

Why has the US suddenly softened its approach towards North Korea?

By: Talha Hasan – India*

The BBC reported on the 2nd of August, 2017, Rex Tillerson, the US Secretary of State made a foreign policy statement to reassure Kim Jong Un that the US is not seeking to topple North Korea's supreme leader or his regime and that Washington would like to "sit down" for talks.

This statement comes after a series of provocative statements and actions taken by the US against the North Koreans in the past few months since Trump took center-stage in the American Political scene. The US has addressed North Korea repeatedly with threats of using aircraft carriers and nuclear weapons against North Korea.

This is in addition to a large-scale military exercise conducted by the US army in South Korea in March 2017 which was conducted in response to North Korea's attempt to launch a ballistic missile on the 12th of February. The US has conducted multiple military exercises including one in April and a ballistic missile drill in July 2017.

The US response to every missile launch attempt by the North Korean's was threatening along with provocative statements and actions until the latest launch conducted on the 28th of July, 2017. The Economist reported that this new missile can travel up to 10,000 km meaning that large swathes of the US were now within the reach of the North Korean ICBM. This test comes 24 days after the earlier missile test which could travel 7500 km. The test on the 28th of July compared to the earlier tests was a major development which appeared capable of reaching the West Coast of the United States, according to experts – a milestone that American presidents have long declared the United States could not tolerate.

The intensive arming of North Korea and its continuing nuclear program along with its missiles tests are aimed to achieve guarantee for the survival of the North Korean entity and ability to improve economic standards. And to achieve these aims requires a mutual agreement with America concerning that however this did not happen and whenever it did it was broken mostly because of US not fulfilling the conditions of the agreement.

For decades, the US has tried to resolve the North Korean issue using different tactics but it has failed. Sheena Greitens, a North Korea expert at the University of Missouri, said in an interview. "US policy toward North Korea has been unsuccessful for a couple of decades, We're seeing the consequences of that now."

With the latest missile test, the Americans realize that they have limited options to deal with North Korea. They have exhausted some options and some are not realistic anymore and that is the reason why the US has decided to soften down its approach towards North Korea.

One of the options for US is to use its military to conduct a 'surgical strike' on North Korea's nuclear sites to take out the country's missiles as well as the country's political leadership, including Kim Jong Un. The problem is that North Korea would be certain to hit back hard, using its own large artillery arsenal to strike at America's allies, South Korea, and Japan. That would likely kill tens or even hundreds of thousands of people — including the 23,500 US troops stationed in South Korea and thousands of others in Japan — even before nuclear weapons were dropped.

So even though the Americans are always inclined towards using the military option but they realize the costs of a military option in dealing with North Korea is immense and the consequences would be catastrophic.

The other option is to impose economic sanctions on the North Korea so that it would conclude that the costs of continuing the programs are too high. But many items the country wants and needs, like weapons and fuel, are already highly sanctioned by the US. Still North Korea hasn't changed its course.

This is the reason why the US realizes that the only solution it has is to swallow its arrogance and humbly conduct diplomatic talks with the North Koreans to come to an agreement to either give up its programs or at a minimum freeze their development. That will require the United States to put something on the table that North Korea wants as has been the case in the past attempts to come to a mutual agreement.

What is noteworthy with this incident is that North Korea is an insignificant country which has an area of 120,540 sq km and a population of 25 million with a large number living under poverty, despite this situation, its leaders have been able to deal with the ego-inflated, arrogant Americans, the Super Power of the world. The North Koreans have been able to reduce the American ego and has made them humbly sit on a table face to face with the North Koreans.

What we need to think about is, if the North Koreans who do not possess the strength of Islam could face the US, what about the Muslim countries?

Take the example of Pakistan which has a population of 220 million and an area of 796,095 sq km and it possesses one of the largest natural reserves of coal and natural gas and is self sufficient as a nation, despite this the US, with all its impunity, flies into Pakistan and bombs the tribal areas killing men, women and children as a result.

The reason is because of the insincere rulers that rule Pakistan who are not loyal to Allah and His Prophet (saw) rather are corrupt, insincere with their loyalties lying with the enemies of Islam and Muslims. And this does not apply on Pakistan alone, this is the situation of every Muslim country today which is way more significant than North Korea such as Turkey, Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

A sincere leader, a Khalifah (Caliph) who fears Allah is what the Muslims today need, equipped with the power of Iman and the ideology of Islam he will not only defend the Ummah from its enemies, rather he would defeat them and unify the Muslim lands and take the call of Islam to the whole world.

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