

Moving beyond the  
Asian Paradox Towards Peace and  
Cooperation in Northeast Asia



# Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative

Moving beyond the Asian Paradox  
Towards Peace and  
Cooperation in Northeast Asia



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The “era of happiness for the people” that I dream of is one that ushers in an era of happiness on the Korean Peninsula and indeed throughout the global village.

We will build even more solid ties of trust with the United States, China, Japan, Russia and other countries of Asia and Oceania by reducing tension and conflict to build peace and cooperation in Asia.

**President Park Geun-hye**  
Inaugural Address, February 25, 2013



Asia suffers from what I call “Asia’s Paradox”, the disconnect between growing economic interdependence on the one hand, and backward political, security cooperation on the other. How we manage this paradox—this will determine the shape of a new order in Asia.

Together, we must meet these challenges. And so I propose an initiative for peace and cooperation in Northeast Asia. We cannot afford to put off a multilateral dialogue process in Northeast Asia. Together, the United States and other Northeast Asian partners could start with softer issues. These include environmental issues and disaster relief. They include nuclear safety and counter-terrorism.

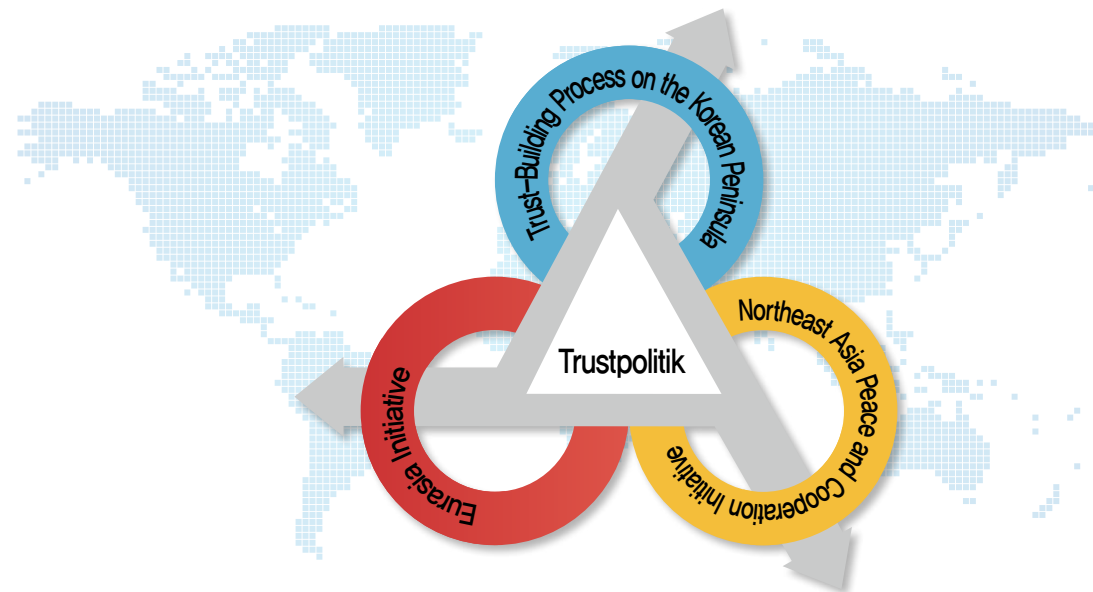
**President Park Geun-hye**  
Address to the Joint Session of the US Congress, May 8, 2013



The Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI) seeks, through the pursuit of Trustpolitik in the region, to build trust in Northeast Asia, which suffers from a trust deficit.

The aim of the initiative is to gradually build trust as participating countries open up their minds and take concrete action, ultimately achieving a Northeast Asia of peace and cooperation.

**Yun Byung-se, Minister of Foreign Affairs**  
 Congratulatory Message at the IFANS Global Conference in Celebration  
 of the 50th Anniversary of the KNA, November 14, 2013



History shows that sustainable cooperation in the relations among countries and the building of communities has always been commensurate with the level of trust.

