

North Korean Leader's Cross-Border Walk for Peace

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It was a historic gesture for ending decades of uneasy armistice conditions, as well as attempting to ease longstanding Korean peninsula tensions.

For the first time since US aggression on North Korea in the early 1950s, a DPRK leader walked across the border separating North from South, a significant gesture for peace and unity on the peninsula.

On Friday, the North Korea Times, the nation's oldest online news service, said DPRK leader Kim Jong-un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in began historic inter-Korean talks in Panmunjom's truce village.

Kim crossed "the demarcation line into the South Korean half of the DMZ to meet" with his counterpart for summit talks.

Topics include formally ending the 1950s war, improving inter-Korean relations, and denuclearizing the peninsula, among other issues.

The summit precedes the first ever meeting between a DPRK and US leader, expected to take place in May or June – though by no means certain.

A tree-planting ceremony by Kim and Moon was hugely symbolic. It was from mixed soil from each nation, irrigated by North Korean river water – a pine tree signifying peace and prosperity.

The inscription on a plaque to be placed near the demarcation line will read:

"Peace and Prosperity Are Planted" – including signatures of both leaders.

Following afternoon talks, Kim and Moon declared willingness to work for peace and stability on the peninsula.

Kim's delegation included nine senior DPRK officials, including Kim Yo-jong, the North

Korean leader's sister and key advisor.

After morning talks, Kim offered to visit Moon's official Seoul residence if invited.

Before talks began, Kim wrote in the guest book:

"A new history begins now – at the starting point of an era of peace."

"We should achieve good results by talking frankly about current issues," said Kim, adding: "It's a moment to write a new history of peace and prosperity."

Moon replied:

"I hope we talk frankly to reach an agreement and present a big gift for Koreans and the people around the world who wish for peace."

Stepping back from the brink for peace on the peninsula faces enormous obstacles – from Washington, not Pyongyang or Seoul.

Inter-Korean rapprochement and agreement to formally end the Korean War if this happens depends largely on how Washington reacts.

The DPRK has been threatened by hostile US administrations throughout the post-WW II period, why it sought nuclear weapons and long-range delivery system missiles – for self-defense, not offense.

Without genuine security guarantees, assured by allies, notably China and Russia, the DPRK isn't likely to eliminate its most important deterrent against possible US aggression.

Given Washington's permanent war policy, its long history of breaching agreements reached, its hostility toward all sovereign independent countries, it takes a giant leap of faith to believe it'll turn a page on North Korea for peace on the peninsula.

Hold the cheers on possible normalized US/DPRK relations ahead. Washington's rage for dominance is longstanding.

All sovereign nations not bowing to its will are threatened. Peace on the Korean peninsula may be unattainable.

Attempts to achieve it failed before. Neocon hardliners infesting Washington may undermine it ahead – whatever the outcome of a Kim/Trump summit if it occurs.

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My newest book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

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