

Ending the North Korean Nuclear Crisis:
Six Parties, Six Perspectives

Edited by Koen De Ceuster and Jan Melissen

November 2008

NETHERLANDS INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
'CLINGENDAEL'

CIP-Data Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague

De Ceuster, Koen and Jan Melissen (eds.)

Ending the North Korean Nuclear Crisis: Six Parties, Six Perspectives, The Hague,
Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael'
Clingendael Diplomacy Papers No. 18
ISBN: 978-90-5031-1311



Desktop publishing by Desiree Davidse

Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael'
Clingendael Diplomatic Studies Programme
Clingendael 7
2597 VH The Hague
Telephone +31(0)70 - 3746605
Telefax +31(0)70 - 3746666
P.O. Box 93080
2509 AB The Hague
Email: ddavidse@clingendael.nl
Website: <http://www.clingendael.nl>

The Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael' is an independent institute for research, training and public information on international affairs. It publishes the results of its own research projects and the monthly *Internationale Spectator* and offers a broad range of courses and conferences covering a wide variety of international issues. It also maintains a library and documentation centre.

© Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael'. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright-holders. Clingendael Institute, P.O. Box 93080, 2509 AB The Hague, The Netherlands.

Contents

About the authors	3
Introduction <i>Koen De Ceuster and Jan Melissen</i>	5
The Six-Party Talks, the UN and North Korea's Nuclear Programme <i>Dick Leurdijk</i>	9
Fear and Loathing in the DPRK: Beyond the Nuclear Crisis <i>Koen De Ceuster</i>	21
The United States and the Asian 'Rogue': From Dogmatism to Pragmatism <i>Frans-Paul van der Putten</i>	37
South Korea: A 2 x 2 Engagement Approach <i>Marc Vogelaar</i>	49
China: Learning to be a Great Power? <i>Frans-Paul van der Putten</i>	59
Japan and the Multilateral Talks: Peripheral Player, Powerful Spoiler <i>Maaike Okano-Heijmans</i>	71

Russia: Many Goals, Little Activity <i>Sico van der Meer</i>	83
Conclusions: Politics, Diplomacy and the Nuclear Crisis <i>Jan Melissen and Koen De Ceuster</i>	89
Appendices:	
1. The North Korean Nuclear Crisis and the Six-Party Talks - A Chronology	99
2. Agreed Framework Between the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	105
3. Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks Beijing, September 19, 2005	109
4. Beijing Agreement of February 13, 2007 – Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement	113
5. Six Parties October 3, 2007 Agreement on 'Second-Phase Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement'	117
Bibliography	121

About the Authors

Koen De Ceuster lectures on the modern and contemporary history of Korea at Leiden University in the Netherlands. He has published on various aspects of the politics of memory in Korea. He is currently participating in an international research project on North–South interfaces on the Korean Peninsula.

Dick Leurdijk is a Senior Research Associate at the Netherlands Institute of International Relations ‘Clingendael’, where he specializes in the United Nations. He has worked on a wide range of UN-related issues, especially in the field of international peace and security, including peacekeeping, peace enforcement and peace-building, in crisis situations such as the Gulf War, Somalia, Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, and the UN’s relationships with regional organizations, such as NATO and the EU. His most recent publications focus on the ‘war on terrorism’ and the role of international organizations.

Sico van der Meer is a Research Fellow at Clingendael’s Security and Conflict Programme. Before joining Clingendael in 2006, he worked as a journalist and as a fellow at a research institute on civil–military relations. His two main areas of research are Dutch defence policy and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Jan Melissen is Director of the Diplomatic Studies Programme at the Netherlands Institute of International Relations ‘Clingendael’, and Head of

Clingendael Asia Studies. He is also Professor of Diplomacy at the University of Antwerp and Visiting Professor at the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium. He is founding Co-Editor of *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*. He is currently participating in a research project on 'Soft Power, Identity and Public Diplomacy in East-Asia'.

Maike Okano-Heijmans is a Research Fellow for Asia Studies with the Clingendael Diplomatic Studies Programme at the Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael' and Visiting Fellow at the Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy of the Australian National University in Canberra. Her present research focuses on the political economy of the East Asian region and Japan's economic diplomacy in North-East Asia.

Frans-Paul van der Putten is a Research Fellow for Asia Studies at the Clingendael Security and Conflict Programme of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael'. His work focuses on China as an emerging great power and the role of China in international security and its relevance for Europe, in particular Chinese-Western security relations.

Marc Vogelaar studied law in Amsterdam and joined the Dutch diplomatic service in 1975. He recently served as Permanent Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague and as the Netherlands' Consul-General in São Paulo, Brazil. He has published various articles on the DPRK, which he visited a number of times in his capacity as a Director for the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) between 1999 and 2002.

Introduction

Koen De Ceuster and Jan Melissen

The last frontier of the Cold War still cuts through the Korean Peninsula. Although the international context may have evolved since the days of ideological confrontation, the perception lingers that the Korean Peninsula remains trapped in a time warp.

Things looked so different at the turn of the century. The historic summit meeting of South Korea's Kim Dae-Jung and North Korea's Kim Jong-Il in Pyongyang in June 2000 was the first tangible result of the South Korean president's 'sunshine policy' of rapprochement and reconciliation with the North. Although the two Koreas stubbornly clung to their policy of engagement, the world seemed to turn in a different direction. When US President George W. Bush moved into the White House in January 2001, dark clouds started to gather over the Korean Peninsula. The new US administration followed a strategy of ostracization of North Korea. The 11 September 2001 attacks only strengthened its drive to rid the world of 'evil'. This culminated in the (in)famous State of the Union address of January 2002, when George W. Bush bundled Iran, Iraq and North Korea together in an 'axis of evil'.

In October 2002, Assistant US Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs James Kelly visited Pyongyang for the first high-level meeting with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, or North Korea) since George W. Bush had become president of the United States. Yet rather than the start of a fresh dialogue, it was a moment of closure. Kelly confronted his North Korean hosts with allegations of a secret nuclear

programme. The message that he delivered was that no dialogue would take place until North Korea came into the open about this secret programme, thus setting both states on a collision course that remains to be defused to this day. As this crisis spiralled out of control, North Korea broke the moratorium on its declared nuclear installations and openly defied the international community by leaving the Non-Proliferation Treaty and moving eventually towards the production and testing of a nuclear weapon. Ironically, this was the nightmare scenario that the Bush administration had dreaded all along.

Loath to engage North Korea directly, the United States passed the initiative to come up with a workable negotiated solution to the People's Republic of China. In this crisis, China for the first time assumed the role not only of an important regional player, but also of a global broker. The Chinese government was sufficiently worried about the destabilizing risks of the ongoing deadlock to invest heavily in a leading diplomatic role that aimed at a multilateral negotiated settlement.

What started as tripartite talks involving North Korea, the United States and China soon evolved into the Six-Party Talks (SPT), including also South Korea, Japan and Russia. Although the stated purpose of the negotiations was to find a negotiated solution to the nuclear crisis, the 19 September 2005 Joint Statement had a far more ambitious goal of creating a framework for cooperation towards lasting peace and stability in North-East Asia. As such, the SPT's agenda addresses the security concerns of North Korea, its regional neighbours and the international community, thereby indirectly acknowledging that all are tied together. Almost two decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Six-Party Talks are in effect an attempt to address East Asia's Cold War inheritance and post-Cold War security dilemmas, with the more distant aim of providing a new security environment for the region.

This does, however, mean different things to the different negotiating partners. Not only have all of the participating states a specific perspective on the underlying causes of the crisis, they also have specific stakes in the ongoing crisis. For North Korea, nothing is more important than to rid itself of what it perceives as a US threat against the existence of the DPRK. In the case of the United States, the incumbent Bush administration not only approached the nuclear crisis from a global security perspective – the concern that North Korea was a crucial piece in the global proliferation puzzle had been a concern shared by the previous administration – it opted for an ideological and indeed non-diplomatic approach, turning North Korea itself into the problem. This approach is so firmly embedded in the mainstream debate about US foreign policy on Capitol Hill that the ideological aversion to North Korea's political system makes dialogue with Pyongyang in itself already politically problematic. China's contribution, meanwhile, was initially driven by its focus on containing the nuclear crisis and maintaining the status quo in North-East Asia. Under immediate threat from North Korean missiles, Japan's stakes in solving the crisis are high, but its role is at best secondary. Largely driven by domestic concerns, Japan pushed a solution of the ongoing saga about kidnapped Japanese citizens in the DPRK onto the agenda agreed

upon on 13 February 2007. Russia's eagerness to participate in the Six-Party Talks was in turn motivated by strategic and economic interests in the region. Although keen to prove its great power status and eager to reap the economic benefits of a negotiated settlement, Russia only plays a small role in the current Six-Party Talks. South Korea's role has been much more proactive and at the same time low key. It was obvious to the government in Seoul that its engagement policies could only continue if a solution to the nuclear crisis was found. At the same time, it knew all too well that ultimately both Pyongyang and Washington held the key to the solution of the crisis. In line with the stated goals of (then) South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun's foreign policy, discreet South Korean shuttle diplomacy in the capitals of all of the Six-Party Talks' participants helped to nudge Washington towards a phased solution of the crisis.

One interesting result of the dynamics of the Six-Party Talks is that the Cold War battle lines lost their meaning during the negotiations. What initially looked like a clear table setting – North Korea, China and Russia pitted against South Korea, Japan and the United States – soon turned into a much more fluid process. By analysing the respective stakes of the SPT's participants, this volume shows how each state brings specific national, bilateral, regional and/or global interests to the negotiating table. These different layers of interests overlap and intersect in an intricate way. If the crisis proved one thing, it is the need for security dialogue in the region. The 2005 Joint Statement acknowledged this need for a multilateral platform where the various interests of the implicated states can be addressed. The Six-Party Talks thus reach beyond settlement of the nuclear crisis, thereby indirectly acknowledging that the crisis is an expression of more fundamental underlying problems and tensions. Although the Six-Party Talks as a process already function as an informal multilateral security dialogue in North-East Asia, it is at present impossible to predict whether this format will outlive a settlement of the nuclear crisis, or whether another multilateral framework will be created, either formally or informally. If and when such a platform is created, it will have to circumscribe its specific role and relations with other already existing regional consultative bodies such as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

The key to success of the Six-Party Talks is acceptance on all sides of a negotiated solution. This entails recognition of what lies under the concept of diplomacy: a fundamental predisposition and commitment to dialogue, also between states that differ on issues of importance to peace and stability in international society as a whole. What it requires from all of the parties, and in this case most of all from the United States and North Korea, is to overcome the view that the other side is only interested in dialogue if it can get what it wants. Managing differences between states is after all what diplomacy is about, and as long as there are overlapping and common interests, such differences are not supposed to mean the end of diplomacy. It is worthwhile remembering this basic principle in a time and age when ideological stubbornness continues to be firmly embedded in the North

Korean body politic and has gained considerable currency in the past eight years of US politics. Fortunately, at moments when political rhetoric closed doors and military options reappeared on the table, diplomacy finally prevailed. The true significance and success of these multilateral Six-Party Talks is that they have contributed to defusing international tension by widening the talks' agenda in an attempt to find creative solutions to the crisis. Finding a way out of this complex and indeed intractable problem was never going to be easy. Although the final outcome remains in doubt, this should not obscure the fact that the real importance of the Six-Party Talks may be in the process itself.

The different chapters in this volume are written by authors with various professional and disciplinary backgrounds. This results in sometimes conflicting interpretations of the core of the matter, not unlike the clash of viewpoints that one may find at the negotiating table. Rather than imposing a single view, we allow these multiple visions and interpretations to coexist in this volume. It goes without saying that under such circumstances all of the authors take responsibility for their chapter only. The volume's ultimate purpose is to provide different perspectives on a problem in contemporary international politics that is far more complex than a superficial or one-dimensional overview might suggest. This book does not make any predictions for the outcome of the Six-Party Talks, but it does seek to enhance insight of the conditions and factors that will contribute to either success or failure.

Leiden and The Hague, October 2008

The Six-Party Talks, the UN and North Korea's Nuclear Programme

Dick Leurdijk

Introduction

Since the submission of its initial report in May 1992 to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) under its Safeguards Agreement, North Korea's nuclear programme has raised concerns about the intentions of the regime in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, or North Korea). Was the programme intended for purely peaceful purposes or was the political leadership developing a nuclear capacity to make finally a nuclear weapon, considering the nuclear card as its ultimate guarantee for 'regime survival'?¹ The doubts about North Korea's intentions were fed by its continuous lack of transparency, through the years, given its international commitments, the discovery in 2002 of a secret 'programme to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons',² its decision to expel IAEA inspectors and to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), its declaration that it had manufactured nuclear weapons, and, finally, a series of ballistic missile and nuclear tests in 2006. Meanwhile, at the diplomatic level, the international community tried to get North Korea's commitment to give up its nuclear programme, based on political deals such as the Agreed

1) International Crisis Group, *After the North Korea Nuclear Breakthrough: Compliance or Confrontation?*, Policy Briefing, Asia Briefing no. 62 (Seoul/Brussels: International Crisis Group, 30 April 2007).

2) See http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/IaeaDprk/chrono_novjan.shtml.

Framework in 1994, the Joint Statement in September 2005 and the Beijing Agreement of February 2007.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a general introduction to international concerns with respect to North Korea's nuclear programme since the early 1990s, both in terms of further proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and in terms of threatening international peace and security. In describing these concerns, the focus will be on the role played by: the IAEA, the UN's nuclear watchdog; the UN Security Council, which bears the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security under the UN Charter; and, finally, the so-called Six-Party Talks, which since 2003 has been the forum for negotiations on a peaceful settlement, involving the most directly involved stakeholders in the region. This explains why other chapters in this volume present in-depth studies of the relationships between North Korea and each of the other five participants in the talks, covering the inter-Korean, regional and international dynamics of North Korea's nuclear programme.

Background

The IAEA is entrusted with the task of overseeing implementation of the NPT, both of promoting the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes and of monitoring and verifying the so-called safeguards, which were designed to ensure that nuclear materials 'are not used in such a way as to further any military purpose'.³ Ever since its initial report to the IAEA in 1992, the relationship between North Korea and the IAEA has been characterized by a continuous series of incidents, with the IAEA urging for more transparency and clarification on the nuclear programme, including the application of inspection procedures, and Pyongyang frustrating IAEA inspections and (threatening) withdrawing from the IAEA and/or the NPT. But in 1994, as a result of bilateral talks 'to negotiate an overall resolution of the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula', North Korea and the United States were able to concur in a so-called 'Agreed Framework', which embedded 'the nuclear issue' in a more general framework with economic, diplomatic and security dimensions (according to the idea of a 'package solution').⁴ Under the nuclear part of the deal, both sides would cooperate to replace the DPRK's graphite-moderated reactors with the less proliferation-sensitive light-water reactor (LWR) power plants. Upon receipt of US assurances for the provision of LWRs and for arrangements for interim energy alternatives (in the form of heavy oil), the DPRK would freeze its reactors and eventually dismantle them. Under the non-nuclear part of the deal, the two parties agreed to move

3) 'Statute of the IAEA'; see http://www.iaea.org/About/statute_text.html.

4) 'Agreed Framework of 21 October 1994 between the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea', IAEA Information Circular, INFCIRC/457, 2 November 1994.

towards full normalization of their political and economic relations, to work together for peace and security on a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula and to strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. The United States promised to provide formal assurances to the DPRK against the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

Although the agreement was greeted with a sigh of relief – that the danger of a second Korean war had been averted – the implementation of the Agreed Framework did not materialize. Then, in October 2002, the United States announced that the DPRK had acknowledged that it had a ‘programme to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons’. While the Agreed Framework had functioned between 1994 and 2002 as an instrument aimed at bringing the DPRK into compliance with its safeguards’ obligations,⁵ the US announcement basically meant the collapse of the Framework’s structure. The reports about a clandestine uranium enrichment programme, the end of the ‘freeze’ pursuant to the Agreed Framework, the expulsion of the IAEA’s inspectors from the DPRK’s territory and North Korea’s withdrawal from the NPT brought this phase to an end. For the second time in its history, the IAEA’s Board of Governors, by way of last resort, referred the matter to the UN Security Council, hoping for more political pressure on North Korea to remedy its non-compliance. However, in April 2003 the Security Council only expressed its ‘concern’ over the situation in North Korea, saying that it would keep following developments there – a clear indication of its reluctance to enforce the DPRK’s compliance by acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

In the aftermath of the collapse of the bilateral talks between North Korea and the United States, China and South Korea – North Korea’s two immediate neighbours – sought an alternative negotiation platform.⁶ This resulted in a multilateral framework, the so-called Six-Party Talks, in which, along with North Korea and the United States, all of North Korea’s neighbours – China, the Russian Federation, South Korea and Japan – were incorporated, with China as acting chairman, taking into account its ‘special

5) To illustrate this point, in a so-called ‘Statement of the President’, the UN Security Council, on 4 November 1994, welcomed the Agreed Framework as a positive step in the direction of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula and maintaining peace and security in the region. It took note of the DPRK’s decision to remain a party to the NPT, and noted the DPRK’s decision to come into full compliance with the IAEA–DPRK Safeguards Agreement. The Security Council noted with approval the DPRK’s decision to freeze its reactors, which, the Council said, is a voluntary measure beyond what is required by the NPT and the Safeguards Agreement. The Council requested that the IAEA monitor the freeze, and continue to report to it on implementation of the Safeguards Agreement until the DPRK has come into full compliance with the Agreement, and to report on its activities related to monitoring the freeze. See <http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus>IaeaDprk/dprk94.shtml>.

6) Changzoo Song, ‘South Korea and the Six-Party Talks: Beyond the Missile Crisis’, in Yongjin Zhang (ed.), *Whither the Six-Party Talks? Issues, Stakes and Perspectives*, NZAI Regional Analysis 2006/1 (Auckland: New Zealand Asia Institute, 2006).

relationship' with North Korea.⁷ The format provided 'a creative formula'.⁸ The unusual, informal set-up, outside any existing institutional structure, gave room for the application of specific procedures, facilitating bilateral and multilateral, formal and informal talks, and for the incorporation of additional issues in the talks, thus reflecting the interests of all of the relevant actors in the North Korean nuclear issue. By broadening the basis for talks with all of the major regional powers, it was believed that an agreement on a multilateral basis would be more effective than a bilateral deal.

The first round of meetings was held in Beijing in August 2003; two other rounds were held in 2004. In February 2005, North Korea declared that it had nuclear weapons and withdrew from the Six-Party Talks, which again heightened tension in the region. These developments, however, did not prevent the six parties from reaching agreement, on 19 September 2005, on a so-called 'Joint Statement'.⁹ Building on the Agreed Framework, the Statement differed in two main respects from the 1994 document: it covered not only the dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear reactors, but also of its nuclear weapons, and it reflected the involvement of all of the parties concerned in the implementation of the deal. Under the terms of the agreement, 'The DPRK committed to abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes and returning, at an early date' to the NPT and to IAEA safeguards. The US affirmed that it had no intention of attacking or invading the DPRK, with South Korea reaffirming its commitment not to receive or deploy US nuclear weapons on its territory. The DPRK and the US undertook to take steps to normalize their relations 'subject to their respective bilateral policies', while the DPRK and Japan similarly undertook steps to normalize their relations 'on the basis of the settlement of unfortunate past and the outstanding issues of concern'. The six parties furthermore undertook to promote economic cooperation in the fields of energy, trade and investment, bilaterally and/or multilaterally, focused on the provision of energy assistance, to the DPRK. And, finally, the six parties committed to joint efforts for lasting peace and stability in North-East Asia.

Within less than a year, however, the tensions on the Korean Peninsula reached a new peak in the aftermath of the launching by North Korea of ballistic missiles (in June 2006) and a nuclear test (in October 2006). Internationally, the tests provoked grave concerns because of North Korea's 'stated pursuit of nuclear weapons'. Under these circumstances, Mohammed ElBaradei, Director-General of the IAEA, said that he considered North

7) Through the years, China had been North Korea's closest ally and principal aid provider, and was thought to have leverage over Pyongyang.

8) Tae-Hwan Kwak, 'Resolving the North Korean Nuclear Issue through the Six-Party Process: A Creative Formula', *The Journal of East Asian Affairs*, vol. 20, no. 1, Spring-Summer 2006, pp. 1-25.

9) US Department of State, 'Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks, Beijing', 19 September 2005, available online at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2005/53490/htm>.

Korea ‘the Number 1 security challenge to the NPT’.¹⁰ This time, the tests led to active involvement by the UN Security Council, which adopted two resolutions that culminated in December 2006 in the imposition of economic sanctions on North Korea. At the same time, its members called upon North Korea to resume the Six-Party Talks with a view to the ‘expeditious implementation’ of the Joint Statement of September 2005, which aimed at achieving ‘the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula’.

The Year 2006

In June 2006 the UN Security Council condemned the DPRK’s multiple launches of ballistic missiles on 5 June 2006. It demanded that the DPRK suspend all activities related to its ballistic missile programme, without, however, taking enforcement measures.¹¹ On 14 October 2006 the Security Council condemned the nuclear test proclaimed by the DPRK five days earlier as ‘in flagrant disregard of its relevant resolutions’, determining that ‘there is a clear threat to international peace and security’. The Security Council decided that the DPRK should ‘abandon’ all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes, together with all other existing weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes, ‘in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner’. This time, the Council, acting under Chapter VII of the UN’s Charter, imposed, in an unprecedented decision, a number of economic sanctions, including an embargo on the supply, sale or transfer to the DPRK of military goods, such as battle tanks, combat vehicles and combat aircraft, etc., and all items, materials, equipment, goods and technology that could contribute to the DPRK’s nuclear-related, ballistic-missile-related or other weapons of mass destruction-related programmes, and of luxury goods.¹² For the first time, there was consensus among the permanent members of the Security Council – including China and Russia – to put pressure on North Korea in a collective effort to make sure that it complied with the Council’s far-reaching political demands. In both resolutions, the Security Council urged the DPRK to return to the Six-Party Talks, calling for an early resumption of the negotiations that were aimed at implementing the Joint Statement of 2005.

The North Korean nuclear test in October 2006 created a new momentum, leading to different policy responses among the other five participants in the Six-Party Talks. The UN Security Council responded by imposing economic sanctions, with the support of both China and Russia, North Korea’s main caretakers at the diplomatic level. More than ever before, the DPRK’s regime was isolated, confronted by collective condemnation of its

10) ‘UN Nuclear Chief meets with US Secretary Rice; Calls for Talks with DPR Korea, Iran’, *UN News Center*, 24 October 2006.

11) See S/RES/1695 (2006), 15 July 2006.

12) See S/RES/1718 (2006), 14 October 2006.

nuclear test, the formulation of collectively supported far-reaching political demands, a series of collective economic sanctions, the collective decision to keep the DPRK's actions under continuous review with a view to strengthening, modifying, suspending or lifting the measures in line with the DPRK's compliance with the resolution's provisions, and a collective call for resumption of the Six-Party Talks.

Under these circumstances, it was hard to predict that only four months later the six parties were able to reach a breakthrough in their talks, by agreeing on the text of the Beijing Agreement of 13 February 2007. One can only speculate about the reasons why the United States, shortly after adoption of Resolution 1718, took the initiative to contact the North Koreans, contrary to its policy adopted in the aftermath of '9/11' not to engage in bilateral talks with North Korea as a member of the 'axis of evil'. This opening, however, led to several bilateral meetings, preparing the ground for the 13 February accord. The fact is that the six parties found sufficient common ground to subscribe to the agreement.

The Beijing Agreement

One of the major developments in the international political and diplomatic fields in 2007 was the breakthrough in the Six-Party Talks on North Korea's nuclear programme. Only four months earlier, the UN Security Council, acting in response to 'the claim' by the DPRK that it had conducted the test of a nuclear weapon on 9 October 2006, decided to impose, for the first time, economic sanctions on the DPRK's regime, while simultaneously formulating an extensive package of political demands, including the decision that 'the DPRK shall abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner'. Never before in the history of North Korea's nuclear programme had pressure on the DPRK's political leadership been so broad-based. Against the background of rising political tensions, the announcement on 13 February 2007 that the six parties in talks on North Korea's nuclear programme had reached a political agreement on the implementation of a phased action plan in line with the principle of 'action for action' – aimed at the 'early denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula' – came as a surprise. The roadmap, which was basically a further elaboration of the Joint Statement of September 2005, provided a series of steps, covering both nuclear and non-nuclear issues.

North Korea committed itself to the closing and disabling of its existing nuclear facilities and the provision of a complete declaration of all its nuclear programmes, in exchange for political, economic and diplomatic commitments by the other five parties in the talks. Under the terms of the Beijing Agreement:

- The DPRK would shut down the Yongbyon nuclear facility and invite back IAEA personnel.

- The DPRK would provide a complete declaration of all its nuclear programmes and existing nuclear facilities that would be abandoned.
- The DPRK and the United States would start bilateral talks, moving towards full diplomatic relations.
- The DPRK and Japan would start bilateral talks aimed at normalizing their relations.
- The parties agreed to cooperate in economic, energy and humanitarian assistance to the DPRK.
- The parties would explore ways and means for security cooperation in North-East Asia.
- The parties would negotiate a permanent peace regime on the Korean Peninsula.

Reading the full text of the Beijing Agreement provides a fascinating insight into the far-reaching implications of the deal, potentially culminating in building new political horizons in North-East Asia – against the background of a complicated geopolitical history that dates back to the Cold War years.¹³

Assessment of the Beijing Agreement

The document met with both optimism and scepticism. Proponents emphasized the potentially historic character of the deal, which opened up the prospect of a peace agreement between North and South Korea, formally ending the 1950-1953 Korean War, a complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, establishment of a permanent peace regime for North-East Asia and possibly even reunification of North and South Korea as the endgame of the peace process.

Others, however, were much more sceptical, taking into account North Korea's lack of transparency with respect to its nuclear intentions in the past. In this context, they referred to earlier political agreements between North Korea and its counterparts in 1994 and 2005, which in both cases failed. The day after signing the Joint Statement in 2005, the North Koreans had indicated that they were no longer bound by the agreement, referring to a series of economic sanctions imposed by the United States against the DPRK because of its supposed involvement in illegal financial transactions. The general conclusion was that the most probable explanation for Pyongyang's willingness to subscribe to the agreement this time was directly related to its desperation about its dramatic economic situation, characterized by large shortages of food and energy – exactly the kind of goods that the regime hoped to receive from the other partners in the talks.

The Beijing Agreement was not an entirely new document, as it drew heavily upon the Joint Statement of the six parties that had been issued in

13) See the appendices to this chapter.

September 2005. This explains why it probably took such a relatively short time to reach agreement on the contents. The provisions contain the same or similar wording with respect to the common goal of ‘denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner’, and the commitments on the part of each of the six parties that these entail. The two documents differ only in a few respects. In the Joint Statement, the United States affirmed that it had no nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula and had no intention of attacking or invading the DPRK with nuclear or conventional weapons, while South Korea reaffirmed its commitment not to receive or deploy nuclear weapons. These elements are missing in the Beijing Agreement, at least explicitly. Similarly, the Joint Statement expressly states that the DPRK has the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, suggesting in this context that the other parties would be prepared to discuss the subject of the provision of light-water reactor(s) to the DPRK ‘at an appropriate time’; similar references are not incorporated, however, in the text of the Beijing Agreement. It is difficult to assess what this means exactly.

Regardless, agreement on the Beijing declaration basically provided for a comprehensive political framework for negotiations, with all of the parties wanting to find a balance between their bilateral and multilateral interests. By adopting the February 2007 agreement, a series of political and economic files were laid down on the negotiating table for further talks in the months to come, ranging from the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, abandonment of nuclear weapons and nuclear programmes by North Korea, the normalization of relations between North Korea and the United States and Japan, the re-establishment of relations between the DPRK and the IAEA, including the return of nuclear inspectors, economic cooperation – including the provision of energy and humanitarian assistance to the DPRK – and the establishment of a security regime for both the Peninsula and North-East Asia. The parties agreed to implement the Joint Statement in a phased manner (by differentiating between the initial phase and the next phase) in line with the principle of ‘action for action’. The US negotiator, Christopher Hill, made clear that the phased approach was agreed upon at the instigation of the US, suggesting that the tight time-schedules indicated what should be achieved within certain time-frames: ‘If the time-schedules are not reached, there is a problem. And this time, it is not a bilateral issue between the US and North Korea, but an agreement between six nations’.¹⁴

Implementation of the Beijing Agreement

Implementation of the road map for the negotiation process promised to be a complex endeavour for the six parties concerned, taking into account both their different national interests and the common end-goal of denuclearization. The agreement triggered a fascinating sequence of

14) Christopher Hill in an interview with the Dutch newspaper *De Volkskrant*, 8 March 2007.

developments over a broad diplomatic front, starting with the release of frozen North Korean financial assets by the United States, and followed, among other things, by: steps to normalize the DPRK's relations with the IAEA, including inviting weapons' inspectors back to the DPRK; closing the nuclear complex in Yongbyon in July 2007 and formal confirmation by the IAEA of the shutdown of five facilities; the delivery to the DPRK of 50,000 tons of heavy fuel oil; start of the disabling of the Yongbyon complex, including blowing up its cooling tower; start of inter-Korean talks, including a historic summit between the leaders of both Koreas and other high-level meetings; opening railway lines between North and South Korea; a concert performance by the New York Philharmonic in Pyongyang; the willingness on the part of North Korea to reopen an investigation into the abductions of Japanese citizens in the past, and reversing its longstanding position that the issue had been settled..

In testimony before Congress in October 2007, Christopher Hill, recapping 'milestones' in the Six-Party Talks, welcomed North Korea's steps, including the reaffirmation of its commitment 'not to transfer nuclear materials, technology or know-how', one of the United States' main proliferation concerns. For its part, Hill said, the US had started moving towards normalizing relations with North Korea, starting with the process of removing the designation of North Korea as a state sponsor of terrorism and terminating the application of the Trading with the Enemy Act. According to Hill, the United States remained committed to replacing the 1953 Korean War armistice with a permanent peace arrangement on the Korean Peninsula, saying that discussions on a peace regime for the Peninsula could begin once North Korea fully disclosed and abandoned its nuclear weapons programmes.¹⁵

And it was exactly at this stage of the process in late 2007 that, after the successful initial steps, the first doubts about North Korea's real intentions became visible, as predicted by some critics at Capitol Hill immediately after announcement of the breakthrough in February 2007. US State Department spokesman Sean McCormack indicated that the phase of disabling the Yongbyon reactor and North Korea's declaration of its entire nuclear programme would become difficult, because 'you're getting to some fundamental issues and irreversibility in terms of disabling the reactor. And that is a step that North Korea has not yet taken'.¹⁶ After some early indications, it became clear at the end of 2007 that North Korea had missed the deadline, both for the declaration of all nuclear programmes and disablement of all existing nuclear facilities – much to the dismay of the other parties in the talks. US President Bush sent a letter to the North Korean President Kim Jong-Il in early December 2007, urging North Korea to stick

15) 'Six-Party Process Builds North Korea's Relations with World; State Department Envoy Christopher Hill Recaps Recent Milestones', *USINFO.STATE.GOV* Current Issues, 26 October 2007.