Trust is a valuable asset for cooperation and public infrastructure and an indispensable element for true peace. Peace without trust is no more than a fragile, bogus peace. Furthermore, the firm establishment of trust is a process which requires time and a consistent approach.

In this regard, President Park's Trustpolitik is a diplomatic strategy which also encompasses policy measures. The Trust-building Process on the Korean Peninsula and the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI) aim to establish sustainable peace and cooperation on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia through Trustpolitik.

**Yun Byung-se, Minister of Foreign Affairs**

Opening Remarks at the International Conference on  
 "New Strategic Thinking: Planning for Korean Foreign Policy," April 29, 2013

**Concept of the Eurasia Initiative** It is an initiative for making Eurasia one continent (energy and railway networks), a creative continent (technology and culture), and a continent of peace (NAPCI and the Trust Building Process on the Korean Peninsula)



# What does the concept entail?

**The Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI) is a process for the building of an order of multilateral cooperation and trust.**

NAPCI is a process for establishing an order of multilateral cooperation in Northeast Asia.

As it suggests, “process” indicates continuing steps and actions, and it emphasizes how rather than what. Process places priority on gradual change and a step-by-step approach to achieve certain results.



The same is true of NAPCI. It is not pursued in accordance with a pre-arranged timeline with a view to the immediate establishment of a specific organization for multilateral cooperation.

Rather, the initiative focuses on how to accumulate small but meaningful practices of cooperation and what kind of changes these could bring in Northeast Asia.

How can we build up a habit of cooperation, and what kind of changes could we bring in Northeast Asia through such practices?

The answer is trust.

NAPCI aims to build cooperation through trust and lay the foundation for sustainable peace and prosperity in the region.

# How to cooperate?

**NAPCI entails accumulating a practice of dialogue and cooperation to build trust on the basis of a shared vision and recognition.**

How should we pursue multilateral cooperation in Northeast Asia?

Trust should first be secured.

What is the starting point for the building of trust?

It is dialogue.

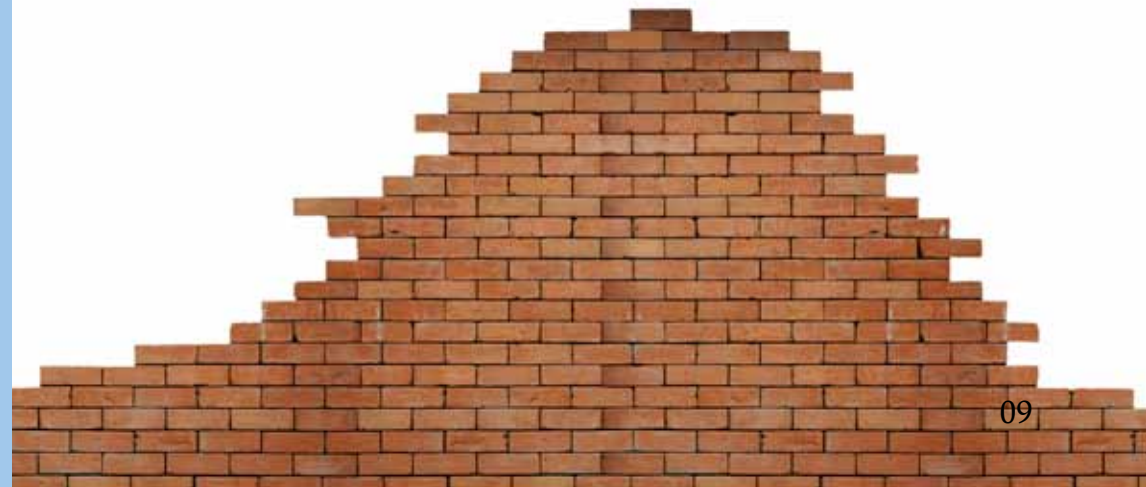
For cooperation to be fostered there is a need to replace misunderstanding with understanding.

