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Statement by H.E. Shim Yoon-joe
Head of the Delegation of
the Republic of Korea
At the 17th Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council
Athens, Greece
1–2 December 2009

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the Greek Chairmanship for its hospitality and arrangements here in Athens. Its strenuous efforts to revitalize the work of the OSCE throughout this year as Chairman-in-Office, and to enhance cooperation between the OSCE and its Asian Partners for Co-operation, including the activities of the Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office for the Asian Partners, Mr. Kotsonis, are to be commended. I would also like to extend my appreciation to the endeavors of the Finnish Chairmanship of the Asian Contact Group for assisting and encouraging the Asian Partners for Co-operation to further collaborate with the Organization.

Mr. Chairman,

The Republic of Korea has a particular interest in the OSCE process, since it is located in a region where there is not yet a genuinely structured security dialogue. In this sense, Korea regards the Corfu Process as a timely initiative in terms of reinvigorating and revitalizing the OSCE, and thus we are closely monitoring its development to reflect upon a possible security dialogue mechanism in Northeast Asia. We hope that by adopting a Political Declaration and relevant Decisions on the Corfu Process, this Athens Ministerial Council will set the stage for a future role of the OSCE and restore trust and confidence in the OSCE area.

[Korea's Activities in the OSCE]

Mr. Chairman,

As a Partner for Co-operation, Korea is dedicated to deepening its cooperation with the OSCE and its Asian Partners. As such, Korea is fully committed to working with the OSCE in support of democratic institution and capacity building efforts in Afghanistan. In this context, Korea contributed to the ODIHR's Election Support Team to Afghanistan this year. Korea supports the OSCE's Afghanistan Border Security and Management Project as well, and contributed to the OSCE project "Patrol Programming and Leadership-Tajikistan."

Considering that the instability of Afghanistan is a common concern for the Participating States and the Partners for Co-operation and recognizing that development and stability go hand in hand, Korea has also participated in the reconstruction and democratization of Afghanistan. In addition to pledging contributions totaling 30 million dollars over the period of 2009–11 last year, Korea plans not only to expand the existing Medical and Vocational Training contingent but also to establish a full-fledged Provincial Reconstruction Team consisting of both civilians and military personnel next year.

[DPRK's Nuclear Issue / Inter-Korean Relations]

Mr. Chairman,

Taking this opportunity, I would like touch upon one of the most pressing security and proliferation-related issues not only in Northeast Asia but also on a global scale, namely the DPRK's nuclear issue.

The DPRK has taken a series of provocative actions throughout 2009, conducting a second nuclear test and launching ballistic missiles as well as a long-range rocket, all of which were clear violations of relevant Security Council resolutions. The DPRK even claimed that it would continue its nuclear activities such as the weaponization of plutonium and uranium enrichment in a letter to the UN Security Council in September, and announced that it had completed the reprocessing of spent fuel rods by the end of August.

Even though the DPRK has shown conciliatory gestures recently, including the family reunion event and the Red Cross Talks between the two Koreas, it is our judgment that there is no substantive change in the DPRK's nuclear ambition.

Therefore, we believe it is desirable for us to maintain a Two-Track approach—maintaining the sanctions regime pursuant to Security Council resolution 1874 while at the same time trying to engage the DPRK in the dialogue process.

US President Obama recently announced during his visit to Korea that the United States would send Ambassador Bosworth, Special Representative for North Korea Policy, to Pyongyang on 8 December. We hope the upcoming US-DPRK bilateral dialogue will pave the way to the Six-Party Talks, which is the most viable framework in which to resolve the DPRK's nuclear issue.

During his visit to the United States last September, Korean President Lee Myung-bak proposed a "Grand Bargain" that demonstrates our will to come up with a fundamental resolution to the DPRK nuclear issue. Departing from the incremental and partial approach of the past, the "Grand Bargain" aims at capturing in a single agreement all steps related to the DPRK's irreversible denuclearization and the Five Parties' corresponding measures to realize the ultimate goal of the DPRK's complete and verifiable denuclearization.

Given that it is not possible to cooperate and coexist with a nuclear armed DPRK, Korea will assign a high priority to the nuclear issue in the context of inter-Korean dialogue. While we will continue the provision of humanitarian assistance to the North Korean people, it is our firm stance there will be no meaningful economic cooperation with the DPRK unless substantive denuclearization measures are taken.

Mr. Chairman,

Korea has been active in developing and implementing the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security and co-operation, especially by regularly holding the annual OSCE-Asian Partners for Co-operation Conference. Following the first OSCE-Korea Conference in 2001, and the second one in 2005, Korea will host the third OSCE-Korea Conference on 18–19 May next year. I believe that this will be a good opportunity to

exchange perspectives on various security dimensions on regional as well as global levels, and further strengthen cooperation between the OSCE and the Asian Partners for Co-operation. I would like to invite all Participating States and Partners for Co-operation to join the conference to make it a resounding success.

In concluding, Mr. Chairman, I would like to express my delegation's full confidence in the Government of Kazakhstan as the next Chair of the OSCE. I am certain that Kazakhstan will fulfill this honourable and demanding role with success, and further develop the OSCE into a more effective and future-oriented organization in the years to come.

Thank you.

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