16) See *USINFO.STATE.GOV*, 16 July 2007.

to its commitments. On 20 January 2008, the US Special Envoy on North Korean Human Rights, Jay Lefkowitz, in a speech in Washington, warned that North Korea intended to keep its nuclear weapons beyond Bush's presidency, suggesting that the United States' approach to North Korea's nuclear programme was under review at the time. China's new ambassador to Japan, Cui Tian-Kai, also doubted whether denuclearization could be achieved within the next year.¹⁷

The issue led to a stalemate in the second phase of the Six-Party Talks, with the United States demanding a 'complete and correct' declaration of all of North Korea's nuclear materials, capacity and knowledge, focusing on the DPRK's suspected uranium enrichment programme for weapons and its denial that it was proliferating nuclear technology to other nations (such as Syria¹⁸), with the DPRK insisting that it had already made the declaration and that the stalled progress was because of 'technical issues' and not a lack of political willingness.¹⁹

In mid-April 2008, against a backdrop of stepped-up sabre rattling in the inter-Korean relationships, a new effort was made at a meeting in Singapore of US negotiator Christopher Hill and his North Korean counterpart to have the stalled negotiations resumed. 'We need to get things finalized for phase two', Hill said on the eve of the meeting, adding: 'If we can do that, I think we would look forward to having (North Korea) make their report'.²⁰ The next day, after having briefed the chair of the Six-Party process about his talks with his DPRK counterpart, Hill said:

I think people need to understand this continues to be very much a Six-Party process, and proposals we make to the DPRK need to be worked out within and by Six-Party members. So, as always, China remains a very key factor in all of this [...] Obviously, if we can finalize the issue of the declaration, that will be a key moment – because the declaration needs to be submitted to the Chinese chair. China then needs to bring the Six Parties together. We need to look at the overall declaration, make sure it is consistent with our expectations, and then we have to look ahead at how we are going to deal with the next phase.²¹

At the end of June 2008, with a delay of seven months, North Korea indeed handed over the long-awaited nuclear declaration to the chair of the

17) 'N Korea Will Keep its Nukes: US Envoy', *The Australian*, 21 January 2008.

18) North Korea had been accused of providing nuclear assistance to Syria, although Damascus denied that it had an undeclared atomic programme. The US had questions about any possible North Korean role in a suspected Syrian covert nuclear site that was bombed by Israel in September 2007. See 'Rice Seeks North Korea Solution Before Window Closes', *Reuters*, 22 February 2008.

19) 'North Korea Says Delay in Talks "Technical"', *Associated Press*, 21 February 2008.

20) 'Nuclear Talks with North Korea Make Progress, US Says', *The Washington Post*, 8 April 2008.

21) Christopher R. Hill, Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, 'Remarks upon Departure from Six-Party Talks', US Embassy, Beijing, China, 9 April 2008.

Six-Party Talks. The 60-page document should provide details on how much plutonium North Korea says that it has produced in the past. The document did not address three key international concerns: a list of North Korea's nuclear weapons; the status of any uranium-enrichment programme; and the extent of North Korea's proliferation of nuclear technology. Pending the review process, US President Bush has already moved to delist North Korea as a sponsor of international terrorism and to lift some trading restrictions. With the document under review in the different capitals for verification of completeness and correctness, the Six-Party Talks were resumed, leading in July 2008 to a first informal encounter of US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and her North Korean counterpart – the highest such meeting since the start of the talks.

In the meantime, US Assistant Secretary Hill had already indicated that phase 3 negotiations, which would be even more difficult, require a foundation of transparency and trust. Phase 3 involves getting North Korea to relinquish all of its fissile material. It is clear that many more hurdles await the negotiators on the road ahead, raising serious doubts about the effectiveness of a collective carrot-and-stick policy, combining diplomatic pressure (economic sanctions) and providing economic, political and security rewards under the Six-Party Talks. It suggests that patience and time are required before the new political horizons, potentially included in the Beijing Agreement, really will come true. It remains to be seen whether the way in which the six parties have dealt with North Korea's delay in presenting its nuclear declaration – the first serious test of North Korea's intentions – will set a precedent for the third phase of the talks, which will probably become the most sensitive part of the Beijing deal: when North Korea is supposed to abandon and dismantle its nuclear weapons' programme.

Fear and Loathing in the DPRK: Beyond the Nuclear Crisis

Koen De Ceuster

Introduction

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, commonly known as North Korea) is often presented as intractable and unpredictable. This contribution, however, fundamentally disagrees with such an analytical framework, instead suggesting high predictability in DPRK policies when considered from the DPRK's national interests and how these are defined and interpreted in Pyongyang. Such an approach is of much more than academic interest, as it fundamentally contributes to finding a workable solution to the nuclear crisis that has gripped North-East Asia since October 2002. At the same time, it supposes looking beyond the nuclear crisis itself. Assessing the reasons for why the DPRK felt the need to develop nuclear weapons and answering the underlying causes of the ongoing crisis are the keys to a lasting solution of the crisis. Looking back on the often sinister spectacle of the Six-Party Talks, it is disturbing, particularly in view of the stakes involved, to see how little consideration was given by particularly the United States to these common-sense questions. The conclusion in Pyongyang, where this does not go unnoticed either, cannot be other than that the Six-Party Talks are nothing but a protracted sideshow, while a much more ominous plot – regime change – is hatched.

Obvious though it may sound, it is worth repeating that when trying to understand the DPRK's position in the Six-Party Talks, it is of crucial importance to recognize that policies are not formulated in a void, but respond to regional and global contexts. Pyongyang reacts as much as it acts.

Only by accepting that Pyongyang's actions are also reactions can one begin to decipher the rationale behind the moves that are made by the DPRK. Second, any action or reaction is not so much a response to a set of objective facts, but rather a response to an *interpretation* of facts. The analytical framework applied by the DPRK's leadership in reading the world hinges on a set of ideological parameters that differ fundamentally from those applied by its main foe, the United States. That ideology shapes the perception of reality does not in and by itself preclude pragmatic responses, but rather shapes and defines such responses. Getting a grip on the reciprocal shaping of ideology and history thus becomes the key to understanding the DPRK's attitude in international affairs.

Understanding the DPRK: Context and Principles

Bruce Cumings has succinctly described the DPRK's *ŷuche* ideology as a form of national solipsism.²² For *ŷuche* to be understood correctly, one has to look beyond the economic autarky to which many Western observers have reduced it. *ŷuche* is more than anything else concerned with various aspects of national sovereignty. This goes back to concepts of nationhood that circulated in East Asia at the end of the nineteenth century, when Western imperialism rattled traditional state models. The North Korean revolution was shaped in the resistance movement against foreign oppression and exploitation by the Japanese colonial state. No longer slaves, Koreans were to be masters of their own destiny. The anti-colonial roots of the social and national revolution that took place in the North of Korea are reflected in the three cardinal principles of *ŷuche*: autonomy (*chaju*); self-reliance (*charip*); and self-defence (*charwi*).²³ The history and memory of the Korean independence struggle is the well-spring of the DPRK's abhorrence of any semblance of dependency.

The Korean War (1950-1953) was a forceful attempt to impose the revolution in the South.²⁴ This attempt backfired and brought the full military weight of the United States to bear on the DPRK.²⁵ So accustomed are we to thinking of the DPRK's military threat to the South, that we easily forget that the DPRK confronts the mighty US military machine across the demilitarized zone (DMZ). We are equally accustomed to perceiving the US military

22) Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History. Updated Edition* (New York and London: WW. Norton & Co., 2005), pp. 408-424.

23) Bruce Armstrong, *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950* (Ithaca NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2003).

24) On the complex origins of the Korean War, see Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War: Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes, 1945-1947* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981); and Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War, II: The Roaring of the Cataract, 1947-1950* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).

25) Bruce Cumings, *North Korea Another Country* (New York and London: The New Press, 2004), pp. 1-42.

posture as purely defensive, but from the DPRK's perspective, both US strategic planning and the military exercises that it conducts on a regular basis in the southern part of the Korean Peninsula look anything but defensive. Selig Harrison sees the direct cause for the DPRK's nuclear weapons and missile development programmes in the United States' 'nuclear saber rattling during the Korean War and the subsequent deployment of US tactical nuclear weapons in the South for more than three decades'.²⁶ The Bush administration pushed red buttons in Pyongyang when in the 2002 *Nuclear Posture Review*, North Korea was explicitly mentioned as one of the contingencies where the possible first use of nuclear weapons could be considered.²⁷

The end of the Cold War held no peace dividend for the DPRK. It only led to increased ideological and strategic isolation, particularly after its erstwhile allies – the former Soviet Union (in 1990) and the People's Republic of China (in 1992), allies that had always been held at arms length!²⁸ – established diplomatic relations with the Republic of Korea (ROK, or South Korea).²⁹ A sobering consequence of the changed relations with its allies was the hastening of the economic downturn that the DPRK had faced since the late 1980s, spinning out of control into an economic meltdown and widespread famine from the mid-1990s onwards. The situation was made all the worse since the United States not only did not reciprocate the diplomatic gesture of Russia and China, but instead appeared to increase pressure on the DPRK.

An existential fear gripped Pyongyang at the end of the twentieth century. As socialist states tumbled in Europe, the DPRK retracted into an ideological spasm, unflinchingly affirming the soundness of its socialist course. It strengthened the defence of its political system under the banner of the 'Army First' (*sŏn'gun*) revolution: the DPRK's answer to the post-Cold War era.³⁰

26) Selig S. Harrison, *Korean Endgame: A Strategy for Reunification and US Disengagement* (Princeton NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), pp. 197-200.

27) See <http://www.armscontrol.org/pressroom/2003/nkorean03>; and Im Tongwŏn, *P'isŭmeik'ŏ: Nambuk kwan'gye-wa Pukhaek munje 20nyŏn. Im Tongwŏn hoigorok* [Peacemaker: Twenty Years of South-North Relations and the North Korean Nuclear Crisis. The Memoirs of Lim Dong Won] (Seoul: Joongang Books, 2008).

28) B.K. Gills, *Korea versus Korea: A Case of Contested Legitimacy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996).

29) When Eduard Shevardnadze as Soviet foreign minister visited Pyongyang in September 1990 to break the news, Kim Yong Nam, his DPRK counterpart, reacted by threatening the accelerated development of nuclear weapons. See Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History* (London: Little, Brown & Co., 1997), pp. 213-216.

30) By the end of 1998, 'Army First' became an established phrase in DPRK propaganda. This coincided with the adoption of a revised constitution, elevating the deceased founder of the Republic, Kim Il-Sung, to Eternal President, and raising the profile of the National Defence Commission to the highest political body in the country chaired by Kim Jong-Il.

While showing a brave face towards both domestic and international adversity, the DPRK has also shown its capability to respond in a more pragmatic manner, through engagement with the South. This resulted in two important agreements: the North–South Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression and Exchanges and Cooperation (13 December 1991); and the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula (31 December 1991).³¹ Although the Joint Declaration was never implemented, as a formal expression of the DPRK’s principal commitment to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, it remains an important document. From the DPRK’s perspective, it promises the reciprocal withdrawal of the US nuclear threat. In that sense, this inter-Korean agreement is also part of an ongoing intricate diplomatic *pas de deux* with the United States.³² The DPRK only signed up to the agreement after the United States had made public (be it indirectly) the withdrawal of its nuclear warheads from the Korean Peninsula. That the Declaration never moved beyond the principle was partly a consequence of a conflicting dynamic that had developed between the DPRK and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).³³

The IAEA’s credibility had been severely tarnished following the discovery of the extent of Iraq’s secret uranium enrichment programme in the wake of the first Gulf War (1990–1991). The IAEA sought to reassert its authority through enforcing a more intrusive inspection mechanism. The first country to be confronted with the IAEA’s new face was the DPRK,³⁴ following suspicions about the comprehensiveness of its initial nuclear declaration to the IAEA. The resulting stand-off was finally resolved through direct DPRK–US negotiations that resulted in the 1994 Geneva Framework Agreement, which saw the DPRK return to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and brought the existing nuclear installations under an IAEA-controlled moratorium.³⁵ It is this Framework Agreement that unravelled in autumn 2002.

31) Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas*, pp. 255–265.

32) The first official DPRK reaction to Kelly’s charges was a verbal counter-attack, which described the ‘axis of evil’ speech and the threat of a pre-emptive nuclear strike as ‘a gross violation of the basic spirit of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, [and] reduced the inter-Korean joint declaration on denuclearization to a dead document’; see KCNA, ‘Conclusion of Non-Aggression Treaty between DPRK and US Called For’, 25 October 2002, available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>. Following its nuclear test, the DPRK reiterated its commitment to the goal of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula; see KCNA, ‘DPRK Foreign Ministry Spokesman on US Moves Concerning its Nuclear Test’, 12 October 2006, available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>.

33) Leon V. Sigal, *Disarming Strangers: Nuclear Diplomacy with North Korea* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), pp. 27–32.

34) Sigal, *Disarming Strangers*, pp. 18–19.

35) Marion Creekmore Jr, *A Moment of Crisis: Jimmy Carter, The Power of A Peacemaker, and North Korea’s Nuclear Ambitions* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2006); and Joel S. Wit, Daniel B. Poneman and Robert L. Gallucci, *Going Critical: The First North Korean Nuclear Crisis* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2004), pp. 221–246.

The signing of the 1994 agreement came months after the death of Kim Il-Sung on 8 July 1994. That the DPRK, despite the death of its paramount leader, went through with the deal instead of retracting in self-imposed isolation was ample proof of the importance that Pyongyang attached to these first direct negotiations with the United States since the Korean War armistice negotiations in 1953. More than just material benefits, the most important outcome for the DPRK was the ultimate prospect of a normalization of relations with the United States.

Escalating the Crisis: More than Just Strategy

When George W. Bush was sworn in as the 43rd President of the United States in January 2001, the timid process of US–DPRK rapprochement that had started in the final years of the Clinton presidency ground to a halt. Although the new administration’s Secretary of State Colin Powell recognized the initial merits of Bill Clinton’s belated and tentative engagement policy with Pyongyang, all initiatives were soon put on hold pending a US–North Korea policy review.³⁶ In effect, the United States’ North Korea policy fell victim to ideological wrangling within the Bush administration, leading to a *de facto* paralysis of US policy on North Korea. Overtures created by the DPRK were wilfully ignored.³⁷ Despite the solemn declaration in the October 2000 US–DPRK Joint Communiqué affirming that the United States had no ‘hostile intent’ towards the DPRK, George Bush made disparaging remarks about Kim Jong-Il and Bush’s ‘neo-con’ entourage made public allusions to strategies for regime change.³⁸ The culmination of this new face of US policy came in the January 2002 State of the Union address, when George W. Bush named North Korea as part of an ‘axis of evil’ and a potential target for a pre-

36) Charles L. Pritchard, *Failed Diplomacy: The Tragic Story of How North Korea Got the Bomb* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2007), pp. 72-73; and Im Tongwŏn, *P’isūmeik’ŏ*, pp. 520-538. Despite what the 1994 Agreed Framework had called for, US President Bill Clinton’s administration had been very slow in engaging the DPRK in any meaningful dialogue. It was not until a comprehensive review of the United States’ North Korea policy was undertaken by William Perry (the ‘Perry Review’ in 1999) that a consolidated effort at engaging the DPRK began. This led to some swift but belated initiatives: the invitation of North Korean Vice Marshal Jo Myong-Rok to the White House – resulting in *inter alia* a ‘joint US–DPRK communiqué’, later blissfully ignored by the Bush administration – and the subsequent visit of US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to Pyongyang, both in October 2000.

37) One sign of such goodwill was the unqualified condemnation by the DPRK of the 11 September 2001 attacks. The DPRK subsequently acceded in October and November 2001 to three separate international conventions aimed at combating international terrorism. See Pritchard, *Failed Diplomacy*, p. 54; and Tim Beal, *North Korea: The Struggle against American Power* (London and Ann Arbor MI: Pluto, 2005), pp. 102-103.

38) See http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eap/001012_usdprk_jointcom.html.

emptive strike.³⁹ Particularly worrisome for Pyongyang was that the Bush administration was willing to back up its words with deeds.

In stark contrast to the DPRK's improvement of relations with South Korea and even Japan – Japan's Prime Minister Koizumi made a surprise visit to Pyongyang in September 2002 – relations with the United States deteriorated further when deadlock was succeeded by action. On 4 October 2002, Assistant US Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs James Kelly confronted his DPRK hosts with the allegation that the DPRK was in breach of the 1994 Agreed Framework by secretly developing a highly enriched uranium-based (HEU) nuclear weapons' programme. Kang Sok-Ju, the DPRK's foreign minister, is said to have admitted to the existence of such a programme during an angry outburst on the fringes of the formal meetings. This outburst – whether correctly understood or not – was sufficient for the United States to move forwards in dismantling the 1994 Agreed Framework, which the Republican Party had opposed from the start.⁴⁰ The United States convinced KEDO (the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization) on 14 November 2002 to suspend its monthly heavy-fuel deliveries to the North.⁴¹ In response, the DPRK accused the United States of intentionally breaking the agreement. What followed was an escalation of the crisis, in which the DPRK knowingly, but in a phased manner, disengaged from the Agreed Framework. In succession, it lifted the freeze on its nuclear installations (13 December 2002); cut the IAEA seals and disabled its surveillance cameras (22 December 2002); and ordered the expulsion of all IAEA inspectors (27 December 2002). On 10 January 2003, the DPRK informed the UN Security Council of its withdrawal from the NPT on the grounds of an imminent threat to its national security. It justified this move by referring to article X (1) of the NPT:

39) When William Arkin in March 2002 disclosed classified information from the 2002 *Nuclear Posture Review*, it transpired that the DPRK was even listed as a target for a pre-emptive nuclear attack. See online at <http://www.commondreams.org/views02/0309-04.htm>.

40) Lim Dong-Won, architect of Kim Dae-Jung's 'sunshine policy' with a lifelong career in the South Korean intelligence services, in his memoirs is very critical about the interpretation of Kang Sok-Ju's admission, which he considered to be taken out of context. He was equally critical of the assessment of the available intelligence, which led to the fateful events in October 2002; see Im Tongwŏn, *P'isūmeik'ō*, pp. 663-671. As the United States was edging closer towards reaching a deal with the DPRK in 2007, a sobering reassessment of the intelligence that had led to the initial allegation was made public. See Selig S. Harrison, 'Did North Korea Cheat?', *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2005, available online at <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20050101faessay84109/selig-s-harrison/did-north-korea-cheat.html>; and David E. Sanger and William J. Broad, 'US had Doubts on North Korean Uranium Drive', *New York Times*, 1 March 2007.

41) One year later, the United States moved to have KEDO suspend work on the construction of the two light-water reactors (LWR) that it was building, and on 31 May 2006, KEDO terminated the LWR project. See online at http://www.kedo.org/au_history.asp.

Each Party shall in exercising its national sovereignty have the right to withdraw from the Treaty if it decides that extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of this Treaty, have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country. It shall give notice of such withdrawal to all other Parties to the Treaty and to the United Nations Security Council three months in advance. Such notice shall include a statement of the extraordinary events it regards as having jeopardized its supreme interests.⁴²

On 4 February 2003, the DPRK announced that it had restarted its Yongbyon reactor.

While there is an intriguing sequence to the escalation, with the two protagonists locked into a staring game, neither wanting to blink first, there is a core of fundamental anxiety that should not be overlooked. Under pressure from the United States, the DPRK disengaged from its earlier commitments, on the grounds that the United States was also retracting on earlier promises and reverting to an offensive posture against the DPRK. The DPRK declared that, as a sovereign state, it had the duty to do its utmost to protect its nation's honour and dignity. This should not be discarded as mere rhetoric. It is obvious that there was growing uncertainty in Pyongyang about US intentions. Faced with both the belligerent language of the likes of Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld and John Bolton, and the actions that backed up their rhetoric, the DPRK made a dash for what it considered to be the ultimate defence strategy: the acquisition of a nuclear deterrent. When on 31 May 2003 in Cracow, Poland, George Bush announced the establishment of the Proliferation Security Initiative, the DPRK responded by declaring publicly for the first time its intention of developing such a nuclear deterrent in response to US hostile pressure.⁴³

By that time, China had already stepped in to mediate in a crisis that had the potential to provoke a regional arms race.⁴⁴ Despite the start of negotiations, the mutual positioning continued unabated. Particularly galling for Pyongyang was the Bush administration's firm position of not negotiating until North Korea had returned to a situation in line with the terms of the 1994 Agreed Framework. As the trilateral talks became the Six-Party Talks,

42) See online at <http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Infcirc/Others/infcirc140.pdf>.

In 1994, the DPRK had suspended its withdrawal from the NPT one day short of the statutory 90-day grace period. In January 2003, Pyongyang revoked this suspension and hence considered itself no longer bound by the NPT after a single day, despite protestations by Washington that it could not do so. See Sigal, *Disarming Strangers*, pp. 38-42; and Wit, Poneman and Gallucci, *Going Critical*, pp. 1-15.

43) KCNA, 'KCNA on DPRK's Nuclear Deterrent Force', 10 June 2003, available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>. From the start, as in this specific instance, the DPRK indicated that it was willing to reverse course if the United States changed its hostile policies.

44) Days after the DPRK announced that it had started reprocessing the 8,000 spent fuel rods, kept in safe storage under the 1994 Agreed Framework, a first round of trilateral talks was held in Beijing on 23 April 2003.

the United States' negotiating strategy evolved into CVID (complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement) of the DPRK's nuclear programme. Prior to any real negotiations, Pyongyang continued to push red buttons. For years the DPRK had maintained a 'neither confirm nor deny' policy, an attitude that was not uncommon among declared nuclear states. Considering this policy no longer to be sufficient as a nuclear deterrent, the DPRK moved to confirm the United States' worst fears.⁴⁵ In October 2003, it officially announced the completion of the reprocessing of 8,000 spent fuel rods, thereby publicly admitting that it had a stockpile of plutonium. From mid-2004 onwards, DPRK officials publicly talked about the possession of nuclear weapons, and in May 2005 the DPRK announced that it was extracting fuel rods from the restarted reactor at Yongbyon, suggesting a new round of reprocessing. It is from that perspective that North Korea's disclosure during the talks that it effectively possessed nuclear weapons has to be understood.⁴⁶

That escalating the crisis improved the DPRK's bargaining position is undeniable. It would, however, be a mistake to see nothing more than jockeying for position in the active escalation. There is ultimately a real sense of fear and a distrust of the United States' real intentions that drove the DPRK. The combination of increased military, economic and political pressure on Pyongyang, and the US negotiators' rigid CVID negotiating position, hardly inclined the DPRK to soften its posture of self-defence. It was not until the fourth round of talks that, confronted with pressure from the other negotiators, the United States eventually relented on CVID as a preliminary condition before addressing the DPRK's concerns. Although a statement of principles was agreed upon on 19 September 2005, the agreement soon disintegrated over what North Korea saw as the United States' lack of trustworthiness.

The 9 October 2006 nuclear test changed all of that. Not only was there a renewed urgency to find a solution to the crisis once the proverbial dust had settled, but the DPRK's negotiating strategy had also become more forthcoming. Having shown the world its nuclear capability, the DPRK felt

45) For years, CIA reports had been used to claim that the DPRK already possessed nuclear weapons. The same reports were now used to cast doubt on Pyongyang's claim to have developed such weapons. See David E. Sanger, 'North Korea Says It Now Possesses Nuclear Arsenal', *New York Times*, 25 April 2003.

46) DPRK Vice Foreign Minister Choe Su-Hyon, addressing the UN General Assembly on 28 September 2004, was the first to publicly talk about the DPRK's nuclear arsenal. Referring to Condoleezza Rice's description of North Korea as 'an outpost of tyranny', the DPRK withdrew from the Six-Party Talks in February 2005, citing the hostile attitude of the US. In a Foreign Ministry statement, the DPRK explained that 'We had already taken the resolute action of pulling out of the NPT and have manufactured nukes for self-defence to cope with the Bush administration's evermore undisguised policy to isolate and stifle the DPRK. [The DPRK's] nuclear weapons will remain nuclear deterrent for self-defence under any circumstances'; see KCNA, 'DPRK FM on its Stand to Suspend its Participation in Six-Party Talks for Indefinite Period', 11 February 2005, available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>.

sufficiently reassured not only to return to the negotiations, but also to be more cooperative in finding a workable solution to the crisis.

Escalation has always been a strategic choice of the DPRK. For one, it undeniably strengthened North Korea's bargaining position, but it was also the only way to get and keep the world's attention. Why the DPRK so desperately wants the world's attention is a question that is often sidestepped by reducing North Korea's politics of escalation to nothing but bargaining tactics. Regardless of whether one is willing to admit that genuine fear reigns in the corridors of power in Pyongyang, it is quite clear that escalation is not a goal in itself. The questions of why the DPRK went down the road towards developing a nuclear potential, and what its diplomatic short- and long-term goals are, deserve attention.

The Goals of DPRK Diplomacy at the Six-Party Talks

From the start of the second nuclear crisis, the DPRK had insisted that the issue was to be resolved through bilateral consultations with the United States.⁴⁷ Even though it eventually relented and accepted a multilateral forum, Pyongyang's focus remained squarely on Washington. Although it may have given in on the format, the DPRK rejected the demand for CVID as a preliminary step, instead demanding simultaneity in words and actions. Not only was this a matter of principle for the DPRK, as it was even more alarmed and suspicious of any preliminary concessions after it had witnessed how Iraq had first been disarmed, only to be subsequently attacked by the United States.⁴⁸ As it is, this fundamental principle has often been the root cause of the talks' successive interruptions.⁴⁹ On the one hand, it relates to the DPRK's adamant desire to be recognized as an equal partner, but it is also testimony to the absence of trust in the United States' ulterior motives. The roadmap hammered out by China and South Korea, and agreed upon by the different parties on 13 February 2007 (and 3 October 2007), seeks to address this need for confidence-building measures.

For the DPRK, equality and reciprocity are crucial elements in the process, which it is hoped will ultimately lead to removal of the (military)

47) KCNA, 'Spokesman for DPRK Foreign Ministry on Peaceful Solution to Nuclear Issue', 14 April 2003, available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>.

48) KCNA, 'DPRK's Determination to Strongly React to US Hardline Measure Reiterated', 19 June 2003, available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>. See also KCNA, 'KCNA Flails US Strategy for Pre-emptive Strike', 30 July 2003, available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>.

49) The Banco Delta Asia (BDA) affair is a case in point. At the time when the United States sat down with the other parties to hammer out the Joint Statement, the US Treasury imposed sanctions on this Macau-based bank, for alleged money-laundering practices related to North Korean bank accounts held at the bank. From a North Korean perspective, this was in breach of the good faith agreed upon in the Joint Statement, and was testimony to the unabated ill intent of the Bush administration.

threat and normalization of relations with the United States. In that respect, it is useful to consider the official aim of the Six-Party Talks: the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The DPRK reads into this definition the removal of the US nuclear threat, and such a reading further provides an indirect justification for the development of a North Korean nuclear deterrent in response to a US threat.⁵⁰ It also means that a resolution of the nuclear crisis does not consist of the unilateral disarmament of the DPRK, but 'liquidation of hostile relations between the DPRK and the United States, coupled with the removal of all threats of nuclear war on and surrounding the Korean Peninsula'.⁵¹

To denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, North Korean negotiators fight pitched battles. Hardened negotiators, they stubbornly cling to this long-term goal, while in the short term they try to wrest as many concessions as they can get.⁵² In that sense, an agreement is never final, but is also always the start of a new round of debate, negotiations and deals. When it succeeded in having its sovereign right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy recognized in the September 2005 Joint Statement, the DPRK immediately followed by demanding the provision of nuclear reactors as an integral part of a final settlement of the nuclear issue. Described at the time as 'backtracking' before the ink of the deal was properly dry, it was in fact a demonstration of how North Korea had already moved to the next stage of the negotiations.

Between the 19 September 2005 Joint Statement and the 13 February 2007 Initial Actions Agreement, the DPRK retracted, in a stubborn refusal to return to talks as long as the Banco Delta Asia (BDA) affair was not settled.⁵³

50) Having acquired a nuclear deterrent of its own, the DPRK is now capable of forcing the withdrawal of the nuclear umbrella from South Korea and thereby achieving the true denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula that it committed itself to in the 1992 Joint Agreement.

51) Kim Gye-Gwan, chief DPRK negotiator, as quoted by Park Jae-Kyu, 'Prospects for Inter-Korean and US-DPRK Relations', speech prepared for delivery at the Woodrow Wilson Center, 8 September 2008, available online at http://www.wilsoncenter.org/events/docs/JKPark-Dir.Forum_remarks08-Sept.08.pdf, pp. 13-14.

52) Much is made of the economic concessions that North Korea wrests from such negotiations. The concessions that the DPRK obtained for halting (50,000 tons of heavy fuel oil (HFO)) and disabling (950,000 tons HFO) its Yongbyon facilities are less impressive when compared to the recurrent yearly delivery of 500,000 tons HFO under the 1994 Agreed Framework. Given that the larger part of the deliveries would only take place after disablement, one might conclude that Pyongyang was truthful about its commitment to finding a solution to the crisis, all the more so since these were one-off donations.

53) North Korea did attend the November 2005 session, but by December 2005, when the full impact of the US Treasury's intentions had become clear, the DPRK issued a statement refusing to return to the negotiations until the 'financial sanctions' were lifted. See KCNA, 'Rodong Shinmun <õnyak-ül chõbõrinün ch'õsa> Cho-Mi chikjõp hoedam hoep'I' [Nodong Shinmun: 'Reverting on One's Pledge: Shirking Direct DPRK-US Talks'], 6 December 2005, available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-k.htm>.

Pyongyang was upset about this affair, which it saw as proof of continued US attempts to undermine the DPRK. For all practical means and purposes, the BDA case amounted to a financial blockade of North Korea, and was interpreted in Pyongyang as another means towards the ‘neo-con’ goal of regime change.⁵⁴ The DPRK replied to this threat by showing off its military capability (the firing of a volley of missiles on 5 July 2006) and pushing forward the development of its nuclear deterrent, while at the same time refusing to return to the negotiations as long as the financial ban was not lifted and the DPRK’s unhampered access to the international financial system was not restored. As a state responding to an imminent threat, the DPRK discarded the UN resolutions condemning both its July 2006 missile test and its October 2006 nuclear test.

With its nuclear capability proven, the DPRK became more amenable to a negotiated settlement, secure in the knowledge that it demanded respect as a nuclear power and possessed by a sense of safety from attack under its own nuclear umbrella. At the same time, there was renewed urgency on the part of the other partners to reach a negotiated settlement.

The DPRK returned to the Six-Party Talks after preliminary bilateral meetings with the United States had been held in Berlin, Germany, in January 2007. During these and subsequent talks in Geneva on 2 September, not only did Assistant US Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Christopher Hill promise a resolution to the BDA crisis, but he also provided North Korea’s Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Kim Gye-Gwan with tangible US commitments in return for North Korean actions. Although strenuously denied by the US negotiator – it is politically indigestible for the United States to be seen ‘giving in’ to North Korea – Kim Gye-Gwan made it clear that he understood that in return for shutting down and dismantling the Yongbyon site and handing over the paper trail of the DPRK’s nuclear programmes, the United States would remove the DPRK from its list of states sponsoring terrorism and would lift the remaining trade sanctions that had been imposed in the wake of the Korean War.

