possible for the Council to hear the views of all countries that are involved in the dispute the Security Council is considering.

In response to such questions raised by journalists at the press conference, the special representative of the Dominican Republic emphasized that "we have to listen to the affected party. I totally agree."

Among the other conflicts referred to in questions from journalists were conflicts in Yemen, Venezuela and the Palestinian situation. The Security Council's lack of attention to North Korea in its proposed schedule for the month of January was a source of concern among several journalists who raised questions. One journalist asked the special representative for the Dominican Republic for his nation's response to Kim Jong Un's New Year's Speech promising a new form of response if the international community continues to impose sanctions on the DPRK. In response, the special representative emphasized that dialogue should be the only path toward solutions to conflicts and if dialogue has been frozen for any reason, that problem has to be dealt with and addressed. "There is no solution other than dialogue, at least we as a country don't see any other solution," explained Mr Singer.

Such statements suggest that there is the potential for more dialogue in the practice of the Security Council if new members to the

Council act in line with the principles of the UN Charter as Mr Singer indicated was the goal of the Dominican Republic.

Notes:

1. “Any Member of the United Nations which is not a Member of the Security Council or any state which is not a Member of the United Nations, if it is a party to a dispute under consideration by the Security Council, shall be invited to participate, without vote, in the discussion relating to the dispute....” From Chapter V Art. 32 of the UN Charter.

2. Article 32 also applies to inviting to the Security Council states who are not Members of the UN. It says, “The Security Council shall lay down such conditions as it deems just for the participation of a state which is not a Member of the United Nations.”

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