

MIB Capstone

Why Does North Korea Need Nuclear Weapons?

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DHP-P275 North Korean State & Society
Spring 2018

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April 7, 2018

Abstract

North Korea has been keeping its authoritarian regime for 70 years and this relatively small nation in north east Asia has been creating problems. The nuclear weapon issue is the most serious one among all those problems caused by this nation. North Korea is a poor country and the people face a hard time with the shortage of food. During the famine in the middle of the 1990s, a lot of North Korean citizens died. UN and many countries including the US, South Korea, and Japan try to help North Korea from a humanitarian standpoint. However, North Korea kept its military first-policy and spend a lot of budget on the military force.

It is difficult to understand why North Korea came this way. But analyzing the history of this nation since its foundation, Kim dynasty's goal is gradually coming out. It is how to keep its regime and complete the reunification of the two Koreas with the leadership of the North. For this purpose, North Korea shifted its way to the nuclear weapons and the problem has grown to be one of the most threatening issues in the world. There is limited information about North Korea, therefore by collecting every possible information source, this article can be made.

Since the beginning of 2018, the situation is dynamically moving and it is decided that Kim Jong-Un, the current supreme leader of North Korea is supposed to meet with President Moon Jae-In, and eventually with President Trump. Though it is still difficult to predict how North Korea issue will be developed, this article did a careful analysis and shows the possible scenarios from now on.

1. Introduction

North Korea has been one of the major states related to the nuclear weapon issue in the last three decades. Since the creation of the country, North Korea keeps its authoritarian regime under the reign of Kim dynasty for three generations whereas many countries have been democratized since 1945. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, there was a big movement of democratization among the former Soviet allies in eastern Europe. New-born Russia has changed its strategy of hegemony. China opened its economy to the capitalist market under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping and enjoyed its dramatic economic growth and consequently became the #2 GDP nation. In the Korean Peninsula, South Korea moved into the democratization when Roh Tae-woo declared his intention of democratization during his presidential campaign in 1987.

In the meantime, North Korea still keeps its regime as well as the anachronistic communism until now. In addition to that, the founder, Kim Il-Sung led the country to invade the southern part of the Korean peninsula so that he could reunify the territory under a single regime. After having paid too much cost, the Korean War was ceased and both sides agreed to have armistice in 1953.

There have been many provocations from North Korea since then but there was no war in the last 65 years. Nevertheless, the situation of the Korean peninsula is far from the peace. The current biggest issue is the security of the area including the surrounding countries and the United States. For those nations' concern, North Korea has been proceeding its nuclear weapon development for a long time.

In the 1990s, when it was evident that North Korea was elaborating its nuclear development program, the US, South Korea, and Japan tried to stop its program and the US reached the

Agreed Framework with North Korea by providing them with the light water reactors and temporal supply of heavy oil so that North Korea would not suffer from the shortage of the energy. It seems that many of the allies expected that the regime of North Korea would not last for a long time after the death of Kim Il-Sung in 1994. The United States might have been too optimistic and trusted North Korea's integrity too much. After all, North Korea kept on proceeding its nuclear development behind its faithful-looking attitude and the agreement was finally dismissed. President Bush criticized North Korea by calling it as one of "Axis of evil", which created a strong repulsion of North Korea under Kim Jong-Il's reign.

Meanwhile, North Korea had a serious damage to its agricultural production and it consequently caused a disastrous famine during 1994 and 1998. A lot of North Korean citizens lost their lives from starvation or hunger-related illnesses. The North Korean government argued that the main reason for the famine was the flood in 1995 but there was an apparent mistake in the agricultural policy at that time. The agricultural productivity dropped so much due to an illogical and stubborn policy conducted by the government. North Korea reportedly lost somewhere 240,000 and 3,500,000 lives out of 22million population during the famine period. In spite of such crucial situation, the North Korean government put the priority on keeping its regime with enormous expenditures on nuclear development program and maintaining Kumsusan Palace of the Sun, which is the mausoleum for Kim Il-Sung's corpse.

The main question of this article is why does North Korea need nuclear weapons under such circumstances. With the money they invested in the nuclear weapon development, they could have saved a lot of lives of North Korean citizens but they didn't do that. They are facing the United States as a plausible enemy and the tension has been kept quite high in the last three decades. What is the limit of patience for the United States? How will other related states such as

South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia behave to solve this issue? What is the intention of the United Nations and how will they be involved in North Korea nuclear issue? There are several future scenarios of this issue. Some of them might be really threatening for the related states and there is still a possibility to settle the problem in a peaceful manner without conducting any military action. This article will conduct careful analyses and introduce the best practice for the solution for this issue.

2. The background of this independent study

As a Japanese citizen, I have been concerned with North Korea's nuclear development for a long time. I had some knowledge of this issue together with that of the modern history of North and South Korea in the 20th century. After having studied further about the Korean peninsula and its international relationship with the US and Japan, I became much more interested in North Korea, which is quite curious in the world of 21st century. The information about North Korea is quite limited and there are various speculations regarding the intention of North Korea.

However, by analyzing that limited information such as the official propaganda of North Korea, interview of defectors, North Korea's behavior since its foundation in 1948, it is still possible to predict their next step. Will the regime last forever or collapse soon or later? What becomes of the future of North Korean people? How will related countries be influenced by the progress of North Korea issue? There are many questions in my mind and it is something like reading a mystery without clear clues plotted by the author.

I will make some arguments based on my thoughts and speculations after carefully collecting information from various sources. The situation is still changing day by day and I will try to be updated with my writings.

3. Security Issue

Nuclear is the most devastating weapon in the modern world. This is the common understanding of politics. Paradoxically, a nuclear weapon is a weapon not to use for the attack but for the deterrence. This is another common understanding among most of the nations in the world. In North East Asia, there are “three nuclear powers (Russia, China, North Korea), the world’s most advanced threshold nuclear weapons state (Japan), and two nuclear-capable states (South Korea, Taiwan)”¹. In addition to that, “it hosts a major strategic presence by the largest nuclear weapons power in the international system”², which is the US nuclear umbrella protecting South Korea and Japan. Namely, North East Asia is one of the densest areas of nuclear weapons. “There is no doubt that nuclear weapons will play a critical role in shaping whether this pivotal region is characterized by stability or instability”³.

After having developed its nuclear weapons, North Korea publicly explained that they needed nuclear weapons in order to protect the land and its people from the nuclear attack on the United States. Also, it declared that there would be no possibility to use nuclear weapons for its preemptive attack.⁴ The background of this statement is explained by the Korean War during 1950 and 1953. After the surrender of the Empire of Japan in 1945, the Korean Peninsula was treated under the trusteeship for a while and it was divided by the 38th parallel. The Soviet Union troops stationed in the North and the US army stationed in the South respectively. When both the North and the South founded the independent nations in 1948, the leaders of two Koreas had a

¹ Andrew O’Neil, *Nuclear Proliferation in Northeast Asia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 4.

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ Virginie Grezelczyk, *North Korea’s New Diplomacy*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 130

desire to reunify the peninsula. On June 25, 1950, the North provoked the fire to invade the South and it was the inception of the Korean War in which millions of people were killed during those three years. From the experience of the Korean War, North Korea had a stigma to fear the power of the United States, whose army had almost defeated Kim Il-Sung's army at the border with China. Even after they signed the armistice of the Korean War, the power of the US has been one of the major concerns for North Korea for its security.

Furthermore, North Korea saw the cases of Iraq and Libya, whose regimes were defeated by the US and its allied nations. North Korea believes that Iraq and Libya were attacked as they were not able to protect themselves with the sufficient capability. In other words, the lack of nuclear power deterrence made them collapsed. Saddam Hussein was arrested and sentenced to death after a brief process of prosecution whereas Gaddafi was brutally killed by the militias opposing him. The cases of those two dictatorship's collapse are the nightmare for the existing dictator, Kim family.

Pyongyang keeps in mind that President Bush referred Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as the "Axis of evil" in his State of the Union address in 2002 and one of those regimes was overthrown by the United States. Bush administration kept on denouncing that axis as the nations who support the terrorists and took a hard-line policy toward them. In the Bush administration, what we call neo-conservatism had an influential power through the politician such as Vice President Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense. The provocative voices of those executive members also irritated North Korea. As a matter of fact, the United States is the only nation, who used nuclear weapons against their enemy. The atomic bombs dropped on to Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 took 140,000 and 90,000 lives away and most of them were non-combatants. Those facts are sufficient to scare North Korea and make them believe that

nuclear weapon development is the only way to survive. In August 2017, US Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson stated in the press conference that the US has no intention to seek to realize the regime change in North Korea. He said, “We do not seek a regime change; we do not seek the collapse of the regime; we do not seek an accelerated reunification of the peninsula; we do not seek an excuse to send our military north of the 38th parallel. And we’re trying to convey to the North Koreans we are not your enemy, we are not your threat, but you are presenting an unacceptable threat to us, and we have to respond.”⁵ Meanwhile, President Trump has said several times that all options –including military strikes–remain on the table.⁶ President Trump has made various provocative statements toward North Korea, including Kim Jong-Un’s profile. For example, he tweeted on August 11th, 2017 as “Military solutions are now fully in place, locked and loaded, should North Korea act unwisely. Hopefully, Kim Jong-Un will find another path!”⁷ It is quite natural that North Korea doesn’t soften its aggressive propaganda to the United States, who sends such mixed-up messages. The current deadlock situation between the US and North Korea in the negotiation for peace talks attributes to the personality and immaturity of the leaders of both countries.