The results of both the Berlin and the Geneva talks indeed reappeared in respectively the 13 February 2007 Initial Actions Agreement and the follow-on Second Phase Actions Agreement of 3 October 2007. Both agreements were elaborations of the earlier Joint Statement of Principles. They spelled out much more clearly what was expected of the different parties in the successive phases, while reiterating the ultimate goal – CVID – of this gradual process. Implementation of the initial phase, however, soon hit a snag, when the release of the BDA’s funds proved technically more difficult than expected, thus explaining why the DPRK missed the 60-day deadline for closing its

54) David Lague and Donald Greenless, ‘Squeeze on Banco Delta Asia Hit North Korea Where it Hurt: Disruption of Funds at Macao Bank Hits the Regime Hardest’, *International Herald Tribune*, 18 January 2007. See also online at <http://www.ustreas.gov/press/releases/js2720.htm>. For a background briefing on the BDA case, see online at http://www.ncnk.org/resources/briefing-papers/ncnk_issue_brief_bda/.

nuclear installations and delayed bringing the IAEA inspectors back in. Frenzied diplomatic efforts by Christopher Hill eventually lifted this cloud and the DPRK followed through with its part of the deal.

One day prior to receiving its BDA funds, the DPRK allowed IAEA inspectors back into North Korea.⁵⁵ The IAEA announced on 18 July 2007 that the Yongbyon facilities had been closed down and sealed, and were monitored again by the IAEA. In subsequent negotiations, the DPRK agreed to dismantle its nuclear facilities in Yongbyon and to provide a 'complete and correct' declaration of its nuclear programmes. Disabling the installation went apace, but the DPRK dragged its feet on providing its declaration. Finally, in May 2008, it handed over 18,000 Xeroxed pages documenting the operational history of its nuclear installations since 1986, and on 26 June 2008 formally handed over the declaration of its nuclear assets to the Chinese authorities as conveners of the Six-Party Talks. In response, US President George W. Bush initiated the process of removing the DPRK from the list of states sponsoring terrorism, but relented when subsequent agreement was not reached on a verification protocol. Claiming that the United States was not following through on its promises and was breaking the cycle of 'action for action' (*haengdong tae haengdong*), the DPRK in August 2008 stopped, and in September 2008 eventually rolled back, the dismantlement of its nuclear installations.

This sequence of events again shows how the DPRK proceeds in fulfilling its part of the deal, as long as it is certain that its actions are reciprocated. Barring reciprocity, the DPRK cannot be expected to move so far ahead as to harm its own security interests. The same principle explains why it is highly unlikely that the DPRK will give up its plutonium stock before a final and satisfactory settlement is reached. The only final and satisfactory outcome of the crisis for the DPRK is the normalization of its relations with the United States, resulting in the provision of a security guarantee, the removal of economic sanctions and the recognition and acceptance of the DPRK's political system.⁵⁶

The Six-Party Talks as a Multilateral Forum

No interests are more important to the DPRK than its own national interests. Besides upholding the revolution, the second most important national goal is to realize the reunification of Korea. This is where its confrontation with the United States originates. The DPRK sees no added value in multilateral negotiations, preferring to compartmentalize its international relations into

55) In fact, IAEA Director-General Mohamed ElBaradei visited Pyongyang on 13 March 2007, ahead of the submission of the final report by the US Treasury on the BDA case. Inspectors eventually arrived in Pyongyang on 26 June 2007, one day after Pyongyang took receipt of its BDA funds.

56) Im Tongwŏn, *P'isŭmeik'ŏ*, p. 664.

sizable packages of bilateral relations. This is reflected in its attitude during the Six-Party Talks, where it focuses squarely on the United States. The future of the DPRK and the region hinges on the normalization of relations with the United States. Once the US threat is removed, a permanent peace regime can be achieved on the Korean Peninsula, which in turn is the key to peace in the region. Inter-Korean affairs have no place in the Six-Party Talks, because both Koreas had declared in the 15 June 2000 Declaration that they would solve inter-Korean problems on their own terms. Indeed, it is worthwhile to repeat that for most of the nuclear crisis, inter-Korean relations deepened, expanded, and were effectively out of sync with international concerns over the North Korean crisis.

Relations with Japan, North Korea's former colonizer, remain tense. On the one hand, there is the demand on the part of North Korea that Japan atones for its wartime past and provides the North with a sizable indemnification, not unlike what South Korea received in 1965 when it re-established diplomatic relations with Japan. The DPRK is further irked that the Japanese government has not recognized the magnitude of the gesture made by the DPRK's National Defence Commission Chairman Kim Jong-Il when he acknowledged and apologized to (then) Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, during their summit meeting in September 2002, for the abduction of a number of Japanese citizens. The DPRK is very wary and openly critical of Japan's role at the Six-Party Talks, as Tokyo keeps pushing the abductees' issue onto the agenda. North Korea is concerned that this essentially bilateral issue might interfere with a resolution to what is really at stake at the Six-Party Talks: its relations with the United States.

The DPRK's relations with China and Russia are amicable, despite the turbulent 1990s. Most important for Pyongyang is the fact that both Beijing and Moscow share the same interpretation of the international order and the inviolability of national sovereignty. China, Russia and the DPRK are all keen upholders of peaceful coexistence, a recurrent term in the successive declarations. The Chinese understanding of the term, which is shared by Russia and the DPRK alike, is respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, but most importantly non-interference in the internal affairs of a state, and the recognition of the sovereign equality of states.⁵⁷ This effectively excludes a discussion of the DPRK's human rights' situation from the agenda of the Six-Party Talks. At the same time, it circumscribes the influence that China is willing to exert on North Korea (at least in this multilateral framework). Despite its closeness to and economic dependence on China, the DPRK remains an actor in its own right, acting upon its own national (security) interests in spite of upsetting its powerful neighbour. This was best demonstrated when it went ahead with its nuclear test, despite

57) In this regard, see Gerry Simpson, *Great Powers and Outlaw States: Unequal Sovereign in the International Legal Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). It is the same sovereign equality that made the DPRK argue – as a matter of principle – for the recognition of its right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy in the agreement of principles.

obvious opposition from China.⁵⁸ Relations with Russia are less close, but there is a clear mutual understanding about the importance of containing US influence in the region and the world.

Conclusion

That the DPRK remains single-mindedly focused on its bilateral relations with the United States is a consequence of the fact that they still confront each other across the DMZ – technically still locked in a war with each other. The removal of that threat and the normalization of relations with the United States are the most important diplomatic challenges for the DPRK, and these relations are the key to peaceful coexistence in the region. Until that goal is achieved, it is not only the fortunes of the Six-Party Talks that remain in the balance, but it is also unlikely that the DPRK will hand over its stockpile of plutonium.

If and when its relations with the United States are normalized, the DPRK may still wake up to the realization that the Six-Party framework may prove a better security guarantee than bilateral relations could ever provide. North Korea's Kim Jong-Il is on record as having said that he expects the United States to play a continued role as power-broker in North-East Asia even beyond the horizon of the reunification of Korea, so much so that he even accepted the idea of US troops stationed on the Korean Peninsula, provided that they contribute to the maintenance of peace instead of their current offensive posture against the DPRK.⁵⁹

From the DPRK's perspective, the alpha and omega of its security now hinges on its relations with the United States. No threat is more imminent than the US threat. The current confrontation can be solved through accepting ideological differences. Once that confrontation is solved, inter-Korean relations can be rekindled and the vision of a unified Korea further elaborated. Changes in both US–DPRK and inter-Korean relations will have an obvious impact on the regional balance of power. North Korea's Kim Jong-Il seems to share an awareness that a multilateral framework may be very helpful in channelling the frictions that may arise as a consequence of a strategic realignment on the Korean Peninsula. His assessment of Korea's position in the region is not fundamentally different from the calculations made by the last Emperor of Korea, Kojong, at the end of the nineteenth century. Korea is faced with an inescapable geopolitical reality. Surrounded by big powers, Korea is but a small nation. Ever since joining the world

58) China's frustration over the test showed in the speed with which it agreed to UN sanctions following the DPRK's nuclear test. While condemning the test as a dangerous breach of the non-proliferation regime, China at the same time called for the rapid reconvening of the Six-Party Talks so as to remove the DPRK's need for a nuclear weapons' capability.

59) Im Tongwŏn, *P'isŭmeik'ŏ*, pp. 115-116; and Park Jae-Kyu, 'Prospects for Inter-Korean and US–DPRK Relations', p. 19.

community of nation-states in the late nineteenth century, Korea has been trying to find ways of securing its national sovereignty against foreign encroachment. Never a military match for its powerful neighbours, proposals for the international neutralization of Korea circulated from the 1890s onwards. The Six-Party format may evolve into a revived version of Kojong's goal of the international neutralization of Korea. Even if that were to happen, it is clear that such a format would only matter in as far as it serves Korean interests. In that sense, in the DPRK's perspective, the local persistently dominates the global.

The United States and the Asian 'Rogue': From Dogmatism to Pragmatism

Frans-Paul van der Putten

Introduction

The United States has been the dominant military power in East Asia since 1945. It played a key role in the process that led to the division of Korea in 1948 and in the Korean War of 1950-1953. Moreover, North Korea regards the United States as its greatest threat and claims to have developed nuclear weapons in response to this threat. Since the return of the nuclear crisis in October 2002, US policy towards North Korea (officially the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)) has focused first and foremost on putting a definite end to the DPRK's nuclear programme, but there have been and still are conflicting views in Washington on the right way to get there. While much has been written about US policy towards the North Korean nuclear crisis, this has rarely been done from the perspective of US interests. These include not only interests of national security (non-proliferation) and domestic politics (changing or adjusting the policies of the previous president), but relate also to the overall position of the United States in East Asia and to crises in the Middle East. This chapter therefore starts with an analysis of how the North Korean nuclear crisis relates to these various US interests, and outlines the United States' approach to the crisis against this background.

Interests at Stake

The greatest significance of the North Korean nuclear programme for US interests is the risk of proliferation. During the 1990s North Korea reportedly obtained nuclear weapons' technology from the Pakistani nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan.⁶⁰ The DPRK is also known to have a certain amount of plutonium. It publicly claimed to have nuclear weapons for the first time on 10 February 2005,⁶¹ and substantiated this claim by conducting a nuclear test on 9 October 2006. But important elements in North Korea's nuclear programme remain obscure. It is unknown what kind of nuclear device was tested in 2006. Also unknown is how much plutonium North Korea possesses, and how far the supposed programme to enrich uranium has progressed. Furthermore, little is known about North Korean attempts to transfer nuclear technology abroad. On 6 September 2007 Israeli warplanes attacked a target in Syria; only half a year later did the US government declare that it had evidence that this was in fact a Syrian nuclear plant that had been built with North Korean assistance.

The North Korean government clearly has nuclear weapons' technology, plutonium and nuclear facilities, and there therefore exists a risk that relevant knowledge or materials could be transferred abroad. The DPRK is a country with which the United States is formally in a state of war, and a country that might seek financial or other benefits from selling nuclear technology abroad. In spite of the launch of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) by US President Bush in May 2003,⁶² it is impossible to block all of the possible avenues of transferring nuclear technology from North Korea to foreign countries or organizations.⁶³ The only way to neutralize the proliferation risk is to make sure that the North Korean nuclear programme is completely dismantled. This has consequently been the main US policy aim towards the DPRK since October 2002.

To understand fully the United States' position regarding North Korea and its nuclear programme, a number of other interests need to be taken into account. At the political level, the DPRK's nuclear issue helped the US government to 'sell' its post-2000 hardline foreign policy, domestically as well as to its allies. At the end of the Cold War, the administration of US President George Bush Sr tended towards a pragmatic approach to international security. This approach was continued under President Clinton, but came

60) See <http://www.cfr.org/publication/7751/#2>.

61) See http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2006/10/09/asia/AS_GEN_Koreas_Nuclear_Chronology.php and KCNA, 'DPRK FM on its Stand to Suspend Participation in Six-Part Talks for Indefinite Period', 11 February 2005, available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/calendar-e/frame.htm>.

62) The PSI is a US-led global initiative to stop international shipments of weapons of mass destruction; see <http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/proliferation/>.

63) Wade L. Huntley, 'US Policy towards North Korea in Strategic Context: Tempting Goliath's Fate', *Asian Survey*, vol. 47, no. 3, 2007, pp. 455-480, at p. 468.

under intense criticism from hard-line conservatives. They strongly opposed the 1994 Agreed Framework agreement on North Korea's nuclear programme. After George Bush Jr became president in January 2001, he included into his administration a number of the most vehement critics of Clinton's North Korea policy. The previous multilateralist, cooperative stance was abandoned in favour of a strategy that exploited American leadership in military affairs more directly and that made a clear division between 'good' and 'evil'. American values were to be promoted more forcefully than before, while no deals were to be made with those who are hostile to these values.

US foreign policy focused on three countries in particular to bring the latter aspect into practice: Iraq; Iran; and North Korea. Rather than divert attention away, the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks actually resulted in a strengthened resolve in the Bush administration to confront these three countries. In his State of the Union speech in January 2002, US President Bush announced that the three countries constituted an 'axis of evil'. Together with al-Qaeda, they were depicted as the United States' most dangerous enemies. Emphasizing the dual threat of anti-Western terrorist networks and 'rogue states' – the latter supposedly supplying the former with weapons of mass destruction – was instrumental in setting the scene and mobilizing support for the Iraq War and the United States' unilateralist foreign policy. The re-emergence of the North Korean nuclear issue in October 2002 strengthened the sense that weapons in the hands of rogue states such as the DPRK were an acute threat to US national interests.

In the ongoing debate between the ideological hardliners and more pragmatic policy-makers, the proper way to deal with North Korea's nuclear programme remains a recurring issue. The hardliners argue that denuclearization and human rights should be pursued simultaneously and without compromise, and that the DPRK's regime is untrustworthy and therefore not a proper negotiating partner. Implicitly or explicitly they favour regime change as the ultimate aim of US policy towards North Korea. Meanwhile, the pragmatists believe that it is more in US interest to focus on denuclearization, to use diplomatic means rather than coercion, and to avoid the issue of human rights. Whereas the hardliners – led by US Vice-President Cheney – had the upper hand after '9/11', the unsatisfactory aftermath of the Iraq War gave more room to the pragmatic side during US President Bush's second term. Still, both terms of Bush's presidency have been characterized by a relative tendency towards a hardline, ideologically driven foreign policy.

At the regional level, the nuclear issue is relevant to the extensive economic and strategic interests that the United States has in East Asia. China, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan are all important trade partners of the United States. US firms are large investors in China, while the Chinese government is a major investor in US government debt. The United States maintains a large-scale military presence in, and long-standing alliances with, South Korea (officially the Republic of Korea (ROK)) and Japan. It also has military cooperation with Taiwan (the Republic of China), for whom it is able to provide security against a potential Chinese attack largely because it has

military bases in Japan. Moreover, both China and Japan are increasingly actors on the global stage, adding further significance to the East Asian region in US foreign policy. To protect its interests in East Asia, the United States strives to maintain its alliances with Japan and the ROK, and keep the growing power of China in check.

Because the nuclear issue takes up a central role both in US–DPRK relations and in the Six-Party Talks, numerous regional issues have become tied to this issue. As such, the nuclear question plays a prominent role not only in the relationship that Washington has with Pyongyang, but also in its relationship with Beijing, Seoul and Tokyo. The US government seeks the support of these other governments in pressuring North Korea to abandon its nuclear programme. At the same time, US actions need to avoid damaging its alliances with Japan and South Korea. The US government needs to take into account Japanese interests in solving the abductions’ issue, and South Korean interests in improving relations with North Korea.

Even more complicating is the involvement of China. China’s mediating role has been instrumental in setting up the Six-Party Talks and in keeping them going. On several occasions, economic and diplomatic pressure exerted by Beijing on Pyongyang has helped to get the North Koreans to return to the negotiating table. At the same time, there is a potential military confrontation between the US and China over Taiwan’s status. Also, North Korea constitutes a security buffer between China and the US forces in the ROK and Japan, so any change in the DPRK’s security status thus affects the security relationship between China and the United States. As such, the North Korean nuclear issue is intimately related to the strategic position of the United States in East Asia.

As mentioned already, the North Korean nuclear crisis became related to US policy in the Middle East because the Bush administration used the ‘axis of evil’ concept as the conceptual underpinning of the war against Iraq. As the US military became bogged down in Iraq, this fundamentally affected the situation in East Asia: for Pyongyang, a US military strike did not seem very likely; and Beijing felt less worried that the United States would attack North Korea or that it would allow Taiwan to provoke China. The North Korean crisis is linked not only to the Iraq War but also to the Iranian nuclear crisis. Because the US military is already committed to the Middle East, it is more likely to be used against Iran than against North Korea, even though the North Koreans are far ahead of the Iranians in terms of developing a nuclear weapons’ capability. At the same time, the fact that the US does not use military means to end the North Korean nuclear programme may encourage Tehran to move on with its own programme.

The US government has a strong interest in ending the North Korean nuclear programme. Regime change in Pyongyang and Korean unification would only be in US interest if they led to a stable and pro-American Korean Peninsula. Under the present conditions, it seems unlikely that this would happen – although some hardliners in Washington argue that there is simply no alternative to regime change in order to end the nuclear problem. Apart

from the stand-off between hardliners and pragmatists, relations with the other members of the Six-Party Talks (in particular Japan, South Korea and China) are of course an important consideration in US thinking on the nuclear issue. Consequently, it should be approached in a way that leads to progress without risking a war, but also without straying too far from the hardline position that North Korea is not to be trusted. Moreover, this approach should not negatively affect alliance relations in East Asia, or the regional balance of power between the United States and China.

From Pragmatism to Dogmatism

In 1994, after mediation by former US President Carter, the United States and North Korea adopted the Geneva Agreed Framework. At the time, many policy-makers in Washington believed that the fall of the North Korean regime was imminent. The promise to supply North Korea with light-water reactors, a long-term programme, in return for an immediate end to the existing nuclear programme, was therefore seen by them as a favourable deal. Even so, there was criticism from Republicans that North Korea should not be rewarded for nuclear blackmail. After the Republican Party gained control of the US Congress in November 1994, it became more difficult for the Clinton administration to move towards better relations with the DPRK.

After 1994 there seemed no imminent threat of North Korea developing nuclear weapons. During Clinton's second term as president, especially from 1998, the United States gradually showed greater interest in improving relations with North Korea.⁶⁴ Although a series of Four-Party Talks (involving also China and the ROK) failed to achieve this aim, high-level bilateral contacts eventually took place in 2000: North Korean Vice-Marshal Jo Myong-Rok was received by President Clinton in Washington; after which US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright made an official state visit to Pyongyang. There had even been plans for a visit to North Korea by President Clinton.⁶⁵ In 1998 the DPRK test-fired a missile that was capable of reaching Japan, and by the late 1990s US intelligence services began to suspect that North Korea had secretly reactivated its nuclear programme. However, no evidence of a secret nuclear programme could be found – in spite of several on-site inspections by the United States⁶⁶ – and the focus of

64) Charles K. Armstrong, 'US–North Korean Relations', in John Feffer (ed.), *The Future of US–Korean Relations: The Imbalance of Power* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), p. 15.

65) Joseph Tse-Hei Lee, 'The Bush Administration and the North Korean Nuclear Crisis: Pursuit of Global Hegemony', in Yone Sugita (ed.), *Evaluation of the Bush Administration* (Osaka: Smallworld Libraries, 2003), p. 20.

66) James Risen, 'Ferreting Out North Korea's Nuclear Secrets: US Intelligence Experts at Odds', *New York Times*, 5 August 2000, available online at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9401E5D7153CF936A3575BC0A9669C8B63&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all>.

Washington's diplomacy remained on improving bilateral relations and on reducing tensions on the Korean Peninsula rather than on the nuclear issue.

Under the Bush presidency, which began in January 2001, this policy changed. The new administration included a number of outspoken critics of Clinton's policy of improving relations with North Korea, notably US Vice-President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz. The moderate Secretary of State, Colin Powell, initially considered continuing the Clinton administration's Korea policy, and President Bush agreed that the Agreed Framework would not be abandoned unless the North Koreans violated it,⁶⁷ but it also quickly became clear that Powell's hold over foreign policymaking was limited. In June 2001 it was decided that North Korea would be handled jointly by US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly and Robert Joseph from the Non-Proliferation Directorate of the National Security Council. The non-proliferation posts in the administration were under strong influence from the hardliners,⁶⁸ and because of their strong influence, resuming bilateral exchanges with the DPRK – without prior far-reaching concessions by Pyongyang regarding human rights and its conventional weapons posture and proliferation – was problematic.

After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the hardliners in the US government came to dominate policy-making on North Korea, and soon thereafter relations deteriorated dramatically. On 29 January 2002, US President Bush made his 'axis of evil' statement during his State of the Union speech, when he identified North Korea, along with Iran and Iraq, as evil states and enemies of the US. The Bush Doctrine of pre-emptive war, first announced on 1 June 2002, appeared to be a sign from the Pentagon that the United States was heading for confrontation with the 'axis of evil' states. It subsequently became clear that Iraq was targeted in particular, and that the allegation of Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction would be the main justification for offensive action.

CVID: Complete, Verifiable and Irreversible Dismantlement

In early October 2002, US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly made a visit to Pyongyang. Kelly confronted his hosts with intelligence that North Korea was secretly enriching uranium. Prompted by this action, a senior North Korean official reportedly confirmed that such a programme indeed existed. Suddenly the nuclear issue had re-emerged. It then took another

67) Armstrong, 'US–North Korean Relations', p. 16; and Michael J. Mazarr, 'The Long Road to Pyongyang: A Case Study in Policy-Making Without Direction', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 86, no. 5, September/October 2007, pp. 75-94, at p. 76.

68) Mazarr, 'The Long Road to Pyongyang', p. 78.

eleven days before the US government acted on this new development.⁶⁹ On 16 October 2002, the day when the Iraq War Resolution was signed into law by President Bush, the US government announced that North Korea had admitted to having a secret nuclear programme. With help from other countries, the US suspended shipments of oil to North Korea until all nuclear activities were terminated.

In the following months, North Korea openly defied the United States as it removed monitoring equipment from the Yongbyon nuclear facility and withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. In February and March 2003, with the Agreed Framework discarded, both sides resorted to military posturing to increase the pressure. The United States deployed extra bombers to Guam, while North Korea test-fired a missile on the day of the inauguration of the ROK's President Roh and allowed fighter jets to shadow a US spy plane. Washington refused to enter into bilateral talks with Pyongyang to defuse the crisis, but in April 2003 it agreed to join the Three-Party Talks in Beijing with the DPRK and China (which had been proposed by China). The crisis only worsened during the talks when North Korea stated that it actually possessed nuclear weapons. After this, the risk of a military conflict escalated further. At the end of May 2003 US President Bush announced the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), which enhanced the ability of the US and its allies to board and search North Korean ships in international waters. In July 2003 a report surfaced in the media that US Defense Secretary Rumsfeld had ordered an operation plan for possible conflict with the DPRK that included highly provocative military pre-war actions intended to make the Korean People's Army waste its supplies of fuel and food.⁷⁰

In spite of this posturing, there is no indication that the United States was willing to risk entering into a war with North Korea.⁷¹ The continuing engagement of the US military in Afghanistan and Iraq severely restricted the

69) Armstrong, 'US-North Korean Relations', pp. 17-18. The eleven-day delay may in part have been caused by the administration's desire not to let the news affect the voting on the Iraq War Resolution that took place on 10 October (House of Representatives) and 11 October (Senate) 2002. If the Bush administration was less interested in the issue of WMD (weapons of mass destruction, which Iraq was accused of having) itself than on going to war against Iraq (regardless of the formal reason), which appears to have been the case, evidence of the North Korean nuclear programme would have diverted attention away from Iraq. After 16 October 2002, government officials argued that Iraq was much more of a security threat than North Korea and that therefore military action should be taken against Iraq and not necessarily against North Korea. But critical questions were still raised by politicians and in the media about the distinction. See, for instance, http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/military/july-dec02/comparing-10_21.html. It remains unclear why the US government waited another five days after 11 October 2002 before making public the news on the North Korean programme.

70) See <http://www.usnews.com/usnews/news/articles/030721/21korea.htm>; and Armstrong, 'US-North Korean Relations', pp. 17 and 19.

71) Mazarr, 'The Long Road to Pyongyang', p. 75; and Armstrong, 'US-North Korean Relations', p. 18.

option of employing military means. Some hardliners in the Bush administration believed that, when the time was ripe, regime change was still the only way to solve the nuclear issue.⁷² But in the short run, US national security required that something be done to end North Korea's ability to export nuclear technology. The plan for a multilateral diplomatic approach, supported by Powell and Rice, was adopted in spite of criticism by Rumsfeld.⁷³

For the time being, the motivation to try and achieve a quick diplomatic solution was still very limited. There was no coherent policy because of strong opposition from within the Bush administration against engaging with North Korea.⁷⁴ This became clear during the first three rounds of the Six-Party Talks (SPT). Still, a context had been established in which the United States and the DPRK could work towards a diplomatic solution. The multilateral approach of the SPT brought to the table a number of North Korea's neighbours who could help to apply pressure on Pyongyang. From August 2003 until September 2005 the US government's position on the SPT remained basically the same. It was willing to enter into various rounds of talks, but it stuck to its demand that the nuclear programme had to be terminated as a precondition to any negotiation. In particular, the United States demanded 'complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement' (CVID). North Korea continued to reject this; it did not want to give up its nuclear security insurance before an alternative security guarantee was available. It attempted to pressurize the United States into a more forthcoming stance by threatening in October 2004 at the SPT to give a demonstration of its nuclear capabilities. In February 2005 the DPRK for the first time made a public announcement that it possesses nuclear weapons.

Up to September 2005, the US made a number of limited gestures and offers – probably aimed at showing China and South Korea that it was seriously interested in keeping the SPT going. The United States repeatedly stated that it had no intention of attacking North Korea.⁷⁵ In June 2004, during the third round of the SPT, the US offered a six-step denuclearization plan that included a number of US contributions. In July 2005, during the fourth round of the talks, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice – who had succeeded Powell – announced that she would examine whether the South Korean plan to provide the DPRK with energy in return for an end to the nuclear programme could be included into the six-step plan. Moreover, in the months leading up to the fourth round of talks, the US had softened its stance somewhat.⁷⁶ Some food aid was sent to North Korea by the United States, and President Bush's statements about Kim Jong-Il were not as disrespectful as before. There were also signs that the United States might loosen its

72) Huntley, 'US Policy towards North Korea in Strategic Context', p. 469.

73) Mazarr, 'The Long Road to Pyongyang', p. 86.

74) Mazarr, 'The Long Road to Pyongyang', p. 81.

75) See <http://www.iht.com/articles/2005/07/26/news/talks.php>.

76) See <http://www.iht.com/articles/2005/07/25/news/talks.php>.

demand that there could be no negotiation before CVID was realized, and that the US was more willing than before to meet with North Korean officials outside the formal SPT setting.

Back to Pragmatism

The turning point came on 19 September 2005 in the second part of the fourth round of talks, when the United States and the other SPT members signed a Joint Statement drafted by China.⁷⁷ The Joint Statement opened the way to negotiations about how denuclearization, security guarantees, aid and other related issues might be incorporated into a time-schedule. The United States had made a significant concession by signing the document and thereby agreeing to these negotiations while CVID had not yet been achieved.⁷⁸ Another US concession was that the United States formally confirmed that no nuclear weapons were stationed in the ROK, which was a rare departure from its policy of making no statements on this matter.⁷⁹ Furthermore, the United States accepted that the original idea from the Agreed Framework of providing North Korea with light-water reactors might again become negotiable. It was the US approach that changed, rather than anyone else's. The DPRK merely promised to do what it had offered all along: to terminate the nuclear programme in return for security and aid.

Why, then, did the US government abandon its previous tough stance? One element was that there was extreme pressure on the US to save the SPT. More than one year had passed between the third and the fourth rounds of talks, and it was generally believed that if the fourth round ended in failure, the Six-Party Talks would come to a definite end. This would mean failure for Beijing. The multilateral, China-assisted way out of the crisis would then be closed to the United States. The Chinese and South Korean governments exerted strong pressure on the United States to sign the Joint Statement,⁸⁰ but even before the fourth round started, there were signs that the United States was becoming more interested in moving ahead with the nuclear issue. The Bush administration had moved into the second term half a year earlier, and Condoleezza Rice had replaced Colin Powell as the US Secretary of State. Powell had become stuck between the administration's hardliners and the allied and other countries to which he had to sell the Iraq War and its aftermath. During Bush's first term, any policy-making by the US State Department on North Korea was to an important degree controlled by the Department of Defense and US Vice-President Cheney.⁸¹ Rice, who had

77) See <http://www.iht.com/articles/2005/09/19/asia/web.0919korea.php>; and Huntley, 'US Policy towards North Korea in Strategic Context', p. 469.

78) See <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2005/53490.htm>.

79) Huntley, 'US Policy towards North Korea in Strategic Context', p. 471, fn 40.

80) Huntley, 'US Policy towards North Korea in Strategic Context', p. 472.

81) See <http://www.iht.com/articles/2007/02/16/asia/web.0216.php?page=1>.

previously been US National Security Adviser, secured more room to act and get results on North Korea. In addition, she was determined to take charge of the North Korean issue. She replaced Kelly with Christopher Hill, a career diplomat who had extensive experience in dealing with Serbia, as the United States' lead negotiator at the SPT.⁸² By this time the problems in Iraq and the trial of Cheney's former chief of staff, Scooter Libby, had caused the hardliners to lose some of their hold on foreign policy-making.⁸³ Moreover, US President Bush was reportedly becoming more interested in solving the nuclear issue – as progress in North-East Asia would divert attention from the problems in Iraq – so North Korea climbed higher on the political agenda. Bush was also encouraged to continue the SPT approach because the other countries had proved willing to apply pressure on North Korea.⁸⁴

After the Joint Statement of 2005 there followed a phase in which it was unclear whether the new approach by the United States would last. The US imposition of economic sanctions because of allegations that North Korea was counterfeiting US dollars indicated a renewed hold by US Vice-President Cheney over North Korean policy,⁸⁵ leading to the freezing of North Korean funds in Banco Delta Asia and the stalling of further talks for more than one year.⁸⁶ But the October 2006 nuclear test once again forced the United States to continue working on a diplomatic solution, while at the same time the coordinated international pressure on Pyongyang created a new opportunity.⁸⁷ Bush then gave the US State Department permission to hold bilateral negotiations with North Korea in Berlin, Germany, paving the way for the Beijing Agreement of 13 February 2007, which stipulated how to implement the Joint Statement. The US agreed that North Korea would receive heavy fuel oil, that bilateral talks would start, that it would begin the process of removing North Korea from the list of sponsors of terrorism, and that it would advance the process of terminating application of the Trading with the Enemy Act to the DPRK. There would also be working groups to plan for a security mechanism and for normalization of US–DPRK relations.⁸⁸ What the United States demanded, simultaneously with the foregoing, was that North Korea dismantle its nuclear capabilities and produce a declaration on its nuclear programme.

By the time of the Beijing Agreement, US Secretary of State Rice had sufficient backing from the US President to bypass Vice-President Cheney altogether.⁸⁹ The strategy advocated by Rice had benefited substantially from Donald Rumsfeld's replacement as US Secretary of Defense by Robert Gates

82) Mazarr, 'The Long Road to Pyongyang', p. 89.

83) Mazarr, 'The Long Road to Pyongyang', p. 88.

84) Mazarr, 'The Long Road to Pyongyang', p. 87.

85) Huntley, 'US Policy towards North Korea in Strategic Context', p. 470.

86) Mazarr, 'The Long Road to Pyongyang', p. 90.

87) Scott Snyder, 'Responses to North Korea's Nuclear Test: Capitulation or Collective Action?', *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 30, no. 4, autumn 2007, pp. 33-43, at p. 35.

