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How the US Can Work With Its Partners to Contest DPRK Operations

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What is ViTTa®?

NSI's **Virtual Think Tank (ViTTa)** provides rapid response to critical information needs by pulsing a global network of subject matter experts (SMEs) to generate a wide range of expert insight. For this Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) Strategic Outcomes on the Korean Peninsula project, ViTTa was used to address eight key questions provided by the Joint Staff project sponsors. The ViTTa team received written response submissions from 50 subject matter experts from academia, government, military, and industry. Each Korea Strategic Outcomes ViTTa report presents 1) a summary overview of the expert contributor response to the ViTTa question of focus and 2) the full corpus of expert contributor responses received for the ViTTa question of focus. Biographies for all expert contributors are also included in each report.

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ViTTa Question

[Q5] How does the US, working with its partners, best contest DPRK operations?

Subject Matter Expert Contributors

Dr. Bruce Bennett, RAND; **Dr. Stephen Cimbala**, Penn State Brandywine; **Ken Gause**, CNA; **Dr. James Hoare**, Chatham House; **Dr. Gregory Kulacki**, Union of Concerned Scientists; **Dr. Patrick McEachern**, Wilson Center; **Ariel F.W. Petrovics**, University of California, Davis; **Dr. James Platte**, United States Air Force Center for Strategic Deterrence Studies; **Dr. John Plumb**, RAND; **Dr. Jaganath Sankaran**, University of Maryland; **Dr. Sheila Smith**, Council on Foreign Relations; **Brig Gen Rob Spalding**, United States Air Force; **Yun Sun**, Stimson Center; **Dr. William Tow**, Australian National University; **Dr. Miles Yu**, United States Naval Academy

Summary Response

This report summarizes the input of 15 insightful responses from the Korea Strategic Outcomes Virtual Think Tank (ViTTa) expert contributors. While this summary response presents an overview of the key expert contributor insights, the summary alone cannot fully convey the fine detail of the contributor inputs provided, each of which is worth reading in its entirety. For this report, the expert contributors consider how the US can work with its partners to contest DPRK operations. This summary details the various approaches that emerge.

How the US Can Work With Its Partners to Contest DPRK Operations

The expert contributor response reveals several ways in which the US and its partners can best contest DPRK operations. Ultimately, three prevailing approaches and four additional approaches emerge.[1] The three prevailing approaches are:

- Multilateral engagement.
- Strengthening US-ROK-Japan military and defense cooperation and commitment.
- Cooperating with the DPRK rather than contesting it.

The four additional approaches are:

- Conducting an information campaign to empower the people of the DPRK and possibly bring about change in the decision making calculus of DPRK leadership.
- Putting pressure on China elsewhere in Asia.
- Maintaining maximum sanction pressure on the DPRK until it takes meaningful steps toward denuclearization.
- Addressing the wider problem of nuclear weapons proliferation in Asia.

[1] Approaches are classified as "prevailing approaches" if they are cited by several contributors. Those that are classified as "additional approaches" are cited by just one contributor.

Multilateral Engagement

The most frequently cited way in which the US and its partners can effectively contest DPRK operations is with multilateral engagement.[2] Contributors that advocate this approach highlight the advantages of strong multilateral alliances and partnerships for advancing US interests vis-à-vis the DPRK. Ariel F.W. Petrovics of the University of California, Davis offers a broad reflection of this approach, assessing that a multilateral regional engagement strategy, particularly one that "integrates persistent cooperative efforts with direct negotiations," best positions the US to contest and overcome DPRK operations that run counter to US interests, and may "offer tangible benefits that simultaneously provide pathways for developing future leverage over Pyongyang." Petrovics notes that the DPRK has historically been more receptive to sustained engagements that necessitate repeated cooperative interaction, while attempts at coercion have primarily generated hostility.[3] There is also a clear lack of trust between the key regional actors with interests on the Korean Peninsula. Taken together, these factors suggest that a multilateral approach to engagement is likely to be more successful than a bilateral engagement approach when dealing with the DPRK. Petrovics explains that, "when trust between the necessary players is very low—as is the case with North Korean negotiations—engagement has the best chances of success when executed through a multilateral framework." The prevailing absence of trust may also mean that multilateral engagement is most likely to be successful if participants can agree to delegate negotiating oversight and enforcement powers to an agreeable third party.[4]