As of now, there are nine nuclear club members in the world. They are the US, Russia, UK, France, China, all of which ratified the treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Those five members thought that nuclear weapons would be a disastrous tool to extinct human kinds on the earth and agreed on NPT. However, several states showed interest in the nuclear weapon as a method to protect the country. They are India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea, none of which ratifies NPT. When India and Pakistan formally disclosed their nuclear

⁵ Jesse Johnson, “Tillerson rules out North Korea strikes, regime change, but mixed messages plague U.S. policy,” *The Japan Times News* August 2, 2017, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/08/02/asia-pacific/tillerson-rules-north-korea-strikes-regime-change-mixed-messages-plague-u-s-policy/#.Wph5w5PwZE4>

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Donald Trump Twitter Post, August 11, 2017, <https://twitter.com/realdonaldtrump/status/895970429734711298>

status to the world, both were condemned by the UN Security Council and received diplomatic and economic sanctions by some countries.⁸ Israel did not confirm nor deny its possession of nuclear weapons and they have not yet conducted any nuclear test in order to avoid any sanction. North Korea conducted its first nuclear test in 2006. Since then, it has conducted six nuclear tests and was imposed economic sanctions from the outer world.

When France announced its possession of nuclear weapons in 1960, few states had a concern as France was a long-standing democracy state as well as the member of the Western allies. By contrast, many states were concerned with the first nuclear test conducted by China four years later as it was a communist state and the world was afraid of its unpredictable usage of this weapon.⁹ This can be explained by the concept of “Balance of Threat”. Stephen Walt argues that States’ ideas of security are defined by a perceived threat, not a need to maintain a balance of power.¹⁰ According to Walt, there are four elements of threats. They are 1) Aggregate power, 2) Geographic proximity, 3) Offensive capabilities, 4) Offensive intentions. Former UK Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill explains the concept of threat quite simply:

The French Army is the strongest in Europe. But no one is afraid of France. Everyone knows that the French are peaceful and overhung by fear. Germany, on the other hand, fears no one.

This is what Churchill stated before WWII, when Germany was regarded as the threat for most European states. North Korea can be put in the same position of Germany under the Nazi administration in the 1930s. Apparently, North Korea shows their offensive intentions toward the United States and its allies.

⁸ O’Neil, *Nuclear Proliferation in Northeast Asia*, 63

⁹ Ibid, 64

¹⁰ Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, (Cornell University Press, 1987)

Walt also mentions that the peace has become the privilege of states with nuclear weapons and the wars after 1945 have been fought mainly by those without nuclear. Therefore, states feeling threatened to seek for the nuclear weapons for its survival.¹¹

4. Humanitarian Issue

It should not be ignored that there is a serious human right issue in North Korea. The North Korean government accepts foreign journalists, who would like to report the lifestyle of ordinary people. As is always the case, the itinerary is completely controlled and the western journalists are always accompanied by North Korean guides so that the journalists won't take pictures, shoot videos, and interview the citizens, who are not designated by the regime. A lot of videos can be watched on the web, broadcasted by foreign reporters and most of them are the shootings in Pyongyang, the capital of the state as well as the grand stage of citizen actors to show their manipulated behaviors to those visitors from abroad. In the reports of these foreign media, various spots in Pyongyang can be seen. A modern supermarket and a department store have a lot of groceries and fresh food on the shelves but a hidden handy video camera captures honest comments of a clerk, who carelessly confesses that the goods on the shelf are not for sale and she has no idea when they will receive products for sale. Western journalists are taken to the guided tour in a modern hospital. A man with a white coat guides the group of journalists. Apparently, he doesn't seem to be a real doctor. The guide shows one of the rooms for patients. A woman in pajama is waiting for the journalists to be interviewed and she keeps on talking how happy and lucky she is because she is treated with the state of the art medical technology. She also thanks her supreme leader, Kim Jong-Un as this becomes possible due to the hard work of the supreme

¹¹ Walt, the origins of alliance

leader. Western journalists have a chance to visit one of the apartment houses where they can see the daily life of ordinary people. The residents are typical families, a wife, and a husband with their kid(s). The flat is neat and comfortable with new furniture and new electronic products such as flat TV, stereo system, refrigerator, washing machine...etc. Here again, the couple tells that they are so happy and thankful to their supreme leader. In all of these scenes, we can sense that there is no evidence that the residents really used those facilities. All of them are way too clean as if they are just opened and those actors are just deployed before the arrival of the western journalists.¹² It looks like a model room with the actors, who pretend to live there.

Sometimes, western media have chances to interview citizens in Pyongyang. Those citizens interviewed by western media are well prepared and they practiced how to respond. They uniformly stress that they are happy and satisfied with their everyday life in their beloved country under the leadership of their supreme leader. They are ready to protect the country from the attack of the enemies, most likely the United States. Those responses seem to be along with the guideline of the authorities and the interview is always monitored by someone sent from the authorities. In some cases, young people are at a loss how to respond as western journalists send them a curveball. For instance, two British laureate scientists were invited to North Korea and had a meeting with selected smart students. Scientists were really impressed with the smartness of the students as well as their good command of English. After the meeting, they were guided to the computer room where students can work on their research with the computer. However, they were not able to access the internet and all they could research was within the range of North Korean intranet. Quite naturally, scientists wondered how they could explore the world of

¹² Fact Reality. "Never Before Seen Real Life Footage Inside of North Korea", Published [Dec. 2016], YouTube video, Dec. 26, 2106, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YgHh6f1GYx0>

science without the access to the internet. Students didn't have an answer, nor the tutor. Finally, the questioning was interrupted by the guide, who found it problematic for the nation's propaganda.

In North Korea, there is its own caste system called "*Songbun*" which was started in 1957.¹³ According to Human Rights Watch, an NGO focusing on human rights, the North Korean government sorted out its citizen as per the *songbun*, a term translated as an ingredient but also meant as the background during the Japanese colonial period from 1910 to 1945 and the Korean War from 1950 to 1953. The main purpose of *songbun* system is to isolate and purge Kim's enemies and reward his followers.¹⁴ After grasping the power in the position of the president, Kim Il-Sung strengthened the control of the entire state. He knew that the authoritarian system was an effective way to achieve his goal. Even after his death in 1994, this policy was inherited by his son, Kim Jong-Il and Kim's dynasty prospered by the sacrifice of North Korean ordinary people, who were forced to deal with the poor standard of everyday life.

Along with the socialism system, the food is given as ration to the citizens. When the economy of North Korea was relatively good in the 1950s and 1960s, people probably felt happier with their lives. Gradually, the management of policies went worse and the ration of food was reduced from time to time. People felt something wrong in the policy but if they complain or criticize the government, they will be taken away for severe interrogation and in the worst case, execution. The tragedy happened in the middle of the 1990s when the shortage of food became really serious. A lot of people starved and there was a big flood in 1995 which accelerated the shortage of agricultural products in the country. Finally, the North Korean

¹³ Andrei Lankov, *North of the DMZ: Essays on Daily Life in North Korea*, (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Co., 2007). 66

¹⁴ Robertson, Phil. "North Korea's Caste System" Human Rights Watch, Jul. 5, 2016, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/07/05/north-koreas-caste-system>

government admitted there was a famine and 600,000 to 2.5 million people reportedly died because of the starvation. There are some arguments that they could have saved a lot of lives of citizens if the government had managed the agriculture plan wisely and spent much more money for the import of food to fill the gap of the domestic supply and demand. Based on an estimate, expenditure of \$100-200 million annually would have solved the food shortage during the period of famine in the middle of the 1990s. Kim Jong-Il didn't care for the starvation. Instead, he spent \$6 billion for the military budget and \$790 million to build the mausoleum for his father, Kim Il-Sung.¹⁵ It is evident that the regime's priority is military, not people of the country. As Kim Jong-Il argues, North Korea is based on "*Songun*", Military-first policy and the fact during the famine proves its adherence to the military.