88) See <http://www.state.gov/t/pa/prs/ps/2007/february/80479.htm>.

89) See <http://www.iht.com/articles/2007/02/16/asia/web.0216.php?page=1>.

in December 2006. While Rumsfeld, backed by Cheney, had often frustrated the policies of the US National Security Council and the State Department, Gates was an old friend of Rice.⁹⁰ Although the February 2007 deal was sharply criticized by the hardliners, President Bush expressed his strong support. North Korean affairs were now again dominated by the US State Department.

Even so, progress was slow, also after February 2007. During the course of 2007 the US government specified that the declaration demanded from North Korea needed to include the amount of plutonium, list of facilities and a list of the plutonium, uranium and international cooperation programmes.⁹¹ North Korea moved ahead with dismantling its nuclear facilities, but negotiations about the declaration proved complicated. In June 2008 North Korea finally submitted the declaration, after the US government decided to accept a version that was less than complete (regarding the uranium programme, weapons already produced and past proliferation activities). In return, the Bush administration removed the provisions of the Trading with the Enemy Act and took steps towards removing North Korea from the list of terrorism-sponsoring states.⁹²

As pointed out by Michael J. Mazarr, the Bush administration was characterized by ‘policy incoherence caused by a collision of contradictory approaches from ideologically opposed officials whose combat was often unregulated’.⁹³ With regard to how the United States actually dealt with the nuclear issue, the Joint Statement of September 2005 is the turning point. In the end the US had too great an interest in coming to an agreement with North Korea. The present situation – where at least there is talk of improved DPRK–US relations beyond the nuclear issue – more or less resembles the situation during the later part of Clinton’s presidency. The phase of heightened military posture combined with the conditional demand of complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement has passed.

Outlook

The two US presidential candidates – John McCain and Barack Obama – have both stated that North Korea’s nuclear weapons’ programme must be eliminated and that a military solution is among the options. But while Obama stresses the importance of diplomacy, McCain wants ‘verifiable denuclearization and a full accounting of all [of North Korea’s] nuclear materials and facilities before any lasting diplomatic agreement can be

90) See <http://www.ihf.com/articles/2007/11/25/africa/riceside.php>.

91) See <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2008/02/101290.htm>.

92) Jaysree Bajoria, ‘Pyongyang’s Deal’, 27 June 2008, available online at http://www.cfr.org/publication/16657/pyongyangs_deal.html?breadcrumb=%2Fregion%2Fpublication_list%3Fid%3D276.

93) Mazarr, ‘The Long Road to Pyongyang’, p. 93.

reached'.⁹⁴ McCain also wants to include North Korea's ballistic missile programme, its support for 'terrorism and proliferation', and the Japanese abductees' question in any future settlement. This would amount to a return to the ideological approach of the period from 2003 to 2005, when the United States joined the Six-Party Talks without making a realistic offer at the negotiating table. Unless the regime collapses through internal causes, the risk of nuclear proliferation can only be addressed through diplomacy. The United States does not have the resources either to attack North Korea or to force China and other countries to cut off aid.

As a multilateral diplomatic tool, the Six-Party Talks have served the United States well. They gave the Bush administration a channel of communication with North Korea, which de-escalated the crisis, allowed the mobilization of international pressure, and eventually produced the agreements of 2005 and 2007. At the same time the US government was able to claim that it never gave in to North Korean demands to hold bilateral talks. Moreover, the multilateral approach allowed the US government to shift part of the responsibility for either stalling or making concessions to the other countries involved.

But the United States did not make progress on the nuclear issue itself. On the contrary, the US position worsened because North Korea managed to continue its programme and test a nuclear device in spite of all the rhetoric coming from Washington. Ideological and domestic considerations took precedence over US foreign policy-making, and thus contributed to a weaker position in international relations. Given the limited means to force the North Korean government to abandon its nuclear capabilities altogether, it is difficult to see an end to the nuclear crisis any time soon. For the time being, the most important outcome for the United States from the Six-Party Talks is its improved security relationship with Beijing. In the words of Christopher Hill: 'This whole Six-Party process has done more to bring the US and China together than any other process I'm aware of'.⁹⁵ This has important implications for regional and even global stability, and its significance far exceeds the North Korean nuclear issue.

94) See <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20070701faessay86401-p20/barack-obama/renewing-american-leadership.html>; and <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20071101faessay86602-p30/john-mccain/an-enduring-peace-built-on-freedom.html>.

95) Interview with ABC News, available online at <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2007/80784.htm>.

South Korea: A 2 x 2 Engagement Approach

Marc Vogelaar

Introduction

South Korea will be the first country to benefit from a positive outcome of the Six-Party Talks (SPT). Yet its profile at the SPT negotiations has been relatively low to date. There are good reasons for this, and South Korea should keep things that way.

As a co-negotiator at the Six-Party Talks, South Korea (the Republic of Korea, or ROK) has a unique status through its historic and constitutional links with North Korea. This status is both a privilege and a handicap. South Korea must also take into account its weakened but vital alliance with the United States, as well as its closer relationship with an ever-stronger China. South Korea is, as it were, playing chess with more than one opponent and on more than one chess board. It pursues two interlinked two-track approaches, keeping the balance both between carrots and sticks in its North Korea policy and in its relations with the US and China.

Under its somewhat arithmetical heading, this chapter will look at the implications for South Korea's inter-Korean policies of the roller-coaster developments since the nuclear crisis of 2002, and explore opportunities that the SPT may provide for South Korea to foster the peace process on the Korean Peninsula. For over ten years, South Korea's persistent yet modestly successful engagement policy has been pursuing peace and ultimately the reunification of the Korean Peninsula. Can these objectives also – or better – be met in a multilateral setting? Do the Six-Party Talks, which for the first time reflect a global involvement in addressing the nuclear issue, provide a

golden opportunity for South Korea to settle its troubled relationship with Pyongyang once and for all? Or does the multilateral track, which addresses the nuclear issue as the first priority, interfere with South Korea's bilateral long-term goals: peace and reunification with North Korea?

It may seem hazardous to try and answer such questions shortly after political power in South Korea shifted to a new president, and to a political party that spent the best part of a decade in opposition. The Bush era is also drawing to a close in the United States. Who occupies the Blue and the White House, respectively, is highly relevant for the solution of the current nuclear crisis with North Korea as well as for the future of the Korean Peninsula. Although forecasts are particularly difficult at this point, 2008 provides a good opportunity to take stock of the effectiveness of South Korean engagement policy over the past ten years, to analyse the ROK's role at the SPT and to explore the potential for synergy between South Korea's bilateral engagement efforts and the multilateral negotiations that are led by China.

South Korea's Complex Position among the Six-Party Talks' Participants

Unlike North Korea's four remaining interlocutors at the SPT, South Korea has a formal claim on Northern territory (and vice versa!). It is also North Korea's most important export market and may soon become its major trading partner. At the same time, at least for now, South Korea has a tenuous political relationship with North Korea than its four other SPT partners.

But the most significant distinction stems from South Korea's security situation. The interests of the United States, Russia, China and Japan in the North Korean issue are relatively recent, having been triggered by the nuclear crises with North Korea of 1993 and 2002. South Korea, on the other hand, has been facing a continuous military threat from its northern neighbour ever since the forced division of the Korean Peninsula by foreign powers in 1945. For over half a century, Seoul's first and foremost preoccupation has been to preserve national security. This may seem (and indeed is) a priority for any government, at any time. But protecting South Korean sovereignty and citizens has come at a high cost for successive South Korean governments, the armed forces and the Korean taxpayer.

Even after the Cold War, engaging with the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) was not the obvious choice for South Koreans. The ROK is technically at war with its only neighbour, which has already invaded South Korea once and which has maintained an aggressively critical posture ever since. The DPRK possesses nuclear weapons, and presumably other weapons of mass destruction. It also has the fifth largest standing army in the world. Its artillery is capable of destroying the South Korean capital, Seoul, within hours. In response, the ROK has secured its survival by developing a strong army, maintaining a strong, albeit laborious, military alliance with the United States, and by judiciously refraining from excessive aggression whenever it

was provoked by North Korea's dubious terrorist activities. South Korea's growing political and economic ties with other countries in the region, including its former Cold War enemies China and Russia, have significantly improved regional stability and, implicitly, South Korean national security. Even so, the fact that South Korean military spending increased by 70 per cent between 2001 and 2006, and that it has embarked on an ambitious US\$ 665 billion 'Defence Reform 2020' initiative, illustrates that South Korea's legitimate concerns over its national security all but faded after the Cold War.⁹⁶ Given the North's huge striking power, notably its capability to hit Seoul, the South has therefore had no option for decades but to pursue peaceful coexistence and to avoid armed conflict.

A Glimmer of Korean Sunshine

In the early 1990s, the disintegration of the Soviet Union first led to widespread and wishful belief, both inside and outside South Korea, of the imminent implosion of Kim Il-Sung's isolated regime. When this failed to occur, the emphasis in the ROK's posture gradually shifted to accepting the status quo and engaging with its reclusive northern neighbour.

While the world at large was thus struggling with the dilemma of how to deal with 'rogue' regimes, South Korea began to accommodate its unruly, next-door next of kin. The one remaining obstacle to engagement – that is, North Korea's ambition to become a nuclear power – was believed to have been cleared in 1994 by the Agreed Framework. The fragile cooperation that followed received a boost from the first-ever inter-Korean summit, which was held in Pyongyang in 2000. The optimism that the 1994 deal and 2000 summit set off around the globe ended abruptly in 2002, when it appeared that the North had covertly continued to develop nuclear weapons. In spite of this deception of South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung and against pressure from Washington, which now branded North Korea as part of an 'axis of evil', new South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun maintained his predecessor's 'sunshine policy' and even strengthened economic and social contacts with the North. Family reunions at, and tourist visits to, Mount Kumgang increased sharply and the development of the Kaesong industrial zone took off. During Roh's tenure, such contacts became a separate level of interacting with the hostile neighbour, in spite of multiple security incidents and aloof from progress or setbacks in the official inter-Korean dialogue.

If security-through-containment was traditionally the key element of the ROK's policy regarding the DPRK, where did 'sunshine policy' emerge from and why? Before 1998, peaceful coexistence and engagement were neither absent nor taboo in the ROK's political lexicon. Peaceful coexistence between North and South Korea, which were technically at war, was already embodied

96) John Feffer, 'Asia's Hidden Arms Race', *Foreign Policy in Focus*, 13 February 2008, p. 3.

in the North–South Joint Communiqué of 1972, the first but short-lived attempt since the Korean War to achieve détente.

North Korea’s political isolation and economic downfall after the end of the Cold War, however, sparked hopes in South Korea for a rapprochement with the North. Upon his election in 1998, South Korea’s President Kim Dae-Jung (‘KDJ’) launched his ‘sunshine policy’, based on engagement rather than confrontation or containment. ‘KDJ’ pursued three major objectives: national security; regional peace and stability; and, ultimately, peaceful reunification with North Korea. Kim suggested that reunification be achieved in three steps: the settlement of peace and reconciliation; establishment of a North-South Confederation; and, finally, a unified nation.⁹⁷ This policy was welcomed by North Korea and led to the first summit between North and South Korea since the Armistice in 1953. It also met with broad domestic and international support, as President Kim’s subsequent Nobel Peace Prize testifies. In 2002 Kim Dae-Jung’s successor, Roh Moo-Hyun, claimed a more reserved approach, but cooperation between the two countries soared nonetheless. After Lee Myung-Bak took over South Korea’s presidency in February 2008, bilateral relations quickly worsened, however, as South Korea demanded ‘more reciprocity’ in its cooperation with North Korea and sought to improve its strained relationship with the United States. Although both sides declare their dedication to the ambitious goals of the agreement that President Roh somewhat hastily concluded with North Korea’s ‘Dear Leader’ Kim Jong-Il in October 2007, the previous level of North–South contacts is not likely to be upheld under President Lee.⁹⁸

The last but not least of Kim Dae-Jung’s three objectives – reunification – has not yet materialized. Nobody knows whether it ever will, nor does everyone wish it would. Officially, North Korea no longer shuns the subject of reunification. It has even declared that ‘grand national unity is the foremost and urgent goal to be achieved’.⁹⁹ But few South Koreans believe that the ‘Dear Leader’ has abandoned his father’s dream of uniting the Korean Peninsula under communist rule (hence the broad acceptance of the ‘Defence Reform 2020’ initiative mentioned above). For South Korea, meanwhile, reunification is more than a stated objective. It is a legal obligation under article 3 of its Constitution.¹⁰⁰ But for years to come, reunification is doomed to remain a distant dream, for two reasons. First, because the 38th parallel

97) Kim Keun-Sik, ‘Inter-Korean Relations and the Future of Sunshine Policy’, *Journal of East Asian Affairs*, 2001, p. 101.

98) ‘Joint Statement of 4 October 2007’, a North–South agreement reached on the occasion of South Korean President Roh’s visit to Pyongyang.

99) ‘Let the passion for reunification, based on independence, penetrate the entire nation [...] The fundamental barrier blocking our reunification is the US’, as quoted from New Year Joint Editorial, 2006, by Yoo Ho-Keun in ‘Current Issues in North-East Asia and Inter-Korean Relations: Evaluation and Prospect’, *East Asia Review*, 2006, p. 137.

100) ‘The territory of the Republic of Korea shall consist of the Korean Peninsula and its adjacent islands’, as quoted in Key-Young Son in ‘Entrenching “Identity Norms” of Tolerance and Engagement’, *Review of International Studies*, 2007, p. 501.

will, and must remain, the internationally recognized demarcation line until a formal peace treaty is concluded. But also because reunification, whether by mutual consent or triggered by the DPRK's collapse, would come at a high economic and humanitarian cost to the South Korean taxpayer.

In retrospect, Kim Dae-Jung's 'sunshine policy' has proved visionary, in that it was based upon the assumption that the North would survive the Soviet Union's disintegration, both politically and economically. Even without reunification, South Korea's past decade of engagement produced spectacular results. The two Koreas are now cooperating in a number of areas and are discussing a wide range of important bilateral issues such as military confidence-building, family reunions, tourism, free-trade zones or joint fishing zones in the Northern Limit Zone (NLL).¹⁰¹ To a large extent, these separate lines of communication are not hostage of the unpredictable six-party negotiations. Whether this cooperation below the political surface will be successful and results will prove sustainable, however, is another matter. Nor are all South Koreans convinced that engagement should be unqualified, as President Lee's election in 2007 has demonstrated. A reversal at the SPT or yet another security incident at the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ)¹⁰² may easily jeopardize inter-Korean relations, as in the case of the recent killing of a South Korean tourist at Mount Kumgang.¹⁰³ But national security, regional peace and stability and ultimately reunification are no less strongly pursued by Lee's conservative government than by his predecessors. Nor are there signs that political support for a rapprochement with the North is as yet fading. Admittedly, the younger generation of Koreans appears to be no more familiar with North Korea than with other nations, and popular interest for the Korea across the DMZ is likely to dwindle after the Koreans who remember the Korean War have disappeared. Aside from public support, the ROK's government is struggling to safeguard the successes of engagement to date while embracing the conditionality that the US and Japan apply in their policies towards the DPRK. But can South Korean bilateral, *long-term* objectives be corroborated through multilateral negotiations that address the nuclear issue as a first priority? For the time being, South Korea's President Lee is focusing on strengthening economic ties with the North while banking on the SPT to improve regional security.¹⁰⁴ Accordingly, South Korea is likely to attach less priority to improving its damaged political relationship with North Korea until tangible and irreversible progress is made at the SPT.

101) The NLL is the demarcation line in the Yellow Sea that was never recognized by North Korea.

102) The DMZ is the demarcation line established at the end of the Korean War in 1953.

103) On 11 July 2008 a South Korean tourist was killed at the Mount Kumgang resort after having apparently strayed into a restricted area.

104) Inter-Korean trade in the first five months of 2008 is up 30 per cent over last year and South Korea may soon replace China as North Korea's main trading partner, according to Aidan Foster-Carter in *Comparative Connections*, July 2008.

A More Prominent Role for South Korea at the Six-Party Talks?

Although former South Korean President Roh claimed that his government was the architect of the SPT's breakthrough in 2005 and again in 2007, there are no objective reports that South Korea is a factor of great influence at the negotiations.¹⁰⁵ The merits of Seoul's work behind the scenes are not considered here because they are unknown. There are several reasons for this low profile. As at the time of the Agreed Framework, South Korea's contribution to solving the nuclear crisis has been – and is likely to remain – subject to three constraints.

A major obstacle is the DPRK's perception of the South and its reluctant response to South Korea's successive engagement efforts. Traditionally the DPRK does not accept the ROK as a peacemaker, but merely as a provider of aid. North Korea tends to reserve politically sensitive issues for bilateral negotiations with the United States, which it considers to be its main negotiation partner at the SPT.¹⁰⁶

Second, strains in the ROK–US alliance are limiting South Korea's room for manoeuvre at the talks, while well-intended bilateral gestures from South Korea are often considered by the United States to be eroding the collective pressure on North Korea. South Korea is thus perceived by other SPT participants – not least by the US – to attach more priority to cooperation between North and South than to the nuclear issue. As a result, South Korea addresses the North with diverging degrees of conditionality in the bilateral and in multilateral tracks respectively, thus affecting its credibility. But this two-track approach also allows for flexibility in South Korea's contacts with the North. Having more than one face reduces the risk of having to save face. Finally, hidden agendas and less hidden tensions among all five of North Korea's interlocutors at the talks are affecting the negotiations' effectiveness.

A higher profile for South Korea at the SPT also remains unlikely for a different reason. By admitting to a covert nuclear weapons' programme in 2002 and missile launches followed by a nuclear test in 2006, North Korea not only provoked its Southern neighbour but the entire international community. In response, the format of the negotiations has become multilateral and thereby more institutional. The UN Security Council (UNSC) unanimously agreed to sanctions, and three of its permanent members sit at the SPT negotiation table. Compare that to the mid-1990s,

105) Park Kun-Young describes these claims as far-fetched and convincingly argues that the 2.13 agreement was solely the result of the US shifting its approach to solving the Banco Delta Asia (BDA) affair in 2006; see Park Kun-Young, 'An Appraisal of the Roh Administration's North Korea Policy', *East Asian Review*, vol. 19, 2007, p. 33.

106) North–South contacts soared after US President Bush took power in 2001 only because the White House was reluctant to do business directly with North Korea, which it considered part of the 'axis of evil'.

when a last-minute bilateral deal between North Korea and the United States ended the nuclear crisis of 1993!¹⁰⁷

In this new, multilateral setting, South Korea's generous, albeit more prudent, engagement policy clashes with the sharp conditionality of four other participants in the SPT and undercuts South Korea's stated ambition of becoming an effective mediator at the talks.¹⁰⁸ The present South Korean government thus faces a dilemma: either increasing leverage at the negotiation table by accepting the priority of solving the nuclear crisis as a precondition for further détente; or dissociating its bilateral, unconditional policies from the SPT as under Presidents Kim and Roh. The latter approach risks isolating South Korea at the multilateral talks and weakening the ROK–US alliance; not a small risk for a nation that is technically at war. But more conditionality will affect North–South relations, and this effect is already beginning to show under Lee's presidency. South Korea's leadership now appears to be opting for the middle road, taking up sensitive political issues in the multilateral format while promoting stronger economic ties and humanitarian assistance bilaterally, aloof of the conditionality at the multilateral talks.

All of these factors do not bode well for South Korea's role as a multilateral mediator and international peacemaker. But why should South Korea aspire to such a role anyway? Its added value rather lies in providing humanitarian and economic aid to the North while painstakingly settling old scores such as the NLL, the use of political propaganda at the DMZ, abductees, missing-in-action citizens (MIA) and other bilateral issues. Thus, South Korea's best contribution to the success of the SPT lies outside the SPT: by avoiding security incidents (and responding with moderation when they occur); strengthening economic ties; stimulating humanitarian contacts; and providing aid – that is, by solidifying and fostering stability on the Korean Peninsula through diversified interaction. Like any negotiation, the SPT will benefit from the occasional game of good-and-bad cop. Let the ROK be the good cop. President Lee's climb-down in July 2008 from his earlier hawkish stance on relations with the North may be a positive sign in this regard.¹⁰⁹

Rather than seeking a high Korean profile at the SPT as under former President Roh, South Korea's new President Lee may see fit to increase the ROK's leverage through joining forces with Beijing. There are no signs to date that South Korea will pursue a closer tactical alliance between Seoul and Beijing at the SPT, but the reports of Lee's visit to Beijing in May, 2008 are encouraging. China is both a neighbour and a benefactor of the DPRK, the ROK's main economic partner and a permanent member of the UNSC.

107) The Agreed Framework of 1994, concluded after painstaking negotiations between the US and North Korea.

108) Park, 'An Appraisal of the Roh Administration's North Korea Policy', p. 32.

109) On 7 July 2008, South Korea's President reiterated his willingness to meet the DPRK's leader 'any time'. On 11 July 2008, he told the new South Korean National Assembly that 'full dialogue between the two Koreas must resume'; quoted in Foster-Carter, *Comparative Connections*.

China fully supports South Korea's political priority with regard to the DPRK: preserving stability as a precondition for peace. China also has strong leverage over North Korea because of North Korea's dependence on Chinese input for its economic survival. Finally, South Korea and China are both no less critical of Kim Jong-Il's provocations than they are opposed to a confrontational course to contain him. Such a circumstantial alliance between South Korea and China would provide South Korea with a useful role at the SPT and would be tailor-made for solving the North Korean issue, using the voice of moderation, and with policies subtly combining carrots and sticks.

The ROK–US Alliance

The division of the Korean Peninsula has lasted for over half a century, since the Korean War's Armistice in 1953. So has the ROK–US alliance. South Korea's role and effectiveness at the Six-Party Talks are intricately linked to its coordination with the United States. Since the second nuclear crisis erupted in 2002, the synergy between the Blue and the White House has been rather poor as the result of clashing views on how to deal with North Korea, with the United States' Bush administration openly critical of the 'sunshine policy' of South Korean Presidents Kim and Roh. Equally, other strains in the South Korean–US relationship have had a negative impact.¹¹⁰ The relationship has been under repair since President Lee's conservative government took over in early 2008. Of course it remains to be seen how Lee will get along with his future colleague in the White House.

South Korea clearly needs the US military umbrella in the face of the North Korean threat. But the US also needs South Korea, not only for solving the North Korean issue but in the wider context of its China policy as well. What has gone wrong with the South Korean–US alliance in the past decade?

The ROK–US alliance became increasingly strained because South Korea has a primarily bilateral perception of the North Korean issue. South Korea pursues military de-escalation, stability, economic cooperation, reconciliation and a formal peace treaty with the North.¹¹¹ Many South Koreans also resent the unilateralist, tough approach of the United States' Bush administration. In addition, as an ally, South Korea fears being entrapped by the United States' policy to contain China.¹¹² For its part, the United States has a more global vision of the crisis. As part of its drive against international terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

110) For example, the further reduction of the US Forces in South Korea and, more recently, restrictions on US beef exports to the ROK.

111) The latter became part of the Beijing Agreement at the behest of South Korea, although it is not directly linked to the nuclear crisis.

112) H.G. Hilpert, *Südkoreas aussenpolitische Dilemmata* (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 2007), p. 22.

(WMD), the Bush administration stipulates complete and irreversible denuclearization by North Korea as a precondition for normalizing bilateral relations, lifting sanctions, approving international financial institutions' loans to North Korea and other benefits that North Korea eagerly pursues.

A related bone of contention between the United States and South Korea is the rather frivolous use of conditionality in humanitarian assistance to North Korea. South Korea has at times been wavering on this point but, in all fairness, both donor countries lack consistency in this area. In spite of the United States' perennial suspicion that food aid benefits the Korean People's Army (KPA) rather than starved civilians, South Korean food aid to the North – of around 400,000 tons of rice plus 300,000 tons of fertilizer annually – is usually provided without strings attached, irrespective of the progress made on the nuclear issue.¹¹³ Nonetheless, Southern supplies were cut off after the launch of a ballistic missile and the subsequent nuclear test in 2006, only to be resumed in March 2007. In contrast, after floods hit the North in summer 2007, South Korea at once provided emergency aid totalling well over US\$ 60 million. Now, in 2008, the situation has been turned upside down: the United States has sent 500,000 tons of food aid in response to the latest World Food Programme's appeal (but no fertilizer: to build up leverage for next year perhaps?), whereas South Korea has been withholding food aid in view of worsened bilateral relations. Unsurprisingly, North Korea pretends to be insensitive to this Southern cold shoulder. It has not requested aid from the South in spite of a disastrous harvest and, in June 2008, turned down the South's offer to send 50,000 tons of corn as emergency aid. At the same time, North Korea requested rice aid from China and accepted a US grain shipment, which happens to be roughly the equivalent of the annual ROK donation.

Finally, South Korea and the United States also attach different priorities to reunification. Although the United States has never opposed the concept, it is doubtful whether the US will press the issue as long as China and Russia insist on maintaining the Peninsula's present division.

Concluding Remarks

Through sustained engagement over the last decade, the ROK has managed to achieve most of its foreign policy objectives regarding the DPRK. At the same time, it has been an active and constructive participant at the SPT since the talks' inception in 2003. This two-track approach has its advantages, and there is no apparent interference between the two levels at which South Korea interacts with North Korea.

That said, South Korea's future success with bilateral engagement will remain contingent upon the North's receptiveness for anything coming from

113) In the first five months after taking power, South Korea's President Lee linked aid to progress at the nuclear talks. In July 2008, he softened this position (see footnote 15).

the South beyond humanitarian and economic assistance. To what extent South Korea wishes to subject its aid programmes to political purposes, contrary to the past decade of 'sunshine', is a political (and for some, a moral) choice before the ROK's present leadership. Even then, success is never guaranteed in dealing with North Korea, irrespective of which toolkit South Korea's President Lee will open.

Given the intrinsic weakness of bilateral engagement, the multilateral track must remain a necessary second track for South Korea. There is no room for a South Korean 'go-it-alone', like Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik* in the 1970s. Even Kim Dae-Jung's 'sunshine policy' was wisely embedded in a network of alliances, in particular the alliance with the United States, which he cherished more than the US appreciated his permissive North Korea policy.

Lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula cannot be achieved without complete and verifiable denuclearization of the DPRK. And that happens to be a multilateral affair. The nuclear issue must be dealt with first. From this perspective, South Korea's attempts to usher the North into bilateral cooperation are less urgent than the collective effort to solve the nuclear crisis. From this perspective, the most effective South Korean contribution to the Six-Party Talks is an indirect one: to avoid incidents and deliver economic and humanitarian assistance. South Korea will be more effective as a facilitator than as a mediator.

The fate of the divided Korean people does not depend on the two governments on the Korean Peninsula. It lies in the hands of Beijing and a new generation of political leaders in Washington, Seoul, Tokyo and Moscow. As in 1994, it is far from certain that 2007's breakthrough will produce lasting results. The US addressed – and defused – the nuclear crisis in the early 1990s; now China holds the key to peace. China seems best placed to lead the peace process, provided that it can garner sufficient flexibility from the US and Japan. But China also needs South Korea's help to bring the SPT to a positive conclusion. South Korea should therefore by all means continue to engage the North bilaterally. As for strengthening economic ties, inter-Korean trade will have an important spin-off as it enhances stability on the Korean Peninsula, and so contributes to the Six-Party Talks. To increase its political leverage, South Korea (as indeed is the case for all of North Korea's interlocutors at the SPT) is well advised to coordinate its DPRK policies with China in dealing with the starved but resilient 'Hermit Kingdom' in the coming years. This new orientation in no way clashes with its other priority: to restore the special relationship with the United States. But doing both will require a political balancing act. I am confident that this will succeed: the Koreans have been good at balancing acts for centuries, having to survive amid the superpowers of their time.

China: Learning To Be a Great Power?

*Frans-Paul van der Putten*¹¹⁴

Introduction

Along with Russia, China is the only country in the Six-Party Talks (SPT) that maintains diplomatic relations with all of the other participants.¹¹⁵ Moreover, China has been the main driver behind the SPT from the beginning.¹¹⁶ More than anything else, Beijing's efforts at keeping the US and North Korea (the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, or DPRK) at the negotiating table have kept the SPT going. China's highly active and visible diplomacy towards stabilizing the Korean Peninsula is a recent phenomenon. Its actions since 2003 towards the SPT provide an insight into Beijing's motives to be a leading player in regional security, and the limitations that currently exist to this role. This should be seen against the background of China's rise as a major player in international security, alongside the longer-standing positions of the United States and Europe. China is increasingly

114) I thank Peter Schouten for letting me benefit from his master's thesis, 'China en Noord-Korea: Van beschermheer tot aanklager?', unpublished master's thesis, Groningen University, 2007.

115) Russell Ong, *China's Security Interests in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 82.

116) Samuel S. Kim, 'China's New Role in the US-DPRK Nuclear Confrontation', in John Feffer (ed.), *The Future of US-Korean Relations: The Imbalance of Power* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), p. 107.

acting as a 'responsible stakeholder', simply because it has a growing stake in international stability. The West has repeatedly called upon Beijing to use its influence to address international and local crises, such as those that relate to North Korea, Iran, Sudan, Myanmar and Zimbabwe. The North Korean nuclear crisis is the instance in which Beijing has taken the most active role, a role that has subsequently earned it significantly more positive reactions from the West than its roles elsewhere did.

Interests at Stake

China's primary concern regarding the North Korean nuclear crisis is that it threatens regional stability. An armed conflict between North Korea and the United States would severely destabilize the Peninsula. So would a sudden collapse of the North Korean regime, which China has been trying to prevent by supplying economic assistance.¹¹⁷ Instability in North Korea would threaten stability within China, as the two countries share a 1,416 kilometres-long border. Over two million ethnic Koreans with Chinese nationality live in China, with the largest concentration of ethnic Koreans living in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture in north-east China (Manchuria).¹¹⁸ Yanbian, which takes up about one-quarter of Jilin province, borders on both North Korea and Russia. In addition to the ethnic Korean Chinese, there are also some 30,000-50,000 North Korean refugees in China,¹¹⁹ the majority in Yanbian. During the North Korean famine of the mid-1990s, their number may have been as high as 200,000.¹²⁰

Border crossings have occurred and continue to occur in spite of both North Korea and China trying to prevent them. In the case of all, or virtually all, North Koreans who moved to China, they left North Korea illegally and their stay in China is likewise illegal. North Korean refugees in China, when caught by the Chinese police, are sent back to North Korea, where they are likely to receive punishment.¹²¹ The formal punishment in the DPRK for illegally crossing the border with China is up to three years in a labour

117) Shulong Chu, 'The Security Challenges in North-East Asia: A Chinese View', *East Asian Security: Two Views* (Carlisle PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), pp. 1-2.

118) Andrei Lankov, 'The Gentle Decline of the "Third Korea"', *Asia Times Online*, 16 August 2007, available online at <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/IH16Ad02.html>, accessed 21 April 2008.

119) James D. Seymour, 'The Exodus: North Korea's Out-Migration', in John Feffer (ed.), *The Future of US-Korean Relations: The Imbalance of Power* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), p. 139; and Rhoda Margesson, Emma Chanlett-Avery and Andorra Bruno, 'North Korean Refugees in China and Human Rights Issues: International Response and US Policy Options' (Washington DC: CRS Report to Congress, 26 September 2007), p. 4, available online at <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34189.pdf>, accessed 21 April 2008).

120) Seymour, 'The Exodus', p. 139.