The second step for trust-building is a common recognition of the need for cooperation. Northeast Asian countries should work together, as the saying goes “Many hands make light work.”

In these times, there are many different factors which pose threats to the very lives of people. There are new issues in particular, such as disaster relief, transnational crime, environment and energy security, which transcend borders. There is a need for Northeast Asian countries to jointly recognize the need for coordinated measures to address such issues.

What would be the third step for trust-building? It would be to develop a common vision for the future of Northeast Asia. Without common goals we will not be able to overcome even small differences. Once we embrace shared goals we will be able to overcome the differences between us. As Europe succeeded in achieving reconciliation and integration by sharing the vision of a “united Europe,” we should develop a common vision for a brighter future for Northeast Asia.

If the countries of Northeast Asia, based on a common vision and dialogue, accumulate a practice of cooperation and build trust, we can establish a solid framework for cooperation. And, from a long term perspective, it may be possible to discuss the most sensitive issues, as seen in the experience of Europe.



# Why is it necessary?

## There is an ever-growing need for cooperation in Northeast Asia.

The economies of Asian countries are achieving continued growth and are surging ahead to assume a central place in the world. The Northeast Asian region, which includes the second and third largest economies in the world, accounts for around 20 percent of the global economy. The region is also assuming ever greater influence in the world. However, the Asian paradox continues to be evident in Northeast Asia: the discrepancy between the growing economic interdependence in the region on the one hand and the relatively underdeveloped political and security cooperation on the other. Moreover, Northeast Asia currently lacks mechanisms for effective multilateral cooperation to deal with inter-state conflicts.



A lack of effective measures to address sources of conflict in the region such as historical and territorial issues as well as newly emerging common threats including environment and energy issues are hindering the efforts to fully maximize upon the potential for the development of the region.

As emphasized above, there is a pressing need to lay the groundwork for cooperation in Northeast Asia and regional powers have presented a vision for a new order in Northeast Asia. President Obama's "Pivot to Asia," President Xi Jinping's "Chinese Dream," and President Putin's policy for strengthening Russia's presence in the Asia Pacific region are key examples. The Park Geun-hye administration is pursuing NAPCI to build a new order of multilateral cooperation based on trust.

# What are the objectives?

Accumulate  
a practice of  
dialogue and  
cooperation

Lay the  
foundation for  
sustainable peace  
and prosperity

Encourage  
the DPRK's  
participation in  
the international  
community

**We aim to build trust by accumulating a practice of multilateral dialogue and cooperation.**

First, NAPCI seeks to build trust and foster a spirit of cooperation in the region by accumulating a habit of cooperation among regional partners.

Second, the initiative seeks to lay a foundation for sustainable peace and prosperity by establishing an order of cooperation in the region.

Third, the initiative aims to encourage North Korea to engage with the international community and contribute to the denuclearization of the DPRK. We could also build on NAPCI to address North Korea's security concerns through a multilateral peace and security system in Northeast Asia.

Peace on the Korean Peninsula is inseparable from peace in Northeast Asia. The initiative goes hand in hand with the Trust Building Process on the Korean Peninsula as we seek to build trust on the Korean Peninsula as well as in Northeast Asia.