Many countries, as well as international organizations, participated in the aid to North Korea. During 1995-2005, some \$1.7 billion was spent for the aid to North Korea, most of which was food. Among that, the World Food Programme (WFP) contributed around \$300 million annually in the late 1990s. It is regrettable that the North Korean government thought that the national security was jeopardized when they accepted foreigners, working for those humanitarian institutions and traveling around the country. The government was not happy to expose the miserable condition of people in the country side. Finally, the government announced that due to the recovery of the agricultural production, it did not need such humanitarian aid in 2004. Instead, North Korea expected the continuous aid from South Korea under Roh Moon-Hyun administration, which took over the Sunshine Policy from the precedent administration. At that time, South Korea did not demand the detailed report of the usage of the aid and did not require strict monitoring on how money was spent. But the situation changed when Lee Myun-Bak took

¹⁵ Joshua Stanton and Sung-Yoon Lee "Pyongyang's Hunger Games" *New York Times*, Mar. 7, 2014

over the office in the Blue House in 2008. The South Korean government altered its generous aid to North Korea and the bilateral aid was reduced so much.¹⁶

Human Rights Watch 2018, states the humanitarian condition of North Korea as follows;

“The North Korean government restricts all basic civil and political liberties for its citizens, including freedom of expression, religion and conscience, assembly and association. It prohibits any organized political opposition, independent media and civil society, and free trade unions.”¹⁷

Those humanitarian repressions are testified by many defectors until now. People in North Korea are educated under strict restriction and they are forced to believe that Americans are cruel and they are trying to extinguish innocent North Koreans, South Korea is actually colonized by the US after the surrender of the Empire of Japan. People in South Korea have a hard time with poverty. They come to believe that their life-standard is privileged thanks to the supreme leader, Kim Jong-Un. The outside information is strictly blocked so that the government can keep the regime over the ordinary people without the knowledge of the real world. People can buy TV monitor and radio although they are not affordable for most of them. Even they get one, the tuning dial is fixed not to receive any broadcasts other than North Korea’s state-owned station’s program.¹⁸

However, it is impossible to block the influx of the outside information completely. With the economic growth, Chinese people increased their income and DVD players became affordable for most Chinese. They sold used VCRs to the market, and here come brokers, who sell those VCRs to the people in North Korea at their purchasable price. Once having a hard device, soft

¹⁶ Hazel Smith, *North Korea Markets and Military Rule*, (Cambridge University Press, 2015), 304

¹⁷ Human Rights Watch 2018. “North Korea, Events of 2017”, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/north-korea>

¹⁸ Andrei Lankov. *North of the DMZ: Essays on Daily Life in North Korea*, (Jefferson, N.C. McFarland and Co., 2007), 49

contents such as South Korean drama are being smuggled to the black market in North Korea. Step by step, people in North Korea are exposed to the information from abroad. Even with the manipulated education which imprints their own ideology, people start to think what the reality is. One of the defectors argued that the best weapon against North Korea is not the military force, but the information. Defectors realize how the regime deceived North Korean people with its restriction. One of the defectors, who used to be a medical doctor in North Korea crossed the river and reached China. Being all wet with serious hunger, she was looking for a house, where she can ask for something to eat. She found a house and a dog in the front yard was barking to her. When she approached the dog, she noticed that the food for a dog in China was much better than that for a doctor in North Korea.¹⁹

5. History of Nuclear Development in North Korea

North Korea was allegedly interested in nuclear weapons during the period of Kim Il-Sung. In the middle of the 1950s, North Korea sent some scientists to the Soviet Union in order to receive them some training regarding nuclear program. During the 1960s and 1970s, North Korea gradually disclosed its movement toward nuclear by building a research center and nuclear reactor in Yongbyon. Since then, the North Korean nuclear issue has been quite controversial in terms of security. Followings are the years when remarkable events happened regarding the nuclear development in the Korean peninsula between 1985 to the present as of March, 2018.²⁰

1985: North Korea signs the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty

¹⁹ Barbara Demick. *Nothing to Envy: Ordinary Lives in North Korea*, (New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2009), 211

²⁰ Arms Control Association. "Chronology of U.S.-North Korean Nuclear and Missile Diplomacy", Updated March, 2018, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/dprkchron>

1991: The US withdraws all the tactical nuclear weapons deployed in South Korea

1992: The two Koreas sign the joint declaration of the denuclearization

North Korea ratifies the safeguards agreement with the IAEA

IAEA inspectors find discrepancies in North Korea's report

1993: North Korea announces its intention to withdraw from the NPT

North Korea suspends its decision after the talk with the US

1994: North Korea announces its withdrawal from the IAEA

Jimmy Carter visits North Korea

Kim Il-Sung dies

The US and North Korea reach Agreed Framework in which North Korea receives two LWR and the temporal supply of heavy oil

1995: KEDO is formed

1996: The US and North Korea have bilateral missile talks

The US imposes sanctions on North Korea for its missile technology transfer

1997: The US imposes another sanction on North Korea for missile-proliferation activities

1998: North Korea launches a missile

The US and North Korea have the third round of missile talks

2000: Two Koreas have a summit

North Korea's vice marshal Jo Myong-Rok visits Washington

US secretary Albright visits Pyongyang

2002: President Bush criticizes North Korea as "Axis of evils"

North Korea admits its program to enrich uranium to nuclear weapons

North Korea forces inspection team of IAEA leave the country

2003: North Korea announces its withdrawal from NPT

North Korea admits its possession of nuclear weapons

The first round of six-party talks starts

KEDO suspends the construction of LWR

2005: Six-party talks announce a joint statement that North Korea abandons all nuclear weapons and nuclear programs, and returns to the NPT and IAEA

2006: North Korea conducts the first nuclear test

2007: President Roh Moon-Hyun visits Pyongyang

2009: North Korea launches what they call “an experimental satellite”

North Korea withdraws from six-party talks

North Korea conducts the second nuclear test

2013: North Korea conducts the third nuclear test

2015: North Korea proposes to suspend nuclear testing in exchange for the US-ROK joint-military exercises being called off. The US rejects the proposal

2016: North Korea conducts the fourth nuclear test

North Korea conducts the fifth nuclear test

2017: North Korea conducts the sixth nuclear test with a hydrogen bomb

2018: US-ROK decide to hold joint military exercises during PyeongChang Olympic games

North Korea sends Kim Yo-Jong to PyeongChang

Kim Jong-Un meets South Korea’s special envoy and shows its willingness to discuss with the US on denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula

President Trump agrees to meet Kim Jong-Un by May 2018

In addition to the events mentioned above, there were so many negotiations among related parties and North Korea test-launched rockets to demonstrate its capability of delivering the

nuclear warhead. The world has been concerned with the occasional provocative behavior as well as North Korea's threatening comments. Even when Pyongyang agreed to freeze or abandon its nuclear weapons and programs and got some aid, they worked on the development behind the talks.

In 2018, with the momentum created at the PyeongChang Olympic Games, the North and the South had a direct meeting in Pyongyang where Kim Jong-Un expressed its willingness to have a direct talk with the US. Meanwhile, President Trump immediately responded and announced that he would also be ready to talk with Mr. Kim by May 2018. It is to be noted that Kim Jong-Un stated that he could agree to the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula if the regime's survival and nation's security would be guaranteed. It is not yet clear what he means with "The denuclearization of the Korean peninsula." It is hard to assume that he meant that only North Korea throws its nuclear weapons and nuclear programs away. He might demand that the US nuclear umbrella over South Korea should also be removed, too. Moreover, he might request the complete withdrawal of the US forces deployed in South Korea. According to the home page of North Korea, it is reported that the supreme leader, Kim Jong-Un met the special envoy from South Korea but there is no explanation about the agenda of the meeting as of March 9, 2018.

6. Why Do They Need Nuclear Weapons?

This chapter is the main theme of this article. What on earth made North Korea quest for nuclear weapons? As stated in chapter 5, North Korea consistently kept its nuclear development in spite of various hindrances including natural disaster, failure in economic development, and the pressure from other nations. In the 2018 new year address, Kim Jong-Un stated, "Our

country's nuclear forces are capable of thwarting and countering any nuclear threats from the United States, and they constitute a powerful deterrent that prevents it from starting an adventurous war.”²¹ As he clearly states in the speech, the main purpose of his nuclear arsenal is to deter an adventurous war. Various analysts on North Korea argue that there are more reasons for North Korea to develop nuclear weapons. Andrew O’Neil explains in his book that there are three main drivers underlying its decision to go for nuclear weapons.²²

The first and most significant is insecurity and threat perception. For North Korea with relatively inferior conventional weapons, believe that nuclear weapon is the only tool to balance with the superior adversaries. The second driver is the prestige. They believe that with more destructive capability at hand, they can demonstrate their power in the international system. The third driver is the domestic influence of vested interests. Namely, policymakers care benefits of some sectors which receive benefit from nuclear weapons, such as the scientific community which develops the nuclear weapon system, a branch of the military in charge of controlling nuclear weapons, and an organization which can get benefit by being involved in the nuclear weapon development.

North Korea also learned that nuclear development can be used for bargaining power against the counterpart of negotiations. Pyongyang has earned a lot of aid in the exchange for its pretence to withdraw from the nuclear development program. By signing Agreed Framework, North Korea was promised to receive two LWRs and to be supplied heavy oil until it was revealed that they actually kept on working on the nuclear development program, which was a violation to the framework.