121) Samuel S. Kim, *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 91-93.

camp.¹²² It is clear, however, that border crossings cannot be prevented, and that political instability in North Korea would inevitably lead to economic and social tensions in China.¹²³ North-east China is a potential destination for much larger numbers of refugees than there already are. At a more general level, a military conflict would have a negative impact on the East Asian economy. It could also lead to heightened tensions between China and both the US and Japan. All of this runs counter to China's strategy of protecting domestic stability, continuing economic growth and preventing strategic competition with neighbouring countries or the United States.¹²⁴

There are also other interests at stake. The main reason why China intervened in the Korean War in 1950 is still relevant.¹²⁵ It would be a significant strategic disadvantage if the entire Peninsula came under American influence. China does not directly challenge existing US influence in South Korea, but it would not favour an increase of American influence – especially in North Korea. Nor would Beijing like to see a return to a Japanese-dominated Korean Peninsula, such as existed from 1895 until 1945. Whatever direction the political process on the Peninsula might take, it is important for China to be involved in order to counterbalance the influence of the US and Japan. The nuclear crisis takes up a major role in the relations of Pyongyang with Seoul, Washington and Tokyo.

Further interest relates to the other main source of instability in East Asia: the Taiwan issue. From the beginning, the two issues have been closely connected.¹²⁶ The cross-Taiwan Strait situation was effectively frozen by the US in 1950, because of the North Korean invasion of South Korea. After the outbreak of the Korean War, the United States deployed its navy to the Taiwan Strait in order to deter China from invading Taiwan. Events on the Peninsula thus ensured that Taiwan survived as a de facto independent state. Since 2003, China's role as mediator in the North Korean nuclear crisis has led to improved relations with the United States. According to Gilbert Rozman, when the US appealed for Chinese support in the nuclear crisis, China responded:

122) Seymour, 'The Exodus', p. 141.

123) Bonnie Glaser, Scott Snyder and John S. Park, *Keeping an Eye on an Unruly Neighbor: Chinese Views of Economic Reform and Stability in North Korea* (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2007), p. 19; Chu, 'The Security Challenges in North-East Asia', pp. 1-2; and Avery Goldstein, 'Across the Yalu: China's Interests and the Korean Peninsula in a Changing World', in Alastair Ian Johnston and Robert S. Ross (eds), *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), pp. 145-146.

124) Ong, *China's Security Interests in the Twenty-First Century*, p. 78; and Kim, *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers*, p. 66.

125) Ong, *China's Security Interests in the Twenty-First Century*, p. 75; and Kim, *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers*, p. 43.

126) Gilbert Rozman, *Strategic Thinking about the North Korean Nuclear Crisis: Four Parties Caught Between North Korea and the United States* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 104.

[...] with hints that healthy Sino-US relations achieved through handling Taiwan independence moves differently would have consequences. US willingness to restrain Chen [Shui-bian, the Taiwanese president] made it easier for China to join in restraining Kim Jong-Il, although any talk of linkage would be denied.¹²⁷

Especially since the North's nuclear test in October 2006, cooperation between Beijing and Washington has been close. During the same period, the US increasingly took efforts to keep the Taiwanese government from taking actions that would provoke Beijing. Whereas during the 1990s China severely criticized various Taiwanese actions that were thought to be aimed at independence, in recent years direct pressure came from Washington rather than Beijing. The increasing cooperation between China and the US towards North Korea and Taiwan results in improved relations between the two great powers and a higher level of interrelatedness between the two issues.¹²⁸ Beijing has an interest in continuing its active mediating role in North Korean-US relations in order to encourage the US to influence – to the extent that this is possible – the behaviour of Taiwanese politicians.

The crisis also relates to China's overall position in the East Asian region, beyond the Korean Peninsula and the Taiwan Strait. Since 1945 the United States has been the dominant military power in East Asia. Although China is not directly challenging the American position, it has a strong interest in joining the US as a leading influence on the future of regional security. The Six-Party Talks may at some point result in, or contribute to, the establishment of a multilateral security mechanism in East Asia. It is in China's interest to play a prominent role in the process leading up to this, in order to prevent such a mechanism from becoming a tool of US foreign policy that would place limits on China's regional security strategy – especially with regard to Taiwan.

There are also concerns at the global level. As mentioned in the introduction, China is under growing pressure from the West to prove that its growing influence in international relations is a force for good. There has been much criticism from Western governments and in Western media about China's role in Zimbabwe, Sudan, Myanmar and Iran. Beijing considers its global image of great importance, and the fact that its constructive involvement in the North Korean issue is widely perceived as positive partly offsets its negative image in other cases. This also provides Chinese diplomats dealing with other crises with more credibility as to their interest in playing a constructive role than they would otherwise have had. China also has a strong interest in supporting and expanding the role of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). A weak UNSC invites unilateral actions by the US, as well

127) Rozman, *Strategic Thinking about the North Korean Nuclear Crisis*, p. 104.

128) Chae-Jin Lee, *A Troubled Peace: US Policy and the Two Koreas* (Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), p. 246; and Shen Dingli, 'North Korea's Strategic Significance to China', *China Security*, vol. 2, no. 4, 2006, pp. 19-34.

as the emergence of alternative multilateral security organizations in which China has a less favourable position. In this context it is of great importance that China can demonstrate its willingness to take responsibility for international security, of which the North Korean crisis is an important example.

Finally, China has to deal with the consequences of North Korea becoming a nuclear power. North Korea has been working on its nuclear weapons' capabilities for decades. Although it remains possible that the nuclear weapons' programme will be abandoned in return for certain benefits, no country can rule out the possibility that North Korea will continue to develop nuclear weapons – whether in secret or openly. There is no certainty that the nuclear test of October 2006 was a success, therefore it is unclear whether North Korea actually is a nuclear power. But there is a chance that Pyongyang has nuclear weapons, and as time goes by the likelihood that this is the case increases.¹²⁹ A nuclear DPRK strengthens the position of Japanese politicians and policy-makers who argue in favour of a greater role for the military in Japanese security policy.¹³⁰ It might also accelerate the development of the American-led missile defence system in East Asia. Japan and other neighbouring countries might even decide to develop their own nuclear weapons.¹³¹ Such developments run firmly against China's security interests. Another problem is that Beijing cannot rule out the possibility that Pyongyang will use its nuclear weapons to apply pressure on or threaten China.¹³²

The Chinese government cannot force the DPRK to end its nuclear programme and to allow foreign observers to make fully certain that no remnants of the programme are secretly maintained, unless it is willing to risk serious instability on the Korean Peninsula. Verifiable denuclearization without political instability can only be achieved if Pyongyang acts voluntarily. The developments between 1993 and today have shown that – under current international conditions – North Korea is unlikely to give up its nuclear programme, but that the programme might be temporarily and partly frozen if an agreement is reached. China has an interest in working towards a new agreement that slows down the North Korean programme and that enhances the feeling in Japan and the US that diplomatic rather than military steps are most effective.

129) Xhang Hui, 'Revisiting North Korea's Nuclear Test', *China Security*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2007, pp. 119-130.

130) Bates Gill, *Rising Star: China's New Security Diplomacy* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2007), p. 57; and Avery Goldstein, *Rising to the Challenge: China's Grand Strategy and International Security* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. 197.

131) Ong, *China's Security Interests in the Twenty-First Century*, pp. 76 and 84; and Andrew Scobell, *China and North Korea: From Comrades-in-Arms to Allies at Arm's Length* (Carlisle PA: US Army War College, 2004), p. 12.

132) Kim, 'China's New Role in the US–DPRK Nuclear Confrontation', p. 103.

Since 2003, the main policy aims of the Chinese government with regard to the nuclear crisis are stabilizing the relationship between Pyongyang and Washington, while keeping the DPRK's regime from collapsing. Another aim that has become increasingly important is to slow down the pace of development of North Korea's nuclear weapons' programme, and to demonstrate to other countries that a diplomatic approach is the most useful proposition.¹³³ Additional aims are to make sure that US and Japanese political influence on the Korean Peninsula will never become dominant, to stimulate the Americans to limit the activities of the pro-independence movement in Taiwan, and to play a leading role in shaping a future regional security mechanism. China consequently has an interest in the continued existence of the Six-Party Talks as they provide it with a platform on which to play a leading role – alongside the United States – in regional security affairs.

China during the First Nuclear Crisis

The main issues that China has addressed since the beginning of the second nuclear crisis are defining its own role as a proactive mediator, convincing the United States to abandon its hardline position of 2003-2005, and keeping the 'brinkmanship' of North Korea within bounds. Although China did not play a leading role at the time,¹³⁴ it did gain some experience with these issues during the first nuclear crisis in 1993-1994. During the first crisis China was involved in several ways: as a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the UNSC, as a military ally of North Korea and as a major actor in East Asian security. Moreover, since December 1988 Beijing had provided the location for low-profile talks between the US and North Korea that were aimed at dealing with a broad range of issues. These Beijing talks – which in themselves constituted an initial form of Chinese mediation between Washington and Pyongyang – continued during the crisis.¹³⁵

In the IAEA China voted against reporting to the UNSC that North Korea had violated Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) safeguard agreements, and in the UNSC China abstained from voting for a resolution

133) Views on China's priorities differ widely. According to some experts, after the 2006 nuclear test the top priority for Beijing became denuclearizing North Korea, even at the risk of a regime collapse: see Zhu Feng, 'Shifting Tides: China and North Korea', *China Security*, vol. 2, no. 4, 2006, pp.35-51; and Zhang Liangui, 'Coping with a Nuclear North Korea', *China Security*, vol. 2, no. 4, 2006, pp. 2-18. However, other experts believe that China values keeping the regime in power over denuclearization: see Rozman, *Strategic Thinking about the North Korean Nuclear Crisis*, p. 120.

134) Kim, *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers*, p. 64; and Kim, 'China's New Role in the US-DPRK Nuclear Confrontation', p. 102.

135) G.R. Berridge and Nadia Gallo, 'The Role of the Diplomatic Corps: The US-North Korea Talks in Beijing, 1988-94', in Jan Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 219 and 222.

that requested North Korea to adhere to the safeguard agreements.¹³⁶ This position was coherent with the Chinese view that respecting national sovereignty is a leading principle in international relations. While China gave strong diplomatic support to North Korea, it was also highly unlikely that China would give North Korea military support in the event of a war with the United States or South Korea. China established diplomatic relations with South Korea in 1992 and greatly valued its good relations with both South Korea and the United States. In fact, China exerted diplomatic pressure on both the North Koreans and the Americans to enter into talks on the nuclear issue. These negotiations initially took place in Beijing, but they were later upgraded and transposed to New York and Geneva. China reportedly also warned North Korea that it could not rely on a Chinese veto in the Security Council if it did not return to the NPT and address the crisis through negotiations.¹³⁷ When tensions between North Korea and the US further increased in May 1994, China applied even more pressure on Pyongyang by changing its position in the UNSC on economic sanctions against North Korea from ‘opposing’ them to ‘not being in favour’:¹³⁸ a publicly visible signal to Pyongyang that Beijing’s diplomatic support was conditional on North Korean willingness to avert a clash with the US. When the Agreed Framework was signed and the threat of military escalation decreased, Beijing again returned to a more passive role.

China Takes Centre Stage

After the beginning of the second nuclear crisis in October 2002, China initially continued to rely on the Agreed Framework and the US and North Korea themselves to resolve the matter. But as the Agreed Framework was subsequently abandoned and military tension once again mounted during the first few months of 2003, the Chinese stance changed.¹³⁹ A major difference with the 1994 situation was that the United States seemed prepared to employ military means against Pyongyang even without the support of the UNSC.¹⁴⁰ There would be no way for China to give North Korea diplomatic protection if the United States took the same approach in East Asia as it was taking towards Iraq.¹⁴¹ Moreover North Korea might make a reckless move in

136) Peter Schouten, ‘China en Noord-Korea: Van beschermheer tot aanklager’, unpublished Master’s thesis, Groningen University, 2007, p. 75.

137) Berridge and Gallo, ‘The Role of the Diplomatic Corps’, p. 223.

138) Schouten, ‘China en Noord-Korea’, p. 79.

139) Jae Ho Chung, ‘China’s Ascendancy and the Korean Peninsula: From Interest Re-evaluation to Strategic Realignment?’, in David Shambaugh (ed.), *Power Shift: China and Asia’s New Dynamics* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 2005), p. 155.

140) Rozman, *Strategic Thinking about the North Korean Nuclear Crisis*, p. 103.

141) Scobell, ‘China and North Korea’, p. 13; and Kim, ‘China’s New Role in the US–DPRK Nuclear Confrontation’, pp. 107–114. In early 2003 the DPRK’s regime was preparing for a possible American attack: see Robert S. Ross, ‘Comparative Deterrence: The Taiwan Strait

the belief that it was to be attacked by the United States.¹⁴² China also had greater leverage than in 1994: the 1989 Tiananmen crisis had weakened China's reputation in international affairs, whereas by 2003 China's continuing economic growth – in spite of the 1997 Asian financial crisis and contrasting with Japan's economic difficulties – had strongly increased China's standing as an emerging great power.¹⁴³

To stabilize the situation, China tried to convince both sides that the nuclear crisis should be dealt with through negotiations.¹⁴⁴ North Korea was willing to negotiate with the United States only bilaterally, while the Americans wanted multilateral talks. To solve this, the Chinese worked towards a multilateral setting that included the opportunity for DPRK and US negotiators to come together in bilateral side-meetings. China's support for the SPT entailed hosting the talks in Beijing and working behind the scenes to get all of the parties together and to stimulate them to reach an agreement, or at least part of an agreement.¹⁴⁵ China did this consistently for all of the SPT rounds. Frequent bilateral visits were made by high-ranking Chinese officials to all of the other SPT members to get them to the negotiating table and to prepare for the 2005 and 2007 agreements.¹⁴⁶

What China also invested in the SPT was its reputation as a leading mediator and its influence over Pyongyang. It is especially this aspect that differentiates China's role since 2003 from the part that it played in the first nuclear crisis. In 1993-1994, China had contributed to a diplomatic solution without taking great risks. But during the second crisis, if the SPT remained fruitless in spite of China's intensive diplomatic effort, China stood to lose its reputation as a leading actor in regional security. The result would be that the Chinese government could do even less to avert instability on the Peninsula. Furthermore, Beijing's degree of influence over Pyongyang was limited from the start. China could vary the degree of diplomatic protection for the DPRK in the UNSC and persuade the Americans to join the SPT, but there was little else that it could do. Cutting off economic aid to North Korea could lead to the collapse of the regime and was not considered an option. As it turned out, China succeeded in getting North Korea to accept the multilateral format of the SPT. However, as Chinese pressure on Pyongyang increased, its ability to exert further influence was exhausted. This became clear after the DPRK's missile tests and even more so after the nuclear test of 2006.

and the Korean Peninsula', in Alastair Ian Johnston and Robert S. Ross (eds), *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), p. 34.

142) Kim, 'China's New Role in the US–DPRK Nuclear Confrontation', p. 101.

143) Kim, *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers*, p. 65.

144) Gill, *Rising Star*, p. 55.

145) Lee, *A Troubled Peace*, pp. 239-256.

146) Kim, *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers*, pp. 67-69.

Decreasing Influence in Pyongyang, Growing Position in Regional Security

During 2003-2005 the most pressing problem within the SPT, from the Chinese point of view, was the unwillingness of the United States to make a realistic offer to the North Koreans.¹⁴⁷ The US position was that before any offer could be made, North Korea should first end its nuclear programme and prove that this was the case. China's view was that the United States should offer North Korea something in return for such a major concession.¹⁴⁸ In order to move the US to a more accommodating stance, China benefited from the involvement of South Korea, Russia and Japan. South Korea, in particular, cooperated closely with China in this respect, but ultimately also Russia and Japan believed that the US position made progress in the SPT impossible. China in effect used the multilateral character of the SPT to increase diplomatic pressure on the United States, whereas the United States had hoped that it would work against North Korea. The Joint Declaration of September 2005 was a diplomatic success for Beijing, as it signified the abandoning by the US of its uncompromising stance. After 2005 China continued to persuade the United States that it should move further towards a pragmatic approach, but for the Chinese, North Korea was now becoming the larger obstacle to further progress in the SPT.

In 2003-2005 China had much difficulty in getting the DPRK to join the various rounds of the SPT. To get the North Koreans to attend the first round of the SPT, China had promised extra economic assistance and had persuaded the US to provide a non-aggression assurance.¹⁴⁹ Additional economic incentives were needed to obtain North Korean support for the following rounds.

The difference with the period after 2005 is that the US became more cooperative, while North Korea became less so. A major problem for the Chinese government is that by 2006 it had little influence left to control North Korea.¹⁵⁰ After the nuclear test, China spent its last resources for influencing Pyongyang when it supported UNSC Resolution 1718, which

147) Rozman, *Strategic Thinking about the North Korean Nuclear Crisis*, pp. 107-114.

148) Kim, *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers*, pp. 70-71.

149) Kim, 'China's New Role in the US-DPRK Nuclear Confrontation', p. 104. At this stage China used positive rather than negative stimuli. A three-day shutdown of a Chinese oil pipeline to North Korea occurred in February 2003 and was interpreted in international media as a Chinese action to apply pressure on Pyongyang. According to Andrew Scobell, however, the shutdown was most probably caused by genuine technical problems. The deployment of Chinese troops near the Korean border in mid-2003 is believed by Scobell to have been part of a regular reorganization process: see Scobell, *China and North Korea*, pp. 23-24.

150) According to an observation by Scobell in 2004, 'The world may have witnessed the furthest extent of Beijing's influence on Pyongyang in 2003 and early 2004'; see Scobell, *China and North Korea*, p. 10.

demanded that North Korea end its nuclear programme.¹⁵¹ Since October 2006 the positions of China and the US on the nuclear issue have become closer than ever, while China–DPRK relations have reached an all-time low.¹⁵² By conducting the missile tests and the nuclear test, Pyongyang had shown the world its defiance towards Beijing. This development has made it very hard for China to continue its role as mediator. Other than hosting the SPT, there is not much left for the Chinese government to do. Indeed, from 2007 negotiations between the United States and North Korea increasingly took place outside China. Although the US–DPRK talks in places such as Berlin, Geneva and Singapore were formally part of the SPT structure, it seems that China’s role has strongly diminished. Thus while China has continued to play its highly active role in supporting the Six-Party Talks since the 2007 agreement, progress in the nuclear crisis came to rely more on direct interactions between North Korea and the United States.¹⁵³ A further setback for China relates to the somewhat increased role for Russia, which contributed to resolving the dispute between North Korea and the US treasury on the Banco Delta Asia in 2006–2007 (see the chapters on North Korea, Russia, and the US in this volume).¹⁵⁴

This does not mean that China is about to lose its interest in the nuclear crisis and the Six-Party Talks. Not only does China increasingly share an interest with the US in denuclearizing North Korea, but the wider significance of the Six-Party Talks for China’s regional interests has also become more important. In late 2007 and early 2008, China and the United States successfully co-managed the potential threat to regional stability stemming from Taiwan’s referendum on whether it should apply for United Nations’ membership under the name of Taiwan, rather than as ‘Republic of China’. China regarded this as a move towards independence. This was a joint approach in the sense that Beijing held back from directly threatening Taiwan, while Washington issued strong statements to signal its dissatisfaction with the referendum. This creates a model for future instances of cooperation, which would be strengthened by the frequent high-level contacts between China and the US at the Six-Party Talks.

Moreover, there are increasing calls to widen formally the Six-Party Talks into a regional security forum. At a press conference in July 2008, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice talked favourably about such plans.¹⁵⁵ China has strong incentives to stay closely involved in the Six-Party Talks and has consequently kept up its efforts to play a pivotal role in organizing Six-Party Talks’ meetings, even as its influence on the nuclear issue itself has grown smaller.

151) Schouten, ‘China en Noord-Korea’, p. 98.

152) Zhu Feng, ‘Shifting Tides’.

153) Gary Samore, ‘China Uneasy about US–North Strides’, *Joong Ang Daily*, 6 August 2007, available online at <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2878883>.

154) Samore, ‘China Uneasy about US–North Strides’.

155) See <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO0807/S00738.htm>.

China had put much at stake,¹⁵⁶ and had worked very hard for the SPT because there was no better alternative. Once Beijing assumed the role of mediator, it was obliged to invest heavily in sustaining the SPT. There is no other country in the SPT that is capable of playing such a role. Given that never before in modern history had China acted proactively as a mediator in an international security crisis, it seems unlikely that the Chinese government had intended to be a leading player when the second nuclear crisis erupted. Because of its role in managing the second nuclear crisis, however, China increasingly came to be regarded as an influential and responsible great power in East Asia. This puts China in a favourable position with regard to influencing the future of regional security. In the run-up to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, China's policies towards regional crises – such as in Sudan, Zimbabwe, Iran and Myanmar – was heavily criticized in the Western media. In this context, maintaining an active role in the North Korean crisis became of growing importance for China in order to improve its image.

Outlook

Given the right conditions, China will take the initiative to mediate in an international crisis, as is consistent with its new great power status. As China develops greater interests in international security and becomes more influential, the likelihood that it will play this mediating role increases. However, the North Korean nuclear crisis suggests that China's role will remain limited for the time being. This is the first time that China has attempted to play such a role, and North Korea is arguably a special case because it borders China and because – through US involvement – there is a link between Korean security and the Taiwan issue.

China's ability to play a leading role in the talks on the nuclear crisis, however, seems to have diminished greatly since late 2005. With regard to the nuclear issue itself, the results for China are so far mixed.¹⁵⁷ On the one hand, US–North Korean relations have become more stable, but on the other hand North Korea has a growing nuclear weapons' capacity. Moreover, the Taiwan issue is a higher priority in Beijing's security strategy than the North Korean nuclear issue, and Beijing now has more confidence than before that the United States will use its influence to keep Taiwan's pro-independence movement within certain limits. The Chinese government will therefore have a tendency increasingly to exploit the potential of the Six-Party Talks to manage cross-Strait tensions. If Washington continues to cooperate with Beijing in this regard, the nuclear crisis has a beneficial side-effect for China that partly outweighs the negative facets of its impact.

156) Scobell, *China and North Korea*, p. 11.

157) For an analysis of China's deteriorated position, see Zhang Liangui, 'Coping with a Nuclear North Korea'.

Japan and the Multilateral Talks: Peripheral Player, Powerful Spoiler

Maaïke Okano-Heijmans

Introduction

Surprising as it may sound to many observers today, it was Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi who made the initial proposal for six-party negotiations in 1998.¹⁵⁸ The Japanese government was largely driven by fear of being left out in multilateral negotiations on an issue of great importance to Japan's national security. Responses at the time, however, were lukewarm at best. None of the then Four-Party Talks' members saw immediate value in including Japan – or Russia. While supporting the four-way talks, the Japanese government used the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) as a channel to address its concerns. Only after the US claim in October 2002 that North Korea had disclosed a uranium-based nuclear programme, did the parties agree to a six-way multilateral dialogue, which now included Japan and Russia.¹⁵⁹ Japan's participation and

158) Kuniko Ashizawa, 'Tokyo's Quandary, Beijing's Moment in the Six-Party Talks: A Regional Multilateral Approach to Resolve the DPRK's Nuclear Problem', *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 19, no. 3, 2006, pp. 411-432.

159) Many commentators accepted Washington's claim about the North's alleged highly enriched uranium programme, while North-East Asian countries remained unconvinced. See Gavan McCormack, 'North Korea and the Birth Pangs of a New North-East Asian Order', *Arena*, Special Issue no. 29/30, 2008.

cooperation in the so-called Six-Party Talks (SPT) was deemed of importance in order to reach a comprehensive deal with North Korea.¹⁶⁰

Although the Japanese government has made it clear that North Korea poses the greatest threat to Japan's national security,¹⁶¹ it is not Pyongyang's nuclear devices and missiles that attract the most attention. Rather, it is the alleged abduction of some seventeen Japanese nationals from Japan by North Korea in the 1970s and 1980s that is the chief focus of Japanese politicians and policy-makers.¹⁶² This issue has framed bilateral and multilateral relations with North Korea since 2002 – some six years. It is also the reason for Pyongyang's repeated calls to exclude Tokyo from the Six-Party negotiating table and other parties' concern over a slowdown in negotiations.

The question must be asked as to why the Japanese government prioritizes a bilateral issue while its national and regional security at large is at stake. Japan's successful test of its missile interceptor system in December 2007 and the deployment of ballistic missile units in its capital city, Tokyo, show that Japan – in cooperation with its closest ally, the United States – is stepping up its national defence.¹⁶³ Certainly, the North Korean threat facilitates the otherwise controversial military enhancement of Japan in a context of uncertainty about US commitment and an increasingly stronger China. Could it be that a focus on the abductions serves to prolong the threat and justifies Japan's security policy?

Washington's conciliatory approach in the wake of Pyongyang's nuclear test of October 2006 left Tokyo in an awkward position, however. The credibility of the United States as an ally is a big concern. As Washington and Pyongyang slowly move forwards, Tokyo may in the end be forced to follow. This partly explains why the Japanese government now shows a desire to

160) Looking back on this period, Shigemura harshly criticizes the Japanese government for being weak and having been too eager to enter the Six-Party Talks, arguing that the success of a Six-Party agreement depends on Japanese willingness to provide funds. See Toshimitsu Shigemura, *Chosen Hanto 'Kaku' Gaiko: Kitachosen no Senjutsu to Keizairyoku* [Korean Peninsula 'Nuclear' Diplomacy: North Korea's Strategy and Economic Power] (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2006), pp. 63-64.

161) See various issues of the annual *Diplomatic Bluebook*, Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and *Defence of Japan*, Japanese Ministry of Defence (before 2007, the Defence Agency).

162) The Japanese government currently identifies seventeen Japanese citizens as having been abducted by North Korea and continues investigations into other cases in which abduction is not ruled out. Five abductees returned to Japan in 2004. North Korea long asserted that eight abductees died and that it has no knowledge of the four others. In June 2008, however, Pyongyang agreed to reopen investigation into the issue. For more information on the Japanese viewpoint, see <http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/abduction/index.html>. For a detailed description and analysis of the abductees' issue and its impact on Japan's policy, see Yoichi Funabashi, *The Peninsula Question: A Chronicle of the Second Korean Nuclear Crisis* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2007).

163) 'Japan Conducts First Test in Tokyo of Ballistic Missile Shield', *Associated Press*, 14 January 2008. In late January 2008, Japan deployed the third of a total of nine intended ballistic missile defence systems in the Tokyo area.

move away from its hardline stance, characterized by one-issue politics and sanctions. However, a majority of Japanese politicians and the public strongly opposes any softening of policy. This chapter analyses Japan's concerns, as well as its prioritization and leverage points. Discussion focuses on the political context, Tokyo's diplomatic cards, and the policies of the prime ministers who have ruled Japan since the initiation of the Six-Party Talks.

The Political Context and Japan's Foreign Policy Agenda

As with any bilateral relationship, Japan's relations with North Korea revolve around an array of international, regional, bilateral and domestic issues. More than in any other relationship, however, Japan's options with regard to Pyongyang are limited. This is true for three important issues on the Japanese government's agenda: national and regional security – including the North's nuclear and missile programme – the abductees and the normalization of relations.

Japan's leverage in both the bilateral and multilateral context is constrained by the fact that North Korea is above all interested in improving and developing relations with the United States, which it regards as the greatest threat to its national security. Pyongyang views Tokyo as a second tier: Washington's little brother that needs to be seriously consulted only when deemed to be to its own benefit. A key to solving the security threat that North Korea poses to Japan therefore lies in the hands of its alliance partner.

From a US perspective, Japan's participation in the Six-Party Talks constitutes a critical paradox, particularly after Washington adopted a more engaging stance towards Pyongyang. On the one hand, US officials admit that a deal with North Korea will need the full backing of Japan. The substantial Japanese economic aid that would become available with normalization of relations is regarded as a key component of a comprehensive agreement.¹⁶⁴ At the same time, however, Washington has made it clear that it will move ahead even without an immediate solution to the abductees' issue.¹⁶⁵ In an attempt

164) James L. Schoff, *Political Fences and Bad Neighbours: North Korea Policy Making in Japan and Implications for the United States*, project report by the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 2006 p. 19, available online at <http://www.ifpa.org/pdf/fences.pdf>.

165) Although no progress had been made on the abductees' issue, the US in late 2006 and early 2007 reportedly offered to remove North Korea from the terror list. This contradicted earlier commitments, made for example in 2000 by the US State Department and – implicitly – with its 2003 annual report, *Patterns of Global Terrorism*. Japanese concerns diminished in late 2007 because of the impasse evolving around North Korea's nuclear weapons' declaration, but were revived following renewed engagement between Washington and Pyongyang from spring 2008. Symbolically, North Korean and Japanese negotiators met for working-level consultations on 11 (and 12) August 2008, the day when the US could have rescinded North Korea's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism. See Larry Niksch and Raphael Pearl, *North Korea: Terrorism List Removal*, CRS Report for Congress (Congressional Research Service), 14 January 2008; Michael Green and James Prystup,

to break the deadlock and avoid having to upset its ally when moving ahead, the United States, in bilateral as well as multilateral meetings, pressed North Korea to address the abductees' issue with Japan.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that there is a crucial difference in threat perception between the US and Japan. The US and Japan share concerns over nuclear and missile development and the export of weapons of mass destruction, but the real threat perception in Japan is much bigger, as Tokyo seriously fears North Korean missiles, nuclear devices and refugee flows because of its geographic proximity. Anything less than a complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is hence unacceptable to the Japanese government. This explains Japan's rather lukewarm response to the February 2007 Six-Party Talks' agreement, which included a time-frame and monitoring mechanism for the declaration of nuclear programmes and disablement of existing nuclear facilities, but addressed denuclearization only in vague terms.¹⁶⁶

Japan's leeway on another major issue of concern is also constrained – albeit more by its own choice. In 1990 Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu agreed to consult South Korea on all Japanese policy towards North Korea, including the normalization of diplomatic relations. Japan has generally maintained this stance. As in bilateral relations with other countries in the region, the burden of history looms large in talks on official relations. Reparations for wrongdoings during the colonial period and Pacific War play a vital role in discussions about establishing official relations between Japan and North Korea.¹⁶⁷

The normalization of relations is of importance in bilateral and multilateral talks, giving Japan a diplomatic card in the Six-Party context. Financial compensation or, as the Japanese insist, 'economic assistance' would provide the North Korean regime with huge funds relative to the size of its economy. These billions of dollars are addressed in the multilateral context in two ways. First, normalization of Japan–North Korea relations is

'The Abductee Issue is a Test of America's Strategic Credibility', *PacNet*, no. 45, 15 November 2007; and 'Abduction Not an Issue for Terror List Removal: Vershbow', *Yonhap News*, 14 May 2008.

166) In the Joint Agreement 'the Parties reaffirmed their common goal and will to achieve early denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula [...]'. This point is made by Hitoshi Tanaka, former Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, who was closely involved in negotiations with North Korea under former Prime Minister Koizumi. See Hitoshi Tanaka, 'Five Myths about Dealing with North Korea: A Japanese Perspective', *East Asia Insights: Toward Community Building*, vol. 2, no. 3, June 2007 (Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange), p. 3.