## ► Similarities between NAPCI and the Helsinki Process

### Background

- Conflicts
- Security dilemma
- Divided country
- Conflicting values

### Objectives

- Ease tensions and promote peace and security

### Basic approaches

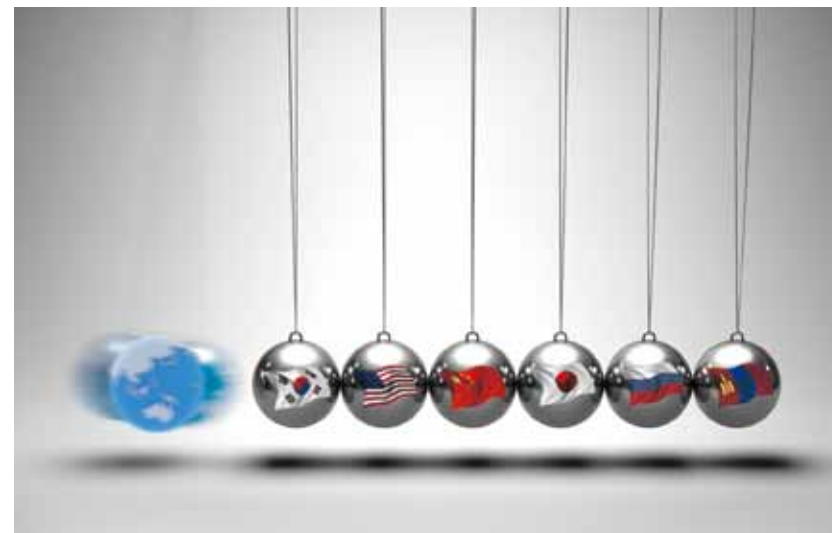
- Multilateral (security) cooperation process
- Comprehensive agenda
- Gradual and steady approach
- Cooperative security

## Who is to participate and which agenda are to be discussed?

We will lay a firm groundwork for cooperation with a common agenda of “non-traditional soft security issues” through open participation.

The initiative embraces the principle of “open participation.”

The initiative will begin with the participation of Northeast Asian countries including the Republic of Korea, Japan, China, Russia, the DPRK and Mongolia, as well as the United States, which has a strong stake in the region. The initiative will be pursued along with existing endeavors such as the trilateral cooperation among Korea, China and Japan. In addition, it will develop cooperation with regional bodies for cooperation such as ASEAN or the EU by allowing for their participation as observers.



Cooperation will begin with non-traditional security issues which represent common threats in the region.

Cyber terrorism, the Fukushima nuclear accident and microdust are just some examples of critical issues which pose a threat to all peoples across borders. NAPCI seeks to embark on efforts for cooperation on non-traditional security issues where multilateral cooperation is crucial. These issues include nuclear safety, energy security, environment, disaster relief and cyberspace.

Depending on the progress in the initial stages, the agenda may, through a consensus-based approach, be expanded to encompass a traditional security agenda such as political or military issues.



# What are the basic principles?

- Use a gradual, step-by-step approach
- Proceed at a pace comfortable for all participants
- Complement existing mechanisms for cooperation
- Pursue multi-layered and multi-dimensional cooperation
- Promote open dialogue and cooperation
- Enhance participating countries' sense of ownership over the process



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## Use a gradual, step-by-step approach

The initiative takes a process-oriented approach that focuses on building up a habit of dialogue and cooperation.

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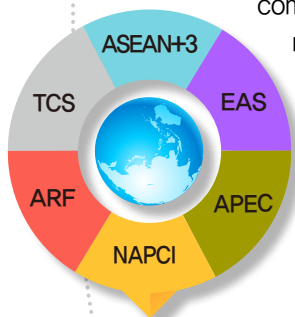
## Proceed at a pace comfortable for all participants

The initiative will start with countries that are ready to participate, in areas where cooperation is relatively easy, and at the working level where this presents fewer burdens. With the consent of participating countries we may expand the scope of cooperation.

### 3 Complement existing mechanisms for cooperation

There are already a number of mechanisms for cooperation in place in the Asia Pacific region. The Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS) among Korea, Japan and China, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN+3, and the East Asia Summit (EAS) are key examples. The initiative seeks to

complement existing frameworks for cooperation by revitalizing and developing existing mechanisms. In areas where there are no mechanisms for cooperation, the initiative seeks to create new processes of dialogue and cooperation.



