

North Korea has expressed its commitment to “complete denuclearization” of the Korean peninsula and is not seeking conditions, South Korean President Moon Jae-in says, as the United States vowed to maintain “maximum pressure” on Pyongyang.

Moon said big-picture agreements about denuclearization, establishing a peace regime and normalization of relations between the two Koreas and the United States should not be difficult to reach through summits between the North and South, and between the North and the United States.



South Korea President Moon Jae-in (File | AP)

“They have not attached any conditions that the U.S. cannot accept, such as the withdrawal of American troops from South Korea. All they are talking about is the end of hostile policies against North Korea, followed by a guarantee of security.”

North Korea has defended its nuclear and missile programmes, which it pursues in defiance of U.N. Security Council resolutions, as a necessary deterrent against perceived U.S. hostility. The United States stations 28,500 troops in South Korea, a legacy of the 1950-53 Korean War.

Moon said he saw the possibility of a peace agreement, or even international aid for the North’s economy if it denuclearizes.

U.S. CIA Director Mike Pompeo visited North Korea last week and met leader Kim Jong-Un with whom he formed a “good relationship”, U.S. President Donald Trump said, ahead of a summit planned for May or June.

The statement, unconfirmed by North Korea, comes before a summit between the leaders of the two countries on 27 April, to be followed in May or June by a meeting between Kim Jong-un, the North Korean leader, and Donald Trump.

Sources: The Guardian, Reuters, SCMP

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