

# Six Powers, or Five? Russia Offers Guarantee to North Korea

by Kathy Wolfe

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov proposed on April 10 that Russia, China, South Korea, the United States, and Japan sign a multilateral non-aggression pact with North Korea, a “Six-Power” guarantee to end the Korean crisis. “Russia is willing to take part in a ‘cross guarantee’ of the North Korean regime between the United States, China, Russia,” and the other parties, Ivanov told South Korean Defense Minister Cho Young-kil in Seoul. “North Korea will resist U.S. efforts to resolve the nuclear crisis at the United Nations,” Ivanov said, “since the UN’s authority has been seriously undermined by the war in Iraq.” An alternate multilateral forum must be found.

South Korean Foreign Minister Yoon Young-kwan proposed the Six-Power format to Secretary of State Colin Powell in Washington March 28. Washington rejected it, instead demanding a UN Security Council meeting on April 9 to condemn North Korea. China and Russia then vetoed the UNSC action. Meanwhile, Seoul National Security chief Ra Jong-yil took the Six-Power plan to Moscow and Beijing in the first week in April. The result was Moscow’s offer, the first such by any great power.

China and North Korea accepted the multilateral idea after Yoon traveled to Beijing April 10-12, and met Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, President Hu Jintao, and other officials. Previously, China had backed North Korea’s insistence upon purely bilateral talks with Washington, a demand that the United States recognize Pyongyang’s national sovereignty. But as Yoon noted, semantics about “bilateral” vs. “multilateral” could lead to war.

This was the context for the announcement on April 12 by North Korea that it can now accept a multilateral format. “If the United States is ready to make a bold switch-over in its Korea policy for a settlement of the nuclear issue, the D.P.R.K. will not stick to any particular dialogue format,” a Foreign Ministry spokesman said. Pyongyang is willing to be flexible, to learn “whether the United States has a political willingness to drop its hostile policy or not,” he said. “It is possible to solve the issue if the United States sincerely approaches the dialogue.”

South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun officially adopted the “Six-Power” framework April 13, and announced a global

diplomatic drive to sell it to President Bush—before Roh’s visit to Washington May 11-17.

## Development: The Only Guarantee

South Korean Foreign Minister Yoon announced April 16 that initial talks will take place April 23, in Beijing, between China, the United States, and North Korea, to get the process rolling by meeting Pyongyang’s demand for as “close to” bilateral talks with the United States as possible. Yoon indicated that South Korea, Russia, and Japan are expected to join in the near term.

The best minds involved, however, know that only the concerted *economic development* of Eurasia, especially of the entire Korean Peninsula and Russia’s Siberian Far East, can create a fundamental peace in the region. They don’t want to repeat the experience of Israel, Palestine, Jordan, and Egypt, of attempting political peace settlements while the economic development required by those agreements was blocked, leaving the Mideast population in poverty, almost assuring perpetual war there.

Minister Ivanov pointed out in Seoul on April 10 that South Korea and Russia will soon convene a working-level meeting on railway cooperation to extend the Trans-Siberian Railway to South Korea. This implies stepped up Russian efforts to help rebuild the North’s rail grid, and renewed efforts to connect the Trans-Korean Railway between North and South Korea, stalled since March. Seoul, Tokyo, Moscow, and Beijing are also engaged in energetic discussions to open a pair of 2,500-mile oil and gas pipelines from Irkutsk at Russia’s Lake Baikal in Siberia, through China and North Korea, into South Korea and undersea to Japan. This \$20 billion project would provide cash to Moscow, stabilization of the splintering Russian Far East, free energy to North Korea, and a break in the stranglehold of Mideast energy supplies on Japan, China, and South Korea.

EIR Contributing Editor Lyndon LaRouche said on April 14 that if “Six-Power” talks get off the ground, then Russia’s involvement implies a link, as well, to new potential arrangements for the economic development of the entire Eurasian Land-Bridge/New Silk Road region, “from Tokyo to Pusan to Paris.” The Russian offer to guarantee peace in Korea, he

said, implies a link with the St. Petersburg Summit held April 6 by the heads of state of Russia, Germany, and France, focused on economic development. LaRouche hailed the prospect for cooperation among Russia-France-Germany, on the one hand, and Russia-China-India on the other hand. This opens a potential for new treaty agreements across Eurasia, LaRouche said, for trade, investment, and productive job creation. Eurasian cooperation in technology-sharing and long-term capital improvement projects means a solution for the economic crisis in Asia, Europe, and Russia.