167) A formula based on the amount that South Korea received with normalization of relations in 1965, adjusted to present times, calculates roughly the amount that the North would receive. Estimates of the amount of the settlement range between US\$ 3.4 and US\$ 20 billion. Reportedly, Japanese officials were discussing a final sum between US\$ 5-10 billion. See Mark E. Manyin, *Japan–North Korea Relations: Selected Issues*, CRS Report for Congress (Congressional Research Service), updated 18 April 2003, p. 9.

included as one of the goals of the SPT agreements of September 2005 and February 2007. Second, the financial stimulus constitutes a 'carrot' to any final comprehensive deal. During one of the SPT sessions, North Korea implied that economic aid from Japan (and South Korea) would be needed for the ultimate settlement of its nuclear programme.¹⁶⁸ In recent years Tokyo has used this card to frustrate negotiations indirectly, thereby becoming a spoiler of the Six-Party Talks.

This obstructionist stance can be linked directly to developments in the mid-1990s, which made Japan more sensitive to threats in its security environment. The nuclear crisis of 1993-1994, the launch of (test) missiles – especially the Taepodong missile that flew over Japanese territory in 1998 – and intrusions into Japan's territorial waters by North Korean spy boats, as well as Chinese nuclear tests, induced the Japanese government to reconsider its regional and security strategy.¹⁶⁹ Security considerations received growing media attention and started to play a role in Japan-North Korea relations. Particularly since 2002-2003, television and other forms of media directed the public into a relatively constricted range of views on North Korea through narrow, biased saturation coverage.¹⁷⁰ The focus of attention was the abductees' issue, which became the human face of the abstract North Korean threat.

Ironically, perhaps, North Korean nuclear and missile development is an opportunity in the security field, in the sense that it creates a favourable environment for stepping up missile defence and increasing the role of the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in developments in areas surrounding Japan. From a regional perspective, the North Korean threat is thereby a welcome excuse to improve military capacities and Japan's regional security, notably towards China.

Tokyo's Diplomatic Cards

The funds that will become available to North Korea with the establishment of official relations with Japan are clearly a tool of Tokyo's economic

168) Ashizawa, *Tokyo's Quandary*, p. 422. As reported in footnote 10, estimates of the amount of the settlement range between US\$ 3.4 and US\$ 20 billion, and Japanese officials are reportedly discussing a final sum between US\$ 5-10 billion. See Manyin, *Japan-North Korea Relations*, p. 9. The practical significance of this package becomes clear when compared to North Korea's estimated gross national income of US\$ 40 billion in 2006; see 'N. Korea's GDP Estimated at \$40 Billion: CIA', *Yonhap News*, 12 March 2008.

169) On the consular front, Japan was furthermore reminded that despite not sharing a land border with North Korea, refugees are a concern bilaterally as well as in a broader sense. The widely-published intrusion of five North Koreans into its consulate-general in Shenyang, north-east China, in May 2002 exemplified this. For more details, see C.H. Kwan, *Japan's Two-faced Diplomacy in Shenyang* (Tokyo: RIETI, 21 May 2002).

170) Hyung Gu Lynn, 'Vicarious Traumas: Television and Public Opinion in Japan's North Korea Policy', *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 79, no. 3, 2006, pp. 483-510.

diplomacy and security strategy at large.¹⁷¹ Financial and economic relations are also of significance. It is clear here that Japan's leverage over Pyongyang declined with the sharp downturn in economic relations with North Korea throughout the past decade.¹⁷² Financial flows decreased as the Japanese government in recent years hardened its policy towards the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (*Chosen Soren* in Japanese) and *pachinko* (gambling parlours), which are widely believed to have provided Pyongyang with significant sums of cash. By 2006 the total bilateral trade volume had declined to only one third of its 2002 level, from roughly US\$ 370 to 120 million. A mere US\$ 9 million in exports was left in 2007.¹⁷³ Although even at its peak, bilateral imports and exports never comprised more than 0.1 per cent of Japan's total trade, this trade had been substantial for North Korea. If trade and finance gave Japan any leverage before, this influencing power was now lost because of the measures and sanctions that the Japanese government imposed progressively after 2004.

In the multilateral context, Japan continuously refuses to cooperate in energy and humanitarian assistance, to which the parties committed in February 2007.¹⁷⁴ Even as Pyongyang delivered the belated declaration of its nuclear programme in June 2008 and other parties supplied the remaining shares of assistance, Japan upheld that it would not provide assistance as long as no substantial progress was made on the abductees' issue. Moreover, bilateral sanctions on North Korea that were imposed following the missile and nuclear tests in late 2006 remain in place. Only in the run-up to the most recent extension, in April 2008, did the Japanese government show a desire to change to a slightly different course.

The apparent decline in Japan's leverage is all the more important when put into a regional perspective, as it stands in sharp contrast with growing South Korean and Chinese willingness to do business with North Korea. North Korea's trade with China more than doubled between 2002 and 2006.¹⁷⁵ Although normalization would give the Japanese easier access to North Korea's raw materials (coal and minerals) and improve their relative economic position towards South Korea and China, the immediate economic gains are obviously much greater for Pyongyang than for Tokyo. Negotiations on normalization and the prospect of stronger economic ties are hence still a diplomatic card in Tokyo's relations with Pyongyang.

171) Here, economic diplomacy concerns the use of economic instruments for foreign policy purposes.

172) The intensity of trade, investment and financial flows determines the actual impact of sanctions and the (prospect of) humanitarian assistance.

173) Japan's exports to North Korea consisted, for the greater part, of busses and trucks, followed by automobiles and synthetic fibre products. Imports largely involved seafood, as well as hard coal and fresh vegetables (*matsutake*); see *Country Report* (Tokyo: Sekai Keizai Joho Sabisu, 2006), downloaded from www.jetro.go.jp in November 2006.

174) 'Japan to Press Pyongyang for Abduction Probe', *Japan Times Online*, 4 March 2007.

175) Data compiled from United Nations Statistics Division (COMTRADE) and the Ministry of Unification of South Korea.

Not only the state of bilateral economic relations but also the economic and political situation in North Korea itself plays a role in Japan–North Korea relations.¹⁷⁶ Pyongyang feels more confident of leverage over Japan when its economy is in relative good shape. At times of domestic economic crisis and natural disasters (such as famine and flooding), however, Pyongyang tends to adopt a more welcoming approach towards Tokyo. Indeed, breakthroughs in bilateral consular issues stand in an inverse relationship with the state of North Korea’s economy. Pyongyang does not concede on these issues when its economy is in (relatively) good shape. Conversely, it adopts a more conciliatory stance when economic crisis is imminent.¹⁷⁷

Changes in the broader, strategic context inform and reinforce this link between the state of North Korea’s economy and its stance towards Japan. Geostrategic changes in 1991 prompted North Korea to be more open to communication with Japan. Pyongyang saw the need to engage Tokyo, as its traditional allies Russia and China increasingly interacted with their old foes from the late 1980s. When North Korea’s relationship with the United States was at a low early in the new millennium, North Korea’s leader, Kim Jong-Il, also saw benefits in improved ties with Tokyo.

Prime Ministers in Control: Koizumi, Abe and Fukuda

The three prime ministers who have ruled Japan since the initiation of the Six-Party Talks in 2003 have taken very distinct policies with regard to North Korea.¹⁷⁸ Unsurprisingly, changes in bilateral policy did not fail to leave their impact in the multilateral setting. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi revamped bilateral talks in 2000 through the resumption of formal normalization talks, which had been stalled since 1992. He left an important legacy with the first bilateral summits in history, in September 2002 and May 2004. This engaging approach went against the course of US President Bush, who early in 2002 famously included North Korea in an ‘axis of evil’. During the first summit, Koizumi and North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il adopted the Pyongyang Declaration, which formally stated that both sides would ‘make

176) More generally, the ominous state of the North Korean economy can be regarded as an important factor behind the escalation of tension and progress in denuclearization talks since early 2007. By testing a nuclear weapon, Pyongyang got Washington to the negotiating table and gained leverage to extract economic benefits. All of these factors serve to ensure regime survival.

177) The return in 1997 of Japanese wives who moved to North Korea with their Korean husbands in the late 1950s and early 1960s and the admission in 2002 of abducting Japanese nationals are cases in point.

178) It should be noted that Prime Minister Fukuda resigned from his position on 1 September 2008 and was succeeded by Taro Aso later in September 2008, just before this publication went to press. See the final paragraph of this chapter.

every possible effort' for an early normalization of relations.¹⁷⁹ The Japanese government moved away from Koizumi's conciliatory approach, however, when it stalled official talks in 2002 because of its dissatisfaction with Pyongyang's handling of the abduction issue.¹⁸⁰

As Chief Cabinet Secretary under Koizumi, Shinzo Abe of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) successfully used the abductees' issue, his long-time pet project, to rise quickly to power. As Koizumi's successor in September 2006, Abe took a tough stance against North Korea by continuously demanding a solution to the issue.¹⁸¹ Japan made great domestic and international diplomatic effort to increase awareness of the abductions and to gain broad support for the abductees as a human rights' issue. This proved quite successful in the sense that Washington declared its support, and messages and written statements were adopted at the G8, United Nations and the Six-Party Talks. Increasingly, however, the Japanese government was also criticized for 'hijacking' the Six-Party Talks by overemphasizing the abductees' issue.¹⁸²

Formal negotiation on the normalization of bilateral relations restarted reluctantly in early 2006, with settlement of the abductees' issue as a Japanese precondition for the establishment of diplomatic ties. Although the domestic environment was far from conducive to an improvement in relations, Japan was drawn to the negotiating table because of commitments in the September 2005 Six-Party agreement. Reopening negotiations provided an opportunity to confine tension and appeal to the abductees' issue bilaterally.¹⁸³ In certain ways, the Six-Party Talks thus served as a welcome context to talk with North

179) An English version of the Pyongyang Declaration is available at http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/n_korea/pmv0209/pyongyang.html. The Pyongyang Declaration is criticized for not including a single 'agreement' between the parties and for sidestepping important issues such as nuclear proliferation and the abductees' issue. See Shigemura, *Chosen Hanto 'Kaku' Gaiko*, pp. 69-70. The Pyongyang Declaration also included a commitment to 'maintain the moratorium on missile launching in and after 2003'. The North Korean missile launch of July 2006 thus constituted a breach of the declaration and was followed by unilateral Japanese economic sanctions.

180) Paradoxically, the sudden confession to (a number of) abductions by North Korea during the first summit changed bilateral relations for the worse.

181) Abe soon established the 'Headquarters for the Abductions Issue' headed by the Prime Minister and with the Chief Cabinet Secretary – under the new title of Minister of State for the Abductions Issue – as Deputy Chief.

182) It should be noted that South Korea under Presidents Kim Dae-Jung and Roh Moo-Hyun took the extreme opposite position, seemingly wanting to avoid discomfiting the North and likewise being accused of narrow-mindedness. While it is clear that a significant number of South Korean citizens have also been kidnapped by the North, the government kept remarkably silent.

183) Schoff argues that when bilateral talks were on hold, the Japanese government used the Six-Party Talks as a means to demonstrate its commitment to the abduction issue. See Schoff, *Political Fences and Bad Neighbours*, p. 21.

Korea while not seeming weak.¹⁸⁴ However, Abe had mobilized so much public support at home for his policy, that there was little room for manoeuvre and policy change had become nearly impossible.

One-issue politics clearly served Abe well. By making normalization conditional to progress in the abductees' issue, Japan simultaneously secured greater international interest and maintained a powerful tool to punish North Korea for lack of progress. Some may conclude that narrow domestic political interests simply prevailed over broader strategic purposes. At a deeper level, however, Abe's policy may be thought of as a conscious attempt to set the bilateral and multilateral political agenda in a context that is framed by a North Korean regime that is first and foremost interested in negotiating with Washington. Tokyo is generally relegated to the sidelines, expected only to provide economic assistance when the time is ripe. But with little to lose bilaterally and lots to gain domestically and strategically, Abe insisted, however, on this one issue. An obstructing stance furthermore assures that multilateral engagement does not move too fast without real concessions from Pyongyang.

A major flaw in Tokyo's policy, however, was its failure to anticipate that the United States might change to a more conciliatory approach towards North Korea.¹⁸⁵ A 'Bush shock' thus engulfed Japan when the United States receded in early 2007 from its policy of making substantial progress or settlement of the abductees' issue a precondition for removing North Korea from its list of state sponsors of terrorism.

By the time of Abe's resignation in September 2007, the abductees' issue had acquired such a high profile that the more conciliatory approach desired by new Japanese Prime Minister Fukuda needed to be carefully presented. The more accommodating Fukuda strongly hinted that he regarded the nuclear and missile threat from Pyongyang as a more important issue.¹⁸⁶ He had to be extremely careful, however, to avoid upsetting the Japanese public, which – considering his soft image – would certainly not give him the benefit of the doubt and would oppose any policy change without substantial concessions from Pyongyang.

Fukuda aimed for a face-saving way to break the impasse. This approach was in a sense facilitated by lack of progress in the Six-Party framework in early 2008, which alleviated the need to press on with the abduction issue.¹⁸⁷ For Fukuda, the Six-Party Talks were a meaningful forum to address larger issues of concern. The multilateral meetings also provided a context for

184) The domestic constraint that resulted from Abe's hardline policy frustrated Japanese policy-makers already back in 2004. See John S. Park, 'Inside Multilateralism: The Six-Party Talks', *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 4, 2005, pp. 86 and 91.

185) See footnote 8.

186) Interview with Prime Minister Fukuda, *Financial Times*, 12 November 2007.

187) North Korea in November 2007 provided a report that it insisted disclosed all of its nuclear programmes and holdings. The US, claiming that the list was incomplete, demanded a new declaration. Pyongyang presented this to China on 26 June 2008.

bilateral negotiations. A breakthrough seemed apparent in June 2008, when following intense silent diplomacy on Washington's side, Pyongyang agreed to reopen investigation into the abductions and Japan lifted some sanctions.¹⁸⁸ As long as promises are not followed up, however, the stalemate will continue.

As the US and North Korea moved towards an agreement in spring 2008 and US President Bush announced his intention to remove North Korea from the list of states sponsoring terrorism, Japan is left in an awkward position. Japanese Prime Minister Fukuda showed willingness to take a more engaging approach, but needed a positive sign from Pyongyang in order to sell such a policy change to the Japanese public.¹⁸⁹ Even as Japan feels pressure from the more engaging United States, policy changes can hardly be justified to Japan's public without progress on the abductees' issue. Considering the dire outlook for the North Korean economy in 2008-2009 and with Pyongyang likely wanting to seize the opportunity to improve relations with Washington, a breakthrough seems imminent. On the other hand, North Korea may decide to await real progress on the US side before proceeding with a reinvestigation of the abductees' issue. In that case, Washington may be forced to choose between moving ahead and upsetting its ally or allowing the deadlock to continue.

Conclusion: Leverage in the Multilateral Effort

Japan's constrained role in the Six-Party Talks is no surprise. Japan hinges on two legs: it plays a largely circumstantial role in the practical sense; and is a powerful spoiler in a broader, strategic way. Its role is circumstantial because its leeway is framed by US initiatives, South Korean consent and Chinese brokering. Japan's bilateral relationship with North Korea is caught in a multiple relations' context and is complicated by the fact that Japanese and North Korean willingness to proceed is often at odds. Predictably, Japan's actual contributions to the multilateral process have thus been minimal. This is true in proposals and suggestions for progress, actions to restart negotiations when talks were deadlocked, and outlining a vision for SPT process in the context of future relations in and around the Korean

188) Official talks took place in Beijing on 11-12 June 2008. Pyongyang vowed to reopen investigation of the abductees' issue and hand over Yodogo hijackers to Japan. In return, Japan agreed to lift the ban on travel and embargo on chartered flights, and let North Korean vessels transport humanitarian aid supplies.

189) Signs of a desire to change Japan's hardline policy came in the run-up to the third extension of economic sanctions in March-April 2008 and with efforts to spur process in the abductees' issue in May 2008. See 'Yokota-san fusai, mago-musume to Kankoku de menkaian: Seifu ga Li-seiken ni chukai yosei', *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 9 May 2008; and 'Kankoku e no chukai yosei wo hitei: Buhodo de Kanbo Chokan', *Tokyo Shimbun*, 9 May 2008.

Peninsula.¹⁹⁰ Moreover, in refusing to provide energy assistance, Japan's commitment to the SPT agreements has been half-hearted at best.

From a security perspective, Japan's concerns over North Korea's nuclear and missile programmes appear to be at odds with its (in)action in negotiations addressing these issues. When taking a closer look, however, it becomes apparent that while Tokyo recognizes Pyongyang as the greatest threat to Japan's national security, Pyongyang also provides a welcome justification to the Japanese government for enhancing Japan's security capabilities. The North Korean threat creates leeway to pursue a more proactive military policy and create more offensive capabilities for broader (collective) defence purposes. The abductees' issue serves to give the North Korean threat a human face domestically.

Tokyo wants a denuclearized Korean Peninsula and a stable neighbour, but a Six-Party Talks' solution – which would enhance China's standing – is in itself not a priority. Japanese interests are well served by retaining the status quo, which explains why Tokyo has been consciously adopting the role of spoiler.

Three points are vital to make sense of Japanese actions: relations with the US; economic diplomacy; and one-issue politics. Japan's stable and constructive relations with the US and neighbouring countries are a general concern. However, the abductees' issue shows that Tokyo does not just blindly follow Washington. The Japanese government stuck to its hardline policy even while the US has since early 2007 been moving to a more engaging stance. As the US and North Korea in the first half of 2008 made progress in multilateral and bilateral negotiations, the Japanese government started moulding public opinion to allow a softer approach. Nevertheless, real policy changes can only be expected following substantial progress in the abductees' issue or in US–North Korea relations. Certainly, the decision to remove North Korea from the list of terrorism-sponsoring states is crucial in this regard.

Economic diplomacy is a powerful instrument available to the Japanese in the bilateral and multilateral context. After all, the promise of economic assistance and (humanitarian) aid are substantial 'carrots' in negotiations. Furthermore, the prospect of economic assistance that will become available with normalization gives Japan significant leverage. Japanese aid is required for a comprehensive, multilateral solution to the North Korean crisis. Recognizing furthermore that the North Korean nuclear and missile threat justifies the steady build-up of military capabilities, Japan under Abe adopted a hardline stance towards North Korea. Bilateral sanctions were imposed, trade relations restricted, and financial flows tightened.

Ad hoc one-issue politics is consciously applied by the Japanese government. In times of confrontation, a hardline posture on (essentially consular) issues makes a powerful distancing impact, while in periods of engagement these issues facilitate improvement in relations. The Japanese

190) Ashizawa, *Tokyo's Quandary*, pp. 420-421.

government in recent years has slowed multilateral negotiations through focusing on the abductees' issue and adopted a negative approach to economic diplomacy to reinforce this policy. Japan has assumed that sooner or later it will get what it wants because Japanese money is required for a comprehensive agreement and successful conclusion of negotiations with North Korea in the Six-Party Talks. Developments in the first half of 2008 show, however, that Japan's (economic) weight does not impede short-term progress on nuclear issues.

Positive use of Japan's economic diplomacy towards North Korea, driven by regional security concerns, will come only with progress on the abductees' issue and in relations between North Korea and the US. A more engaging policy, similar to the new economic diplomacy pursued towards China in the 1990s, is then viable.¹⁹¹ Washington and Tokyo may be at odds, however, when the nuclear status of North Korea becomes the focus of attention. Japan therefore needs to secure its interests in a regional security framework, discussion on which has already started.

The road that the Japanese government will take is impossible to predict, especially after Fukuda's resignation as prime minister on 1 September 2008.¹⁹² Fukuda realized that he would have little choice but to follow if and when the United States sticks to its engaging approach towards North Korea; he tried to soften the Japanese government's hardline stance in order not to lose face internationally when that happens. The critical question now is whether the new prime minister, Taro Aso, is willing to continue along this path and shift from one-issue politics towards a more proactive use of economic diplomacy.

191) Improved economic ties contributed significantly to the reduced likelihood of Sino-Japanese military conflict. For a similar argument, see Yoshinori Kaseda, 'Japan and the Korean Peace Process', in Tae-Hwan Kwak and Seung-Ho Joo (eds), *The Korean Peace Process and the Four Powers* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2003), p. 139.

192) On 22 September 2008 the LDP elected a new leader, Taro Aso, who automatically becomes Japan's prime minister. General elections may follow later in 2008. Following victory in Japan's Upper House elections in July 2007, the opposition Democratic Party, led by Ichiro Ozawa, will be a serious challenge to the LDP in the next election. Although it remains unclear what policy Aso will adopt towards North Korea, it should be noted that if he decides to continue Fukuda's approach, he is likely to face less public resistance because of his earlier hardline stance and nationalistic credentials.

Russia: Many Goals, Little Activity

Sico van der Meer

Introduction

The Russian Federation is often considered to be the weakest party within the Six-Party Talks. Initially, Russia was not even supposed to have a role at all in the Five-Party Talks that the United States had planned to start in 2003; it was only by North Korean pressure that Russia was invited to join the talks as the sixth party. This does not mean, however, that Russia did not have any role of importance during the negotiations, but Russia's role has been important for only two of the six countries involved: North Korea; and Russia itself.

Unstable Partnership

Relations between Russia and North Korea have been unstable for as long as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has existed. During the Cold War the Soviet Union was one of the closest allies of the communist-style regime in North Korea, but had to share this position with China. North Korea was very successful in playing out the rivalry between China and the Soviet Union to its own benefit, in the sense that the DPRK's leaders were continuously able to extract (economic) support from both communist rivals. Because of the DPRK's continuous switching between Russia and China, Moscow has always considered Pyongyang to be an unreliable partner.

The aims of Russia's close relationship with North Korea were mostly political: the Soviet Union supported all of the world's communist regimes and the communist buffer-states bordering the Soviet Union were seen as particularly important strategically. At the end of the Cold War, under Mikhail Gorbachev's leadership, economic aims became more important in Soviet foreign policy. Instead of poor North Korea, which was extracting aid from Moscow but offering nothing in return, South Korea was regarded as a better ally, being a newly arising economic superpower, a so-called 'Asian Tiger'. Moscow expected South Korea to become an important customer of Russian oil, gas and other raw materials from Siberia, which could even function as a springboard to other Asian markets like Japan. Shortly before the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, the Kremlin announced in September 1990 that it would normalize relations with South Korea. This step meant betrayal to the North Korean regime, and the relationship with its former ally became seriously strained.

It was only after Vladimir Putin became the Russian President in 2000 that friendly relations between Russia and North Korea were re-established to some extent, including (relatively modest) economic support to North Korea. This change reflected the new Russian foreign policy that President Putin developed, trying to bring Russia back onto the political stage of the world's powers. Good relations with the international 'pariah regime' in Pyongyang gave Russia a more influential position on the Korean Peninsula, and as such at international negotiations to resolve the region's problems. This new Russian foreign policy was also very pragmatic, so it was not necessary to change the relationship with South Korea. On the contrary, from Russia's point of view, North Korea could have a role in strengthening its economic ties with South Korea.

'The road to Seoul lies through Pyongyang' has been Russia's formula for the last eight years.¹⁹³ This road was meant literally as well as figuratively. Literally spoken, the Russians had to acknowledge that the dreams, during the 1990s, of South Korea becoming an important customer of Russian energy and raw materials had not become fact. Transportation is a problem in this case, because North Korea is situated between Russia and South Korea and does not want to open its borders for transport to the South. Russian visions of railway connections, electricity cables, and oil and gas pipelines from Siberia through North Korea to South Korea are easier to realize while having friendly relations with North Korea than without them. Figuratively, the formula is meant in political terms. When establishing friendly relations in the 1990s, South Korea considered Russia an important partner because of its political leverage over the DPRK's regime. In that sense, it was a disappointment for South Korea that this leverage disappeared immediately after North Korea cut all of its ties with Russia. In other words, to be an

193) Alexander Vorontsov, *Current Russia-North Korea Relations: Challenges and Achievements* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 2007), p. 22.

important partner of South Korea, Russia also has to be an important partner of North Korea.

The fact that North Korea accepted the re-establishment of friendly relations with Russia without demanding that Russia end its relationship with South Korea, is not as strange as it might sound when considering the break-up of relations ten years before. The economic situation in North Korea had been deteriorating fast during the 1990s, so the regime of Kim Jong-Il was quite happy to find its old ally prepared to give some economic aid again. Moreover, North Korea could use some political aid on the international stage, having China as its only ally, yet afraid of too much Chinese influence. While Russia was not seriously involved in the international negotiations concerning North Korea's nuclear programme during the 1990s, its renewed ties with the DPRK brought it a place at the negotiation table from 2003 onwards.

Russia's Aims at the Six-Party Talks

In 2003 the United States tried to start Five-Party Talks, with the participation of the US, North Korea, South Korea, China and Japan. The North Korean leadership, however, insisted on Russia's participation. China even sent a Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs to Pyongyang to urge Kim Jong-Il to accept Five-Party Talks, but North Korea did not agree.¹⁹⁴ North Korea expected Russia to be rather supportive on the nuclear issue, and especially to counterbalance the hardline policy of the United States.¹⁹⁵ It also hoped that Russian participation would decrease Chinese influence on North Korea, thus trying to prevent it from becoming too dependent on Chinese support. Russia, which in previous years had often tried to participate in diplomatic talks on the North Korean nuclear issue in vain, immediately accepted the invitation to participate in the Six-Party Talks.

Russia has several reasons to be eager to participate in the Six-Party Talks. First, Russia is a neighbouring state to North Korea. Although their common border is only some nineteen kilometres in length, Russia is sincerely concerned about instability along this border, not only by the possibility of war on the Korean Peninsula, but also by the chaos that is expected when the North Korean regime collapses.¹⁹⁶ Russia objects to the development of nuclear weapons by North Korea for the same reason: a successful nuclear weapons' programme would only cause more regional instability, as well as a costly arms race in East Asia that Russia may need – but does not want – to

194) Yong-Chool Ha and Beom-Shik Shin, *Russian Non-Proliferation Policy and the Korean Peninsula* (Carlisle PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2006), p. 22.

195) Vorontsov, *Current Russia-North Korea Relations*, p. 18.

196) Ivan Safranchuk, 'North Korea: The Bush Administration's Strategic Fiasco', *Moscow Defense Brief*, no. 1, 2007, pp. 4-5; and Robert D. Kaplan, 'When North Korea Falls', *The Atlantic Monthly*, October 2006, pp. 64-74.

join. Stability on the Korean peninsula is thus one of Russia's main goals. In this respect, one should also note the Russian worries that the United States will make use of any instability to bring North Korea within its sphere of influence, which is something that Russia wants to prevent at all costs.

Russia also tries to use its role in the Six-Party Talks to re-establish its position as a superpower, in the East Asian region as well as globally. Part of this strategy is, of course, to counterbalance the role of the other superpowers, especially the United States but also China. Participation in the Six-Party Talks shows the world that Russia is taken seriously. And when there are any possibilities to downplay the influence of the United States in East Asia, Russia will gladly stimulate this. The more influence that Russia gains in the region the better, not only politically but also economically.

The economic goals, finally, are not to be neglected either. Economic ties with South Korea are seen as highly profitable in Russia. By using North Korea as a bridgehead to South Korea, and with the aim of using South Korea in turn as a bridgehead to other East Asian countries such as Japan, Russia is trying to enlarge its economic leverage in Asia. Exporting energy and raw materials from Siberia to East Asia has been assessed as an important opportunity. Russia hopes that improving its political relations with especially South Korea – by means of supporting South Korean views within the Six-Party Talks as much as possible – will at the same time improve economic relations. Although Russian exports to South Korea have been rapidly growing in recent years (nowadays estimated to be worth around US\$ 5 billion per year), Moscow hopes for much more.

Russia's Role in the Six-Party Talks

At first sight, Russia's role within the Six-Party Talks does not look that impressive. Some observers call the Russian performance in these talks 'weak',¹⁹⁷ others 'lacklustre'.¹⁹⁸ In Russia itself, the government has also been criticized because of its perceived 'passivity' and 'inactivity' at the Six-Party Talks.¹⁹⁹ Indeed, Russia did not launch any important initiatives, but has mostly been supporting Chinese and South Korean initiatives, even trying strategically to coordinate their positions during summit meetings.²⁰⁰ Russia's main role has been to voice the need for peaceful solutions and to prevent too much pressure on North Korea. In this regard, the Russian position is often

197) Rouben Azizian, 'Russia, North Korea and the Missile Diplomacy', in Yongjin Zhang (ed.), *Whither the Six-Party Talks? Issues, Stakes and Perspectives* (Auckland: New Zealand Asia Institute, University of Auckland, 2006), pp. 45-49.

198) Charles L. Pritchard, *Failed Diplomacy: The Tragic Story of How North Korea Got the Bomb* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2007), p. 95.

199) Vorontsov, *Current Russia-North Korea Relations*, p. 23.

200) Samuel S. Kim, *North Korean Foreign Relations in the Post-Cold War World* (Carlisle PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2007), p. 28.

described as rather supportive towards North Korea. It is clear, however, that Russia has not been able to exercise any influence on the regime in Pyongyang at all. The North Korean regime considers Russia to be a welcome ally to back it against the influence of both the United States and China, but apart from that, it does not see Russia as an important player on the peninsula – and Russia is aware of that. For both Russia and North Korea, their opportunistic relationship is a tool to accomplish higher goals, not a goal in itself.

The only ‘Russian’ success within the Six-Party Talks that should be mentioned was the small but critical involvement in the Banco Delta Asia affair. This bank in Macau was used for international transactions by the North Korean government but was declared ‘infected’ by the United States in September 2005, which meant that the North Korean accounts at this bank (consisting of at least US\$ 25 million) were frozen. North Korea used this incident as an argument to stall negotiations on the nuclear issue, refusing to talk as long as these bank accounts were not useable. It was only in February 2007 that, thanks to Russian assistance, this problem was solved. The money was transferred to a North Korean account at the Far Eastern Commercial Bank in Vladivostok, Russia, and could be used again. After this solution, negotiations on the nuclear issue could resume.²⁰¹

An important part of diplomatic bargaining during the Six-Party Talks has also been the issue of economic support, mainly oil deliveries, in exchange for North Korean concessions on its nuclear programme. Russia did offer this kind of support and as such contributed to a final deal on the nuclear issue.²⁰² It should be noted, however, that Russian economic support to the North Korean regime is nothing new; one could argue that only the phrasing of the reason for support has changed. Moreover, the amount of Russian economic support is relatively small, especially when compared to the support of states like China and South Korea. Just like the Russian diplomatic activities within the Six-Party Talks, Russian economic support to North Korea is often described as more symbolic than constructive.

The Importance of Russia’s Role

Considering the Russian role within the Six-Party Talks as ‘weak’ or ‘lacklustre’ does not mean that it could also be earmarked as ‘unimportant’. From the United States’ point of view, this may seem the case, because the Russians were not very helpful during the negotiations. From the North

201) International Crisis Group, *North Korea–Russia Relations: A Strained Friendship*, Asia Briefing no. 71 (Seoul / Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2007), p. 8.

202) International Crisis Group, *After the North Korea Nuclear Breakthrough: Compliance or Confrontation?*, Asia Briefing no. 62 (Seoul / Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2007), p. 10.

Korean and Russian perspectives, however, the Russian role was important and even to some extent successful.

From the North Korean perspective, the requirement of Russian participation in the negotiations has brought what it wished, at least to some degree. Within the Six-Party Talks, Russia has indeed functioned as an extra obstacle for US hardline policy statements. The North Korean viewpoint was that the more anti-US delegations at the negotiation table, the better. This proved a well-chosen strategy indeed, for the Six-Party Talks were undoubtedly somewhat more difficult and slower than Five-Party Talks would have been. In addition, Russian participation and support also gave China the desired signal that North Korea had more allies and was not completely dependent on Chinese benevolence.

