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PSPD's Statement on North Korea firing artillery at South Korean island of Yeonpyeong and the artillery exchanges between North and South Korea

PSPD strongly denounces North Korea firing artillery at Yeonpyeong Island of South Korea

- Both North and South Korea should put all the efforts
not to have further military hostilities**
- Fundamental measures are required to prevent the vicious circle of
armed clashes in the Yellow Sea**

Yesterday(Nov 23), North Korea launched around 170 artillery fires at Yeonpyeong Island where 'Hogook' military exercise was being conducted by the South Korean military, and South Korea exchanged 80 artillery fires in response. It has been one year that North and South naval forces confronted and exchanged fires in the Yellow Sea(Nov 10, 2009). Reportedly, two marines and two civilians were killed and 18 people, including 3 civilians, were wounded in Yeonpyeong Island. Supposedly, North Korea also got considerable damage.

First of all, PSPD expresses the deepest condolences for the deceased marines and civilians their families, and hopes wounded marines and civilians get better soon. PSPD(People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy) strongly denounces that such an aggressive act of North Korea. PSPD also strongly urges both North and South Korea to refrain from further armed confrontation and immediately initiate a dialogue to seek a peaceful measure for controlling a crisis.

Regarding reported facts, the artillery fires of North Korea at Yeonpyeong Island clearly constitutes an aggressive act. North Korea argues that its artillery fires were a response to the artillery exercise of the 'Hogook' military exercise of South Korea. However, North Korea's artillery is beyond a reasonable defense measure in terms of the principle of proportionality and

inevitability.

Additionally, North Korea's artillery fires killed two civilians who were employed for building a military barrack, wounded three civilians, and damaged civilian facilities and houses. Whatever North Korea's intention is, the fire of artillery by North Korea, which seriously threatens peace of the Korean peninsula, cannot be a means for solving any problems. PSPD urges North Korea to explain and apologize regarding its artillery fires and take a reasonable action against whom responsible.

As can be seen from the four times of the armed conflicts between North and South Korea in the Yellow Sea, the NLL(Northern Limit Line) adjacent areas have been instable. While the boundary between North and South Korea has remained controversial, and the tense of the military confrontation has been even intensified after hotline between North and South Korea was cut in May 2009. As a result, the area becomes a 'powder keg' of the Korean peninsula. The recent artillery exchanges between North and South Korea in a shock well reveal such high level of instability.

At the moment, the artillery exchanges have been stopped, but there is very high tense around NLL adjacent areas. No more armed conflict should happen. A military retaliation results another rather stronger military retaliation. Both North and South Korea should put all the efforts not to have further armed confrontations, and they should refrain from making any remarks that could cause further armed conflicts, but they should seek a way to restore a peaceful control of a crisis. Further military confrontation would make both North and South Korea defeated.

□ Appendix. NLL(Northern Limit Line)

The Northern Limit Line or North Limit Line (NLL) is a disputed maritime demarcation line in the West Sea between North Korea and South Korea. It acts as the de facto maritime boundary between the two Koreas. The line was unilaterally set by the U.S.-led United Nations military forces on August 30, 1953, after the United Nations Command and North Korea failed to reach an agreement. It is not officially recognized by North Korea. In particular, it is not included into the Armistice Agreement of 1953 between the two states. In 1977 North Korea attempted to establish a 50 mile military boundary zone around the islands claimed by South Korea along the NLL; however, the claims were rebuffed. Since 1999, North Korea has claimed a more southerly "Maritime Military Demarcation Line", which would make the islands a part of North Korea as well.

NORTHERN LIMIT LINE AND WEST SEA/YELLOW SEA AREA

