

South-North Summit Talks in Korea

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have agreed to hold dialogues between relevant authorities in the near future to implement the above agreements expeditiously.

President Kim Dae-jung cordially invited National Defense Commission Chairman Kim Jong-il will visit Seoul, and Chairman Kim Jong-il will visit Seoul at an appropriate time.

The Significance of South-North Joint Declaration

1) The significance of the document is that it is the first agreement signed by the leaders of South and North Korea in the 55 years since the division of the nation.

The agreement will play a guiding role in future inter-Korean relations since the leaders of the South and North and face-to-face meetings, confirmed their will for peace, reconciliation and cooperation and agreed on concrete action plans.

President Kim emphasized that now is the time for the South and North Korean leaders to lead the way in charting the future of the nation, amid the new global order characterized by the collapse of the Cold War as well as advances in information and globalization.

2) The Declaration confirms the principle that inter-Korean issues should be resolved by South and North Korea.

Establishment of peace on the Korean Peninsula, inter-Korean cooperation and national unification are issues that the South and the North should play principle roles in resolving through dialogue and negotiations.

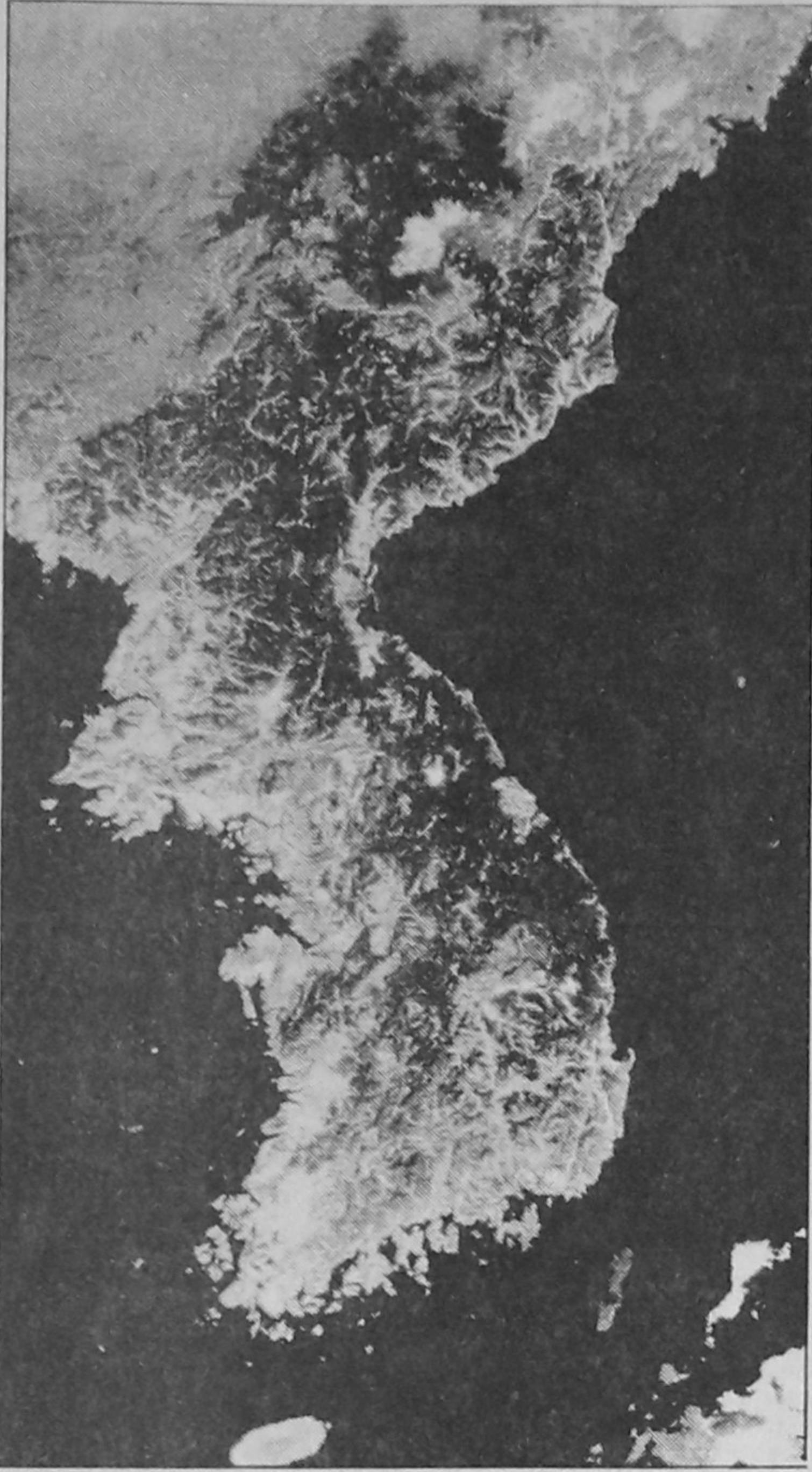
The principle of the centrality of South and North Korea in the Korean question was already confirmed by the South-North Basic Agreement and the international community has also been fully supportive of this principle.

