



# Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative

2015



Moving beyond the Asian Paradox  
Towards Peace and Cooperation in  
Northeast Asia



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Cooperation Initiative

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## REMARKS



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Just as Europe pioneered a framework for multilateral cooperation through the European Coal and Steel Community, later going on to establish the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM), I propose that we create a consultative body for nuclear safety in Northeast Asia.

Korea, China and Japan would spearhead the effort, with participation open not only to the United States and Russia but also North Korea and Mongolia.

It will also be necessary to expand regional cooperation with regard to various other issues, including disaster relief and rescue, climate change response and drug trafficking, and make efforts to lay the groundwork for lasting peace and prosperity.

I look forward to the active participation of neighboring countries in this Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative so that together we may usher in a new future for the region.

Address by President Park Geun-hye on the 69th Anniversary of Liberation (Seoul, August 15, 2014)

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# 1 Concept and Objectives

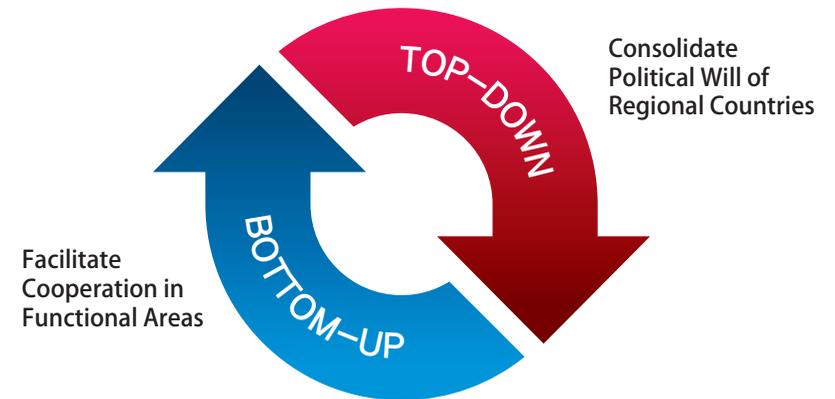
The Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI) is a key element of the *Trustpolitik* pursued by the Park Geun-hye administration. It is a future-oriented effort by the ROK Government to replace a structure of conflict and discord in the region with an order of dialogue and cooperation.

**NAPCI is a “process” which seeks to build an order of multilateral cooperation in the Northeast Asian region.**

- ✓ The initiative focuses not on immediately establishing a body for multilateral cooperation but rather it places more emphasis on the process of constantly fostering small yet meaningful forms of cooperation.
- ✓ It aims to gradually encourage a change in perception and attitudes of countries of the region with a view to eventually developing a shared understanding with regard to multilateral security cooperation.

**NAPCI aims to build up trust by cultivating a habit of dialogue and cooperation at various levels.**

- ✓ It takes a bottom-up approach seeking to induce the consolidation of political will on the part of governments in the region through dialogue and cooperation on soft security issues which are relatively less sensitive and do not represent a significant burden for the participating governments.



- ✓ At the same time, it takes a top-down approach seeking to ensure that once political will is created through regular high-level dialogues between governments, this will then facilitate cooperation in functional areas on particular issues.
- ✓ The initiative will lead to a mutually reinforcing effect, allowing for continued cooperation in functional and political areas.

**NAPCI seeks to put in place a framework for sustainable peace and prosperity in the Northeast Asian region.**

- ✓ NAPCI represents an endeavour, by nurturing an environment which serves to expand the scope and depth of multilateral cooperation, to lead to greater lasting peace and prosperity in Northeast Asia.
- ✓ It seeks, by providing a multilateral framework for the stable management of elements of discord, and by achieving a harmony between various forms of vision pursued by countries within the region, to open a new path of cooperation.

## NAPCI will contribute in positive ways to the efforts to resolve issues on the Korean Peninsula by encouraging the participation of North Korea.

