

Motto: "Opinions are free, but not mandatory"—I.L.Caragiale

EDITORIAL

The first USA – North Korea summit



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On June 12th, 2018, president Donald Trump had the first meeting, that most analysts characterized as historical, with the North-Korean leader, Kim Jong Un. The brief joint statement (four points) signed by the two presidents the same day mentions, at the third point, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) commitment to work for "*total denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula*". It comes as a continuation of the Panmunjon Declaration signed on April 27th, 2018. At the same time, president Donald Trump declared, somehow unexpectedly, that he has discontinued the joint military drills with South Korea.

The document stresses the agreement of the two countries for a joint action in order to achieve a lasting peace in the Korean Peninsula, for achieving new relations between the USA and DPRK as well as for recovering PoW/MIA remains and the immediate repatriation of those already identified. The two sides committed to continue negotiations in order to fulfil these provisions.

The moment of this understanding was well chosen as probably there wasn't much time left for North Korea's successfully testing an intercontinental ballistic missile (which would have meant crossing the red line drawn by Washington) that could reach the USA's continental territory. So, the stage that could mean the USA wages a war certainly costly and with difficult to foresee consequences was not reached.

The two sides' agreement on denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula is a provision somehow unbalanced, certainly to the USA's benefit. North Korea does not have the means to verify such a promise while the USA can impose the observance of North Korea's promises through inspections. Moreover, the American nuclear arsenal is mostly placed on navies, submarines and bomber planes which are easily to gather together into the area although it is unlikely that the USA ever use a nuclear weapon against North Korea. The North Korean side is well aware of that and wants, in the most pragmatic way, a reduction of the American forces in South Korea and probably in Japan. A first gesture was made by president Donald Trump who declared: "*We will discontinue the joint military drills (with South Korea), that are very costly*".

As far as lifting the sanctions against North Korea is concerned, president Trump stressed that they will stay in place until the North Korean nuclear weapons are not any longer a threatening factor. The Secretary of State Mike Pompeo underlined that several times during the following days.

Back in the USA, the strong opposition to president Trump tried to minimize and find (fabricate) weak points of this historical summit. In fact, it outreaches by far the Korean Peninsula region and the issue of removing the nuclear weapons of North Korea's military arsenal. We consider president Trump made on that occasion a breakthrough in the Russian Federation's and China's relations with the North Korean regime (see also the declarations the Russian Foreign Affairs minister Serghei Lavrov made prior to the summit and who offered Moscow's good offices, the North Korean leader's letter addressed to Vladimir Putin after the summit with Donald Trump), a breakthrough which handled with strategic craftsmanship may lead to a Washington's even better positioning in Asia and globally.

So that, hereinafter, the diplomacy and the intelligence services will have even more important roles to play in future negotiations, in verifying the denuclearization stages and the developments of bi- and multilateral relations, stages that are just beginning once the Joint Statement was signed on June 12th, 2018.