

Current Issues & Policies



THE SEJONG INSTITUTE

March 2021 Edition
No. 2021-8 (March 2, 2021)

The Entry into Force of the TPNW and the Future of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime

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English Abstract

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) of the United Nations, which completely bans nuclear weapons, took effect on January 22. The emergence of the first legally binding TPNW, which absolutely bans nuclear weapons, was developed due to the poor performance of the existing Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the resulting complaints of non-nuclear-weapon states. The TPNW began with humanitarian considerations to raise awareness to the international community about the consequences of the nuclear war. Some advocates of the TPNW argue that the treaty can complement the NPT while strengthening the ban on the use of nuclear weapons. Others-who do not support the TPNW-argue that the treaty weakens the NPT's capabilities. However, key nuclear-armed states did not participate in the negotiation. The member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the countries that are affected by the "nuclear umbrella", such as Japan and South Korea, did not participate either. As a result, the TPNW became an incomplete treaty that only reflected the stance of the non-nuclear states, and the actual effect of nuclear disarmament is questioned due to resistance from the nuclear powers. The implementation of the TPNW provides several implications for discussions on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. First, the TPNW is expected to serve as a stimulus to reignite discussions on the denuclearization of the

Korean Peninsula. Second, it further provides implications for discussing the regional denuclearization in Northeast Asia. The TPNW cannot create a world without nuclear weapons overnight, yet its vision and leadership can reduce the threat of nuclear weapons.

※ Translator's note: This is a third party's unofficial translation of the original paper which was written in Korean. All references should be made to the original paper.

※ This article is written based on the author's personal opinions and does not reflect the views of the Sejong Institute.