From the Russian point of view, participation in the Six-Party Talks was also a success. Russia was able to show the world that it was back on the stage of international politics, that it was necessary for resolving important crises all over the world. Being present at the negotiation table itself was already an important success for Russia, no matter what actually happened at that table. In Russia's view, the Six-Party Talks could also be used to hinder US hegemony in the world, as well as China's importance in East Asia, thus creating a more multi-polar world than in earlier years. By showing Russian interest in the region and by often siding with South Korea, and to a lesser extent Japan, Russia also established better (economic) ties with countries that could be increasingly important for its economic purposes. Next to these successes at a high political level, one should also recognize that the outcome of the Six-Party Talks, which resulted in the 13 February 2007 Action Plan, is exactly what Russia had hoped for: North Korea will not produce any more nuclear weapons; no armed conflict took place; and North Korea's regime is still functioning. Instability on the Korean Peninsula – whether from war, a nuclear arms race or a collapsing North Korean regime – is a worst-case scenario for Russia and has been prevented successfully thus far. While observers may call Russia's performance weak, from the Russian perspective there is little to complain about: even without a lot of effort, all of its goals have been accomplished.

Future Russian Involvement

Russia's role within the international framework concerning North Korea will not easily change. Its somewhat opportunistic relationship with North Korea has thus far proven to be fruitful for both Russia and North Korea, so one may expect it to be continued. Both regimes have the common goal of stability in North Korea, which is why Russia will continue to back North Korea against too severe international measures, especially military ones, by other states (especially the United States). Nevertheless, the 'friendship' between Russia and North Korea is mostly symbolic. Both states know that their relationship is nothing more than opportunism. As long as both are able to use the relationship for their own (be it small) profit, why should it change?

Conclusions: Politics, Diplomacy and the Nuclear Crisis

Jan Melissen and Koen De Ceuster

These conclusions do not go into detailed comparisons of the different players' performances in the bargaining process, nor do they provide a formal analysis of the negotiations as a whole. The emphasis is rather on the relevant context and background of the negotiations from the perspective of the six participating countries. This approach is premised on the belief that analysis of the wider domestic and international contexts in which the bargaining takes place is important for our understanding of evolving international relationships. While this perspective has clear empirical limits and does not aspire to contribute to theory-building, it may cast a useful light on some of the wider diplomatic and political considerations of the countries with a direct stake in the North Korean nuclear crisis.

Pessimists and Optimists

Making predictions about the North Korean nuclear crisis has always been a hazardous business. Insiders closely involved in the multifaceted negotiations, which are aimed at reducing regional instability in East Asia and the global proliferation of nuclear weapons, have generally been cautious when it comes to looking ahead. With so many different security and non-security issues at stake, and with each of the powers involved pursuing their own national interests, it is wise to celebrate small steps forward in the negotiations without extrapolating such progress to future prospects. More than fifteen years after

the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) presented its initial report on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, or North Korea), North Korea has made significant advances in acquiring a nuclear weapons' capability. However small, North Korea is listed among the world's nuclear powers, and speculation based on the historical record suggests that its removal from the club of nuclear 'haves' is *unlikely* to be imminent. There are no precedents of countries voluntarily giving up their best military assets in the face of perceived hostility by other states. Certainly, in the course of the lengthy talks on North Korea's nuclear crisis, negotiating an agreed outcome has not become any easier. This may be seen as evidence that North Korea is defending its national interests well. Phrased in a more antagonistic way, it can be seen as proof of the tyranny of the weak at work. Meanwhile, the great irony of the threat posed by this small country is, of course, that it is heavily dependent on humanitarian aid and economic assistance from exactly those states that its idiosyncratic behaviour irks. The need for such support has only conditioned North Korean negotiation strategy to a limited extent, although it has successfully tried to reap economic rewards from the concessions that it makes.

Some countries condemn outright the North Korean political system and stick to a policy of diplomatic isolation, while others, with a diplomatic predisposition to talk and to help the North Koreans, have opted to recognize the DPRK's government and to use engagement and negotiations as a lever to open North Korea up. The pessimists claim that North Korea is fundamentally unreliable and that its regime has a pathological inclination to renege on its given word. This is the line of argument that has been pursued by US ideological hardliners, with little understanding for North Korean fears of encirclement. Some even go so far as to embrace the notion of 'regime change' as the ultimate solution to overcome the existing deadlock, and to integrate North Korea forcefully into the society of states. The optimists, meanwhile, have argued that engagement has brought gradual and demonstrable progress in the talks and that it has made North Korea more amenable to international reason. They point to the 1994 Agreed Framework that brought a negotiated end to the first nuclear crisis, and the agreements reached through negotiations in the multilateral setting of the Six-Party Talks (SPT) aimed at ending the second nuclear crisis. Optimists also make the point that North Korea has reached out to its former foes: South Korea, through cross-border economic cooperation; and Japan, by showing a willingness to address the issue of Japanese abductees.

Whatever their opposing viewpoints, pundits at both extremes of the spectrum coincide in their assessment that solving the crisis is likely to be a long-term affair. The changed format of negotiations with North Korea from bilateral to multilateral talks – as much as the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan taking priority in US national security policy and pressure from China and other East Asian powers to invest in diplomacy – have dampened the viability of US military options, an idea that has always been severely criticized by all countries in the region. In the current political climate in the

United States, it is Iran rather than North Korea that is more likely to become eligible for punitive military action by the United States (and Israel) – even though the North Koreans are well ahead of Iran in terms of developing a nuclear weapons’ capability. To be sure, the changing modes of diplomacy employed in the talks with North Korea have been of considerable significance. One effect of the Six-Party Talks that has been skilfully exploited by China – notably in the run-up to the Joint Statement of September 2005 – was that the multilateral character of the talks became instrumental in urging the United States to take a more accommodating stance. As a result, little more than three-and-a-half years after President Bush’s ‘axis of evil’ speech, the United States agreed to negotiations with North Korea prior to the ‘complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement’ (CVID) of its nuclear weapons’ capability. In the US presidential election year 2008, unilateralist and military options may still be tabled in US domestic debates about policy towards so-called ‘rogue states’, but in actual fact they have been all but ruled out.

If anything characterizes diplomacy in adversarial negotiations, apart from its inherent complexity, it is that many rounds of talks may produce little progress. In the absence of congenial international conditions and the sort of chemistry that produces negotiated agreements, skilful diplomatic manoeuvring can be painstakingly slow in delivering results. Although expectations and excitement about the first summit meeting between the political leaders of North and South Korea in June 2000 were very high, immediate results did not match the media frenzy. The momentum seemed to result in protracted negotiations with few apparent political results. The second inter-Korean summit meeting in October 2007 garnered far less international attention. The same can be said of the equally symbolic and potentially far-reaching summit meetings between North Korea’s Kim Jong-Il and Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi in 2002 and 2004. Cold War experience with diplomatic meetings at the highest levels had already taught global public opinion that summitry between conflicting powers is no miracle cure. This sobering lesson applies even more to the post-Cold War climate of continuing mutual suspicion in North-East Asia.

A New Format for the Talks

After the North Korean nuclear crisis flared following the United States’ accusation that North Korea had secretly developed a programme to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons, expectations that a dramatic breakthrough would result in North Korea giving up its nuclear capability quickly evaporated. Fears that North Korea’s trade with other ‘rogues’ could contribute to the spread of nuclear weapons’ technology only nurtured ideological hardliners and further complicated a return to the negotiation table. A creative solution was needed to break the threat of a lasting deadlock. Such a solution was not so much found in the tabling of new proposals, but

rather in a new format for the talks. The multilateral six-way talks offered a way out of the deadlock between the United States and the DPRK and injected new life into the process by including all of North-East Asia's regional powers. The scope of the negotiations was also expanded to include other outstanding regional issues of mutual tension. As proposed by the Chinese, the Six-Party Talks created the possibility for separate bilateral talks between US and North Korean negotiators in the wings of a broader setting, and it combined formal rounds of talks with informal side meetings. Separate consultations between the Chinese and all of the other parties offered opportunities for pre-negotiations, sorting out a number of procedural and agenda issues before and between different rounds of talks. On matters of substance, the new format opened the way to include other issues in deliberations with North Korea, thus dealing with several of the North-East Asian participants' concerns. Normalization of relations with North Korea did, of course, remain subject to bilateral policies of countries such as Japan and the United States.

The flexible format and approach of the Six-Party Talks – outside established international fora such as the United Nations, but backed up by their resolutions and declarations – is evidence of a growing informal multilateralism, dealing with specific issues and conflicts. This is no new phenomenon. Various security crises have benefited from the use of contact groups that revived flagging diplomatic processes, including the Western Contact Group on South Africa in the 1970s, the Contadora Group in Latin America in the 1980s and more recently the Contact Group on Bosnia, which was created in the mid-1990s. One of the difficulties that the newly created Six-Party Talks had in common with these initiatives was the challenge of reconciling common interests with separate national interests. A notable difference was, of course, that the above-mentioned informal groupings did not deal with security issues that share both regional and global dimensions – that affect the stability and security of the international system as a whole. In a broader sense, the Six-Party Talks reflect a more recent tendency of states looking for international solutions outside or at the fringes of international organizations, not only in the field of security but also on low-politics' issues and in institutions like the World Trade Organization or such regional groupings as the European Union. In recent debates in the United States, politicians and scholars have even been exploring the merits of a global informal grouping of democratic states as a better alternative for a fledgling United Nations.

Mediation and Great Power Cooperation

China's diplomatic role in dealing with the North Korean nuclear crisis stands out clearly. By performing the role of convenor and mediator, the Beijing government managed to enhance China's standing in regional security. It also contributed to a partial reframing of China's security relationship with the

United States in East Asia. Although these gains may have come at the expense of Chinese influence on North Korea, Chinese mediation certainly contributed to a lessening of tension between the two main rivals in the crisis: the United States and North Korea.

China's first tactical success in the multilateral talks was that the new format that had replaced direct bilateral negotiations created an opportunity to exercise pressure on the United States, instead of the united front against North Korea that Washington had been expecting. In the broader scheme of things, the significance for China of the Six-Party Talks centred on another longstanding Asian crisis – between China and Taiwan. A degree of Sino-American joint management of cross-Straits tensions was a historical novelty and reached a high point with the debate on Taiwan's referendum on the application for UN membership in late 2007 and early 2008. Although cooperation between the two great powers on Taiwan should not be exaggerated, this episode clearly demonstrated the potential for a future regional rapprochement on security matters. It underscored the point that increased political-military collaboration, and perhaps even the creation of new regional security frameworks, may one day become a feasible result of the dialectics of international security in East Asia.

Last but not least, the Chinese government's proactive stance in dealing with the North Korean nuclear crisis – China's first opportunity to demonstrate its potential as a powerful international mediator – compensated for Western criticisms that had been levelled against its behaviour in other crises over Iran, Sudan, Myanmar and Zimbabwe. On the strength of its performance as an honest broker in Asia, the Chinese government might well take a serious look at future mediation opportunities in Asia, just as the United States acquired a reputation as a mediator in the Middle East in the last quarter of the 20th century.

The Six-Party Talks also offered the United States various opportunities. While US fears about China's threat to its national security interests have a long Cold War pedigree, the Six-Party Talks resulted in a considerable learning curve for the US government. Not only did the talks demonstrate the feasibility of cooperation with China on specific Asian security issues, they also underscored that US fears about China's rise and its encroachment upon established security interests in Asia should not be exaggerated. The fact that the six-nation forum offered room for a considerable relaxation in the political climate between China and the United States was no mean feat against the background of longstanding frictions and mutual suspicion in the Sino-American relationship. The Six-Party Talks proved that against a backdrop of great power rivalry, China and the United States also share common regional interests. At the same time, the United States did learn from the process that China's influence on North Korea is less comprehensive than it had previously anticipated. Even though US security policy in East Asia is no longer a simple zero-sum game, such a minor adjustment in US understanding of the balance of power on the Korean Peninsula matters in the strategic calculations that are made in Washington.

US policy-making on North Korea has been neither consistent nor very effective. It failed to achieve key policy aims on denuclearization, but neither did the ideologues in the US administration bring the realization of regime change any closer. The stand-off between hardliners and pragmatists over how to deal with the nuclear crisis may have led to policy paralysis during George W. Bush's first administration, but it did help to reinforce its tough stance on 'rogue regimes'. With the US armed forces tied down in Iraq and Afghanistan, and with the United States' regional allies steering a much more cautious course, not much more than tough posturing remained. In a climate of protracted US policy incoherence, however, pragmatism eventually prevailed over ideological dogmatism. It was a final victory for diplomacy over the military solutions that circulated from time to time within the US defence establishment.

The broad outline of US negotiating positions was mainly reached in domestic debates, but alliance politics did influence their implementation. South Korea and Japan, both of which have security alliances with the United States, but also the other participants in the Six-Party Talks, put pressure on the United States to accommodate its initial, inflexible CVID position. From the 2005 Joint Statement onwards, little in the United States' conduct at the Six-Party Talks reminded of previous governmental rhetoric on confronting and isolating rogue states. One important side-effect of this changed US attitude and the dominant role of the US State Department in formulating negotiating strategies is the continued prominence of its bilateral relations with both South Korea and Japan on the United States' agenda.

Societal and Economic Dimensions

The roles of South Korea and Japan – as regional players – in the Six-Party Talks are limited, although not at all insignificant, while in terms of security both states are much more at risk in this crisis than either China or the United States. South Korea's foreign relations are largely dominated by governing and, during the last decade, by overcoming the nation's division. Successive South Korean governments have been keenly aware that rapprochement and reconciliation with the North cannot be achieved in isolation but demand a permanent balancing act on both domestic and international tightropes. For South Korea, the nuclear crisis impedes swift progress in inter-Korean relations. The Six-Party Talks are an important and necessary international phase in a multifaceted peace process for the Korean Peninsula. For Japan, the nuclear crisis erupted at a time when it made a first serious attempt to build bridges with North Korea. Keenly aware that it is within reach of North Korean missiles, Japan sought to mend the inimical relations through bilateral diplomacy. Public outcry, however, over North Korea's admission that it had indeed kidnapped Japanese citizens soon overshadowed this much more fundamental security concern. At the Six Party Talks, Japan's role is muted and largely driven by domestic pressure to get to the bottom of the kidnapped

Japanese citizens' case. Beyond this emotionally charged issue, Japan uses this multilateral forum to address its bilateral security concerns. The bottom line for Japan is that it can never lose sight of the fact that it is potentially within reach of North Korean nuclear delivery vehicles, and for this reason the crisis goes to the heart of its national defence. In their own different ways, South Korea and Japan thus share past experiences with North Korea that loom large in domestic politics and that put their bilateral relations under permanent pressure.

A divided nation that has started on the path of reconciliation, the two Koreas share a historical, economic and societal interdependence, which has resulted in a political relationship that is both close and distant, relatively stable and incident-prone, focused on military defence but that is increasingly developing social and economic ties. Wary of US unilateralism, South Korea has been a staunch supporter of the Six-Party Talks, arguing passionately that only a negotiated solution will resolve this crisis. South Korea's delicate relationship with the North has led it to keep a relatively low profile and it has mainly operated behind the scenes. Yet South Korea's position is unique: it has a keen understanding of the North Korean position, while it is tied to a security alliance with the United States. For Seoul, the Six-Party Talks are vital to eliminate the nuclear threat, achieve peace and, ultimately, unification. In that sense, the Six-Party Talks not only intertwine but are a necessary sequel to South Korea's own efforts to engage the North bilaterally. South Korea has been successful in developing a *modus vivendi* with its northern neighbour through sustained engagement since the end of the Cold War, following decades of tense but largely peaceful coexistence. Not surprisingly, its engagement approach clashed and was undermined by more confrontational tendencies in US policy. South Korea's best contribution has indeed been intensive shuttle diplomacy between regular SPT sessions, while stubbornly pursuing its own policy of engagement, which contributed to avoiding security risks, strengthening economic ties, stimulating humanitarian contacts and providing aid. Its approach in the past decade has produced spectacular results in fields as diverse as economic relations, military confidence-building and promoting family ties and cross-border tourism. The importance of this approach for the Korean Peninsula's peace process can be easily overlooked by accounts that focus on multilateral bargaining and an exclusively security-oriented analysis of the crisis. As in other peace processes around the world, however, step-by-step pre-negotiation moves, and an improvement of the broader societal and political climate in which formal talks take place, are necessary conditions for achieving results at the negotiation table.

One-issue politics, economic diplomacy and its relationship with the United States help to make sense of Japan's calculations in its relations with North Korea. As in the case of South Korea, Japan's calculus of its stakes in the crisis did not always lead it to support US positions. In the field of security policy it cannot be taken for granted that Japan is the United States' unsinkable aircraft carrier in East Asia. Its views have always contrasted

sharply with those of US hardliners and the Bush administration's confrontational approach to North Korea. For Japan, the alliance with the United States is and always has been a cornerstone of foreign policy, but North Korea's ambitions in the field of security also opened new perspectives. Japan's proponents of stronger self-defence forces and an independent missile defence capability have exploited the North Korean nuclear threat as a potential opportunity, and they therefore have fewer qualms about the status quo.

Never an enthusiastic participant in the Six-Party Talks, Japan eventually performed the role of spoiler. By making a more forthcoming attitude in the field of financial compensation conditional upon North Korea's handling of the abductees' controversy, successive Japanese governments used the issue not only to strengthen their position in the multilateral talks but also for political gains at home. North Korea has always had the capacity to stir up domestic politics in Japan, and harmonizing Japanese national sentiments with the requirements of the international talks was never easy. While Japan – the world's second economic power – remained a peripheral player in the international talks, it did, however, succeed in using the abductees' issue as a diplomatic card. But Tokyo's obstruction did not make it popular in other capitals, and it is remarkable that Japan's contributions as a regional great power were bound to remain largely circumstantial, certainly in comparison with the roles played by the United States, China and even South Korea. Japan and North Korea never warmed much to one another. The ambiguity in Japan's commitment to developing bilateral relations with North Korea is best expressed by the sharp downturn of Japan's trade with North Korea during the period 2002–2006, following the imposition of successive waves of trade restrictions.

In contrast with the complicated South Korean and Japanese foreign policy puzzles, Russia's stakes in the crisis were much more limited and its interests have always been quite straightforward. Its participation in the Six-Party Talks since 2003 was first of all a matter of status for Russia. Its three key policy aims were: stability on the Korean Peninsula; avoidance of the United States' influence in North Korea (and, by extension, the region); and the promotion of Russian economic interests in the region as a whole. In contrast with the high stakes involved for other powers, the Six-Party Talks are for Russia more of a game of chess, where North Korea could ideally become a bridgehead to its southern neighbour, reaping handsome economic benefits through adeptly juggling its amicable relations with both Koreas. It is also crucial for Russia that nominal recognition of its great-power status in Asia leads to economic gains. Russia's diplomatic goals in the multilateral Six-Party Talks are maintaining the status quo on the Korean Peninsula and stability in the region. On a bilateral level, it offers its good offices as an inter-Korean broker. The hope in Russia is that this supporting role will eventually leave it with a substantial peace dividend through expanded trade and investment in, and with, both Koreas.

Coming Full Circle: Pyongyang's Place in the World

From the moment when the second nuclear crisis exploded in the face of North Korea, it has followed a double strategy of seeking a negotiated settlement with the United States, while at the same time preparing for the worst. This double strategy follows from the belief that weakness never pays in international affairs. North Korea only proceeds in diplomatic negotiations from a (perceived) position of strength. When its initial pleas for negotiations with the United States over the highly enriched uranium allegation were rejected, North Korea moved ahead with building up its nuclear deterrent. This was both a provocation and a warning to the United States that, without talks, it would find itself confronted with the nightmare that it dreaded so much: a nuclear-armed North Korea. On the other hand, it was also a calculated move to enhance the DPRK's security in the face of open hostility on the part of the Bush administration.

That North Korea proved forthcoming after having conducted its nuclear test is testimony to its belief that it now held sufficient leverage over the United States to achieve its ultimate goals of removing the military threat and achieving a normalization of relations with the US. Initially a reluctant participant in the Six-Party Talks, North Korea has since warmed to them as it has seen how their momentum initially swung against the United States' inflexible position. The structure of the Six-Party Talks suits North Korea, in so far as various working groups deal with specific bilateral issues, first and foremost being the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, which is closely tied to normalization of relations with the United States. Verifiably removing the US nuclear threat against the DPRK will allow North Korea to give up its own limited stock of plutonium.

North Korea is no longer in a position to pose a credible threat to South Korea. Gone are the days when it sought to communize the South. It now seeks peaceful coexistence with its neighbours. The historical imperative to overcome the division of Korea remains as powerful as ever both North and South of the demilitarized zone. Inter-Korean relations cannot proceed to their full extent as long as relations with the United States remain tense. Normalization of relations with the United States would bring a considerable peace dividend. The agenda of the Six-Party Talks also covers the normalization of relations with Japan, a process that had started in earnest just weeks before the outbreak of the second nuclear crisis. Here, too, the incentive for North Korea was, and remains, the peace dividend that it hopes to reap.

Progress in inter-Korean affairs also hinges on a peace treaty being signed to end formally the Korean War. Because there is an international dimension to the termination of the Korean War, agreement on a peace regime for the Korean Peninsula is also part of the Six-Party Talks. If and when the agenda of the Six-Party Talks is fully realized, the geopolitical map of North-East Asia will be fundamentally redrawn. The North Korean leadership is aware that for a small nation surrounded by big powers, a multilateral framework

may be conducive to the protection of its interests. It is from this perspective that a continued US presence in the region is not opposed by North Korea's Kim Jong-Il, who sees a regional role for the United States in maintaining Korea's security.

In the end, something good may come from a crisis that should never have happened. As with the reasons for starting the Iraq War, the question is whether the available intelligence and its assessment, and the interpretation of North Korean First Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Kang Sok-Ju's admission of the existence of a secret uranium enrichment programme, warranted jeopardizing the 1994 Agreed Framework. Now that diplomacy is running its course, it is important to reiterate that other ways of dealing with the crisis were for a long time ignored. Now that informal multilateralism has reasserted itself, the Six-Party Talks provide a model for what is in practice a security dialogue in North-East Asia, where intersecting domestic, regional and global interests are debated. It remains to be seen whether the present dialogue has the potential to become permanent and institutionalized, and, if so, what its scope may eventually be.

Appendix 1

The North Korean Nuclear Crisis and the Six Party Talks - A Chronology

2002

- 27 Aug. US informs Japan of the suspicion of a secret DPRK uranium enrichment programme
- 17 Sept. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi visits Pyongyang for first-ever bilateral summit
- 3-5 Oct. US assistant Secretary of State James Kelly confronts DPRK with US allegations of a secret uranium enrichment programme during visit in Pyongyang
- 16 Oct. US announces DPRK admitted to secret nuclear weapons programme
- 18 Oct. Five abducted Japanese citizens on a home visit allowed by DPRK fail to return to Pyongyang.
- 20 Oct. Inter-Korean talks in Pyongyang overshadowed by nuclear crisis.
- 14 Nov. Bush threatens to halt KEDO oil shipments to DPRK unless Pyongyang ends its nuclear programme
- 11 Dec. A shipment of DPRK made Scud-missiles bound for Yemen is intercepted upon US request, but allowed to proceed to destination.
- 12 Dec. DPRK threatens to reactivate its nuclear programme in response to the suspension of oil shipments. Pyongyang blames US for wrecking 1994 Agreed Framework.
- 13 Dec. DPRK asks IAEA to remove monitoring equipment from Yongbyon nuclear site

- 22 Dec. DPRK removes monitoring equipment
- 24 Dec. DPRK begins repairing Yongbyon nuclear installations
Ongoing Inter-Korean talks on cross border links stall.
- 25 Dec. Pyongyang begins reloading Yongbyon nuclear reactor
- 27 Dec. DPRK expels two IAEA inspectors and announces reactivation
of reprocessing plant.

2003

- 6 Jan. IAEA passes resolution threatening referral to UNSC
- 10 Jan. DPRK announces withdrawal from NPT
- 12 Jan IAEA finds DPRK in breach of its Safeguards Agreement and
refers the case to UNSC
- 23 Jan. Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov visits
Pyongyang in an effort to mediate
- 5 Feb. DPRK declares to have reactivated its nuclear facilities
- 24 Feb. DPRK test fires a missile into the East Sea
- 25 Feb. Roh Moo-hyun sworn in as president of ROK
- 2 Mar. Four DPRK fighter jets shadow a US reconnaissance plane in
international airspace
- 10 Mar. DPRK test fires another missile into the East Sea
- 31 Mar. US President Bush announces the Proliferation Security
Initiative in Cracow, Poland.
- 1 Apr. US announces that Stealth fighters on exercise in ROK will stay
there
- 9 Apr. UNSC expresses concern about DPRK withdrawal from NPT
- 12 Apr. DPRK drops insistence on bilateral talks with US
- 18 Apr. DPRK announces start to reprocessing of nuclear fuel rods
- 23-26 Apr. Three-Party Talks in Beijing
- 12 May DPRK scraps 1992 Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of
the Korean Peninsula
- 9 June DPRK says it will build a nuclear deterrent unless US gives up
its hostile policy
- 12 July DPRK announces completion of reprocessing of spent fuel rods
- 1 Aug DPRK agrees to Six-Party Talks
- 27-29 Aug. First round of Six-Party Talks
- 16 Oct DPRK announces it will 'physically display' its nuclear deterrent
- 21 Nov. KEDO suspends construction of two light water nuclear
reactors in DPRK

2004

- 10 Jan Unofficial US scientific team visits Yongbyon site and is shown
weapons-grade plutonium
- 25-28 Feb. Second round of Six-Party Talks
- 12-14 May First working group meeting of SPT

- 22 May Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi visits Pyongyang, second summit
- 21-23 June Second working group meeting of SPT
- 23-26 June Third round of Six-Party Talks
- 2 July Secretary of State Colin Powell meets DPRK Foreign Minister Paek Nam-Sun during ASEAN Regional Forum meeting in Jakarta
- 28 Sept DPRK announces possession of nuclear weapons

2005

- 14 Jan. DPRK willing to restart stalled SPT
- 19 Jan Condoleezza Rice during confirmation hearings as secretary of state calls DPRK an ‘outpost of tyranny’ where the US must bring freedom
- 10 Feb DPRK indefinitely suspends participation in SPT
- 2 March DPRK declares end to self-imposed moratorium on ballistic missile testing
- 31 March DPRK declares itself a ‘fully-fledged nuclear weapons state’ ready to participate in ‘disarmament talks’ on ‘equal footing’ during SPT
- 18 Apr DPRK has shut down Yongbyon reactor to extract fuel rods for reprocessing (completed on 11 May)
- 1 May DPRK test fires short-range missile into East Sea
- 13 May US special envoy on the DPRK Joseph DeTrani meets DPRK diplomats in New York to assure them that US recognises DPRK sovereignty and has no intention to attack.
- 16 May First inter-Korean talks held in 10 months
- 22 June First inter-Korean ministerial talks held in 1 year
- 9 July DPRK announces readiness to return to SPT
- 12 July ROK offers electricity to DPRK in return for end to nuclear weapons programme
- 26 Jul.-
- 7 Aug. First session of fourth round of SPT ends in recess
- 13-19 Sept. Second session of fourth round of SPT agrees on Joint Statement of Principles
- 15 Sept. US Treasury designated the Macau-based Banco Delta Asia as a ‘primary laundering concern’ freezing 25 million dollars in DPRK accounts
- 20 Sept DPRK demands provision of civilian nuclear reactors in return for ending its nuclear programme
- 28-29 Oct. Chinese President Hu Jintao visits Pyongyang
- 9-11 Nov. First session of fifth round of SPT
- 6 Dec DPRK announces refusal to return to SPT until US lifts ‘financial sanctions’

2006

- 5 July DPRK test fires seven missiles, including a long-range Taep'odong 2 which fails shortly after launch
- 7 July ROK suspends food aid in protest at missile launches.
- 15 July UNSC unanimously adopts resolution 1695 condemning DPRK missile test
- 3 Oct DPRK announces it is to conduct a nuclear test 'to bolster its self-defence in the face of US military hostility'.
- 9 Oct. DPRK carries out nuclear test
- 14 Oct. UNSC adopts unanimously resolution 1718 imposing mandatory sanctions on DPRK
- 31 Oct. China announces SPT will reconvene soon.
- 18-22 Dec. Second session of fifth round of SPT ends without progress

2007

- 16-18 Jan. US-DPRK talks in Berlin
- 8-13 Feb. Third session of fifth round of SPT ends in adoption of an Agreement on Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement
- 14 Mar. US Treasury finalizes its ruling on the BDA case, thereby formally releasing the 25 million dollars in frozen DPRK accounts. Its ruling orders US financial institutions to sever ties with the bank and bars it from access to the US financial market.
- 13 Mar. Head of the IAEA Mohamed AlBaradei visits Pyongyang
- 15 Mar. US Treasury ends investigation into Banco Delta Asia
- 19-22 Mar. Session 1, part 1, of sixth round of SPT falter as DPRK is unable to access its frozen funds in BDA accounts
- 14 Apr DPRK misses 60-day deadline to implement its first phase commitments
- 12 June Russia offers to facilitate DPRK funds transfer
- 21 June US nuclear envoy Christopher Hill makes surprise visit to Pyongyang to break the deadlock
- 25 June DPRK announces receipt of its frozen funds
- 26 June IAEA inspectors arrive in DPRK for first time since their expulsion in 2002
- 14 July DPRK announces shut down of Yongbyon reactor after receipt of 50,000 tons of heavy fuel
- 18 July IAEA announces closure and sealing of DPRK Yongbyon nuclear facilities
- 18-20 July Session 1 part 2 of sixth round of SPT
- 2 Sept Bilateral US-DPRK talks in Geneva lead to DPRK commitment to declaration and disablement of all nuclear installations by the

- year end. DPRK announces the next day the US promised in return to remove it from list of state sponsors of terrorism
- 6 Sept. Israel attacks suspected nuclear site in Syria
- 27-30 Sept. Session 2, sixth round of SPT. DPRK agrees to declare its nuclear programmes and disable its Yongbyon nuclear installations. The Agreement on the Second Phase Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement is released in Beijing on 3 October.
- 2-4 Oct. Second North-South Korean Summit held in Pyongyang; 'Declaration on the Advancement of South-North Korean relations, peace and prosperity' signed by Roh Moo-hyun and Kim Jong-il
- 11 Oct. US-led team of nuclear experts arrives in Pyongyang to oversee the dismantlement of the Yongbyon nuclear facilities.
- 4 Dec. US nuclear envoy Christopher Hill visits Pyongyang and Yongbyon. He delivers a personal letter from President Bush to Kim Jong-Il, urging the latter to keep his pledge to reveal full details of all its nuclear programmes
- 31 Dec. DPRK misses deadline for declaration of its nuclear programmes

2008

- 31 Jan. Kim Jong-Il is said to remain committed to ending the DPRK nuclear programme
- 19 Feb. US-DPRK nuclear negotiators meet in Pyongyang but fail to make progress on a verification protocol
- 25 Febr. Lee Myung-bak (GNP) sworn in as ROK president
- 26 Febr. Concert in Pyongyang by New York Philharmonic Orchestra, broadcast live in NK
- 28 March DPRK test fires short-range missiles into the Yellow Sea
- 1 April First verbal attack of a ROK leader since 2000, in a DPRK newspaper commentary on ROK president Lee Myung-bak
- 8 April US-DPRK nuclear negotiators continue talks in Singapore on a verification protocol
- 25 April US accuses DPRK of helping Syria build a nuclear reactor, expressing concern over DPRK proliferation activities.
- 13 May DPRK hands 18,000 pages of documents over to a US envoy, detailing the operational history of its Yongbyon nuclear installations.
- 16 May US resumes food aid to DPRK (suspended since Jan 2006)
- 11-12 June Japan and DPRK hold bilateral talks in Beijing
- 26 June DPRK hands over declaration of its nuclear programmes to Chinese authorities
- 27 June DPRK symbolically destroys the cooling tower of its nuclear reactor in Yongbyon. President Bush initiates the process to

- remove the DPRK from the list of countries sponsoring terrorism.
- 11 July DPRK soldier fatally shoots ROK tourist at Mt. Kumgang tourist resort in DPRK
- 10-12 July Sixth round of SPT continued
- 24 July US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice meets for the first time DPRK Foreign Minister Park Ui-chun at the ASEAN Regional Forum meeting in Singapore.
- 12 Aug. The DPRK is not delisted as a state sponsor of terrorism due to lack of progress in reaching agreement on how to verify the comprehensiveness of the DPRK nuclear declaration
- 18 Aug. IAEA is informed of suspension of nuclear disablement process. IAEA continues monitoring the nuclear facilities
- 26 Aug. DPRK announces the suspension of the ongoing disablement of its Yongbyon installations citing US failure to remove it from the list of countries sponsoring terrorism
- 3 Sept. DPRK is said to have started reassembling installations at the Yongbyon facility.
- 9 Sept. DPRK celebrates 60th anniversary of its founding in the absence of its leader Kim Jong-Il, who allegedly had a stroke on 14 August.
- 24 Sept. IAEA reports removal of seals at the Yongbyon nuclear facilities.
- 1-3 Oct. Chief US negotiator Christopher Hill visits Pyongyang to force break through in verification deadlock.
- 2 Oct. Inter-Korean military talks convene for first time in eight months
- 7 Oct. DPRK test fires two short-range missiles in the Yellow Sea.
- 9 Oct IAEA monitors barred from access to Yongbyon nuclear site
- 11 Oct. US removes DPRK from list of countries sponsoring terrorism as DPRK agrees on resumption of disabling its nuclear facilities, accepting inspections to verify the comprehensiveness of its nuclear declaration.
- 12 Oct. DPRK allows international and IAEA inspectors to resume their monitoring work.