Several contributors echo this assessment, but advance it a step further, highlighting the value of a cohesive US-ROK-Japan trilateral alliance for effectively contesting DPRK operations. Dr. Patrick McEachern of the Wilson Center highlights the benefit of the three countries working together, explaining that "the most effective and seamless responses to DPRK operations benefit from the national capabilities of all three states." While long-standing and deep-rooted South Korean distrust of Japan has served as a barrier to advancing the cohesion of the ROK-Japan bilateral and US-ROK-Japan trilateral alliances,[5] the current situation on the Korean Peninsula may present an opportunity for the ROK and Japan to overcome some of their differences to expand cooperation in light of a common threat.[6] Prioritizing a cohesive US-ROK-Japan trilateral approach may position the US to effectively contest DRPK operations; the same, however, cannot be said about prioritizing a US-China bilateral approach. Though the latter may be tempting, McEachern contends that it would be "an example of a tactical approach that loses sight of the strategic importance of prioritizing the allies."[7] While China certainly plays an important role on the peninsula, the US should not overlook the misalignment of US and Chinese values and interests.[8] Attempting to contest DPRK operations by way of a US-China bilateral approach alone, therefore, may not be the best approach for the US to achieve an outcome that is in

[2] See contributions from Cimbala; McEachern; Petrovics; Platte; Sankaran; Smith; and Sun.

[3] Petrovics explains that, "while coercion has tended to harden Pyongyang's resolve against international cooperation and in favor of their nuclear program, offers of integrated cooperation have historically produced reciprocal advances. Specifically, cooperation that necessitates repeated interaction over time—such as building civilian energy plants or encouraging diplomatic integration—has proven relatively successful with little risk of extortion."

[4] See contribution from Petrovics.

[5] See contributions from Hoare; McEachern; Platte; and Smith.

[6] McEachern and Platte expound on this notion. McEachern contends that "steady and persistent management to make incremental gains in US-ROK-Japan trilateral responses to DPRK operations that threaten the security of all three states" will drive progress and increase alliance cohesion. Platte offers a similar assessment, arguing that "a lack of trust and cooperation between Japan and South Korea has long been a problem, but the United States must continue to work on improving trilateral coordination. Finding areas of common interest and defining common threats and red lines could work to improve trilateral military cooperation."

[7] McEachern explains that, "given China's relationship with North Korea and position as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, it can be tempting to negotiate bilaterally with China on North Korea matters. China's rivalry with Japan runs deep, and China can be expected to try to exclude at least Japan and likely the ROK from its preference for US-China bilateral discussions on North Korea issues, including any UN Security Council action. Washington may be tempted to accept this approach in the hope of bringing along the allies later."

[8] See contribution from McEachern.

line with its interests. Rather, contributors agree that the US will be better enabled to effectively contest DPRK operations if it operates according to a fundamental guiding principle of "allies first."[9]

Strengthening US-ROK-Japan Military and Defense Cooperation and Commitment

The second most frequently cited way in which the US and its partners can effectively contest DPRK operations is by strengthening US-ROK-Japan trilateral military and defense cooperation and commitment.[10] Yun Sun of the Stimson Center and Dr. William Tow of Australian National University both highlight the importance of enduring US military and defense commitment, stressing that the US "needs to remain steadfast in its efforts to coordinate its regional defense and security policies with its South Korean and Japanese allies"[11] and "provide unswerving, consistent commitment to the defense of [both countries]."[12] Not doing so, Tow contends, could increase the likelihood of regional instability.

