

Joint Press Release of the Seventh Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Meeting among the Republic of Korea, Japan, and the People's Republic of China

1. The Foreign Ministers of the Republic of Korea, Japan, and the People's Republic of China convened in Seoul, for the Seventh Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Meeting on March 21, 2015, and engaged in an in-depth discussion on various issues including the current status and future direction of the trilateral cooperation, and regional as well as global affairs.
2. The three Ministers expressed their expectation that trilateral cooperation mechanism may head towards restoration on the occasion of this Meeting, held after almost three years since April 2012. The three Ministers also shared the view that trilateral cooperation mechanism should continue to remain and develop as an important framework of cooperation for peace, stability and prosperity in Northeast Asia.

In this regard, Ministers of Japan and the People's Republic of China highly appreciated the active role of the Republic of Korea as the chair country in leading the trilateral cooperation for the past years, including the hosting of this Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

3. The three Ministers acknowledged that there has been steady progress in trilateral cooperation in various areas, despite fluid situations in the Northeast Asian region in recent years.

The three Ministers welcomed that various trilateral ministerial meetings in areas including environment, culture, public health, finance, transportation and distribution, audit, disaster management, earthquake cooperation, and patent were successfully convened during the last two years. The three Ministers decided to encourage a more active promotion of over 50 intergovernmental consultative mechanisms, including about 20 ministerial-level mechanisms, as well as numerous cooperation projects among the three countries.

Furthermore, the three Ministers shared the view that the three countries have actively pursued the institutionalization of trilateral trade, investment, and economic relations. While welcoming the improvement of investment environment with the Trilateral Investment Agreement which came into effect in May 2014, the three Ministers decided to make continued efforts towards the acceleration of trilateral FTA negotiations.

The three Ministers appreciated the efforts made by the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat(TCS), since its establishment in September 2011, to promote trilateral cooperation, and welcomed the release of the "Matrix of Major Events for Trilateral Cooperation in 2015" during this Meeting by the TCS.

4. The three Ministers emphasized that respective bilateral ties among the three countries constitute an important foundation for trilateral cooperation, and that the deepening of trilateral cooperation, in turn, contributes to each bilateral relations and to the peace, stability, and prosperity of the Northeast Asian region. In the spirit of facing history squarely and advancing towards the future, the three Ministers agreed that three countries should address related issues properly and to work together to improve bilateral relations and to strengthen trilateral cooperation.

The three Ministers appreciated the various endeavors made to promote regional cooperation, and decided to make joint efforts to achieve the common goal of building regional trust and cooperation. In this regard, the Ministers of Japan and the People's Republic of China highly appreciated and welcomed the Republic of Korea's "Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative". In addition, the three Ministers decided to further strengthen trilateral nuclear safety cooperation in Northeast Asia, and to expand cooperation in areas including nuclear security, disaster management, environment, and youth exchange.

Furthermore, the three Ministers decided to resume the "Trilateral Counter-Terrorism Consultation" and the "Trilateral Policy Dialogue on Africa", and to continue the "Trilateral Cyber Policy Consultation", "Tripartite Policy Dialogue on Air Pollution" under the framework of Trilateral Environmental Ministers' Meeting, "East Asian Cultural Cities", "CAMPUS Asia", "People-to-People Exchange Forum", and media exchange projects. The three Ministers also decided to newly promote the "Trilateral Youth Summit", cooperation among diplomatic training institutions, network among think-tanks, and the "Trilateral Policy Consultation on Middle East Affairs". Moreover, the three Ministers expressed their intention to explore cooperation in areas, such as capital cities and aging society projects.

5. The three Ministers exchanged views on various regional and global issues.

The three Ministers reaffirmed their firm opposition to the development of nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula, and shared the view that international obligations and commitments under all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and the 19 September 2005 Joint Statement must be faithfully implemented. In addition, the three Ministers decided to continue their joint efforts to resume meaningful Six-Party Talks to make substantial progress in denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

The three Ministers shared the view that trilateral cooperation is an important component of East Asia cooperation, and decided to make joint efforts to contribute to building trust in East Asia through regional dialogues and cooperation. In this vein, the three Ministers welcomed the upcoming launch of the ASEAN Community and decided to build on this momentum by strengthening trilateral cooperation within the existing regional frameworks, such as ASEAN, ASEAN+3(APT), East Asia Summit(EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum(ARF), and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation(APEC).

The three Ministers exchanged views on global issues including response to terrorism and extremism, the situation in Ukraine, Middle East affairs, and the international economy, and decided to continue close coordination on various challenges the international society faces.

6. Based on the accomplishments achieved through this Meeting, the three Ministers decided to continue their efforts to hold the Trilateral Summit at the earliest convenient time for the three countries. /END/