Sources: Rozman 2007; <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7265679.stm>;
http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/n_korea/6party/index.html;
http://www.dfat.gov.au/GEO/dprk/chronology_nuclear_issue.html;
<http://www.nautilus.org/napsnet/dr/index.html>

Appendix 2: Agreed Framework between the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Geneva, October 21, 1994

Delegations of the governments of the United States of America (U.S.) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) held talks in Geneva from September 23 to October 21, 1994, to negotiate an overall resolution of the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula.

Both sides reaffirmed the importance of attaining the objectives contained in the August 12, 1994 Agreed Statement between the U.S. and the DPRK and upholding the principles of the June 11, 1993 Joint Statement of the U.S. and the DPRK to achieve peace and security on a nuclear-free Korean peninsula. The U.S. and the DPRK decided to take the following actions for the resolution of the nuclear issue:

- Both sides will cooperate to replace the DPRK's graphite-moderated reactors and related facilities with light-water reactor (LWR) power plants.
- In accordance with the October 20, 1994 letter of assurance from the U.S. President, the U.S. will undertake to make arrangements for the provision to the DPRK of a LWR project with a total generating capacity of approximately 2,000 MW(e) by a target date of 2003.
- The U.S. will organize under its leadership an international consortium to finance and supply the LWR project to be provided to the DPRK. The U.S., representing the international consortium, will

serve as the principal point of contact with the DPRK for the LWR project.

- The U.S., representing the consortium, will make best efforts to secure the conclusion of a supply contract with the DPRK within six months of the date of this Document for the provision of the LWR project. Contract talks will begin as soon as possible after the date of this Document.
- As necessary, the U.S. and the DPRK will conclude a bilateral agreement for cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
- In accordance with the October 20, 1994 letter of assurance from the U.S. President, the U.S., representing the consortium, will make arrangements to offset the energy foregone due to the freeze of the DPRK's graphite-moderated reactors and related facilities, pending completion of the first LWR unit.
- Alternative energy will be provided in the form of heavy oil for heating and electricity production.
- Deliveries of heavy oil will begin within three months of the date of this Document and will reach a rate of 500,000 tons annually, in accordance with an agreed schedule of deliveries.
- Upon receipt of U.S. assurances for the provision of LWR's and for arrangements for interim energy alternatives, the DPRK will freeze its graphite-moderated reactors and related facilities and will eventually dismantle these reactors and related facilities.
- The freeze on the DPRK's graphite-moderated reactors and related facilities will be fully implemented within one month of the date of this Document. During this one-month period, and throughout the freeze, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will be allowed to monitor this freeze, and the DPRK will provide full cooperation to the IAEA for this purpose.
- Dismantlement of the DPRK's graphite-moderated reactors and related facilities will be completed when the LWR project is completed.
- The U.S. and the DPRK will cooperate in finding a method to store safely the spent fuel from the 5 MW(e) experimental reactor during the construction of the LWR project, and to dispose of the fuel in a safe manner that does not involve reprocessing in the DPRK.
- As soon as possible after the date of this document U.S. and DPRK experts will hold two sets of experts talks.
- At one set of talks, experts will discuss issues related to alternative energy and the replacement of the graphite-moderated reactor program with the LWR project.
- At the other set of talks, experts will discuss specific arrangements for spent fuel storage and ultimate disposition.

- The two sides will move toward full normalization of political and economic relations.
- Within three months of the date of this Document, both sides will reduce barriers to trade and investment, including restrictions on telecommunications services and financial transactions.
- Each side will open a liaison office in the other's capital following resolution of consular and other technical issues through expert level discussions.
- As progress is made on issues of concern to each side, the U.S. and the DPRK will upgrade bilateral relations to the Ambassadorial level.
- Both sides will work together for peace and security on a nuclear-free Korean peninsula.
- The U.S. will provide formal assurances to the DPRK, against the threat or use of nuclear weapons by the U.S.
- The DPRK will consistently take steps to implement the North-South Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.
- The DPRK will engage in North-South dialogue, as this Agreed Framework will help create an atmosphere that promotes such dialogue.
- Both sides will work together to strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime.
- The DPRK will remain a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and will allow implementation of its safeguards agreement under the Treaty.
- Upon conclusion of the supply contract for the provision of the LWR project, ad hoc and routine inspections will resume under the DPRK's safeguards agreement with the IAEA with respect to the facilities not subject to the freeze. Pending conclusion of the supply contract, inspections required by the IAEA for the continuity of safeguards will continue at the facilities not subject to the freeze.

When a significant portion of the LWR project is completed, but before delivery of key nuclear components, the DPRK will come into full compliance with its safeguards agreement with the IAEA (INFCIRC/403), including taking all steps that may be deemed necessary by the IAEA, following consultations with the Agency with regard to verifying the accuracy and completeness of the DPRK's initial report on all nuclear material in the DPRK.

Robert L. Gallucci
 Head of Delegation of the
 United States of America,
 Ambassador at Large of the
 United States of America

Kang Sok Ju
 Head of the Delegation of the
 People's Republic of Korea,
 First Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs
 of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Appendix 3

Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks Beijing, September 19, 2005

Following is a text of the joint statement at the conclusion of the fourth round of Six-Party Talks, as released in Beijing on September 19, 2005 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China.

Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks
Beijing 19 September 2005

The Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks was held in Beijing, China among the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America from July 26th to August 7th, and from September 13th to 19th, 2005. Mr. Wu Dawei, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, Mr. Kim Gye Gwan, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DPRK; Mr. Kenichiro Sasae, Director-General for Asian and Oceanian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan; Mr. Song Min-soon, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the ROK; Mr. Alexandr Alekseyev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation; and Mr. Christopher Hill, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs of the United States attended the talks as heads of their respective delegations. Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei chaired the talks. For the cause of peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia at large, the Six Parties held, in the spirit of mutual respect and equality, serious and practical talks

concerning the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula on the basis of the common understanding of the previous three rounds of talks, and agreed, in this context, to the following:

- The Six Parties unanimously reaffirmed that the goal of the Six-Party Talks is the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner.
- The DPRK committed to abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs and returning, at an early date, to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to IAEA safeguards.
- The United States affirmed that it has no nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula and has no intention to attack or invade the DPRK with nuclear or conventional weapons.
- The ROK reaffirmed its commitment not to receive or deploy nuclear weapons in accordance with the 1992 Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, while affirming that there exist no nuclear weapons within its territory.
- The 1992 Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula should be observed and implemented.
- The DPRK stated that it has the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The other parties expressed their respect and agreed to discuss, at an appropriate time, the subject of the provision of light water reactor to the DPRK.
- The Six Parties undertook, in their relations, to abide by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and recognized norms of international relations.
- The DPRK and the United States undertook to respect each other's sovereignty, exist peacefully together, and take steps to normalize their relations subject to their respective bilateral policies.
- The DPRK and Japan undertook to take steps to normalize their relations in accordance with the Pyongyang Declaration, on the basis of the settlement of unfortunate past and the outstanding issues of concern.
- The Six Parties undertook to promote economic cooperation in the fields of energy, trade and investment, bilaterally and/or multilaterally.
- China, Japan, ROK, Russia and the US stated their willingness to provide energy assistance to the DPRK.
- The ROK reaffirmed its proposal of July 12th 2005 concerning the provision of 2 million kilowatts of electric power to the DPRK.
- The Six Parties committed to joint efforts for lasting peace and stability in Northeast Asia.
- The directly related parties will negotiate a permanent peace regime on the Korean Peninsula at an appropriate separate forum.

- The Six Parties agreed to explore ways and means for promoting security cooperation in Northeast Asia.
- The Six Parties agreed to take coordinated steps to implement the afore-mentioned consensus in a phased manner in line with the principle of 'commitment for commitment, action for action'.
- The Six Parties agreed to hold the Fifth Round of the Six-Party Talks in Beijing in early November 2005 at a date to be determined through consultations.

Appendix 4

Beijing Agreement of February 13, 2007 - Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement

The Third Session of the Fifth Round of the Six-Party Talks was held in Beijing among the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and the United States of America from 8 to 13 February 2007. Mr. Wu Dawei, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, Mr. Kim Gye Gwan, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DPRK; Mr. Kenichiro Sasae, Director-General for Asian and Oceanian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan; Mr. Chun Yung-woo, Special Representative for Korean Peninsula Peace and Security Affairs of the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Mr. Alexander Losyukov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation; and Mr. Christopher Hill, Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs of the Department of State of the United States attended the talks as heads of their respective delegations. Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei chaired the talks.

I. The Parties held serious and productive discussions on the actions each party will take in the initial phase for the implementation of the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005. The Parties reaffirmed their common goal and will to achieve early denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner and reiterated that they would earnestly fulfill their commitments in the Joint Statement. The Parties agreed to take coordinated

steps to implement the Joint Statement in a phased manner in line with the principle of "action for action".

II. The Parties agreed to take the following actions in parallel in the initial phase:

1. The DPRK will shut down and seal for the purpose of eventual abandonment the Yongbyon nuclear facility, including the reprocessing facility and invite back IAEA personnel to conduct all necessary monitoring and verifications as agreed between IAEA and the DPRK.
2. The DPRK will discuss with other parties a list of all its nuclear programs as described in the Joint Statement, including plutonium extracted from used fuel rods, that would be abandoned pursuant to the Joint Statement.
3. The DPRK and the US will start bilateral talks aimed at resolving pending bilateral issues and moving toward full diplomatic relations. The US will begin the process of removing the designation of the DPRK as a state-sponsor of terrorism and advance the process of terminating the application of the Trading with the Enemy Act with respect to the DPRK.
4. The DPRK and Japan will start bilateral talks aimed at taking steps to normalize their relations in accordance with the Pyongyang Declaration, on the basis of the settlement of unfortunate past and the outstanding issues of concern.
5. Recalling Section 1 and 3 of the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005, the Parties agreed to cooperate in economic, energy and humanitarian assistance to the DPRK. In this regard, the Parties agreed to the provision of emergency energy assistance to the DPRK in the initial phase. The initial shipment of emergency energy assistance equivalent to 50,000 tons of heavy fuel oil (HFO) will commence within next 60 days. The Parties agreed that the above-mentioned initial actions will be implemented within next 60 days and that they will take coordinated steps toward this goal.

III. The Parties agreed on the establishment of the following Working Groups (WG) in order to carry out the initial actions and for the purpose of full implementation of the Joint Statement:

1. Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula
2. Normalization of DPRK-US relations
3. Normalization of DPRK-Japan relations
4. Economy and Energy Cooperation
5. Northeast Asia Peace and Security Mechanism

The WGs will discuss and formulate specific plans for the implementation of the Joint Statement in their respective areas. The WGs shall report to the Six-

Party Heads of Delegation Meeting on the progress of their work. In principle, progress in one WG shall not affect progress in other WGs. Plans made by the five WGs will be implemented as a whole in a coordinated manner.

The Parties agreed that all WGs will meet within next 30 days.

IV. During the period of the Initial Actions phase and the next phase - which includes provision by the DPRK of a complete declaration of all nuclear programs and disablement of all existing nuclear facilities, including graphite-moderated reactors and reprocessing plant - economic, energy and humanitarian assistance up to the equivalent of 1 million tons of heavy fuel oil (HFO), including the initial shipment equivalent to 50,000 tons of HFO, will be provided to the DPRK.

The detailed modalities of the said assistance will be determined through consultations and appropriate assessments in the Working Group on Economic and Energy Cooperation.

V. Once the initial actions are implemented, the Six Parties will promptly hold a ministerial meeting to confirm implementation of the Joint Statement and explore ways and means for promoting security cooperation in Northeast Asia.

VI. The Parties reaffirmed that they will take positive steps to increase mutual trust, and will make joint efforts for lasting peace and stability in Northeast Asia. The directly related parties will negotiate a permanent peace regime on the Korean Peninsula at an appropriate separate forum.

VII. The Parties agreed to hold the Sixth Round of the Six-Party Talks on 19 March 2007 to hear reports of WGs and discuss on actions for the next phase.

Appendix 5

Six Parties October 3, 2007 Agreement on 'Second-Phase Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement'

On October 3, 2007, the Six Parties – the United States, China, Japan, Russia, the DPRK, and the ROK – agreed on 'Second-Phase Actions for Implementation of the Joint Statement.'

The United States welcomes the October 3 agreement, which outlines a roadmap for a declaration of the DPRK's nuclear programs and disablement of its core nuclear facilities at Yongbyon by the end of the year. These Second-Phase actions will effectively end the DPRK's production of plutonium – a major step towards the goal of achieving the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. We intend to work closely with the other parties to implement Second-Phase actions as expeditiously and effectively as possible.

Under the terms of the October 3 agreement:

- The DPRK agreed to provide a complete and correct declaration of all its nuclear programs – including clarification regarding the uranium issue – by the end of the year.
- The DPRK agreed to disable all existing nuclear facilities subject to the September 2005 Joint Statement and February 13 Agreement. As a start, the core nuclear facilities at Yongbyon – 5-MW(e) nuclear reactor, reprocessing plant (Radiochemical Laboratory), and fuel rod fabrication facility – are to be disabled by the end of the year.

- The DPRK committed not to transfer nuclear materials, technology, or know-how.
- The United States reaffirmed its intent to fulfill its commitments regarding the removal of the designation of the DPRK as a state sponsor of terrorism and the termination of the application of the Trading with the Enemy Act (TWEA) with respect to the DPRK.
- U.S. action related to the terrorism designation and TWEA application will depend on the DPRK's fulfillment of its Second-Phase commitments on providing a declaration and disabling its nuclear facilities.
- The DPRK and Japan agreed to make 'sincere efforts' to normalize their relations.
- The other parties reaffirmed their commitment to providing the DPRK with economic, energy, and humanitarian assistance up to the equivalent of one million tons of heavy fuel oil (HFO), inclusive of the 100,000 metric tons that has already been delivered.
- The Six Parties remain committed to holding a ministerial level meeting in the near future.
- The October 3 agreement builds on the February 13 agreement on 'Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement,' pursuant to which the DPRK in July shut down and sealed the Yongbyon nuclear facility and invited back the IAEA to verify and monitor these activities.

Declaration

- The declaration will include all nuclear facilities, materials, and programs.
- The DPRK also agreed to address concerns related to any uranium enrichment programs and activities.

Disablement

- Specific disablement actions will be based on the findings of the U.S.-China-Russia experts who visited the DPRK September 11-15 to survey the facilities at Yongbyon.
- The goal of these actions is to ensure that the DPRK would have to expend significant time and effort to reconstitute its ability to produce weapons-grade plutonium.
- At the request of the Six Parties, the United States has agreed to lead disablement activities and provide the initial funding for those activities.
- As a first step, U.S. experts will lead another delegation to Yongbyon the week of October 8 to prepare to develop operational plans for disablement.
- A team of U.S. experts is expected to be back on the ground shortly thereafter to begin disabling the core facilities at Yongbyon, with the goal of completing disablement action by the end of the year, as agreed in the October 3 agreement.

- We anticipate that further disablement of other nuclear facilities at Yongbyon and elsewhere may extend beyond December 31, 2007.

U.S.-DPRK Relations: Terrorism/TWEA

- The criteria for removing a country's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism and lifting the application of the Trading with the Enemy Act (TWEA) are set forth in U.S. law.
- U.S. action related to the terrorism designation and TWEA application will depend on the DPRK's fulfillment of its commitments on providing a declaration and disabling its nuclear facilities.

Bibliography

Books and Reports

- Armstrong, Charles K. *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003.
- Armstrong, Charles K. 'US-North Korean Relations'. In John Feffer (ed.), *The Future of US-Korean Relations: The Imbalance of Power*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2006.
- Azizian, Rouben. 'Russia, North Korea and the Missile Diplomacy'. In Yongjin Zhang (ed.), *Whither the Six Party Talks? Issues, Stakes and Perspectives*. Auckland: New Zealand Asia Institute, University of Auckland, 2006.
- Beal, Tim. *North Korea: The Struggle against American Power*. London and Ann Arbor MI: Pluto Press, 2005.
- Berridge, G.R. and Nadia Gallo. 'The Role of the Diplomatic Corps: The US-North Korea Talks in Beijing, 1988-94'. In Jan Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice*. Houndmills: Macmillan, 1999.
- Chung, Jae-Ho. 'China's Ascendancy and the Korean Peninsula: From Interest Re-evaluation to Strategic Realignment?'. In David Shambaugh (ed.), *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics*. Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 2005.
- Creekmore, Marion Jr. *A Moment of Crisis: Jimmy Carter, The Power of a Peacemaker, and North Korea's Nuclear Ambitions*. New York: Public Affairs, 2006.

- Cummings, Bruce. *The Origins of the Korean War: Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes, 1945-1947*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981.
- Cummings, Bruce. *The Origins of the Korean War, II: The Roaring of the Cataract, 1947-1950*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- Cummings, Bruce. *North Korea Another Country*. New York and London: The New Press, 2004.
- Cummings, Bruce. *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History. Updated Edition*. New York and London: WW. Norton & Company, 2005.
- Feffer, John (ed.). *The Future of US-Korean Relations: The Imbalance of Power*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2006.
- Ford, Glyn (with Soyoun Kwon). *North Korea on the Brink: Struggle for Survival*. London and Ann Arbor MI: Pluto Press, 2008.
- Funabashi, Yoichi. *The Peninsula Question: A Chronicle of the Second Korean Nuclear Crisis*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2007.
- Gill, Bates. *Rising Star: China's New Security Diplomacy*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2007.
- Gills, Barry K. *Korea versus Korea: A Case of Contested Legitimacy*. London and New York: Routledge, 1996.
- Glaser, Bonnie, Scott Snyder and John S. Park. *Keeping an Eye on an Unruly Neighbor*. Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2007.
- Goldstein, Avery. *Rising to the Challenge: China's Grand Strategy and International Security*. Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.
- Goldstein, Avery. 'Across the Yalu: China's Interests and the Korean Peninsula in a Changing World'. In Alastair Ian Johnston and Robert S. Ross (eds), *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy*. Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2006.
- Ha, Yong-Chool and Beom-Shik Shin. *Russian Non-proliferation Policy and the Korean Peninsula*. Carlisle PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2006.
- Harrison, Selig S. *Korean Endgame: A Strategy for Reunification and US Disengagement*. Princeton NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002.
- Hilpert, H.G. *Südkoreas aussenpolitische Dilemmata*. Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 2007.
- Im Tongwŏn, P'isŭmeik'ŏ: Nambuk kwan'gye-wa Pukhaek munje 20nyŏn. *Im Tongwŏn hoigorok [Peacemaker: Twenty years of South-North Relations and the North Korean Nuclear Crisis. The Memoirs of Lim Dong Won]*. Seoul: Joongang Books, 2008.
- International Crisis Group. *After the North Korea Nuclear Breakthrough: Compliance or Confrontation?*, Asia Briefing No. 62. Seoul and Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2007.
- International Crisis Group. *North Korea-Russia Relations: A Strained Friendship*, Asia Briefing No. 71. Seoul and Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2007.

- Johnston, Alastair Ian and Robert S. Ross (eds). *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy*. Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2006.
- Kaseda, Yoshinori. 'Japan and the Korean Peace Process'. In Tae-Hwan Kwak and Seung-Ho Joo (eds), *The Korean Peace Process and the Four Powers*. Hampshire: Ashgate, 2003.
- Kim, Samuel S. *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Kim, Samuel S. 'China's New Role in the US–DPRK Nuclear Confrontation'. In John Feffer (ed.) *The Future of US–Korean Relations: The Imbalance of Power*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2006.
- Kim, Samuel S. *North Korean Foreign Relations in the Post-Cold War World*. Carlisle PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2007.
- Kwak, Tae-Hwan and Seung-Ho Joo (eds). *The Korean Peace Process and the Four Powers*. Hampshire: Ashgate, 2003.
- Kwan, C.H. *Japan's Two-faced Diplomacy in Shenyang*. Tokyo: RIETI, 21 May 2002.
- Lee, Chae-Jin. *A Troubled Peace: US Policy and the Two Koreas*. Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006.
- Manyin, Mark E. *Japan–North Korea Relations: Selected Issues*. CRS Report for Congress. Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, updated 18 April 2003.
- Melissen, Jan (ed.). *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice*. Houndmills: Macmillan, 1999.
- Nicksch, Larry and Raphael Pearl. *North Korea: Terrorism List Removal*. CRS Report for Congress. Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 14 January 2008.
- Oberdorfer, Don. *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History*. London: Little, Brown & Co., 1997.
- Ong, Russell. *China's Security Interests in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Routledge, 2007.
- Pritchard, Charles L. *Failed Diplomacy: The Tragic Story of How North Korea Got the Bomb*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2007.
- Ross, Robert S. 'Comparative Deterrence: The Taiwan Strait and the Korean Peninsula'. In Alastair Ian Johnston and Robert S. Ross (eds), *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy*. Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2006.
- Rozman, Gilbert. *Strategic Thinking about the North Korean Nuclear Crisis: Four Parties Caught between North Korea and the United States*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- Schoff, James L. *Political Fences and Bad Neighbours: North Korea Policy-Making in Japan and Implications for the United States*. Project report by the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis. 2006. Available online at <http://www.ifpa.org/pdf/fences.pdf>.
- Schouten, Peter. *China en Noord-Korea: Van beschermheer tot aanklager*. Unpublished Master's thesis. Groningen: Groningen University, 2007.

- Scobell, Andrew. *China and North Korea: From Comrades-in-Arms to Allies at Arm's Length*. Carlisle PA: US Army War College, 2004.
- Seymour, James D. 'The Exodus: North Korea's Out-Migration'. In John Feffer (ed.), *The Future of US-Korean Relations: The Imbalance of Power*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2006.
- Shambaugh, David (ed.). *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics*. Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 2005.
- Shigemura, Toshimitsu. *Chosen Hanto 'Kaku' Gaiko: Kitachosen no Senjutsu to Keizairyoku [Korean Peninsula 'Nuclear' Diplomacy: North Korea's Strategy and Economic Power]*. Tokyo: Kodansha, 2006.
- Shulong, Chu. 'The Security Challenges in North-East Asia: A Chinese View'. In *East Asian Security: Two Views*. Carlisle PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007.
- Sigal, Leon V. *Disarming Strangers: Nuclear Diplomacy with North Korea*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- Simpson, Gerry. *Great Powers and Outlaw States: Unequal Sovereigns in the International Legal Order*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Song, Changzoo. 'South Korea and the Six-Party Talks: Beyond the Missile Crisis'. In Yongjin Zhang (ed.), *Whither the Six-Party Talks? Issues, Stakes and Perspectives*. Auckland: New Zealand Asia Institute, 2006.
- Vorontsov, Alexander. *Current Russia-North Korea Relations: Challenges and Achievements*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 2007.
- Wit, Joel S., Danel B. Poneman and Robert L. Gallucci. *Going Critical: The First North Korean Nuclear Crisis*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2004.
- Zhang, Yongjin (ed.). *Whither the Six Party Talks? Issues, Stakes and Perspectives*. Auckland: New Zealand Asia Institute, University of Auckland, 2006.

Articles

- Arkin, William M. 'Secret Plan Outlines the Unthinkable: A Secret Policy Review of the Nation's Nuclear Policy Puts Forth Chilling New Contingencies for Nuclear War', *Los Angeles Times*. Saturday 9 March 2002. Available online at <http://www.commondreams.org/views02/0309-04.htm>.
- Ashizawa, Kuniko. 'Tokyo's Quandary, Beijing's Moment in the Six-Party Talks: A Regional Multilateral Approach to Resolve the DPRK's Nuclear Problem', *Pacific Affairs*. Vol. 19. No. 3. 2006.
- Butler, Nicola. 'North Korea Nuclear Talks End in Stalemate', *Disarmament Diplomacy*. No.73. October-November 2003. Available online at <http://www.acronym.org.uk/dd/dd73/73news01.htm>.
- Dingli, Shen. 'North Korea's Strategic Significance to China', *China Security*. Vol. 2. No. 4. 2006.
- Feffer, John. 'Asia's Hidden Arms Race', *Foreign Policy in Focus*. 13 February 2008.

- Green, Michael and James Prystup. 'The Abductee Issue is a Test of America's Strategic Credibility', *PacNet*. No. 45. 15 November 2007.
- Harrison, Selig S. 'Did North Korea Cheat?', *Foreign Affairs*. January/February 2005. Available online at <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20050101faessay84109/selig-s-harrison/did-north-korea-cheat.html>.
- Kaplan, Robert D. 'When North Korea Falls', *The Atlantic Monthly*. October 2006.
- KCNA. 'Conclusion of Non-Aggression Treaty between DPRK and US Called For'. 25 October 2002. Available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>.
- KCNA. 'Spokesman for DPRK Foreign Ministry on Peaceful Solution to Nuclear Issue'. 14 April 2003. Available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>.
- KCNA. 'KCNA on DPRK's Nuclear Deterrent Force'. 10 June 2003. Available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>.
- KCNA. 'DPRK's Determination to Strongly React to US Hardline Measure Reiterated'. 19 June 2003. Available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>.
- KCNA. 'KCNA Flails US Strategy for Pre-emptive Strike'. 30 July 2003. Available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>.
- KCNA. 'DPRK FM on its Stand to Suspend its Participation in Six-Party Talks for Indefinite Period'. 11 February 2005. Available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>.
- KCNA. 'Rodong Shinmun <önyak-ül chöbörinün ch'ösa> Cho-Mi chikjöp hoedam hoep'i' [Nodong Shinmun: 'Reverting on One's Pledge: Shirking Direct DPRK-US Talks']. 6 December 2005.
- KCNA. 'DPRK Foreign Ministry Spokesman on US Moves Concerning Its Nuclear Test'. 12 October 2006. Available online at <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>.
- Kim, Keun-Sik. 'Inter-Korean Relations and the Future of Sunshine Policy', *Journal of East Asian Affairs*. 2001.
- Kwak, Tae-Hwan. 'Resolving the North Korean Nuclear Issue through the Six-Party Process: A Creative Formula'. *The Journal of East Asian Affairs*. Vol. 20. No. 1. Spring-Summer 2006.
- Lague, David and Donald Greenless. 'Squeeze on Banco Delta Asia Hit North Korea where it Hurt: Disruption of Funds at Macao Bank Hits the Regime Hardest', *International Herald Tribune*. 18 January 2007.
- Lynn, Hyung-Gu. 'Vicarious Traumas: Television and Public Opinion in Japan's North Korea Policy', *Pacific Affairs*. Vol. 79. No. 3. 2006.
- Mazarr, Michael J. 'The Long Road to Pyongyang: A Case Study in Policymaking without Direction', *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 86. No. 5. September/October 2007.
- Park, Jae-Kyu. 'Prospects for Inter-Korean and US-DPRK Relations' (speech prepared for delivery at the Woodrow Wilson Center, 8 September 2008). Available online at

http://www.wilsoncenter.org/events/docs/JKPark-Dir.Forum_remarks08-Sept.08.pdf.

- Park, John S. 'Inside Multilateralism: The Six-Party Talks', *The Washington Quarterly*. Vol. 28. No. 4. 2005.
- Park, Kun-Young. 'An Appraisal of the Roh Administration's North Korea Policy', *East Asian Review*. Vol. 19. 2007.
- Sanger, David E. 'North Korea Says it Now Possesses Nuclear Arsenal', *New York Times*. 25 April 2003.
- Sanger, David E. and William J. Broad. 'US Had Doubts on North Korean Uranium Drive', *New York Times*. 1 March 2007.
- Snyder, Scott. 'Responses to North Korea's Nuclear Test: Capitulation or Collective Action?', *The Washington Quarterly*. Vol. 30. No. 4. Autumn 2007.
- Tanaka, Hitoshi. 'Five Myths about Dealing with North Korea: A Japanese Perspective', *East Asia Insights: Toward Community Building*. Vol. 2. No. 3. June 2007. Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange.
- UN News Service. 'UN Nuclear Chief meets with US Secretary Rice: Calls for Talks with DPR Korea, Iran', *UN News Center*. 24 October 2006.
- Weiner, Rebecca. 'Proliferation Security Initiative to Stem the Flow of WMD Materiel'. 16 July 2003. Online publication available at <http://cns.miis.edu/pubs/week/030716.htm>.
- Yoo, Ho-Keun. 'Current Issues in North-East Asia and Inter-Korean Relations: Evaluation and Prospect', *East Asia Review*. 2006.
- Zhang, Hui. 'Revisiting North Korea's Nuclear Test', *China Security*. Vol. 3. No. 3. 2007.
- Zhang, Liangui. 'Coping with a Nuclear North Korea', *China Security*. Vol. 2. No. 4. 2006.
- Zhu, Feng. 'Shifting Tides: China and North Korea', *China Security*. Vol. 2. No. 4. 2006.

Internet Resources

- Korea Central News Agency: <http://www.kcna.jp.co>
- The Institute for Far Eastern Studies, Kyungnam University:
<http://ifes.kyungnam.ac.kr>
- The Nautilus Institute: <http://www.nautilus.org>
- The International Atomic Energy Agency: <http://www.iaea.org>
- US Department of State: <http://www.state.gov>
- US Department of State's e-journal:
<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/journals.htm>