



Korea and the Threat of Nuclear Weapons

We note with concern the current escalation of tension in the Korean Peninsula and are categorically opposed to any state threatening to use aggressive action against another, especially if that threat involves the possible use of nuclear weapons. We denounce the implication that nuclear weapons can be used as a way of conducting international relations. We recognize that if such a situation was to escalate and involve violence, then it would be the innocent citizens of those states who would suffer the most. We believe that the war games and the war talk being conducted by all parties involved are threatening the security of the region and the whole world.

We condemn the actions and rhetoric from all sides of the conflict. Such behavior leads to a systematic militarization of the whole region and is being used in an attempt to satisfy the perceived need to secure long sought-after geostrategic interests (i.e. the encirclement of China) and may lead to a (nuclear) militarization of Japan, an increase in foreign military bases, and to the establishment and deepening of military alliances --a new or much extended NATO-- in the Pacific region. The rhetoric and military actions connected to nuclear weapons in this conflict are being used by nuclear-weapon states to legitimize the modernization of their nuclear arsenals and may lead non-nuclear-weapon states to believe that they need to obtain nuclear weapons themselves, thus endangering the fragile system of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Nuclear weapons should not be obtained or retained by any state; rather they must be abolished once and for all. Furthermore, the current conflict is being used to legitimize the continuing deployment of missile defense systems, particularly in the Pacific region.

We condemn the aggressive acts and statements coming from North Korea as acts of war, not of peace and dialogue. Military maneuvers close to North Korea i.e. by South Korea and the USA, are also aggressive and provocative actions. We see as a great danger that the

continued provocation by both sides may lead to a war which would be far more than a regional catastrophe. Dialogue, negotiation, and immediate steps towards disarmament – both in rhetoric and in reality-- are the real necessities.

The exchange of threats, counter threats and military build-up are not new; but the situation can only be made worse by such posturing, and if either side takes the other too seriously then the world may be being lead much further along a possible irreversible path to nuclear war and global destruction. We urge that both sides of this confrontation recognize what is at stake should a violent conflict erupt. It is time that states talk more and threaten less, establishing a culture of peace and dialogue. We will not make progress to a more peaceful world until we reject the use of military force as a first option, and work instead to understand and respect the plight and culture of others. The situation clearly demonstrates once again that, if we do not abolish nuclear weapons, the whole world will remain on the verge of being destroyed.

International Coordinating Committee of the No to War-No to NATO Network

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