

## Talking Points on Trump-Kim Summit and Future Development of the China-US-DPRK Relations

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First, to assess the Trump-Kim summit is very subjective and controversial. Chinese official position and individual scholars' opinions are not identical. Chinese official response was positive, confirming that the two leaders made historical achievements and encouraging them to do more in the following talks. But many Chinese scholars believe that Kim emerged to be a big winner by securing a number of concessions from the United States, Trump did not get any fresh concessions from North Korea on nuclear and ICBM issues. For Trump, the summit was a show, carrying more symbolic meanings than substance. I would grade Trump's performance with "C".

Second, on the bright side of the summit, I believe that the summit set in motion a summit diplomacy between the US and DPRK. A high-level negotiation between Pyongyang and Washington will take place very soon, which may produce more breakthroughs on major issues for three reasons. First, Trump did not get anything substantial in his meeting with Kim Jong Un, he will get something in kind from North Korea, otherwise Trump may walk away from the talks with NK. From the previous pattern of the recent interactions between the US and the DPRK, it will be NK's turn to make more concessions in the next negotiation. Second, Trump and his government is softening their positions on a number of key issues. Trump may not insist on a timetable or a lengthy timetable for NK's denuclearization; the CVID the US has been requesting may become AVD. The softening positions will make negotiations between the US and DPRK more easy and quicken the negotiating process. Third, if North Korea's denuclearization will is real, to quicken the negotiating process and get sanctions lifted as early as possible serve NK's national interests.

Third, Trump and his government's softening position may reveal that the United States seeks the elimination of the NK nuclear weapons rather than the NK nuclear capability, thus may make NK's denuclearization incomplete and reversible. Trump may seek a face-saving and limited rather than total victory since Trump and his government could quickly settle NK's nuclear and ICBM issues, it could devote its diplomatic and military resources to other more important missions. For the United States, it is unwise to spend so significant resources on NK, which should not have occupied a top position on US national strategy if it had not made nuclear and missile provocations.

Four, the high-level US-NK negotiation is highly likely to take place very soon and the negotiation may be fruitful and pave the way for second summit between Kim and Trump. Optimistically, the second summit may produce more significant results than the previous one. Trump has an inclination to divide the US-DPRK interactions into

several episodes, in which the two nations could produce good results in a piecemeal fashion, so he could impress domestic and international audience repeatedly to achieve their domestic purposes (mid-term election).

Five, China and North Korea quickly entered entente. Xi put an end to the ongoing domestic dispute about NK's value in China's national strategy, confirming the strategic value of Sino-NK traditional friendship and their shared ideology. With Kim Jong Un's three visits to China, China and NK has normalized their diplomatic and political relations and in their early stage of discussion of economic cooperation. Conceivably, China will be willing to push for the lift of sanctions with NK taking more substantial steps in its denuclearization. Nonetheless, to seek normalized relations with the United States is NK's determined objective. By its very nature, to seek the normalization of NK-US relations is to diversify its economic and diplomatic ties and reduce its dependence on China.

Six, the looming US-China full-blown trade war is complicating the situation on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia. The Sino-US uneasy cooperation may be in jeopardy if full-blown trade war breaks out. Thus possible falling apart of the uneasy Sino-US cooperation may encourage Trump and his government to seek a quick settlement of NK nuclear issues. North Korea nuclear and ICBM issues will not significantly impact the Sino-US relations.

Seven, the inter-Korean rapprochement is spilling over into the whole Northeast Asia and the rapprochement will remain for the foreseeable future.