#### ► Relations with existing mechanisms for cooperation

	NAPCI	ARF	TCS	ASEAN+3	EAS	APEC
Agenda	Non-traditional security issues	Traditional and non-traditional security issues	Political, economic, environmental fields	Economic, political, environmental fields	Political, security, economic fields	Economic sphere
Participation	Northeast Asian countries	27 members (ASEAN, ROK, US, China, Japan, Russia, DPRK, etc.)	ROK, Japan, China	13 members (ASEAN, ROK, Japan, China)	18 members (ASEAN, ROK, US, China, Japan, Russia, etc.)	21 members (ROK, US, China, Japan, Russia, etc.)
Others	Process for dialogue and cooperation	Security cooperation mechanism	Comprehensive cooperation mechanism	Comprehensive cooperation mechanism	Comprehensive cooperation mechanism	Economic cooperation mechanism

### 4 Pursue multi-layered and multi-dimensional cooperation

Efforts at the government level alone are not sufficient to deal with non-traditional security issues such as the environment. Accordingly, the initiative also seeks to promote cooperation at the civil society level to promote the cooperation in such a way that the efforts are mutually reinforcing. At the initial stage, the initiative intends to take a bottom-up approach starting with cooperation on softer and less controversial issues such as nuclear safety, energy security and environment. The initiative will also take a top-down approach. If and when political commitment can be secured after building a certain level of trust, we will seek measures for cooperation that go beyond the given process.

### 5 Promote open dialogue and cooperation

The initiative envisions the participation of all stakeholders in Northeast Asia as well as the facilitation of Northeast Asian regional cooperation with other regions such as Southeast Asia and Europe.

### 6 Enhance participating countries' sense of ownership over the process

Rather than a particular country leading the process, it would be more desirable and meaningful for all countries with ideas for cooperation to feel a sense of ownership in the pursuit of cooperation. In this context, the ROK is ready to assume the role of a facilitator for regional cooperation.

# What is the road-map for the cooperation?

- Gain support from the international community
- Accumulate a practice of cooperation
- Establish a solid framework for cooperation

## 1 Start by gaining support from the international community.

There is now a growing recognition of the need for peace and cooperation in Northeast Asia, and it is important to further promote this awareness to secure firm support for the initiative.

The ROK government has been actively explaining the concept of NAPCI at various bilateral and multilateral meetings.

The basic concept and rationale of the initiative have been presented on various diplomatic occasions including summit meetings with the US (May 2013), China (June 2013), Russia (November 2013), ASEAN (October 2013), the EU (November 2013) and Canada (March 2014).

Not only Northeast Asian countries such as the US, China, Japan and Russia, but also the international community, including ASEAN and the EU, have expressed an understanding of and support for the initiative.

The ROK government has also been able to secure support for the initiative on the occasion of Track 1.5 forums including the Sejong Institute Conference on NAPCI (September 2013), the Eurasia Conference (October 2013), and IFANS Conference on NAPCI (November 2013).

We plan to continue our efforts to secure support for the initiative. The ROK government will make valuable use of such opportunities at Track 1 forums including the Nuclear Security Summit, ARF (ASEAN Regional Forum) and UN General Assembly meetings. The ROK will also host Track 1.5 forums such as seminars with the EU and NATO and the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Forum, as well as NAPCI workshops in Northeast Asian countries.

## 2 Accumulate a practice of cooperation among Northeast Asian countries.

The initiative seeks to accumulate a practice of cooperation by pursuing concrete projects for cooperation on non-traditional security issues such as nuclear safety, energy security, environment, disaster relief and cyberspace, among others. Such practices will be built in the following two ways.

The first approach is to hold a meeting of Northeast Asian countries on non-traditional security issues. This would involve holding a meeting on a particular soft issue among representatives of Northeast Asian countries either on the occasion of existing multilateral meetings or holding a separate meeting.

The ROK has engaged in consultations on nuclear safety and cyberspace issues among Northeast Asian countries on such occasions as the IAEA International Conference on Nuclear Safety (July 2013) and the Seoul Conference on Cyberspace (October 2013).

The Korean government also hosted the Northeast Asia Energy Cooperation Forum on the occasion of the World Energy Congress (October 2013) and the North East Asia Gas Pricing Gathering on the occasion of the Gastech 2014 Conference and Exhibition (March 2014). It will continue to hold meetings, such as the 2nd Northeast Asia Energy Cooperation Forum, on a range of issues.