²¹ The National Committee on North Korea, “Kim Jong Un’s 2018 New Year’s Address”, <https://www.ncnk.org/node/1427>

²² Andrew O’Neil, *Nuclear Proliferation in Northeast Asia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 64

Although Kim Jong-Un argues that nuclear weapon is for deterrence from the outside threat, it is actually the deterrence from any anti-regime movements which might happen domestically. Kim dynasty lasts for seven decades in three generations. This is a quite rare case in the modern world. In order to keep the regime of Kim dynasty, the family uses carrot and stick. The last and ultimate stick is the nuclear weapons. In the new year's address, Kim Jong-Un stated that the button of nuclear was on his desk and this would indicate that the destiny of the nation would be in his hand. With those reasons, it is impossible to imagine that North Korea under Kim's dynasty will release its nuclear weapons. Russian President, Vladimir Putin commented that "pursuing further sanctions against North Korea was useless as they'd rather eat grass than give up their nuclear program."²³ North Korea repeatedly provoked the US but the Obama administration didn't respond directly to it, saying that they had a strategic patience. For Pyongyang, they really wanted to have a direct negotiation with the US and in order to achieve this goal, they believed that possessing nuclear weapon would bring the reason that the US should meet North Korea for discussion.

7. What North Korea Acquired by the Threat of Nuclear Program

Although Pyongyang explains that they need nuclear weapons for deterrence, its nuclear development works for gaining various aid from the world including its adversaries, the US, Japan, and South Korea. It is quite natural for any state to quest political and economic stability inside and outside of the country. Security is the core of that and Pyongyang insists nuclear weapon is indispensable for its security. The economy is another thing for the stability of a state.

²³ BBC News. "North Korea nuclear crisis: Putin calls sanctions useless", Published [Sep. 2017], YouTube video, Sep. 5, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzmHleT367U>

North Korea used to be relatively in a better position in the economy than the South in the 1950s and 1960s. However, due to the mismanagement of its economic policy under the communist and totalitarian regime, its economy deteriorated since the 1970s whereas the South started its rapid growth of economy under President Park Chung-Hee. Pyongyang had to work hard to procure sufficient food for North Korean people. They needed food at first but the government was not able to fulfill the demand of the entire population. Sung Chull Kim and Michael D. Cohen argue that North Korea is in a dilemma. They need nuclear weapons for their security and enhancement of their bargaining power. By investing so much money in nuclear development and military expenditure, their economy gets worse and it creates discontent among the public, which can be a factor of the instability of the country.²⁴ Therefore, North Korea needs money to keep the stability beyond this dilemma.

The Soviet Union and China are not happy with the nuclear development of North Korea but they never accept the option that North Korea will be the ally of the United States by being unified with the South or absorbed by them. These two guardians have been quite generous to North Korea so that it can keep the regime of communism. The Soviet Union supplied the energy resources with the special price to North Korea. The price was always far below the standard price of the world market. China did the similar thing and currently, China is the biggest trade partner for North Korea covering almost 90% of its export and import.

For the allies of the United States, South Korea, and Japan, it is frustrating to help North Korea because their aid might help to keep its regime. Those countries have helped North Korea through United Nations or directly for humanitarian purposes. Many other countries join the aid

²⁴ Sung Chull Kim and Michael D. Cohen, Editors, *Entering The New Era of Deterrence: North Korea and Nuclear Weapons*, (Georgetown University Press 2017), 196

through UN, too. Up until now, billions of dollars have been donated to North Korea for the resolution of their malnutrition, food shortage, health, agriculture, water supply, sanitation...etc. But it is unknown how much of it was surely delivered to the people, who really need help. There must be a lot of exploitation by the organization or some people with privileges. After all, there is no way to verify how those aids are effectively used.

Since 1985 when North Korea ratified NPT, they caused various headaches to the outer world and every time they showed their intention toward dangerous direction with their nuclear issue, North Korea gained something. What they gained are LWRs, energy supply, food supply...various things are given to this spoiled child with the toy of a lethal weapon. Pyongyang learned that the threat of nuclear development can be a tool to gain something from the outer world. In this sense, a nuclear weapon is indispensable for the regime to survive. As a rogue nation, they are proactively doing some dirty businesses to make money. For instance, selling arms to other rogue nations in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. They are quite active in drug trafficking and their own diplomats often act as a trafficker. The quality of their counterfeiting US dollar is so high. Money laundering is another resource of finance for North Korea and Banco Delta Asia located in Macau holds various accounts related to North Korea.

8. North Korea's Strategy Through PyeongChang Olympic Games

In February 2018, the winter Olympic Games were held for the first time in South Korea. This is, for South Korea, the second Olympic Games following to the summer ones in Seoul in 1988. A year before the Seoul Olympic Games, Korean Air Flight 858 was bombed by two North Korean agents and 115 lives were lost. The agents tried to commit suicides and a man did

it successfully whereas a woman was stopped and taken the poison away from her. Later she confessed that she was a terrorist from North Korea and disguised herself as Japanese with a forged Japanese passport. Although North Korea officially denied the relationship with those terrorists, it was allegedly reported that Kim Il-Song himself directed this plot and this was testified by Kim Hyun-hui, who once was an agent of North Korea.²⁵

It was obvious that North Korea tried to hinder the success of the Seoul Olympic Games by provoking a disastrous terror. As for the PyeongChang Olympics, there might have been a concern about the reaction of North Korea. But that concern was removed when Kim Jong-Un announced in his new year's speech that North Korea might send some athletes to PyeongChang not only individual athletes but also some female ice hockey players to form a joint team with South Korean players. In addition, Pyongyang promised to send its famous cheerleaders to the Olympic Games. With this process, the PyeongChang Olympic Games had an aspect of a political drama. The actors of this drama were, President Moon, Kim Yo-Jong, Kim Yong-Nam, Kim Yon-Chol, Vice President Pence, Ivanka Trump, and Prime Minister Abe.

Looking back the history of the Olympic Games, there are several examples in which this sports event was utilized for achieving a political purpose or the Olympic Games were affected by political issues. For example, 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin were a gorgeous propaganda of Nazi Germany. 1972 Olympics in Munich were remembered as the blooded Olympics by terrorism. Many countries boycotted the participation in the 1980 Olympics in Moscow due to the military intervention of the Soviet Union to Afghanistan. Moscow paid back in the following 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games by boycotting with some of its closely related countries. For those who host the Olympic Games for the first time, it is a great opportunity to appeal its soft

²⁵ Rupert Wingfield-Hayes, "The North Korean spy who blew up a plane" *BBC News*, August 22, 2013, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-22244337>

power to the world. The Olympic Games held in Tokyo (1964), Seoul (1988), and Beijing (2008) are the good examples. All those Asian countries were so excited to host the world-class event where they can show off their development in those times.

Regarding PyeongChang, this is a show time for both Koreas. President Moon Jae-In wanted to work on building the relationship with North Korea in this opportunity. When he heard the news of North's intention of sending their athletes, President Moon thought that the Olympic can become a momentum for the talks with the North, which has been his life work. Korean Sport and Olympic Committee decided to form a joint team of female ice hockey in spite of the confusion of South Korean team's coach and players. North Korea sent 22 athletes to PyeongChang and a lot of cheerleaders and musicians, who got much more attention from the media. Ninety-year-old Kim Yong-Nam led the North Korean delegation but he was apparently the symbolic leader of the team. What was most impressive was that Kim Jong-Un sent his own sister, Kim Yo-Jong to PyeongChang. This is the first time that a member of Kim dynasty bloodline puts her footprint on the soil of South Korea. The Moon administration made its best effort to welcome her. During her stay, the executive members of South Korean government reportedly had the meals with her for five times. Apparently, Kim Yo-Jong is regarded as a superior positioned person than much older Kim Yong-Nam even in the Confucian tradition in the Korean peninsula. She kept her mysterious smile most of the time while she was being shot by cameras of the media but some of her postures were analyzed by psychologists to be the proof that North Korea tried to take the higher position in the negotiation with its Southern counterpart. Vice President Pence kept its hard attitude based on the US diplomatic policy toward North Korea. He acted a determined front line without any compromise in the negotiation with North Korea. He refused to stay at the table of the reception ceremony, where North Korean delegation

leaders sit at the same table. Pence never gave a glance at Kim Yo-Jong nor Kim Jong-Nam during the opening ceremony at the stadium. He just looked at the field grumpily and to the disappointment of South Korean people, he did not clap his hands when joint Korea team entered the field. During their stay in PyeongChang, there is no contact between the US and North Korea. Several days later, Washington announced that there had been a request from Pyongyang to set up a meeting between Vice President Pence and the North Korean leaders but it was canceled in the last minute by North Korea. Although it was a last minute cancellation, it seems that Pyongyang made the plot and it canceled the meeting as per its scenario. Pyongyang wanted to see how plausible to get the concession from the US in the negotiation. But Pence kept a hard-line posture during the event, which was enough for North Korea to gauge the heat of the US.

