

## **Joint Statement of the 10th Defense Trilateral Talks**

Defense officials from the United States, Japan, and the Republic of Korea (ROK) met in Washington, D.C. on March 21, 2018, for the 10th Defense Trilateral Talks (DTT), where they engaged in substantive consultations on regional security issues, including North Korea, and discussed substantive ways to deepen and expand security cooperation. The U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs Randall Schriver, the Japanese Deputy Director General for Defense Policy Masami Oka, and the ROK Deputy Minister for National Defense Policy Yeo Suk-joo, led their respective interagency delegations.

The three representatives recognized that the United States, the ROK, and Japan face common security challenges in the region, and reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing security cooperation and contributing to peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. They urged North Korea to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programs in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner, to cease other provocative actions that only increase tensions in the region, and to comply immediately and fully with international obligations and commitments, including all relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions.

The officials pledged to take necessary steps to strengthen their ability to coordinate closely and respond effectively to any North Korean threat. Accordingly, they resolved to continue efforts to enhance interoperability among the three countries, and committed to continuing missile warning and anti-submarine warfare exercises. They reaffirmed the critical importance of information sharing on North Korea's nuclear and missile threats. They resolved to remain at the center of multinational efforts to ensure the implementation of relevant UNSC resolutions, in order to deter, disrupt, and ultimately eliminate illicit North Korean maritime activities, such as illegal ship-to-ship transfers.

In order to resolve the issue of denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula peacefully, the three representatives pledged to cooperate actively, together and with multilateral partners, to support diplomatic efforts to maximize pressure on North Korea. They welcomed the recent announcements to hold inter-Korean and U.S.-North Korea summit meetings, to be convened at an appropriate time, and underscored the need for North Korea to take concrete actions to denuclearize.

The three officials also discussed other regional security issues, including the importance of maritime security and the maintenance of a free and open rules-based order. They reaffirmed that freedom of navigation and overflight must be ensured, and that all disputes should be resolved in a peaceful manner, in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law.

The U.S. representatives reaffirmed the ironclad U.S. security commitments to the ROK and Japan, and the three representatives pledged to continue to work closely together in the face of the North Korean threat. The three representatives resolved to hold the 11th DTT in 2019 in the ROK on a date to be mutually determined in the future.