The Korean Peninsula as a Scene of Geopolitical Development

9 OCTOBER 2023

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On September 12, 2023, the world looked suspiciously at the Korean peninsula. North Korea's dictator Kim Jong-un set his heavily armoured train in motion to pay a visit to Kremlin leader Vladimir Putin on the grounds of the Vostochny spaceport. North Korea's Stalinist-style dictatorship appears to want to give Putin a second wind in his war against Ukraine, which is contrary to international law. In return, he is probably letting Kim share in last year's record harvests so that he can continue to conceal the catastrophic supply situation in his country. Moreover, I think it would be

foolish to think that this meeting took place without the knowledge and approval of Chinese ruler Xi Jinping. The results of the meeting were deliberately shrouded from the world public. The handing over of a bulletproof vest into Kim's hands at his departure can be interpreted as a purposefully placed gesture to the West – Us against You! The world's outlaws are shaking hands.

All this took place weeks after U.S. President Joe Biden, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol and Japan's head of government Fumio Kishida agreed at historic Camp David on new trilateral cooperation in the core areas of security and economy. Informed of this, we should all be aware that nowhere are the free world and the autocratic regimes of this world physically closer than at the 38th parallel on the Korean Peninsula and thus the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea. A fact that is often considerably underreported in Western media. The coverage of Putin's and Kim's devil's pact in the German media can euphemistically be described as a farce. As a reader, I had the feeling that the central concern was how Americans would feel about this development. A portrayal of the South Korean perspective or depiction of possible influences on the tense relationship on the Korean peninsula? Missing!

The Korean peninsula is already an integral part of the international power ring, as became clear again in August/September of this year at the latest. But how dependent are any inter-Korean developments on the whims and interests of the "global players"? To answer this question, a brief flashback to the second half of the 20th century seems particularly illuminating. When U.S. President Richard Nixon visited the Republic of China in 1972, there was movement in inter-Korean relations in the years that followed. Similarly, the self-dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the following collapse of the Eastern Bloc led to a period of dialogue in Korea. The origins of these rapprochements were always global in nature. But was it not a South Korean idea under Kim Dae-Jung, who won the Nobel Peace Prize for his sunshine policy, that formulated clear principles and made sustainable developments possible?

By no means is it intended to advocate that South Korea act without international exchange from this time on, but the uncomfortable question must be asked whether inter-Korean dialogue will not always fail because of the attitude of the United States, Russia or China? Ideological antagonisms in our globalized world must never be allowed to lead discussions about potential developments on the Korean Peninsula. I look forward to the future, especially how an end to the Ukraine war or otherwise justified regime change in Russia, will affect the relationship of North and South Korea.