To the closing ceremony, the US sent Ivanka Trump, the daughter of President Trump as well as a senior advisor to the president. Not like Vice President Pence, Ivanka disclosed her smiling expression to the media in South Korea and gave an applaud to the joint Korea team, which presumably instructed by the Trump administration. On the contrary, North Korea sent a controversial representative to the closing ceremony. General Kim Yong-Chol arrived at PyeongChang to attend the ceremony. He is allegedly the mastermind of the attack on a South Korean naval ship in 2010 in which 46 sailors were killed. During his stay in South Korea, he kept silent in public. There were protesting demonstrations by South Korean citizens accusing that Kim Yong-Chol was responsible for the attack. Pyongyang must have expected such reaction from the public in South Korea. Still, they sent such controversial person to PyeongChang. It seems to be a litmus test for North Korea to see how much South Korea can tolerate the stimulation from the North. The contrast between Kim Yo-Jong, who was later reported pregnant, and a military enemy representative, Kim Yong-Chol might have been

assigned to check the tolerance of South Korean public opinion toward North Korea's participation to the peace event. By analyzing the reaction of South Korea, Pyongyang will be able to prepare the next step of their strategy. On March 3rd, the Blue House announced that they would send a special delegation to Pyongyang for further discussion.

On March 5th, five members of the special delegation led by Chung Eui-yong, the top national security adviser to President Moon arrived in Pyongyang. To our surprise, Kim Jong-Un himself showed up to talk with the delegation from South Korea on the first day, followed by dinner together with his wife and sister and it lasted over four hours. In the meeting, Kim Jong-Un announced that he would refrain from testing the nuclear program nor launching missiles as long as the talks between the North and the South continue. They also agreed to have a summit at the Panmunjom Peace House on the South Korean side of the DMZ at the end of April 2018.

Pyongyang further expressed willingness to talk to the United States on the issue of denuclearization and normalizing the relationship with the US. They stated that North Korea had no reason to retain nuclear weapons if the military threat to North Korea would be resolved and the security would be guaranteed.²⁶ The US administration still keeps its stance that the denuclearization is the pre-condition of the direct talk between the US and North Korea.

President Trump tweeted, "Possible progress being made in talks with North Korea. For the first time in many years, a serious effort is being made by all parties concerned. The World is watching and waiting! May be false hope, but the U.S. is ready to go hard in either direction!"²⁷

President Trump holds his stance that all options are on the table. It is quite natural and understandable that Washington is not yet so excited as Seoul as they have in mind the history of

²⁶ CNN News, "North Korea willing to talk to US about giving up nuclear weapons, Seoul says", Mar. 6, 2018, <https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/06/asia/north-korea-summit-intl/index.html>

²⁷ Donald Trump, Twitter post, March 6, 2018,

Pyongyang's violation of the agreements on the nuclear program. North Korea violated so far three agreements regarding the denuclearization in 1994, 2005, and 2012.²⁸ For the US, there is an internal concern regarding the personnel issue. Wall Street Journal addressed that "an ambassador to South Korea or a permanent assistant secretary of state for Asian affairs haven't been confirmed. The State Department's special representative for North Korea policy has just resigned, and the military commander in charge of Pacific forces soon will leave, be replaced by an officer light on Asian experience."²⁹ It seems that the desired process is going on for President Moon but the US and South Korea have agreed to resume the joint military exercises in April 2018 after the Paralympic Games are completed on March 18, 2018, which might make Pyongyang go back to the hardline position again.

As a matter of fact, this is not the first time that North Korea said that it could abandon its nuclear weapons. In the Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks on September 19, 2005, there was a clear statement as "The D.P.R.K. committed to abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs and returning, at an early date, to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to IAEA safeguards."³⁰ However, North Korea conducted its first nuclear test in the following year, 2006. Everybody is aware of the fact that North Korea violated what they once promised to the outer world and resumed threatening the enemy states and demanded what they needed such as the aid of food or energy.

9. Negotiation Around the Nuclear Development

²⁸ *Nikkei Shinbun*, "North Korea Denuclearization, a History of Betrayal", Mar. 6, 2018, <https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXMZO27787160W8A300C1EA2000/>

²⁹ Gerald F. Seib, "Surge in Korean Diplomacy to Test the U.S.", *Wall Street Journal*, Mar. 6, 2018

³⁰ US Department of State, "Six-Party Talks, Beijing, China", Sep. 19, 2005. <https://www.state.gov/p/eap/regional/c15455.htm>

In 2018, there is another progress in the talks between the US and North Korea with the momentum created by North's participation in the PyeongChang Olympic games. As long as both parties show the willingness to talk, the worst situation will be avoided, namely, there is no war or conflict for the time being. Although Kim Jong-Un argues that the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is the legacy from his grandfather, Kim Il-Sung, it is hard to believe his words considering the history of the nuclear negotiation as stated in Ch.5.

According to the special envoy of South Korea, who visited Pyongyang and met Kim Jong-Un, North and South Korea agreed on the followings.

- 1) They will have a summit at Panmunjom in April 2018.
- 2) They will install a hotline.
- 3) The North has no reason to keep nuclear weapons if the threat to North Korea diminishes and the regime is guaranteed to exist.
- 4) The North refrains from testing a nuclear program and launching a missile while the talk continues.
- 5) The North will not use nuclear nor conventional weapons against the South.
- 6) The North invites South Korean Taekwondo team and artist team to Pyongyang.

In addition, he stated his desire to have a direct talk with President Trump, who immediately responded with the acceptance of the proposal by May 2018. Kim Jong-Un also admitted his tolerance of the routine joint military exercises between the US and South Korea on a regular level.

It is predictable that Russia and China take a favorable stance toward this movement as both of them don't want to see a war in the Korean Peninsula. Japanese Prime Minister Abe, who is believed to be the best friend to President Trump among the world leaders was informed of Trump-Kim meeting by the call from President Trump, while the South Korean special envoy

members were making the announcement on the premise of White House. Abe has been supportive to the US in giving North Korea the maximum pressure, which eventually worked to make North Korea would come out to the table of talks with President Moon Jae-In and finally with President Trump. However, it can be assumed that Abe feels to be left behind this time. For Japan, who has been deeply involved in North Korea issue, it is not acceptable to be left out of the loop when making an important decision. During the phone conversation with Trump, Abe decided to fly over to Washington to meet Trump in person, which was welcomed by the US President. The biggest concern for Japan is that the abduction issue might be left behind in the talks between the US and North Korea. Furthermore, if Trump makes “Deal” with Kim by freezing North’s plan of developing ICBM which is reachable to the soil of mainland of the States, South Korea, and Japan are still concerned with the threat from the North as they are in the coverage of North’s middle-range missiles.

There are still a lot of agendas to be prepared before the direct talk between the US and North Korea. The summit at Panmunjom will be an important preliminary contact with the North. What is necessary for the allies is to be on the same page. South Korea should not move ahead too much not to break the basic strategy of three allies toward the North. President Trump should be careful not to create an unnecessary provocation, especially on his twitter. And the sanctions should be kept at the highest level until North Korea actually makes concessions and shows the proof of its promise. Everybody knows what North Korea did after they promised something and got an aid in the past. The same mistake should not be repeated.

Meanwhile, President Trump dismissed Rex Tillerson, the Secretary of State on March 13, 2018. Tillerson stated to the media that he came to know the President’s decision on his twitter. It has been rumored that the relationship between Trump and Tillerson had been deteriorated

since a couple of months before. Tillerson allegedly criticized the President for calling him as a moron and he did not deny this report saying that it was not an important issue. There were several times in public that Trump and Tillerson disagreed on the issues of diplomacy. One of them is how to approach North Korea. Tillerson stated that he would open the door to talks with North Korea to avoid military action. President Trump tweeted that Tillerson was wasting time to negotiate with Little Rocket Man and he added further, “As I said, they will be met with fire, fury and frankly, power – the likes of which the world has never seen before.”³¹ President Trump nominated Mike Pompeo, director of CIA as a replacement for Tillerson. Pompeo is known to be closer to Trump in his hawkish way of thinking. The tension between the White House and Department of State will be reduced but Pompeo is not well experienced in diplomacy. A president without clear foreign policy and a secretary of state without diplomacy skill will be a big concern for the US before the meeting with Kim Jong-Un.³²

Also, President Trump replaced H.R.McMaster with John R. Bolton as the national security advisor. By adding Bolton, a hardline former American ambassador to the United Nations, to the Trump administration means a more hawkish shift in American foreign policy.³³ Since the inauguration of the Trump administration, a lot of core staffs resigned or were fired by the President. The administration has been in the unstable condition since the beginning and President Trump’s immediate decision on the meeting with Kim Jong-Un seems to have happened from his motivation that he wants to do something that former presidents could not do and tries to accelerate the momentum to win the next midterm election. It is obvious that

³¹ AJC.com ““As I said, they will be met with fire, fury and frankly, power – the likes of which the world has never seen before.”
<https://www.ajc.com/news/national-govt--politics/tillerson-publicly-disagreed-with-trump/ICHby6sVOMX4fZ97j0z5MI/>

³² Saunders, Elizabeth N., “Could Mike Pompeo actually succeed as secretary of state?”, Washington Post, Mar. 13, 2018,
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/03/13/could-mike-pompeo-actually-succeed-as-secretary-of-state/?utm_term=.cd5095a8fa0c

³³ Mark Landler and Maggie Haberman, “Trump Chooses Hawk For 3rd Security Adviser As Shake-UP Continues”, New York Times, Mar. 23, 2018

President Trump's main interest is always in the reaction of his supporters and most of them think America first, not knowing much about the world outside of the US, or sometimes outside of their territories, such as state, county, or city. The preparation time for the meeting by May 2018 is running out and it is not yet clear what will be discussed between Trump and Kim.

