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The Government Stance on the Proposal to Conclude a South-North Korean Mutual Non-Aggression Pact

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Summary:

Park Chung Hee's stance on the conclusion of South-North Korean Non-Aggression Pact. His proposal deals with South Korea's unification policy and the withdrawal of American Troops issue.

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Affairs Division

I. Background of the Proposal

1. President Park Chung Hee proposed the conclusion of a mutual non-aggression pact between the South and North Korea during the New Year press conference on January 18, 1974. This was based on the conviction that if the North Korean puppets genuinely desire peaceful unification of the Korean Peninsula, the key to this would be to deter the outbreak of war and bring about peace. The proposal contained the following main points:

A. The South and the North pledge to the world that they will not militarily invade each other.

B. The South and North not interfere in one another's affairs.

C. The armistice regime will be maintained under all circumstances.

2. Under the pretext of replacing the armistice agreement with a peace treaty, the Supreme People's Assembly of the North Korean puppets sent a so-called letter of appeal to the U.S. Congress, calling for the conclusion of a peace treaty between the United States and the North Korean puppets and the withdrawal of American troops based in Korea. The main points of the proposal of the North Korean puppets are as follows:

A. The United States and the North Korean puppets commit to a pledge of mutual non-aggression and eliminate the cause of direct military confrontation

B. Halt the increase in and competition over military expenditures and cease the introduction of weapons into the Korean Peninsula

C. Dissolve the the United Nations Command (UNC) and the immediately withdrawal foreign troops stationed in Korea.

D. Make it impossible for the Korean Peninsula to become a military base for foreign troops after foreign troops are withdrawn

3. During his speech on the occasion of National Liberation Day on August 15, 1974, President Park stated the three principles [for unification] and reiterated that the establishment of peace on the Korean Peninsula through the conclusion of a South-North Mutual Non-Aggression Pact constitutes the first stage of peaceful unification.

4. During his New Year's press conference on January 12, 1977, President Park stated that he would not oppose the withdrawal of American troops stationed in Korea after the conclusion of a South-North Mutual Non-Aggression Pact and reiterated his proposal for such a pact. He demanded that the North Korean puppets sign proposed

pact to prove they have abandoned their desire to communize the peninsula by force, the abandonment of which is a precondition of peaceful unification, and called for the resumption of South-North dialogue aimed at concluding the non-aggression pact.

II. Significance of the Proposal

1. The proposal both reconfirms the government's policy of peaceful unification and clarifies its fundamental stance of peace before unification.
2. The proposal states that the reason there has been no progress toward unification and tensions continue on the Korean Peninsula is due to the North Korean puppets' ambition of achieving unification through communization. It further highlights the difference between our peaceful unification policy and the North Korean puppets' policy of communizing the peninsula by force.
3. The government has reiterated that maintaining the current armistice regime and preventing interference in the internal affairs of one another are required as an institutional guarantee to reduce tension and maintain peace on the Korean Peninsula.
4. The withdrawal of U.S. troops must be preceded by measures deterring the outbreak of war on the Korean peninsula through an institutional guarantee based on the South-North Mutual Nonaggression. The proposal calls for the new U.S. government to carefully consider the matter.
5. The government's decision to base mutual non-aggression pact consultations on dialogue grounded on the July 4 Joint Communique has reconfirmed its basic position that the South and North Korea, as the main concerned parties, must resort to dialogue to resolve issues related to peaceful unification.
6. The government has proven its flexibility over the issue of withdrawing American troops (foreign troops) by publicly announcing it will not oppose the withdrawal under certain conditions. Through this, the government has secured diplomatic dominance over the North Korean puppets and their supporting forces.
7. The proposal has instilled the spirit of independence in national defense among the people and has confidently displayed the country's strengthened defense posture to domestic as well as international audiences.

III. The Relationship between the Non-Aggression Pact Proposal and the Proposal for a Meeting among the Directly Related Parties Concerning the Armistice

1. A major goal of the South-North Mutual Non-Aggression Pact is to maintain the armistice regime. As such, the pact proposed to the North Korean puppets on January 12, 1977, does not contradict but rather complements the proposal for a meeting among the directly related parties concerning the armistice. This is because they are both based on the maintenance of the armistice regime and the settlement of peace on the Korean Peninsula.
2. The withdrawal of American troops from Korea will mean the dissolution of the United Nations Command (UNC). The dissolution of the UNC means the nullification of the armistice, and consequently lead to an institutional vacuum for maintaining peace on the Korean Peninsula. Therefore, the government's proposal to conclude a non-aggression pact before the withdrawal of American troops is aimed at institutionalizing through explicit means the North Korean puppets' position that they will not start war again.

IV. The North Korean Puppets' Previous Attitude toward a South-North Mutual Non-Aggression Pact

1. Since immediately after the Korean War, the North Korean puppets have made proposals domestically and internationally for seeking unification without resorting to the use of force or signing of a North-South mutual non-aggression pact. In the July 4 Joint Communique, the South and North agreed to stop slandering each other and work to prevent inadvertent military clashes.

2. Since then, the North Korean puppets have pursued their phony peace offensive with increasing intensity by proposing the conclusion of a North-South peace treaty in 1969. When our side proposed a South-North Mutual Non-Aggression Pact on January 18, 1974, the North Korean puppets switched from their previous phony peace tactics towards the south to calling for a so-called peace treaty with the United States on March 25, 1974.

3. Given the inconsistent position of the North Korean puppets ranging from non-aggression pact and peace treaty, the underlying motives lay in weakening our security posture through deceptive political propaganda and aiming to unravel the balance of power between the north and south by having the withdrawal of American troops materialized at an early date. Ultimately, they aim to materialize their ambition to achieve unification by communizing the Korean Peninsula by force. Therefore, it is unclear whether the North Korean puppets will accept this most recent proposal.

V. Matters to Consider Regarding the Withdrawal of American Troops Stationed in Korea

1. The government may consider the withdrawal of American troops only in the following three circumstances.

A. The goals of stationing American troops is achieved and there is no further need for their presence in Korea (a state of security is obtained)

B. Following judgment that the goals of stationing American troops in Korea cannot be met, the conclusion is made that their continued presence is a waste and of no benefit (their presence does not serve a meaningful purpose)

C. A viable military alternative becomes available, such as a drastic increase in the defense capabilities of the ROK armed forces that is sufficient for deterring the possibility of North Korean puppets' war provocation

2. As long as the United States does not present a satisfactory position regarding the three issues in the above, the American measure of withdrawing troops stationed in Korea would be a defeatist and unilateral capitulation in the struggle against communism. Such a measure would weaken the security and defense of the Korean people who are faced with the threat of invasion and war provocation by the North Korean puppets, and would run contrary to the moral ideals championed by the U.S. government.