- ✓ The initiative seeks, by encouraging the participation by North Korea in forms of cooperation in fields which are less politically sensitive, to eventually build momentum for dialogue to address pending issues including the North Korean nuclear issue.
- ✓ As North Korea sees the benefits of cooperation on particular issues or in certain functional areas and through direct experience of such cooperation, it is hoped that North Korea will soon voluntarily participate in various forms of cooperation in the region. NAPCI will seek to encourage this to become a habitual practice.
- ✓ As such cooperation makes progress, then it will ultimately serve to contribute not only to addressing Korean Peninsula issues but also to ensuring sustainable peace and prosperity in the region.

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## 2 Need for NAPCI

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### There is an ever-growing need for cooperation in Northeast Asia.

- ✓ The economics of Asian countries are achieving continued growth and are surging ahead to assume a central place in the world. The Northeast Asian region, which includes the second and third largest economies in the world, accounts for around 20 percent of the global economy. The region is also assuming ever greater influence in the world.
- ✓ However, the Asian paradox continues to be evident in Northeast Asia: the discrepancy between the growing economic interdependence in the region on the one hand and the relatively underdeveloped political and security cooperation on the other. Moreover, Northeast Asia currently lacks mechanisms for effective multilateral cooperation to deal with inter-state conflicts.

“Northeast Asia remains the crucial missing link in UN engagement with regional or sub-regional organizations under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. This is long overdue.”

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon,  
Remarks at the 9th East Asia Summit (EAS), November 13, 2014



- ✓ A lack of effective measures to address sources of conflict in the region such as historical and territorial issues as well as newly emerging common threats including environment and energy issues are hindering the efforts to fully maximize upon the potential for the development of the region.

**There is a need to make concerted efforts to effectively respond to transnational threats.**

- ✓ Transnational threats, which respect no national or regional boundaries, are ones that cannot be tackled by the efforts of a single country alone. It is desirable to seek to effectively deal with such issues through cooperative efforts.
- ✓ Global issues, such as Islamic extremism in the Middle East, drug-related crimes in Southeast Asia and in Central and South America, and the spread of new forms of contagious diseases in the African region, have an impact on Northeast Asia, whether directly or indirectly.
- ✓ There is a need to address such issues as transboundary air and marine pollution and an increase in cyber crime, through information sharing and the effective use of human and material resources.
- ✓ In particular, there is a need in Northeast Asia, a region in which there is a high concentration of nuclear power plants, to seek to work together for the safe management and development of nuclear power. This will be possible by sharing of information and the exchange of human and technological resources.
- ✓ To deal with unforeseen crises resulting from natural or human disasters, it is important to prepare in advance by building a mechanism for multinational and pan-governmental cooperation so that the countries in the region can promptly respond to and minimize the impact of crisis situations.

## REMARKS

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We rely too much on the conventional toolbox, with the narrow range of either bilateral means or realpolitik. If this pattern persists, there can be little hope for Northeast Asia in breaking out of the traditional security dilemma.

Now is the time for us to complement and reinforce our approach with a new mindset — that is, a collaborative, coordinated, future-oriented and sustainable regional cooperation.

For this to happen, we have to deal with the main obstacle hindering such cooperation, namely the lack of trust — by turning the trust deficit into a trust surplus and by promoting the habit or culture of multilateral dialogue.

Keynote Speech by H.E. Yun Byung-se Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative Forum  
(Seoul, October 28, 2014)

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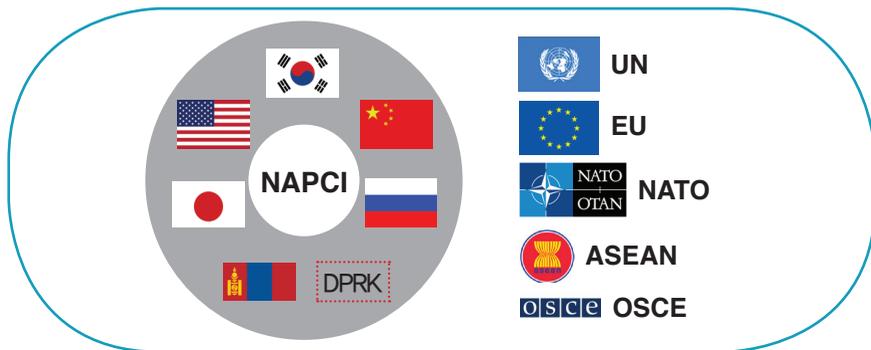


# 3 Partners and Agenda

Major countries of the region are participating in NAPCI and further expanding their cooperation.