As a possibility, there is a chance that the meeting itself will be canceled. The understanding of the Trump administration is that North Korea promised denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Sarah Sanders, White House press secretary claimed that North Korea had promised to denuclearize and they would need to take "concrete and verifiable actions" toward that aim for Trump and Kim to meet.³⁴ The message from Kim Jong-Un was brought from the special envoy of South Korea and there was no official announcement from the North Korean government so far. There might not be any progress on the side of North Korea with concrete and verifiable actions. Even if they both come to the table to talk, it is still difficult to gain something in the meeting. By referring the history of North Korea's negotiation, they might demand the followings.

1) Economical compensation for denuclearization of North Korea

In 1994 when North Korea agreed to freeze plutonium production, they demanded the substitution of the energy supply. South Korea and Japan agreed to finance the construction of two light water reactors. The US agreed to supply 500,000 tons of heavy oil annually to North Korea until the LWRs be completed. Likewise, North Korea probably demands the compensation for what they spent to develop the current nuclear weapons and ICBM missiles. If

³⁴ Jeremy Diamond, "White House puts an asterisk on Trump, Kim Jong Un meeting" CNN politics, Mar. 9, 2018, <https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/09/politics/north-korea-meeting-trump-conditions/index.html>

they have to abandon the current nuclear weapons and missiles, it will be included in the cost of compensation and will be requested from North Korea. Even though both parties agreed on the above condition, North Korea, after all, continued its nuclear development and the agreement was not accomplished.

2) Guarantee of security as well as the regime itself

There is a chance that North Korea demands the complete withdrawal of the US troops from the South Korean territory in order to realize the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula as South Korea is under the US nuclear umbrella like Japan. Currently, approximately 25,000 US troops are stationing in South Korea and it is hard to imagine all those US armies leave from the South Korean soil. However, it is also hard to predict President Trump's decision. He has been complaining the trade imbalance with South Korea and arguing that it was not fair to spend too much military expenditure for the protection of the overseas allies such as NATO, Japan, and South Korea, who don't seem to spend appropriate money for their own security and partly free ride on the US armed forces. In March 2018, President Trump signed president orders imposing heavy tariffs on steel and aluminum imported into the US. In connection with this severe order, Trump stresses the imbalance of the expenditure of the troops stationed in South Korea as well. His understanding is quite simple. South Korea makes money by the trade with the US and the US spend a lot of money to protect them, which is unfair.³⁵ In a fundraising speech in Missouri on March 14, 2018, President Trump said, "We have a very big trade deficit with them, and we protect them. We lose money on the trade, and we lose money on the military." It seems that

³⁵ Veronica Stracqualursi, "Trump apparently threatens to withdraw US troops from South Korea over trade", CNN politics, Mar.16, 2018, <https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/15/politics/trump-us-troops-south-korea/index.html>

President Trump does not recognize how much South Korea and Japan financially support the US armed forces stationing in those two countries.

As there is no additional explanation for the comment of Kim Jong-Un expressed to the special envoy of South Korea, there are still many points to be cleared. As already mentioned, Japan is left behind from the communications among three countries and it is very much concerned with the possibility that the abduction issue might be left behind. China needs to be more involved in the talks among three countries as a nation who is most influential on North Korea with its huge percentage in the entire trade of North Korea. Anyway, the sanction seemed to be effective to make North Korea come out from its cave to the negotiation table. It is important to keep on pressuring Pyongyang from the economic side as well as the military side.

10. What the US Nuclear Posture Review indicates

US Department of Defense published the latest US Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) in February 2018. According to the NPR, the US is focusing on deterring potential adversaries from nuclear attack. The report clearly says that the US is concerned with the budget increase in nuclear weapons of Russia and China. Also, it refers the nuclear development of North Korea as a new emerging concern. In summary, the US nuclear forces play the following critical roles in the US national security strategy. Namely, they contribute to:

- Deterrence of nuclear and non-nuclear attack
- Assurance for allies and partners
- Achievement of U.S. objectives if deterrence fails
- Capacity to hedge against an uncertain future.

The report emphasizes the US's capability of nuclear deterrence by stating as follows:

- 1) the United States is able to identify them and hold them accountable for acts of aggression, including new forms of aggression;
- 2) we will defeat non-nuclear strategic attacks; and,
- 3) any nuclear escalation will fail to achieve their objectives, and will instead result in unacceptable consequences for them.

During the Obama administration, the US tried to reduce its nuclear weapons as much as possible aligned with Obama's speech in Prague on April 5, 2009, "A World without Nuclear Weapons"³⁶ Although NPR argues that the US reduced more than 85 percent of nuclear weapons since the time of the Cold War, it seems to shift the nuclear weapon policy into the posture of restraint the possible adversaries such as Russia, China, and North Korea.

There is a concern that the US stepped back from its ideal situation stipulated in 2010 NPR in which it declared that the ultimate goal is the abolishment of nuclear weapons. Taro Kono, Japanese Foreign Minister expressed his understanding as well as his support toward the 2018 NPR mentioning that he was aware of such concern but Kono argued that the US was trying to comply with the existing threat in their possible way and Japan would keep on insisting the necessity of reducing nuclear weapons.³⁷

11. Possible Scenario of North Korea's Nuclear Weapon Issue

³⁶ Barak Obama, "A World without Nuclear Weapons", YouTube Video, Apr. 5, 2009, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_lcp6yQ0Yw

³⁷ Taro Kono official site, Feb. 5, 2018,

<https://www.taro.org/2018/02/%E7%B1%B3%E5%9B%BD%E3%81%AE%E6%A0%B8%E6%88%A6%E7%95%A5%E8%A6%8B%E7%9B%B4%E3%81%97.php>

There are several options to solve North Korea's Nuclear Weapon Issue. After North Korea reached the point that they are theoretically able to attack the US mainland with their nuclear weapons, it becomes quite difficult to solve this issue with the satisfaction of all the stakeholders. Although North Korea's nuclear weapon has become a wicked problem, here are the possible cases which may happen in the future.

1) Peaceful solution

North Korea has been patient under the economic sanctions. However, with the pressure from the Trump administration, China will be more cooperative by giving further pressure with their economic sanctions. As North Korea relies almost 90% of its foreign trade upon China, this is a really effective measure to make North Korea come to the point of compromise. Kim Jong-Un declares that North Korea will demolish all the nuclear weapons as well as nuclear development facilities in the country. Instead, he demands the security of the nation and the guarantee of the regime and two Koreas will exist as different nations but loosely be united. North and South Korea will try to find the way to cooperate in order to keep the peace of the Korean Peninsula and enhance the economy of North Korea. The US and Japan will normalize the relationship with North Korea and the security alliance among the US, South Korea, and Japan will be maintained. North Korea keeps its regime as a communist nation, with which China and Russia are satisfied and continuously supportive to North Korea.

This is absolutely the best scenario if it is realized. However, the possibility of this case is quite low considering what North Korea argued so far and actually, it did in the past. The US and western allies can hardly trust North Korea, who broke its promise several times. North Korea is really intimidated by the military power of the US and they can't trust the US since they attacked

Iraq and Libya, which didn't have nuclear weapons for deterrence. After all, such utopian scenario is less likely to happen in the actual foreign diplomacy.

2) North Korea makes money anyway

When the economic sanction works well on the financial situation of North Korea, they need to make money by doing whatever they can do. According to the website of World's Top Exports, North Korea exported US\$2.9billion worth goods in 2016.³⁸ Their major exports are Mineral fuels, especially coal briquette which consists 43% of total exports. The second one is clothing and accessories equivalent to 17.5%. Then they export Ores, slag, ash, fish, knit or crochet clothing...etc. In order to earn hard currency, they send labors to Russia, China, Southeast Asia, and Africa where those labors work and earned money but got exploited by the North Korean government. In General, North Korean products are not competitive quality-wise, therefore their products must be competitive in price and the sales of raw material such as coal briquette have a significant effect if the price is cheap. As China stopped its import of North Korean coal, they need to find something else to sell. As regards natural resources, North Korea is allegedly rich in rare-earth and the reserve quantity is much more than that of China, who is the current top exporter in the world. The problem is they have no equipment or technique to extract those resources.

