

## **Living with Nuclear Insecurity**

**Session:** Session 3

**Date/Time:** April 27, 2016 / 10:45-12:15

**Moderator:** William Tobey, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University

**Speakers:** Abe Nobuyasu, Japan Atomic Energy Commission  
Park Jiyoung, The Asan Institute for Policy Studies Institute  
Robert Einhorn, The Brookings Institution

### **Session Sketch**

Session 3 on “Living with Nuclear Insecurity” explored the way the world is confronting, halting, and deterring nuclear technology proliferation. The moderator, William Tobey, senior fellow at Harvard University’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, began with a reflection about the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster in Ukraine and the pros and cons of nuclear power. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, nuclear energy inevitably runs society and the contemporary world.

Ambassador Abe Nobuyasu, commissioner of the Japan Atomic Energy Commission started off the discussion with the topic of nuclear terrorism. He notes that the series of four Nuclear Security Summit meetings have accomplished significant achievements. Specifically, there have been substantial efforts to reduce and contain nuclear bombs and fissile material throughout the world, minimizing the risk of nuclear terrorism. However, it is necessary to remain cautious as nuclear threats are mounting. International efforts primarily focus on building legal frameworks against nuclear terrorism and reducing the amount of nuclear bomb and fissile materials available. In addition to these frameworks, it will be important to identify, control, and deter terrorists who pursue nuclear terrorism. Promoting international cooperation is crucial to tackling this highly challenging task. However, difficulties arise when differing views on who should be considered a terrorist obstructs international cooperation.

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*\*The views expressed herein are summaries and may not necessarily reflect the views of the speakers or their affiliated institutions.*

Dr. Park Jiyoung, research fellow at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies, outlines two kinds of nuclear insecurity: military- or state-based nuclear insecurity and civil-based nuclear insecurity. Military-based nuclear threats arise when rogue states have a strong will for possessing nuclear weapons. Although the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is designed to block such efforts, Iran and North Korea's recent activities have created doubts about its role and effectiveness. Civil-based nuclear insecurities arise due to the misuse of nuclear technology or materials, especially by terrorists. For both cases of nuclear insecurity, the most effective countermeasure will be to intervene at the stage of acquiring nuclear materials. Hence, Dr. Park recommends that the global security system should focus on detecting and managing nuclear materials. Another effective intervention could be the advancement of technology to restrict the transfer of sensitive information. However, this latter option merely delays the nuclear threat, rather than eliminating it.

Robert Einhorn, senior fellow at The Brookings Institution, suggests that the world has returned to a normalcy of chaos and instability, a part of which involves getting used to increased nuclear threats. Warning signs of such a trend include Russia's increasing reliance on nuclear weapons and rejection of U.S.-Russian bilateral nuclear arms reductions, China's ambitious strategic modernization program and more assertive regional politics, North Korea's acceleration of its nuclear and missile programs, Pakistan and India's actions to increase their fissile material stocks and missile capabilities, and rising interest in civil nuclear fuel cycle programs in Northeast Asia. The determined and concerted efforts of the international community will be critical to preventing a world with increased nuclear insecurity and terrorism. Recommendations include having the U.S. and Russia pursue another bilateral agreement that reduces deployed strategic nuclear weapons, encouraging the international community to vigorously implement U.S. Security Council resolution 2270 and convince North Korea to denuclearize, having the U.S. and China engage in strategic stability talks, and promoting key nuclear energy powers to consider safe approaches to meeting nuclear energy requirements without increasing nuclear fuel cycle capabilities.

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## **Asan Plenum 2016 Session Sketch**

During the question and answer session, questions were raised about what we have learned from the recent incident in Brussels and how we should address security issues internationally. Moreover, perspectives were shared on what should be the single highest nuclear security priority for nations, and the best mechanisms to achieve such objectives. The implications of Korea and Japan potentially both becoming threshold nuclear power states were also discussed.

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