

HONG, SEOK-HYUN

Chairman, JoongAng Holdings

A Road to Peace and Prosperity in Northeast Asia

In the wake of the historic inter-Korean summit of April 27 and the June 12 summit between the leaders of North Korea and the United States, the world held high hopes and expectations for denuclearization and a permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula as well as North Korea's economic development and normalization. But the situation now is neither optimistic nor pessimistic. Only the voices of concern are rising with global conditions surrounding North Korea's nuclear issue casting a dark shadow on future negotiations.

At this point, I sincerely hope the parties involved in North Korea's nuclear issue will observe the three following principles. First, they must approach denuclearization based on the best interests of the international community, not their individual concerns. Second, they must overcome the temptation to link the denuclearization talks with contentious bilateral issues. Third, they must rise above the compulsion to use the nuclear negotiations to serve domestic political agendas.

I also call on global leaders and intellectuals who aspire for peaceful development of the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia to pool their wisdom and strength together, to ensure the denuclearization process continues and an environment conducive to change in North Korea is created.