

Federalizing the Korean Peninsula: North Korea Calls for Unifying Confederation with South Korea

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The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on Monday called for ending confrontation on the Korean Peninsula and improving north-south ties, the official KCNA news agency reported.

The DPRK made a four-point proposal clarifying its principles and stances on easing tensions on the peninsula and achieving "independent reunification" of the nation, one day before the 20th anniversary of the death of its former top leader Kim Il Sung.

The DPRK government called on both sides on the Korean Peninsula to end reckless hostility and confrontation and blaze a road toward reconciliation and unity, the KCNA quoted a statement as saying.

It described the current situation on the peninsula as "grave" as a single remark or a tiny friction may cause destruction of the nation amid an extremely high level of hostility and confrontation.

The DPRK asked South Korea to make a bold decision to change its confrontational policy and suspend all kinds of north-targeted military exercises it plans to conduct with "outsiders."

The statement also urged both sides to reject dependence on "outsiders" and settle all issues through their own efforts.

"The north and south should never fall victim to outsiders keen on catching fish in troubled waters through the division of Korea," it stressed.

The government also suggested both sides seek "reasonable reunification proposals" as fellow countrymen have been increasingly demanding the realization of reunification through a "federal formula" on the Korean Peninsula, where different ideologies and social systems exist.

In the June 15 joint declaration, it added, both countries acknowledged that common points exist between the "low-level federation" system proposed by the DPRK and the "confederation" supported by South Korea.

"The north and south should specify the reunification proposals and make efforts to realize them," the statement said.

The June 15 declaration was issued at a historic 2000 summit between late South Korean President Kim Dae-jung and late DPRK leader Kim Jong Il. It led to a period of rapprochement between the two sides that saw large- scale bilateral cooperation and improved economic ties.

The statement called for amicable atmosphere given the “extremely deteriorated” inter-Korean relations.

To that end, the DPRK has decided to send a sports delegation along with a cheerleading squad to participate in the 17th Asian Games to be held in Incheon, South Korea, from Sept. 19 to Oct. 4.

Legal and institutional measures that block kindred bonds and compatriotic feelings should be lifted and all calumnies that breed misunderstanding and distrust be ended, it added.

If these principles and measures put forward by the DPRK side are adopted in good faith, an “epochal occasion” will come for normalizing north-south ties and achieving national unity, it said.

Pyongyang proposed halting inter-Korean military hostilities on June 30, but the proposal was rejected by South Korea’s Unification Ministry in charge of inter-Korean affairs, saying it lacked sincerity.

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