By reaffirming this principle in their Joint Declaration, the leaders of South and North Korea made a commitment to the world that the two Koreas would work together to chart the future of their nation.

3) The Declaration reflects firm agreement on the prevention of war and settlement of peace on the Korean Peninsula.

President Kim emphasized that the eruption of war on the Korean Peninsula would result in the destruction of the nation and that nothing would be achieved by means of war.

In accordance with this spirit, the South and North will take measures such as the suspension of mutual denunciation as well as acts of destruction and insurrection.



The Korean peninsula

As the South and North are set to build a structure of peace based on mutual trust as well as the reduction of threats against each other, they will be able to achieve the goal of ending the Cold War on the Korean Peninsula.

4) The Summit has served as a valuable opportunity to put inter-Korean relations on the right track, based on today's reality.

The two leaders shared the view that the South and North should achieve progress in inter-Korean relations in stages, dealing with small and easy issues at first.

While recognizing the hurdles which lie between the South and the North, the leaders

agreed that their respective unification formulae have elements in common and that they will pursue the unification of the divided peninsula through talks between relevant authorities.

They also agreed that the South and North would first lay a foundation for unification through peaceful coexistence, reconciliation and cooperation.

5) The two leaders emphasized the importance of joint efforts by South and North Korea to resolve the humanitarian issues.

In this spirit, the leaders of the South and North called for inter-Korean cooperation to realize with the utmost urgency in Northeast Asia.

the reunion of separated families. As the first step, the two sides agreed to allow separated family members to meet one another on the occasion of the 55th anniversary of the August 15th Liberation Day and at the same time to resolve, from a humanitarian perspective, the issue of the unconverted North Korean agents who have served or are still serving prison terms in the South.

6) The Declaration lays the foundation for promoting South-North cooperation in a mutually beneficial way.

The two leaders agreed that the promotion of South-North cooperation in all areas is compatible with promoting the development and interests of the entire Korean nation.

In an effort to promote economic exchanges and cooperation in the private sector, the two sides will hold meetings between authorities, discuss cooperative projects and prepare a system of exchanges and cooperation.

Also, in an effort to recover the national identity of the nation and to construct a relationship of mutual trust, the two sides will expand exchanges and cooperation in civic, cultural, sports, public health, environmental and all other fields.

7) The two leaders agreed to continue the dialogue.

The Declaration includes an agreement on a return visit to Seoul by National Defense Commission Chairman Kim Jong-il.

The exchange of visits by the two leaders of the South and North will contribute greatly to bilateral relations and the building up of mutual trust as well as serving as an occasion to guarantee implementation of various South-North agreements.

The date for Chairman Kim's visit to Seoul will be determined in the upcoming meetings between the South and North.

In conclusion, the Declaration has opened a new chapter in the history of inter-Korean relations, which will wholly be in the service of stability in Northeast Asia and global peace.

The summit, we believe, greatly contributed to eliminating the apprehensions about instability on the Korean Peninsula. President Kim urged Chairman Kim to settle pending international questions, including the North's nuclear and missile issues, at an early date so that Pyongyang's relations with neighbouring countries will be improved.

The South-North Joint Declaration is expected not only to substantially improve the inter-Korean relations but also contribute to consolidating stability in Northeast Asia.

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