Then North Korea might earn money through an illegitimate way. They have a special office called Room 39 which was established under the direction of Kim Jong-Il in 1974 and the main goal is to acquire hard currency in whatever ways they can.³⁹ They allegedly conduct drug trafficking, money laundering, human trafficking, counterfeiting, selling arms...etc. Room 39

³⁸ Daniel Workman, "North Korea's Top 10 Exports", World's Top Exports, <http://www.worldstopexports.com/north-koreas-top-10-exports/>

³⁹ Andrei Lankov, *North of the DMZ: Essays on Daily Life in North Korea*, (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Co., 2007), 259

controls the overseas North Korean institutions, such as diplomatic offices and private companies and make them work to earn hard currency through their illicit measures.

As regards nuclear development, North Korea sold the equipment which enables purchasers to develop nuclear weapons in the long run and there are several states, who can be a possible buyer of nuclear technology from North Korea. They are Iran, Syria, and Myanmar.⁴⁰ A state is not the only purchaser of North Korean nuclear technology. There is a risk that nonstate armed groups can be purchasers as well. Sheena Chestnut Greitens, an expert on the crime-state nexus in North Korea, argues that “North Korea has the means and motivation for exporting nuclear material, and the proliferation might be conducted through illicit networks. Nonstate actors might not respond to nuclear deterrence strategies in the same way states do and in some cases, criminal organizations fuse thoroughly with governments. Perhaps most worrisome in this regard is North Korea.” That is an additional uncertainty to the existing dangerous situation.⁴¹

This scenario is plausible as North Korea has sufficient experience and they are skillful to earn hard currency in various ways. The allies need to take appropriate actions to stop their illegal activities.

3) The US makes some concession for the deal

During the 1990s and the early 2000s, North Korea had not yet possessed the nuclear weapons. Under this condition, North Korea committed to cease its nuclear development in exchange for aids from other nations. Although those promises were always broken, North Korea showed an attitude as if they incline to the demolition of the nuclear weapons. Given that these previous commitments were made before the tests of nuclear weapons, it is hard to believe

⁴⁰ Virginie Grezelczyk, *North Korea's New Diplomacy*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 136

⁴¹ Moisés Naim *Mafia States*, Foreign Affairs, May/June 2012

that North Korea would come to the negotiation table on the same basis. It is more likely that they want to resume negotiation as a new nuclear holder.⁴² North Korea has conducted six nuclear tests and they announced all those experiments were successful. As regards the development of missiles, they have extended the missile ranges step by step and they are currently working on ICBM, which can reach the mainland of the US. Up until now, North Korea launched ICBM on a lofted trajectory and the test fired ICBMs landed in the neighboring sea. In order to reach the mainland of the US, ICBMs should be launched at an appropriate angle and they should accomplish successful re-entry into the atmosphere, of which technology was not yet confirmed to be held by North Korea.

If North Korea freezes the development of ICBM, the US can protect its mainland from the threat of their nuclear attack except for Guam, which is within the reach of other short-range missiles. The question is if there is a possibility that the US passively tolerate North Korea with nuclear weapons but without the carrier reaching to the US. This can be the similar case of Pakistan, who possesses nuclear weapons but their warhead will not reach the soil of the US. Apparently, this concession is definitely not tolerable for South Korea and Japan. In addition, the US troops and their family live in those two countries, therefore the US can't accept this option and North Korea will never abandon its nuclear weapons which they already have in hand. Victor Cha commented as "I have learned that the regime never gives anything away free"⁴³ This scenario is less likely plausible and the situation will be on the deadlock.

4) North Korea's preemptive attack on South Korea

⁴² Virginie Grezelczyk, *North Korea's New Diplomacy*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 222

⁴³ Victor Cha, "The Cost of Peace with North Korea", *New York Times*, Mar. 10, 2018

North Korea has provoked several times saying that Seoul would be a sea of fire. Seoul is not so far away from DMZ where North Korean military forces always deployed. Though they never started a war against South Korea since 1953, there were several military provocations or terrors which are supposed to be directed by the top of North Korea. If North Korea conducts a preemptive attack to South Korea, the US troops, as well as South Korean military forces will respond immediately and North Korea cannot survive for a long time as the quality of conventional military weapons are quite different between the North and US/South joint military. Also, the logistics of the North Korean military will be in trouble in a couple of weeks resulting in the shortage of fuel, food for soldiers. North Korea will certainly experience a devastating damage in Pyongyang and its military base for sure. As a conclusion, there is no merit for North Korea to start war or invasion to the South except for the case that Kim Jong-Un becomes desperate or insane.

5) North Korea's preemptive attack on the US bases in Japan

In the meeting with the special envoy of South Korea, Kim Jong-Un stated that North Korean military forces would never aim at South Koreans, who are brothers and sisters of North Koreans. In the meantime, they keep hostile attitude toward Japan, which is still an enemy for North Korea and Prime Minister Abe keeps the stance that allies should maintain a hard pressure on North Korea. As they did until now, North Korea will occasionally criticize Japan for its hostility and create threats to Japan. Even though, unless Kim Jong-Un becomes desperate or insane, North Korea's preemptive attack on the soil of Japan including the US basis would not happen.

6) North Korea launches ICBM with nuclear warhead aiming at the US mainland

North Korea duly understands that nuclear is a weapon of deterrence. It doesn't make sense for them to actually use them. They know nuclear is a weapon not for use but for deterrence and bargaining.

7) The US attacks North Korea with conventional weapons

In 1994, under the Clinton administration, the US made a simulation of preemptive attack to the nuclear facilities in North Korea when they withdrew from NPT and conducted a nuclear test as well as launching missiles. After carefully investigating the degree of sacrifice, the US came to a conclusion not to execute it as they have to bear too many victims of soldiers and citizens of the US and South Korea. The nuclear situation in North Korea has dramatically changed since then and it makes further difficult to conduct a preemptive attack on the facility of North Korea's nuclear powers.

Some argue that the US might be able to attack and defeat North Korean regime with its state-of-the-art military forces without receiving any serious strike back. This argument is hard to believe because it should be taken into account that North Korea has nuclear, biological, chemical weapons and their the conventional forces are always stationing along the DMD line and aiming at Seoul. Victor Cha points out that 230,000 Americans live in South Korea, and 90,000 are in Japan.⁴⁴ If the US forces conduct what we call "bloody nose", it is inevitable to have some victims among those American expatriates. Needless to say, a lot of Korean citizens will become victims by this preemptive attack.

⁴⁴ Washington Post, "The Dangers of a 'bloody nose' for North Korea", Feb. 4, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/the-dangers-of-a-bloody-nose-for-north-korea/2018/02/04/b32124a0-083d-11e8-b48c-b07fea957bd5_story.html?utm_term=.c446ae418200

It is quite difficult to arrange preemptive attack to North Korea without any sacrifice of the US and South Korean citizens, which will consequently lead to a big criticism of the Trump administration. After all, the US cannot move forward with its preemptive action. The US official denied the presence of bloody nose strategy on February 15, 2018.⁴⁵

8) The US uses nuclear weapons on North Korea

If the US uses the nuclear weapons on North Korea preemptively, the US will be seriously criticized by the rest of the world. The US argued that they dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6th and 9th, 1945 respectively because they wanted to end the war against Japan so that they won't have any more sacrifice. This argument is still controversial due to the fact that 130-250,000 noncombatants were killed in those two cities. There is almost no possibility that the US will use its nuclear weapon against North Korea.

9) North Korea regime collapses from inside

In the modern history, there were two major movements of regime collapses. One is in eastern European countries in the late 1980s when the Soviet Union loosened its grip on the satellite nations in that area. The movement differed from nation to nation. The most radical regime change occurred in Romania, where Mr. and Mrs. Ceausescu were executed by firing squad. Another case is the Arab spring from 2010 through 2012 when many of the Middle East and northern African countries changed their regimes. Throughout the Arab spring, people used social network services through internet and the movement transferred rapidly from one country to another.