NAPCI seeks to deepen cooperation among key countries in Northeast Asia and to expand the scope of partnership to include countries and organizations outside the region.

- ✓ NAPCI has the support and participation of major regional countries including the US, China, Japan, Russia, and Mongolia.
- ✓ Furthermore, the ROK Government is consolidating cooperative relations with key multilateral organizations which play a central role in peacebuilding at the regional and international level, such as the UN, the EU, NATO, and the OSCE.
- ✓ In the future also, with a view to fostering greater support for NAPCI in the international community, the ROK Government will seek to expand the scope of our partners of cooperation to include other regional cooperative mechanisms such as ASEAN.



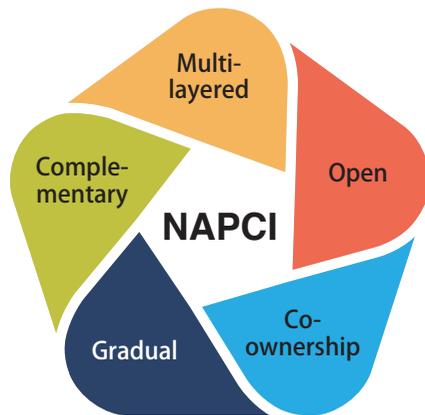
NAPCI will start with discussions on security issues that represent a common threat to the Northeast Asian region.

- ✓ The ROK Government plans to continue to further advance initiatives for cooperation on matters of common interest, including nuclear safety, energy security, climate change and the environment, disaster management, cyberspace, drug, and health issues.
- ✓ As the cooperation proceeds in soft security issues, and as common understanding amongst participating countries is built, NAPCI will seek to gradually expand the discussions to include hard security issues.



# 4 Guiding Principles

To ensure that all participating countries feel comfortable, NAPCI has taken a gradual and complementary approach. The initiative will be jointly pursued by countries in the region who share a sense of common ownership.



NAPCI adopts a gradual and step by step approach in fostering cooperation.

- ✓ NAPCI seeks to foster cooperation first among countries that are willing to participate, in fields relatively easy to embark on cooperation, and at a pace which is acceptable to all participating countries.
- ✓ NAPCI seeks, by securing recognition of the value of the multilateral cooperation in the region and by promoting a sense of mutual understanding, to transform the existing structure of mistrust and confrontation in the region into one of reconciliation and cooperation.

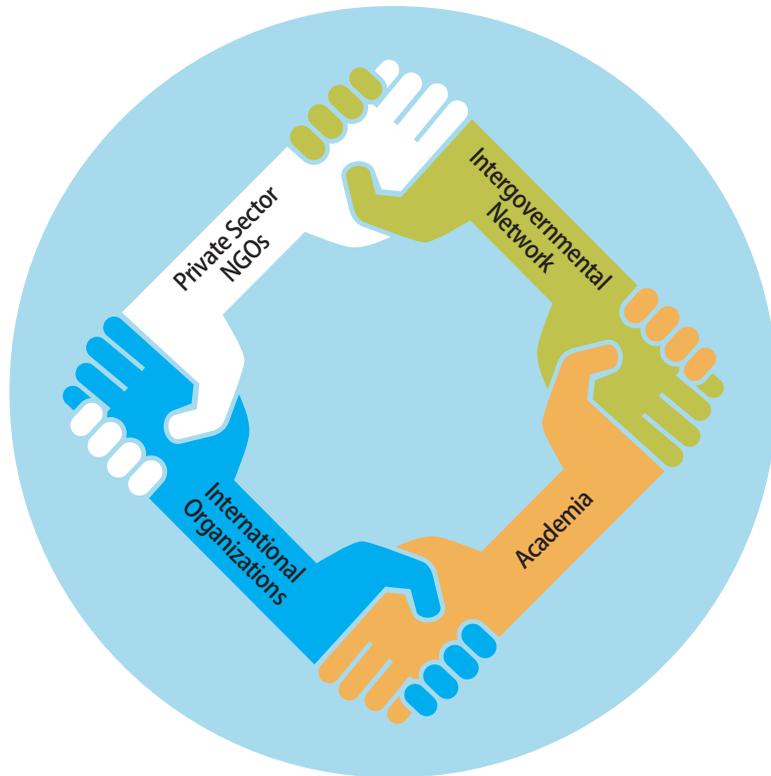
NAPCI complements and expands the existing cooperative mechanisms in the Asia-Pacific region.

