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# THIRD CONCEPT

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- ❖ **Unified Korea**
- ❖ **Focus on International Relations**
- ❖ **Refugees' Status**
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## An International Journal of Ideas

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**Third Concept** aims at providing a platform where a meaningful exchange of ideas can take place among the people of the Third World. The attempt will be to communicate, debate and disseminate information, ideas and alternatives for the resolution of the common problems facing humankind. We welcome contributions from academics, journalists and even from those who may never have published anything before. The only requirement is a concern for and desire to understand and take the issue of our time. Contributions may be descriptive, analytical or theoretical. They may be in the form of original articles, reactions to previous contributions, or even a comment on a prevailing situation. All contributions, neatly typed in double space, may be addressed to:

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## Singapore Summit & After

**M**uch hyped summit between the US President Donald Trump and the North Korean supremo Kim Jong-un on June 12 held in Singapore has evoked mixed reactions. Apart from Washington and Pyongyang, Seoul and Beijing which behind the scene facilitators for arranging this summit are interpreting the summit outcome from their respective perspectives. While the Trump Administration looks upon this summit as adding a new feather in President Trump's cap at a time when Trump's graph of popularity is on decline in the wake of spat over tariffs with Beijing and European Union; nevertheless, Trump's critics have more negatives about the anticipated outcome of the summit. While terming the summit "woefully short on substance and undermining American national security" by asserting that an agreement to complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization (CVID) between American and North Korean officials was nothing but "a pipe dream."

While lamenting at President Trump's inability to extract significant commitments from Kim Jong-un in return for simply agreeing to meet him, some critics credit North Korea for extracting major unilateral concessions, including the freeze on joint U.S.-South Korean military exercises by the United States. Trump's detractors have blasted the Trump-Kim "deal" as a "great giveaway" to North Korea, China and Russia without getting anything in return. The freeze on joint military exercises is being viewed by these detractors with serious apprehensions that could culminate in the possible loss of America's influence and trust among its allies South Korea and Japan as well as eroding American military preparedness. Most of the countries of the Asia-Pacific region have hailed the Trump-Kim deal as a "historical" achievement entailing the potential of bringing lasting peace and economic prosperity to the region and by the extension to the world. Despite some issues needed to be ironed out, the historic meeting is regarded as an achievement in itself by bringing North Korea to the negotiating table. The ray of optimism for an atmosphere of peace and stability in Northern Asia in particular and the Asia-Pacific region in general in the aftermath of Trump-Kim deal is congenial for South Korea which has played active role in it.

The real winner in this 'summitry diplomacy' can be said to be China, which despite sitting on the sidelines has elicited maximum gains in terms of normalization of relations with North Korea, prospects of increased Chinese role in reconstructing North Korean economy, scaling down of the American military threat in China's backyard in the aftermath of the freeze on joint U.S.-South Korean military exercises. For some 'hawks' in Washington, the deal is a page out of the China playbook of a "double freeze" – North Korea to stop testing intercontinental missiles while the US ceasing military exercises with South Korea – thereby making China "great." The post-Singapore summit period opens up new opportunities for North Korea to ascend the trajectory of economic growth by joining the international mainstream, seek membership of the international financial institutions, elicit investment and build up domestic infrastructure. The North Korean leader Kim Jong-un is said to be open to reforming the economy, creating an investment frenzy in the Chinese region bordering North Korea and a sense of optimism within the "hermit kingdom." Many economists opine that any development plan for North Korea ought to focus on infrastructure connectivity to link the isolated country to the surrounding region of Northern Asia along with Western Europe and North America, while providing corridors of development within the country.

It is also suggested by development experts that in the initial stage, North Korea needs to build highways and railways in North Korea and to connect them to South Korea and China. Expansion of North Korean imports and exports will lead to economic development and building businesses, hotels, restaurants and the like along the infrastructure corridors could also provide an economic spill-over effect. Educational and cultural exchanges between North Korea and other countries are also cited as potential instruments entailing transformation effect. The question of denuclearization of North Korea is the most important issue which cannot be resolved overnight. Let it have an opportunity gradually join international organizations, further exposing itself to mainstreaming thinking and realize its international obligations. While negotiating on nuclear issues, North Korean sensitivities and its security concerns have to accorded priority to make it an active player in peace.

— BK