



TALKING POINTS

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Panel: Refugees and Neighbors (Regency Room)

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Talking Points for: Cheng Xiaohe, Renmin University

For China, the very concept of refugee is not alien. Since the founding of Republic of China, China has experienced several rounds of refugee crises, in which many Chinese made their ways out in seeking political freedom and economic benefits at difficult time. In the past twenty years, we witness the reversal of refugee's movement. More and more foreign refugees have begun to flee into China for a variety of reasons, including political oppression, military conflict and/or economic poverty.

North Korea has been and still is China's major source of refugees. In the past years, the Korean refugees have posed significant challenge to China's relations with two Koreas.

If chaos breaks out in North Korea in the future, three possible scenarios regarding North Korea refugee may be in order. (1) Scenario one: a quick change of regime, which takes place within a few month, may lead to some North Korean to flee to China, the number of the refugees should be limited and China can easily handle the issue on its own; (2) Scenario two: power struggled in Pyongyang could not be settled in a short period of time, and accompanying chaos may last for more than half a year, an exodus of North Korean may become real. China might take action on its own territory, setting up refugee camps and offering food and other needs, at the same time, China might call for international humanitarian aids for the refugees by pushing United Nations Security Council to take actions and cooperating closely with South Korea. Scenario three: If the situation in North Korea gets out of control and Chaos becomes prolonged and leads to a massive exodus of North Korean, China may call humanitarian intervention. It might send its own military forces into North Korea's border areas, cordoning off a chunk of land for refugee shelter and preventing chaos from spilling into China. Meanwhile, China might also work with other stakeholders in this region under the auspices of the UNSC or any *ad hoc* organization to end the civil war (conflict) and explore the possible unification on the peninsula.

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