- ✓ NAPCI seeks to create a mutually beneficial synergy effect, by fostering cooperative and complementary, not competitive, relations with existing forms of multilateral cooperation, such as the ROK-China-Japan trilateral cooperation, the Six-Party Talks, the ARF, and the EAS.
- ✓ NAPCI will endeavour to ensure that cooperation pursued by different multilateral cooperative mechanisms have a mutually reinforcing effect.
- ✓ It will play a role in bridging the “cooperation gap” constantly striving to identify fields in which cooperation is as yet rudimentary.



## NAPCI seeks to foster multidimensional cooperation on many levels.

- ✓ NAPCI seeks to provide a venue in which a range of actors can explore dialogue and cooperation on various levels.
- ✓ As it develops and pursues multi-layered mechanisms for cooperation, it hopes at the same time to create a synergy effect between inter-governmental cooperation and efforts made by experts in the private sector.



## NAPCI takes an open and flexible approach.

- ✓ NAPCI hopes to secure the participation of all countries in the Northeast Asian region, including North Korea, in the mechanism for dialogue and cooperation.
- ✓ With a view to expanding cross-regional partnerships, it will seek to strengthen ties on particular issues with other regional institutions such as in Southeast Asia and Europe.

## All participating countries have co-ownership.

- ✓ NAPCI will seek to ensure that all countries of the region, as co-architects, share a sense of co-ownership.
- ✓ The ROK will play the role of facilitator, who fosters an environment in which all participating countries can freely identify areas of interest and lead relevant discussions.



## REMARKS



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The Korean government’s “Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative” aims at a new order of peace and reconciliation in the region by transforming the dynamics of mistrust and conflict into the dynamics of trust and a cooperation.

If countries in the region start building up habits of cooperation from concrete and practical areas such as nuclear safety, climate action, and energy security, it will be possible to build a multilateral cooperation process not unlike the one in Europe.

**Keynote Address by President Park Geun-hye  
at the 7th World Policy Conference (Seoul, December 8, 2014)**

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# 5 Achievements in 2014 and Plans for 2015

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## Fostering International Consensus

### ✓ Securing the Support of the International Community

The ROK Government, actively pursuing high-level and summit diplomacy, has held NAPCI briefing sessions in major countries in the region, including the US, China, and Japan, on two occasions in each country.

Such efforts have served to further deepen understanding in the international community of NAPCI. In this way it has been able to secure the support not only of neighboring countries such as the US, China, Japan, Russia, and Mongolia but also of many other countries such as Germany, France, the UK, Canada, Australia, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Furthermore, international and regional organizations such as the UN, the EU, ASEAN, NATO, the OSCE, the EAS, and CICA have expressed their willingness to actively take part in the initiative.

This year also the ROK Government will continue to exert active efforts to secure further support for NAPCI in the international community such as by holding briefing sessions in various countries.

“We welcomed the initiative for Peace and Cooperation in Northeast Asia by the Republic of Korea to contribute significantly to the sustainable peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula and beyond.”

Chairman’s Statement of the 9th EAS, November 13, 2014

### ✓ Holding of Track 1.5 Meetings

A considerable number of international seminars have been held bringing together representatives from the governmental and non-governmental sector, such as the ROK-NATO NAPCI Seminar on July 9, 2014; the Joint ROK-EU Seminar held on September 18-19; and the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Forum held on October 28-30. These have served to further foster consensus on NAPCI among experts and to gather opinions on feasible areas of cooperation and the future direction for NAPCI.