The second approach is to revitalize the activities of existing mechanisms and develop them by expanding participation to foster dialogue and cooperation in the region.

In November 2013, the ROK actively participated in the Northeast Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC) to revitalize the existing multilateral forums to deal with environmental issues in the region.

In 2014, a new meeting on nuclear safety, the TRM+, will be launched in Northeast Asia. Building upon the TRM (Top Regulators' Meeting) among the nuclear safety regulation authorities of Korea, Japan and China, the TRM+ will include new members such as the United States and Russia. The meeting will be held in Japan (1st TRM+) and Korea (2nd TRM+), respectively.





### 3 Establish a solid framework for cooperation among Northeast Asian countries.

By holding various forums and projects for cooperation related to non-traditional security issues on a regular basis, we will be able to complement existing multilateral cooperation mechanisms and establish a multi-faceted and multi-layered regional cooperation mechanism.

Once such a thriving multi-layered cooperation has been fostered, it may be developed into a solid mechanism for cooperation similar to multilateral cooperation regimes in Europe such as the Helsinki process.

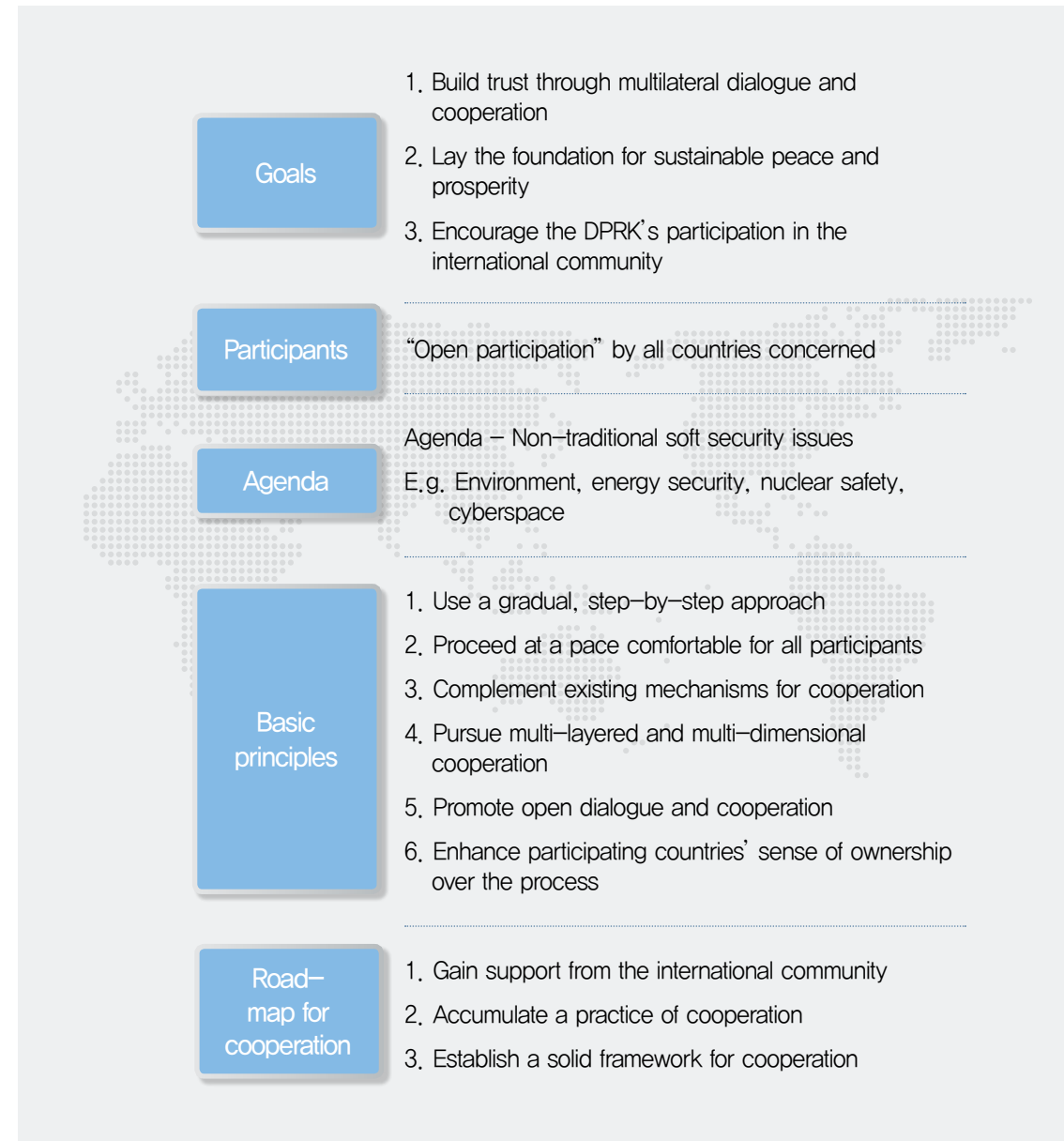
Furthermore, if the conditions are ripe, it may be developed into a multilateral security consultation body in Northeast Asia which is able to deal with North Korea's security concerns as suggested by President Park in her Dresden speech.