## Cooler American Heads

In fact, due to efforts by some cool-headed senior American players, LaRouche added, the “Six-Power” arrangement could even shift the entire global strategic situation—which is now racing toward disaster, given the wholesale destruction of Iraq and threats to spread the war far and wide. Utopian extremists such as Vice President Richard Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, and their crowd, threatened in mid-April that North Korea, Iran, Syria, and others should “take a lesson” from Iraq.

Yet, advisors to the President’s father, former President George H.W. Bush, have begun speaking loudly against any wider war—especially in Korea. These circles control the Carlisle Group investment bank, with its enormous investments in South Korea, Japan, and China, which they do not wish to turn radioactive. They also have an honest horror of the realities of nuclear war so close to Seoul’s 13 million people and Tokyo’s 23 million.

“The big question would be, how would President Bush respond?” LaRouche said. The answer, he noted, is not academic. It depends on what sane people everywhere do, to break the President away from the extremists.

Under the headline “Senior Bush Says US Doesn’t Want War With NK,” the *Korea Times* reports that the elder George Bush himself first held a round of White House meetings, and then flew to Seoul on April 15 to dine with South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun, where they agreed on the need to prevent any chance of war. “This meeting sends out a positive message to the people of South Korea and the United States” about the need to build peace, said Roh. “Should a war break out, its disastrous consequences would not be confined to the Korean peninsula.”

From Washington, President “W” Bush telephoned Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on April 16, *Kyodo News* reports, to say that Japan and South Korea will be invited to a new round of talks with Pyongyang soon. Roh and Koizumi have both announced urgent trips to Washington for early May.

Donald Gregg, Bush Senior’s former Ambassador to Korea (1989-93), has meanwhile grown quite vocal in warning of the danger of a Korean conflict. In an April 10 PBS-TV “Frontline” documentary on North Korea, Gregg made a surprise attack on the President’s worst utopian advisors by

name, for “demonizing” North Korean Chairman Kim Jong-il. They do so, he said, not because they understand reality, but because “it validates a great many of the Manichean theories that people like Richard Perle and [Paul] Wolfowitz, and [William] Kristol and [Lewis] Libby had been laying out: that this is an evil world, that we are under threat.”

## Only Two Options

These people, Gregg said, “never had a policy” toward North Korea, “just an attitude: hostility. . . . We have two options. We can give North Korea a security guarantee in a non-aggression treaty, or in six months, they will become a nuclear power.”

Gregg praised the recent proposal by James Laney, Bill Clinton’s Ambassador to Korea, for the Six-Power guarantee of North Korea’s security by China, Russia, Japan, the United States, and South Korea. Gregg also called for a “senior special Presidential envoy” to be sent to Pyongyang immediately from Washington, as Jimmy Carter went in 1994—reminding some people of Lyndon LaRouche’s offer to travel to Pyongyang, issued on March 13.

Gregg criticized the 1998 “Rumsfeld Commission” report on missile defense, a tome by an “experts” group chaired by the man who is now Defense Secretary, and its conclusion that the United States is under threat of a strategic nuclear missile attack by North Korea. Due to this and more bad advice, Gregg said, the current President “came into office saying ‘I don’t trust Kim Jong-il.’”

“There is a group in North Korea that hopes North Korea can do better by establishing better relations with their neighbors, by building export goods, instead of nuclear weapons,” Gregg told “Frontline.” “I think that plan ought to be encouraged—but by threatening them, by calling them a terrorist state, by calling them the other things—the axis of evil, pygmy, etc.—we make it much harder for them to change the allocation of resources.”

In fact, however, the only two options the world has in Korea, are a Six-Power-type program, or nuclear war.

In case the utopians prevail and President Bush decides not to cooperate with the Six-Power guarantee, Asian experts are already talking about a “back-up” plan to create a “Five-Power” framework—without the United States. As a last resort to stop a war, “Seoul, Beijing, Moscow, and Tokyo could take their fate in their own hands,” as one official put it, go to Pyongyang, and sign a peace treaty to end the 1950-53 Korean War, including a non-aggression pact. To this day, there is only a cease-fire.

It may even be possible to take this “Five-Power plan” to be sanctioned by the UN, because the existing 1953 Korean cease-fire is, technically, signed by the UN and the D.P.R.K. Experts say even a Five-Power pact makes a U.S. unilateral strike against the D.P.R.K. difficult, if not impossible. Thus, many are hoping that if the other five show a firm resolve, Washington will go along.