In 2015 also through the holding of joint seminars with NATO, the EU, the OSCE, and ASEAN, the ROK Government will seek to deepen cooperation with these organizations and to garner wisdom with regard to the full pursuit of projects for cooperation on various issues in the context of NAPCI.

## Inter-governmental Consultations on NAPCI

### ✓ High-level Meeting on Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation

The first High-level Intergovernmental Meeting was held on October 28, 2014 with the US, China, Japan, Russia, and Mongolia attending as official participants and the UN, the EU, and NATO attending as dialogue partners.

Welcoming the efforts by the ROK Government to overcome the Asian Paradox through functional cooperation, the participants shared the view that such efforts should also address the following matters: how to complement existing mechanisms for cooperation (such as the ARF and the EAS); how to encourage the participation of North Korea; how to improve ROK-China-Japan relations; how to identify issues of common interest; and how to bridge such efforts with cooperation in hard security areas.



The 1st High-level Meeting on Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation (Seoul, October 28, 2014)

In order for the meeting to take root, the ROK Government will hold the second meeting in 2015 with a view to further expanding the scope of the participating countries, seeking to further enhance the level of representation, and in particular encourage the participation of North Korea.

- ✓ High-level NAPCI Meetings on the Occasion of other Multilateral Conferences

In addition to the High-level Meeting on Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation, the ROK Government will also explore the possibility of holding high-level meetings with relevant countries on the occasion of major multilateral meetings such as the ARF, the UN General Assembly, APEC, and ASEAN+3/the EAS.

## Advancing Cooperation on Particular Issues

**We have identified seven key soft security agenda which present common threats in the Northeast Asian region — nuclear safety, energy security, the environment, cyberspace, health, drugs, and disaster management — and are expanding cooperation in these areas.**

### Nuclear Safety

In addition to the existing ROK-China-Japan Top Regulators Meeting (TRM), the TRM+ was held in September and November 2014, with the participation of such countries as the US, Russia, France, and Canada, laying a firm basis for cooperation in the region on nuclear safety. Moreover, as the need to establish a “Northeast Asia Nuclear Safety Consultative Body” has been clearly recognized, the ROK Government plans to pursue discussions on concrete ways to achieve this.

### Energy Security

There is a shared understanding on the need to build trust and to deepen mutual interdependence among the countries in Northeast Asia through energy cooperation, with the European Coal and Steel Community, which laid the very basis for European integration, serving as a valuable frame of reference. Countries in the region are strengthening regional cooperation in energy security, utilizing various occasions including the 2nd Northeast Asia Energy Security Forum held in December 2014. In the future, together with the efforts to secure the regular holding of an annual Northeast Asia Energy Security Forum, governments in the region will continue to pursue discussions on various forms of cooperation on issues in the energy field such as oil hubs, gas trading hubs, and super grids.



## Environment

At the Roundtable held in April on cooperation in the field of transboundary air pollution in Northeast Asia and at the NEASPEC High-level Meeting held in September 2014, participants shared the view that countries can seek to find common measures to address transboundary air pollution issues such as fine dust. While seeking to strengthen cooperation in the region by maximizing upon the opportunities presented by various existing programs for cooperation, the ROK Government will seek to arrange for consultations with relevant countries on the occasion of multilateral meetings in the environmental field such as the ROK-China-Japan Environment Ministers Meeting in May, and the negotiations on the Post-2015 New Climate Change System in December 2015.



## Disaster Management

The feasibility for cooperation with the TCS (ROK-China-Japan Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat) and relevant NGOs, which play a leading role in cooperation in disaster management and rescue efforts, has been reaffirmed. The ROK Government is planning to engage in consultations on concrete measures for cooperation on the occasion of relevant multilateral meetings such as the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in March 2015.