We could also build on the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative to address North Korea's security concerns through a multilateral peace and security system in Northeast Asia.

**President Park Geun-hye**

“An Initiative for Peaceful Unification on the Korean Peninsula” (Dresden speech)  
March 28, 2014



# Questions



## In what ways does the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative differ from the initiatives of former ROK administrations?

Although former administrations of the ROK have, since the mid-1980's, proposed various forms of initiatives relating to multilateral cooperation in Northeast Asia, they were not successful in yielding the anticipated results due to various obstacles.

The Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI) takes a differentiated approach drawing on lessons learned from past experience and based on a realistic understanding of reality.

Above all, it seeks to build an infrastructure of trust and to establish a culture of dialogue and cooperation in Northeast Asia.

And it takes a “process-oriented approach” which focuses on fostering a habit of dialogue and cooperation in a concrete manner starting from areas in which a spirit of cooperation can be easily fostered.

“Building trust should be seen as both a process and an end goal”

Lamberto Zannier, OSCE Secretary-General, Key-note address at the Seoul Defense Dialogue, November 11, 2013

## II What is the added value of the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative?

The existing regional cooperation mechanisms in Northeast Asia including cooperation among Korea, China and Japan have only pursued functional cooperation in areas such as the environment and health. They have failed to take into consideration the factors of peace and security in the region. Moreover, they have limitations in that they are mechanisms for cooperation among some countries and have not evolved to encompass all the countries of the region.

Therefore, the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI) seeks to lay the foundation for regional peace and security through multilateral cooperation encompassing all the countries in the Northeast Asian region. In this sense, it seeks to complement the existing mechanisms.

It seeks to revitalize and develop the existing forms of cooperation such as that regarding nuclear safety. The launch of the TRM+, which comprises of the existing TRM (Top Regulators' Meeting) among Korea, China and Japan, and new countries such as the US and Russia, is a good example.

Moreover, a new kind of multilateral cooperation mechanism is to be created in areas in which there are no mechanisms in place, such as cyberspace.

## III What could be done in order to encourage North Korea to join the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative?

Basically, North Korea can participate in the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI) at any stage. We will exert continued efforts to engage North Korea through dialogue and consultations with the countries concerned from the early stages. If North Korea delays its decision to join the Initiative, we will begin the initiative with countries with which cooperation is possible. Yet, we will continue to exert efforts to involve North Korea in the initiative.

North Korea is always welcome to participate in the cooperation.

## IV Can the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative take shape in the midst of the strained relations between China and Japan, and Korea and Japan?

Relations between China and Japan, and Korea and Japan have recently been deteriorating.

However, countries in Northeast Asia are becoming more interdependent at a more rapid pace than in any other region, leading to an increasing demand for cooperation in non-traditional soft security issues.

