

Thank you for allowing me to share with you our ideas on a step toward the realization of a world without nuclear weapons. I am Yosuke Watanabe of Peace Depot, which is a think tank that supports civil society's peace movements, particularly in the area of nuclear disarmament. Now, we would like to request that the realization of a Northeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (NEA-NWFZ) be included in the document to be issued by the IGEP, as an important step toward the realization of a world without nuclear weapons.

For the past quarter century, Peace Depot has advocated an NEA-NWFZ based upon a scheme called 3+3. The first three refer to Japan, the ROK or South Korea, and the DPRK or North Korea. These three countries would form a geographic nuclear-weapon-free zone in which the development, manufacture, possession, stockpiling, deployment, and testing of nuclear weapons would be prohibited. The latter three are the United States, China, and Russia. These three nuclear-weapon states under the NPT would be prohibited from using or threatening to use nuclear weapons against Japan, South Korea, and North Korea. The purpose of the 3+3 NWFZ is to institutionalize the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and Japan through a Six-Party Treaty. Of course, such a treaty would include an agreed transitional period for North Korea to discard its nuclear program, including its existing nuclear arsenal.

Another purpose of pursuing the 3+3 NWFZ is to create momentum in Northeast Asia to shift the regional security policy from the one heavily relying on nuclear deterrence to the one with more emphasis on the concept of common security through diplomacy. The 3+3 NWFZ is a practical and effective approach to promoting dialogue among the six nations for common security.

There is a long-standing NGO movement in Japan that supports an NEA-NWFZ. In particular, nuclear-free local governments support it. For example, the city of Nagasaki issues a Peace Declaration on August 8 every year, in which it asks the Japanese government to support an NEA-NWFZ.

Now, I would like to share with you the recent moves toward the realization of an NEA-NWFZ. Beginning in 2021, the World Federalist Movement is taking the lead in seeking cooperation from parliamentarians of the relevant countries to realize an NEA-NWFZ. In 2022, the Parliamentarians for 3+3 was launched in Nagasaki. The inaugural event was attended by eight parliamentarians from Japan and South Korea. In 2023, two subsequent meetings were held in Seoul and Washington, DC. A similar meeting will be held in China this year.

In conclusion, we argue that an NEA-NWFZ is a better and feasible option, as well as an important step toward a world without nuclear weapons. If this option becomes a reality and the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and Japan is institutionalized, it should benefit all surrounding countries, including the United States, China, and Russia. Therefore, we ask that an NEA-NWFZ be included in a document of the IGEP. Thank you.