## Cyberspace

The need to gradually build trust among countries by establishing a common definition and international norms for “cyber space” and “sharing of information” has also been emphasized. In this regard, the ROK Government will first exert efforts to expand cooperation with the newly launched ROK-China-Japan Cyber Policy Consultation held in October 2014 as a basis, and to make use of the opportunities presented by such occasions as Global Cyberspace Conference to be held in the Hague in April 2015.



## Health

The rapid spread of the Ebola virus demonstrated only too clearly the urgent need for common measures to respond to such cases in the health field in Northeast Asia. With the shared recognition of the need for cooperation within the region in the health sector, the ROK Government will seek to make full use of the opportunities presented by such occasions as the Second High-level Meeting of the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) to engage in discussions on possible measures for cooperation between relevant countries.



## Drug

Meetings have been held among relevant countries on such occasions as the International Drug Enforcement Conference (IDEC) in June and Anti-Drug Liaison Officials' Meeting for International Cooperation (ADLOMICO) held in October 2014. These meetings provided an opportunity to form links between NAPCI and the existing systems for mutual cooperation relating to drug crime in the region. Indeed, consensus has been reached on strengthening joint response and regional cooperation regarding the drug-related crimes. In the future, the ROK Government will continue to deepen cooperation in combating drugs in the region.

# Q & A

## Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative

### I . How is NAPCI distinct from the existing mechanisms for consultations in the region?

NAPCI shares the same goal of promoting regional peace and security as other cooperative mechanisms in the region. However, in terms of membership, agenda, and the proposed way forward, NAPCI takes into consideration the particular characteristics of this region, seeking to foster a “tailored” mechanism for multilateral cooperation. In particular, NAPCI focuses primarily on dialogue and cooperation among the countries of Northeast Asia, as compared to such initiatives as the ARF and the EAS, in which the countries of Southeast Asia take the lead in the discussions.

As NAPCI seeks to first address soft security issues, discussions on which entail less of a political burden, there are differences in the scope of the agenda from the ARF, which deals with both hard and soft security issues, and the EAS, which encompasses a comprehensive range of issues including political and economic issues. Furthermore, taking into consideration the differences in terms of social and political systems between the countries as well as the cultural differences, the focus is on cultivating a habit of dialogue and cooperation, rather than adopting particular norms. Another characteristic of this initiative is that, through networks bringing together non-governmental organizations and experts from academia, it promotes the collective effort to nurture a culture of cooperation in the region.

## II. In what ways does NAPCI differ from the initiatives put forward by the ROK Government in the past?

The ROK Government has in the past proposed measures for the establishment of a multilateral security mechanism in the Northeast Asian region through such initiatives as the 'Consultative Conference for Peace in Northeast Asia' and 'Northeast Asia Security Dialogue.' However, these efforts did not materialize as planned and were not able to move beyond the level of a concept. The reason that momentum for such initiatives was lost is that they placed a focus on addressing hard security issues in which cooperation is difficult, and were aimed at institutionalizing inter-governmental dialogue in a short space of time.

Given the diversity between the countries of Northeast Asia in political, economic and cultural terms and in light of the continuing tensions over historical issues, it is necessary to take a step by step and long-term approach in pursuing multilateral security dialogue in the region. NAPCI recognizes that there is a need to lay the basis for mutual trust and to ensure a sense of ownership among the participants in order to put in place a framework for dialogue and cooperation within the region. Accordingly, it lays emphasis on gradually shaping consensus on cooperation on matters of common interest, while setting aside discussions on sensitive issues until a later stage. The ROK Government will play the role of a 'facilitator' in the multilateral dialogue with a view to fostering a culture of cooperation with various actors participating in the process.

## III. Given the current strains in the relations between countries in Northeast Asia, isn't the realization of this initiative difficult to achieve?

It is true that bilateral relations between some countries in Northeast Asia, such as ROK-Japan and China-Japan relations, are currently experiencing some difficulties. Such tensions, on the contrary, serve to demonstrate the need for multilateral efforts for trust-building such as NAPCI. In fact, Northeast Asian countries are at the same time becoming more interdependent to each other at a more rapid pace than in any other region. This also means that there is an increasing demand for cooperation in both hard and soft security issues.

