

# **18TH ASIA SECURITY SUMMIT THE IISS SHANGRI-LA DIALOGUE**

**SECOND PLENARY SESSION**

**SATURDAY 1 JUNE 2019**

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**Federica Mogherini, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy; Vice President, European Commission**

Thank you and let me start by saying that it is really a pleasure for me to be first of all back in Singapore, but also it is a pleasure to be back to the Shangri-La Dialogue and especially to be in this panel together with the defence ministers of I think I can say the two most solid partners we have in this region as the European Union, with the Republic of Korea and Japan.

Let me start with a personal memory. As you mentioned, I first came to the Shangri-La Dialogue four years ago, in the first year of my mandate, and I came with one simple message: that Asia security matters to Europe, and we have the ambition to be not only – as we are already – the key economic partner for Asia, but also that we had the ambition to become a global security provider, a global security partner, and Asia should have been part of that work that we were starting to strengthen the EU's credibility and capacity on security and defence matters. Since then, I have to say I have seen in our Asian partners a constantly growing interest in a closer and deeper cooperation with the EU on security issues, and I am proud of that.

Four years on we have come, I believe, a long way on this. Today, we work more closely than ever with ASEAN for instance, not only politically and economically, but also on security, including on the military level. For the first time ever, we participated in a multinational naval exercise hosted by Indonesia. We have sent our security experts to many Asian countries to increase our cooperation on a number of issues that are key for both Europe and Asia starting with counterterrorism. With 11 Asian countries we engaged directly on the military-to-military level and we are now developing the deployment of military advisers in several of our EU delegations across Asia, starting with our delegation to ASEAN in Jakarta.

In many cases, we are also deploying our militaries together on the ground. We have agreements with the Republic of Korea, with New Zealand and with Australia to facilitate their participation in the EU military and civilian missions around the world, and we are about to sign a similar arrangement with Vietnam.

So in these very days, we are seeing that Australia is about to contribute to the EU advisory mission in Iraq that is working hand-in-hand in parallel with the new mission from NATO in the same country. We have been there with our advisers since now for one year and a half. And the Republic of Korea and New Zealand deployed respectively vessels, patrol aircrafts and equipment as part of our EU Operation Atalanta that is fighting effectively piracy off the coast of Somalia.

In the strait of Aden which links the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean, it is clear that Europe and Asia have shared security interests that are also vital for our economic interest; we need to work together. The world is becoming smaller, more connected, also more turbulent and complex. Confrontation too often prevails or seems to prevail over cooperation.

Well, I am proud to say here that we are – Europe and Asia – the positive exception, because in these years we have brought Europe and Asia closer on security, on defence, to promote peace in a true spirit of cooperation and partnership. This was not to be given for granted and I think this is a common achievement we have managed to build in these years. I am proud, for instance, of the role the EU had in supporting peace negotiations in Myanmar and in the Philippines, and we have now

put forward a five-point plan to accompany and facilitate peace talks in Afghanistan that I discussed in Kabul a couple of months ago with our partners.

This brings me to the issue we debate today, maybe the most pressing crisis in Asia from a security perspective and one of the last legacies of the Cold War, as it was reminded. In these years, the Europeans have always repeated three things on North Korea. Firstly, that lasting peace is possible, even if it looks unlikely – and some people called us idealistic for this. Secondly, we have always said that the only solution is peaceful and diplomatic, not military – and sometimes, we were called naive for this. Thirdly, we have always believed that the Korean Peninsula needs a denuclearisation process that is complete, verifiable and irreversible – and some people told us that we lacked realism.

I believe today we have been proven right on all three things. Firstly, peace is possible. Secondly, there is no military solution. Thirdly, any agreement on the nuclear issue has to be ambitious and rock solid.

Let me add that if such agreement looks possible even if still very difficult today, it is first and foremost thanks to President Moon, that I would like to thank for his leadership and courage. Without his leadership and courage, I believe we wouldn't be here today. I am also glad that the United States administration decided to engage and to hold that historic summit here in Singapore one year ago. Some have labelled the Hanoi summit as a failure, but in fact, I believe you can't expect a negotiation of this kind to be concluded smoothly in a few months. It was probably even necessary to identify on one side the issues where the US and North Korea are getting closer and those where there is still a lot of work to be done. Hanoi has proven that negotiations need to be built on a very solid foundation.

Here, I come to the way forward. I believe moving forward requires, first of all, North Korea to accept to engage again and to engage in good faith. Moving forward might also require on the way to be creative, to explore new pathways towards denuclearisation and peace-building on the achievements of these years.

First of all, we know that the inter-Korean talks and the US-North Korea talks are linked to one another; they both advance only if they advance in parallel. A group of facilitators might be useful to break the impasse and to guarantee that any obstacle will not derail both processes. Other powers have a stake in this process, as was mentioned, and can also give a positive and important contribution, so they have something to lose and they have something to gain if the process fails or succeeds. Of course I refer to Japan, but also to China and Russia.

The EU is ready to do its part. We have our own expertise in nuclear negotiations. We know how difficult – also technically difficult – they can be and how to make negotiations more resilient against shocks. We know the importance of a strong monitoring and verification system and we can help shape it. We can also put on the table of negotiations our financial support, both as leverage and as a contribution to winning the peace if and when a deal is finally reached, and we can help address human rights issues, which are essential. Let me remind us: we might be the last ones attached to this principle, but we still believe that human rights are essential elements to any normalisation and to any lasting peace.

At the same time, we will keep putting pressure on North Korea. You will know that we have, as the EU, the toughest sanctions regime in place on North Korea and we are working to make sure that all our partners also stick to their commitments with outreaches to all our partners in the world, with specific messages to some of them, to make sure that the UNSC resolutions are implemented by all in full. I believe in the power of a critical engagement with North Korea. As we have in place the toughest sanctions in the world on North Korea, implementing the Security Council resolutions and adding with our own EU autonomous measures, we believe that sanctions are a means to a goal and not a goal in themselves and also that sanctions will go, but will go when a deal is reached and implemented.

All of us share the same goal; the question is, how can we best contribute to achieving it? I am convinced that the answer ultimately lies in a strong multilateral process, an inclusive process where all relevant actors can contribute and an effective process where both parties feel they have something to gain. It might be a necessity to give some security guarantees to North Korea. They should know that the goal is peace and denuclearisation and nothing else. I very much agree with President Moon when he talks about a new regional security architecture for this part of the world – and he has often mentioned the EU as an example. Of course, every historical process has its specificity and history never repeats itself in the same shape, but there is always something to learn from others' experiences. We would be honoured to bring our experience to the table.

We want to contribute to security and peace in Asia, starting with the work we have done in these years and contributing to the important work that is being done in the Korean Peninsula, because peace and security in Asia matters to Europe. I am grateful for our cooperation in these years and I am sure that Europe and Asia will be even closer, reliable partners in the years to come. Thank you.

**Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS**

Madame Vice-President, thank you very much for those remarks and for your reminder near the end that of course sanctions will be lifted, but only when an agreement is both reached and implemented, and for your call for a continued multilateral engagement on this very, very difficult task.