



News from Veterans For Peace

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE March 6, 2012

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VFP STATEMENT ON NEW US-DPRK AGREEMENT

On Feb. 29, the US and DPRK(North Korea) each made a public announcement, following their bilateral talks in Beijing. North Korea's Foreign Ministry stated that, "upon request by the U.S. and with a view to maintaining positive atmosphere for the DPRK-U.S. high-level talks," it agreed to "a moratorium on nuclear tests, long-range missile launches, and uranium enrichment activity at Nyongbyon and allow the IAEA to monitor the moratorium on uranium enrichment while productive dialogues continue." In return, the US State Department stated that it would "take steps to increase people-to-people exchanges, including in the areas of culture, education, and sports" with DPRK, and agreed to meet with the DPRK "to finalize administrative details necessary to move forward with our proposed package of 240,000 metric tons of nutritional assistance."

VFP welcome this new development for confidence-building and human security in the tense Korean Peninsula, and urge both parties to implement their commitments in good faith in the coming weeks and months.

At the same time, we are deeply disappointed and concerned with the US Empire's "stick and carrot" policy toward DPRK, which is shamelessly using "nutritional assistance" to achieve its political/military objectives. This is profoundly an anti-humanitarian, bankrupt policy, which betrays the fundamental values of our country for "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

On the one hand, Uncle Sam had imposed harsh economic sanctions against DPRK for more than a half century from the beginning of the Korean War in 1950, which inevitably inflicted much sufferings on the North Korean people; on the other hand, it now talks about offering "nutritional assistance" to children in North Korea, instead of lifting the harsh economic sanctions.

Furthermore, the U.S. military in South Korea is currently leading massive joint war games ("Key Resolve"/"Foal Eagle") against DPRK with some 200,000 ROK troops, which will last until the end of April. Again, this is the sinister nature of the U.S. Empire's "stick and carrot" policy.

What is needed at this time is a fundamental change in the US policy toward Korea as a whole. End the lingering Korean War officially by replacing the outdated Armistice Agreement of 1953 with a peace treaty. Establish normal diplomatic relations with DPRK, and bring our troops home from Korea. Support self-determination of Korean people for a peaceful reunification of their country, which the US government was largely responsible for dividing it into two arbitrarily in 1945.

Dated: March 5, 2012