

**Session:** Session 4 (Dealing with North Korea Nuclear Threat)

**Date/Time:** April 25, 2023 / 16:00- 17:15

**Rapporteur:**

Hafizah Sahar, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies

**Moderator:**

Sue Mi Terry, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

**Speakers:**

Tae Yong Ho, National Assembly of the Republic of Korea

Bruce W. Bennett, RAND Corporation

Sung Y. Kim, U.S. Department of State

Tokuchi Hideshi, Research Institute for Peace and Security

Georgy Toloraya, Research Institute of Economics of the Russian Academy of Sciences

**Session Sketch:**

The final session of the Asan Plenum on “Dealing with North Korea Nuclear Threat” examined the ongoing challenges posed by North Korea’s nuclear program was not being sufficiently addressed by regional countries. Tae Yong Ho as the representative of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea with regards to North Korea’s nuclear arsenals and Kim Jong Un’s goals. He pointed out that “this year, and last year, North Korea’s missile test was very much tailor-made to respond the exact America and ROK-American joint military exercise, very tailor-made and detailed one.” He also added that “North Korea wants to show its capability” when being asked about the larger goal of this nuclear weapon by the moderator.

The next panelist, Dr. Bruce W. Bennett from RAND Corporation, mentioned with regard to a possible nuclear test, “In other words, Kim (Kim Jong Un) is telling us very clearly he’s not there yet.” But he also added that through these missile launches, “that’s what he’s already indicated where he is planning to go.” He focused more on the quantitative part of North Korea’s missile launching in his remarks.

Ambassador Sung Y. Kim who also serves as the representative of the U.S. Department of State for North Korean denuclearization particularly mentioned how “diplomacy is the only means” even though there will be challenges to reach a meaningful dialogue on this matter.

Next, Tokuchi Hideshi, President of the Research Institute for Peace and Security in Japan, focused on opinion polls in Japan which showed that hopes for the denuclearization of North Korea is unlikely. The continued growth in North Korea’s nuclear capabilities and missile tests were behind growing Japanese strategic concerns.

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

## Session Sketch

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Finally, Georgy Toloraya, Research Institute of Economics of the Russian Academy of Sciences, emphasized that Russia remained committed to North Korea’s denuclearization and would not a nuclear North Korea. He rebutted claims that Russia was supplying the technology and knowledge for North Korea’s nuclear program.

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