⁴⁵ Bloomberg Politics, "U.S. Denies Plan for 'Bloody Nose' Strike on North Korea, Feb. 15, 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-02-15/trump-administration-denies-plan-for-strike-on-north-korea>

Regarding North Korea, the control of China or Russia is not so strong as that of the former Soviet Union to the East European nations. The internet is not reachable for most of the citizens in North Korea and it is quite unlikely that people will transfer information throughout the nation. The control of information by the regime is extraordinary strict and this is what the regime has been most serious in order to keep the Kim dynasty. However, outside information is gradually coming into the country by various methods such as TV monitor or radio by releasing the tuning dial so that it can receive the broadcast from South Korea. Videos of South Korean TV programs and movies are coming into North Korea as well. Some defectors contact with their family or relatives left behind if they are not sent to prisons or concentration camps. Pyongyang has been annoyed and so sensitive with the loudspeakers installed at the border with South Korea. One of the defectors argues that sending information is really effective. Information attack works better than military attacks. He concludes that “knowledge has power, stronger than weapons.”⁴⁶

The biggest problem with this scenario is the refugees. As we see in Iraq, Syria, and other failed states, there are a lot of refugees after the collapse of the regime and nobody wants to see that situation, especially the neighbor countries, China and South Korea. They are not yet ready to accept huge numbers of North Korean refugees once the regime collapses. After all, the current regime is such a headache to the direct stakeholders of the North Korean issue but all those nations try to avoid a drastic change, which creates a turmoil in the Korean Peninsula.

10) Status quo continues

⁴⁶ AL NEWS. “Inside the North Korean Regime – 60 Minutes brings Documentary”, Dec.14, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZCU1_0jBsA

There is a possibility that the current situation continues for some more decades. Namely, the history repeats itself and North Korea is not an exception. On March 26, 2018, a special train from Pyongyang arrived at Beijing and most likely Kim Jong-Un visited Beijing to meet the leaders of China. Two days later, China announced the visit of Kim Jong-Un and his wife to Beijing. Xi Jinping and Chinese leaders had a long meeting with Kim followed by a lavish banquet dinner. This is the first time that Kim Jong-Un himself visited China after taking over the position from his father. Kim is supposed to consult with Xi before the summit with President Moon and another summit with President Trump. This is exactly the same procedure which Kim Jong-Il did in 2000 before receiving then President Kim Dae-Jung in Pyongyang.

The priority of North Korea is to keep its regime first of all and to acquire aid from abroad. In the past, his grandfather and father implemented that plot successfully and he himself must have taken the same route. Chinese media Xinhua reported the comments of Kim regarding the denuclearization, “The issue of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula can be resolved, if South Korea and the United States respond to our efforts with goodwill, create an atmosphere of peace and stability while taking progressive and synchronous measures for the realization of peace.”⁴⁷ President Xi supported this statement. The question is, what the definition of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is. What will North Korea demand the US commit for achieving the denuclearization? It is not yet clear at this stage. In a speculation, North Korea might try to ask China loosen its sanctions by showing a sincere attitude toward denuclearization or reconfirm their alliance in case that the negotiation with the US gets stuck. There will be another movement by the time of the summit but the possibility of the status quo seems to be

⁴⁷ Steven Jiang and , Joshua Berlinger. “North Korea’s Kim Jong Un met Xi Jinping on surprise Visit to China”, CNN, Mar. 27, 2018, <https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/27/asia/north-korea-kim-jong-un-china-visit/index.html>

quite high. If there is no progress in the negotiation between the US and North Korea, North Korea will probably continue the nuclear weapon program as well as testing launching ICBMs.

12. Conclusion

North Korea issue becomes a wicked problem. John C. Camillus argues “A wicked problem has innumerable causes, is tough to describe, and doesn’t have a right answer.”⁴⁸ There is no clear resolution which satisfies the interest of all the stakeholders of this issue. The most important stakeholder of this issue is the ordinary citizens in North Korea. They are powerless and have been repressed by the regime for a long time. The process of militarization of North Korea applies the theory of authoritarian. Masataka Kosaka, a Japanese scholar of political science points out the vicious circle of threat and the empowerment of force. “All dictators try to increase his own power in the state with the reason that the threat from outside toward their country and such power enhancement will create the threat among other states. Those outside states will increase their power, which consequently increase the threat to the dictator and the dictator will try to enhance its power again.”⁴⁹

In March 2018, by inviting Kim Jong-Un to Beijing, China finally come out to the stage of this issue. Chinese media broadcasted the meeting between Xi Jinping and Kim Jong-Un. One of the noticeable scenes is that Kim was taking notes while Xi talks to him. This never happens if it were a meeting in the North Korean government. North Korean media also reported the meeting

⁴⁸ John C. Camillus, “Strategy as a Wicked Problem” Harvard Business Review, May 2008 Issue, <https://hbr.org/2008/05/strategy-as-a-wicked-problem>

⁴⁹ Kosaka, Masataka. *Kokusai Seiji (International Politics)*, Chuko new books, 1966), 213

but quite naturally, the note-taking Kim Jong-Un was not in the broadcast. It can be assumed that China sees two Koreas have been the tributaries of China in the past, now, and in the future. Without its help, North Korea cannot confront with another superpower, the United States. China will probably be more involved in the negotiation between the North and the South as well as with the US. Also, Kim Jong-Un stated that North Korea was ready for denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in the meeting with Xi. The detail of the denuclearization is not yet clarified but once Kim says this word to the leader of China, it means that Kim will keep that word anyway. It is still within the range of speculation, but the economic sanction must have worked and North Korea was pushed into the corner. In addition, North Korea might be concerned with the latest reshuffle of the US administration personnel. Instead of Tillerson and McMaster, who are supposed to be relatively moderate, Pompeo and Bolton were assigned to their positions respectively and both of them have been hawkish in the US diplomacy. With the top leader of the US, who is frequently unpredictable, North Korea might have the difficulty of analyzing the US strategy. In the meantime, North and South Korea agreed to have the summit at Panmunjom on April 27th, 2018.

What is the goal of the North Korean issue? The priority should always be put on the humanitarian issue and on the stability of the area. In order to reach the goal, there are several points to be kept in the minds of the US, South Korea, and Japan.

First of all, President Trump should stop provoking Kim Jong-Un and North Korea in his statement or twitter. When President Bush condemned North Korea by saying axis of evil, North Korea acquired the reason to justify their hard response and they withdrew from NPT the following year.

Second, the route of communication should always be kept. In other words, the room for negotiation should be reserved. For example, at the time of Cuba crisis, the Kennedy administration kept decisive attitude to the Soviet Union but it also kept the door open for compromise.⁵⁰

Third, the history should be frequently referred during the process of negotiation with North Korea. It is apparent that Kim Jong-Un tries to follow the way his grandfather and father went. The economic sanction is effective if China becomes serious and cooperative with the US. The current concern is that the trade war between the US and China is emerging since the US decided to impose the penalty tariff on the imports from China. China stated that they would retaliate against it. They might use the North Korea card so that they can win in the trade war.

Fourth, the military pressure is effective but the US should never step into the preemptive military attack on North Korea. The sacrifice is too huge to accept. North Korea knows that it won't survive for a week once the war begins and is really scared with the military power of the US. The Trump administration can keep saying that all the options are on the table in order to intimidate Kim Jong-Un but the military option is the no-no.

Fifth, the influx of information is effective. North Korean people are brainwashed to believe that they are living in a paradise of the world whereas people in South Korea are victims of capitalism controlled by the evil empire, the United States of America. It is a long way to go but gradually the reality of the outer world is becoming recognized by some ordinary people in North Korea through various media. It is a natural desire of human beings that one wants to know the truth. The more information they have, the more doubtful they will be with the regime. Some people learned capitalism through the black market of North Korea. They are convinced

⁵⁰ Kosaka, Masataka. *Kokusai Seiji (International Politics)*, Chuko new books, 1966), 164

that selling something in a free market brings them profit and they can live a better life.⁵¹ If there are more people, who can be richer by the trade on a free market, they will consist the middle class in the society. The middle class will argue that the market should be liberalized and they will start complaining the existing system, and at last, they will question if their regime is the right answer to their nation. The power from the majority of ordinary people in the country will be a big momentum to change the regime. We can see many examples of East European countries in the 1980s and the Arab Spring in the 2010s.

It takes time and needs money to complete denuclearization. Kim Jong-Un says that denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is possible step-by-step. It is clear that North Korea would demand something by achieving a step and moves the process forward to get another reward. This is what they did in the past and the US, South Korea, and Japan should not repeat the same mistake this time. Some reward can be given to North Korea for their achievement. But the award should be always much less than their satisfaction and it is essential to keep Pyongyang work on denuclearization. It would be a good idea to draw a roadmap to complete denuclearization and set up the interim goals to be achieved. The reward should be set as per the goals. It is really hard to imagine that Kim Jong-Un will give up its nuclear weapons and warhead carriers. However, if he understands that denuclearization is the only way for the Kim regime to survive, there is a chance to realize North Korea without nuclear weapons.

With the threat of North Korea, South Korea and Japan spend more and more budget for their defense. After all, it will be a benefit for the US munitions industry.

⁵¹ Andrei Lankov, *North of the DMZ: Essays on Daily Life in North Korea*, (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Co., 2007), 320

Sung-Yoon Lee argues that President Trump must keep on saying that the US stands by the ordinary people in North Korea and against the dictatorship. People themselves should be the leaders of a free North Korea.⁵²

⁵² Sung-Yoon Lee *Pyongyang's provocative propagandists*, website <http://thehill.com/opinion/international/375543-pyongyangs-provocative-propagandists>

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