Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue 17  
Tokyo, Japan  
9–13 April 2006

Meeting Report

Overview

The seventeenth NEACD meeting took place in April 2006 in Tokyo. In partnership with the Japan Center for International Cooperation, this meeting was the largest and most ambitious of the NEACD sessions and was the catalyst for an intensive round of sideline meetings by senior diplomats from many of the countries who participate in the official Six-Party Talks.

Nature of Participation

The United States, Republic of Korea, and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea sent their chief representatives to the Six-Party Talks to participate directly in the NEACD meeting. The DPRK dispatched its largest and most senior group of participants ever. The delegation was headed by Kim Kye Gwan, a Vice Foreign Minister. There were another eight participants, including Ambassador Han Song-Ryol, Deputy Permanent Representative of the DPRK Mission to the United Nations in New York, and Mr. Jong Thae Yang, Deputy Director General of the Americas Department in the DPRK Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Representing the United States was Christopher Hill, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs and representing the Republic of Korea was Chun Young Woo, Deputy Foreign Minister.

Key Issues Discussed

The NEACD event was divided into three distinct phases, each of which addressed important policy issues that are anticipated to be on the agenda of the Six-Party Talks and that were proposed by member countries:

A special one-day workshop on the "Economic and Energy Development on the DPRK in the Framework of the Korean Peninsula Nuclear Issue" sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. A diverse group of economic experts, including representatives from World Bank and International Monetary Fund, discussed economic issues for the first time with North Korean representatives.

A session on nuclear verification during the main NEACD plenary meeting. Presentations were given by specialists from the Lawrence Livermore Nuclear Laboratory, the U.S. State Department’s Bureau of Verification, Compliance, and Implementation, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and the Republic of Korea’s Institute on Foreign Affairs and National Security.

A session devoted to examining the possible deconflicting of conventional forces on the Korean Peninsula at the Defense Information Sharing workshop that took place after the main NEACD meeting. Presentations were given by specialists from the Rand Corporation (U.S.) and the Republic of Korea Institute on National Unification (ROK).
Key Outcomes

The economic workshop has resulted in the establishment of a new Track II dialogue to encourage North Korea’s economic engagement and reforms with the outside world, which has received the approval of the North Korean government. Susan Shirk, the convener of NEACD, will lead a small group of specialists to Pyongyang in September 2006 at the invitation of the North Korean government to discuss this new dialogue and meet with economic specialists and ensure their participation.

Dr. Shirk discussed this new economic dialogue track idea with senior U.S. government and international financial institution officials in May 2006, who all strongly supported this mechanism and pointed out its importance in helping to formulate a more detailed understanding of the opaque North Korean economy and reinforce North Korea’s economic motivations to denuclearize.

Another important outcome of the NEACD meeting were detailed exchanges of ideas between Track I representatives and IGCC representatives as to how NEACD could further provide direct support to the official Six-Party Talk process. One important idea was for the convening of special NEACD working groups that would examine issues and provide proposals and assessments that would help officials in the Six Party Talks in their deliberations.

Atmosphere of the Meeting

There was plenty of lively discussion and debate among all the participants during these meetings. Most of the North Koreans actively joined in the discussions, asking questions of others as well as explaining their own country’s perspective. While the style was open and engaging, the substance of the North Korean remarks adhered strictly to official positions.

Outside of the official sessions, there was plenty of socializing among participants over meals and coffee-breaks. The North Koreans spent plenty of time interacting with their counterparts from the other five countries, especially the South Koreans. Many participants from Japan, the United States, and the Republic of Korea remarked that this was one of the first opportunities that they had to be able to get to interact with senior North Korean participants in both an informal and formal setting.

The presence of senior North Korean, U.S., and other representatives led to extensive international press coverage of the NEACD meeting. More than 100 media organizations were registered to cover the NEACD meeting. While details of discussions during the NEACD sessions were kept confidential, a press briefing was given by Dr. Shirk following the end of the meeting. Link to op-ed in San Diego Union-Tribune.

Background

Meeting annually, NEACD provides a "track II," or unofficial, forum where foreign and defense ministry policy-level officials, military officers, and academics from China, Russia, North and South Korea, Japan, and the United States are able to meet and frankly discuss regional security issues. Founded in 1993, the forum is considered the leading track II forum in Northeast Asia. At present there is no official "track I" multilateral process in Northeast Asia. The next NEACD and the Defense Information Sharing Study Project will convene in April 2007.
Agenda

Sunday, 9 April

7:00 p.m.
Welcome Reception and Dinner

Monday, 10 April

9:40 a.m.
Welcoming Remarks
Prof. Susan Shirk, IGCC

National Perspectives on Northeast Asian Security
10-minute presentations from each country, followed by a 50-minute question and answer period.

9:50 a.m.
People’s Republic of China
• Li Yang

11:00 a.m.
Russian Federation
• Vladimir Kalinin
• Alexander Timonin

Noon
Japan
• Morimoto Satoshi
• Tsuruoka Koji

1:00 p.m.
Lunch
2:30 p.m.

Nuclear Verification
10-minute presentations followed by a question and answer period.

"The Experiences of Nuclear Verification Around the World and the Lessons for the Korean Peninsula"
Zachary Davis, Lawrence Livermore Nuclear Laboratory

"Chinese Views of Nuclear Verification: General Perspectives and the Korean Peninsula"
Gu Guoliang, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

"Views on Nuclear Verification: General Perspectives on the Korean Peninsula"
Harry Heintzelman, U.S. Department of State

"ROK Views of Nuclear Verification: General Perspectives and the Korean Peninsula"
Choi Kang, ROK Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security

5:00 p.m.

Meeting Adjourns

6:30 p.m.

Dinner
Hosted by Yasuhisa Shiozaki, the Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
Speech and Q&A

Tuesday, 11 April

9:40 a.m.

National Perspectives on Northeast Asian Security, continued

9:50 a.m.

Republic of Korea
  • Chun Young-woo

11:00 a.m.

Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
Kim Kye Gwan
Noon
United States of America
Christopher Hill
1:00 p.m.
Lunch
3:00 p.m.
The Prospects for Track I and Track II Multilateral Diplomacy and the Future Development of NEACD
5:00 p.m.
Meeting Ends
6:30 p.m.
Farewell Dinner
Participant List
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