In particular, it is relatively easier to induce participation among countries in the region on soft security issues as the political cost involved is small compared to the much greater real benefits of cooperation. Furthermore, the cooperation on soft security issues in the pursuit of NAPCI will ultimately help to ease tensions and contribute to the restoring of mutual trust which is the key in addressing hard security issues.

Multilateral security cooperation in Europe also began with economic affairs and later expanded little by little to encompass a wide range of issues even including disarmament, which is one of the most sensitive hard security issues. This was the result of concerted efforts by regional countries to resolve political tension and military conflict and take the path of coexistence. The fact that the Helsinki Process, which contributed to ending the Cold War and to peace-building in Europe, was launched during the Cold War era when hostility and distrust among the countries were most prevalent, offers an extremely valuable lesson for Northeast Asia today.

#### IV. What is the relation between the process for ROK-China-Japan Trilateral Cooperation and NAPCI?

Irrespective of the ups and downs in the political field between the three countries, the momentum for cooperation continues, with the ROK-China-Japan Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS), established in 2011 in Seoul, playing a leading role in the holding of various consultations among the governments and efforts to seek to identify projects for cooperation between the three countries. However, the process for ROK-China-Japan cooperation has not been able to move beyond the realm of technical and functional cooperation. Such forms of cooperation need to be linked to a broader concept of cooperation for peace and security in Northeast Asia.

In this regard, NAPCI and the ROK-China-Japan trilateral cooperation process can indeed be mutually complementary. For example, there may be programs for cooperation pursued by NAPCI in which the ROK, China, and Japan should play a leading role. Moreover, there may be other fields of cooperation which may be pursued more appropriately in the context of NAPCI, rather than in the ROK-China-Japan context. NAPCI, through this mutual complementarity with the TCS, may be able to play a bridging role in enabling the trilateral cooperation to contribute not only to peace and stability between the ROK, China, and Japan, but in Northeast Asia as a whole.

#### V. What is the relationship between NAPCI and the ROK-US Alliance?

NAPCI is not in any way inconsistent with the ROK-US alliance. Rather NAPCI and the alliance are mutually complementary, as they both contribute to peace and stability in Northeast Asia, the former by building trust among regional countries and the latter by serving as a strong deterrence. In fact, when pursued in close coordination, they will be able to create a synergy effect.

## VI. What is the relationship between NAPCI and the Six-Party Talks, and the denuclearization of North Korea?

The Six-Party Talks is a mechanism for consultations that deals with the North Korean nuclear issue, a very sensitive and difficult hard security issue, and differs in terms of objectives and topics from NAPCI which focuses on soft security issues.

By promoting confidence building through the fostering of a habit of dialogue and cooperation in the region, NAPCI may contribute to the Six-Party Talks and to progress in the denuclearization of North Korea, but it is not intended to replace the Six-Party Talks. As multilateral cooperation is promoted through NAPCI and North Korea participates in the regional cooperation, there will be a positive impact on the Six-Party Talks process and on resolving the North Korean nuclear issue.

## VII. How can the participation of North Korea in multilateral cooperation in the region be encouraged?

All the other countries in the region participating in NAPCI share the view that North Korea's participation in this initiative is crucial. In accordance with the principles of flexibility and openness, NAPCI will seek to encourage North Korea to realize the value and benefits of multilateral dialogue and cooperation and participate in the initiative. North Korea is one of the countries most prone to natural disasters. It takes rather a flexible stance with regard to cooperating with the international community in the health and development sector. Hence, in accordance with the principles of taking a gradual and step by step approach, efforts could be made to explore the possibility of North Korea's participation in the relatively less sensitive areas of cooperation such as disaster management, the environment and health.

Confirming the sincerity of North Korea with respect to dialogue and cooperation and aiming to ensure its continued participation by ensuring a 'positive sum' of mutual benefits may ultimately contribute to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in the region. Furthermore, greater coordination among countries concerned will be pursued to ensure that the issue of North Korea's participation in this initiative does not unnecessarily deter or delay progress in dialogue and cooperation in the region.