In particular, the participation of the countries in the region can be easily encouraged in non-traditional soft security issues, of which the political cost is low compared with the benefits yielded by the cooperation.

Collective efforts to build trust are all the more necessary, particularly when political relations are strained.

Multilateral security cooperation in Europe, which began with economic affairs, expanded little by little to encompass a wide range of issues and even reached the stage of engaging in discussions on disarmament, one of the most sensitive issues.

This was thanks to the concerted efforts by the countries in the region which have sought to resolve political tensions and military conflicts and to find the path to coexistence.

As Mr. Lamberto Zannier, Secretary General of the OSCE, referred to in his keynote speech on the occasion of the Seoul Defense Dialogue in November last year, the fact that the Helsinki Process was launched during the Cold War era in which hostility and distrust among the nations were prevalent, offers an extremely valuable lesson for Northeast Asia today.

## V What are the links between the Trust-Building Process on the Korean Peninsula and the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative?

The Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI) and the Trust-Building Process on the Korean Peninsula constitute pivotal elements of Trustpolitik pursued by the Park Geun-hye administration.

NAPCI and the Trust-Building Process on the Korean Peninsula are being pursued in such a way as to be mutually reinforcing.

If trust is restored and a vision for regional peace is shared, countries of Northeast Asia will be encouraged to join the Trust-Building Process on the Korean Peninsula which aims to bring change in North Korea.

Peace in Northeast Asia and on the Korean Peninsula are closely linked together.



## VI What is the relationship between the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative and Eurasia Initiative?

The Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI) and Eurasia Initiative are concrete policies of Trustpolitik and each targets a specific region – Northeast Asia and Eurasia respectively.

The Eurasia Initiative is a broader initiative to expand cooperation in the political, security, economic and cultural fields at the much wider level of Eurasia. NAPCI will be able to contribute to the shaping of Eurasia into a “Continent of Peace”

## VII What is the relation between the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative and Dresden Peaceful Unification Initiative?

The initiative for peaceful unification on the Korean Peninsula presented by President Park Geun-hye in Dresden proposes a vision of a unified Korea that the ROK envisions and a path towards realizing this vision for the two Koreas.

The Dresden Initiative is focused on improving the lives of people on the Korean Peninsula by presenting three proposals to the North Korean authorities – an agenda for humanity, agenda for co-prosperity, and agenda for integration.

Once trust is built up between the two Koreas and sustainable peace is established on the Korean Peninsula, a unified Korean Peninsula will greatly benefit the Northeast Asian region by mitigating the security threats that Northeast Asia faces and offering peace dividends and economic opportunities for neighboring countries.

Moreover, as cooperation is built up and peace is established among regional countries through the pursuit of the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI), this will facilitate unification on the Korean Peninsula, which is the very goal of the Dresden Initiative.

## VIII Please offer some reflections on the relationship between the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative, the Six-Party Talks and the denuclearization of North Korea.

The Six-Party Talks is a mechanism for consultations that deals with the North Korean nuclear issue, which is a very sensitive and difficult traditional security issue, and differs in terms of objectives and topics from the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI), which focuses on a non-traditional soft security agenda.

NAPCI can contribute to the pursuit of the Six-Party Talks and denuclearization of North Korea, but NAPCI is not intended to replace the Six-Party Talks. If, through NAPCI, multilateral cooperation is promoted and North Korea participates in the regional cooperation, this will have a positive impact on the pursuit of the Six-Party Talks and the efforts to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue.

The Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative can be conducive to the pursuit of the Six-Party Talks and denuclearization of North Korea.

## IX Please explain the relation between the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative and the ROK-US Alliance.

The Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI) is not in any way inconsistent with the ROK-US alliance. Rather, NAPCI and the alliance are mutually complementary, as they contribute to peace and stability in Northeast Asia by contributing to trust-building among regional countries and serving as a strong deterrence respectively. If pursued in close coordination, they will be able to create a synergy.