Contributors specifically underscore the critical role that the US plays with respect to deterrence and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in the region more broadly. The US maintains significant levels of troops in both the ROK and Japan,[13] and its commitment to the defense of both countries is central to ensuring stability in the region. US deterrence capability is also central to contesting DPRK operations.[14] However, while US-ROK-Japan military and defense cooperation and commitment has continued to deepen,[15] McEachern contends that "much work remains to be done." Dr. Sheila Smith of the Council on Foreign Relations echoes McEachern's sentiment, highlighting several vulnerabilities that currently challenge the US-ROK-Japan alliance. These vulnerabilities include the missile threat to Japan,[16] the lack of trust between the ROK and Japan,[17] the need for the US and Japanese militaries to address how they will fight together, and the need for a broader understanding between the US and Japan on how to operationalize Article Five protections in the US-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation.

Ultimately, contributors that advocate strengthening US-ROK-Japan security relations as the preferred approach for contesting DPRK operations generally echo Tow's assertion that "there should be no visible let-up in the scale or tempo of [US-ROK-Japan] defense cooperation." Moreover, these contributors also identify several potential opportunities for advancing US-ROK-Japan military and defense cooperation efforts in the interest of contesting DPRK operations, including:

- Integrating missile defense strategies and capabilities.[18]

[9] See contribution from McEachern.
[10] See contributions from McEachern; Platte; Sankaran; Smith; Sun; Tow; and Yu.
[11] See contribution from Tow.
[12] See contribution from Sun.
[13] McEachern notes that the US maintained 23,580 troops in the ROK and 44,889 troops in Japan as of December 2017 (DoD public data).
[14] Platte and Sun both highlight the importance of US deterrence capability in contesting DPRK operations. Sun argues that the US needs to maintain the "absolute ability of deterrence against the DPRK." Platte contends that the US can best contest DRPK operations in the region by closely coordinating with the ROK, Japan, and its other regional partners to "deter by denial."
[15] McEachern points to advancements in US-ROK-Japan information sharing, search and rescue, and missile defense efforts in particular.
[16] Smith contends that this vulnerability currently has no credible deterrent on its own.
[17] Smith describes this vulnerability as the "Achilles heel of our allied military operations, and [an issue that] prevents full operational integration between the two alliances."
[18] See contributions from Sankaran and Tow. Sankaran believes that "the need for coordination is probably most acute in the case of missile defense." He explains that, "in this domain (of missile warfare), countermeasures have to be anticipatory (i.e., defensive systems need to be emplaced earlier than a threat might be realized). The recent experience of THAAD deployment to the ROK offers several lessons. While the previous Park Geun-Hye administration was enthusiastic in supporting the decision, the current Moon Jae-in administration seemed more inclined to offer concessions to China. While offering such concessions may be necessary for the ROK, it might undermine alliance unity and effectiveness. If DPRK missile threats continue to grow, the US and its partners will need more information sharing and system integration arrangement to offset the threats."

- Improving intelligence collaboration.[19]
- Pursuing new forms of anti-submarine warfare.[20]
- Working with allies to form constant maritime patrols to eliminate illicit trade with the DPRK.[21]
- Enhancing surveillance and monitoring mechanisms along the China-DPRK border to prevent trade.[22]
- Developing and implementing tools, procedures, and weapons to find, fix, and finish the DPRK's missile and nuclear programs, including its mobile missile systems and command and control infrastructure.[23]
- Planning for and practicing rapid surgical strikes against DPRK nuclear systems and long-range missile systems.[24]

"Cooperate" Rather Than "Contest"

The third most frequently cited way in which the US and its partners can effectively contest DPRK operations is, in fact, by not *contesting* the DPRK but instead *cooperating* with it to build mutual trust.[25] Contributors that advocate this approach challenge the premise of the original question, arguing instead that the US would be better off if it started focusing on *cooperating* with the DPRK. Dr. Gregory Kulacki of the Union of Concerned Scientists emphasizes this point, asserting that "this is not a constructive question. If you view the US and allied role as contesting, rather than cooperating with the DPRK, it will undermine efforts to build the mutual trust necessary to resolve the root causes of the DPRK's drive to acquire nuclear weapons and maintain a robust and threatening military posture."

Contributors that endorse *cooperation* over *contestation* as the preferred approach generally assess that by altering the adversarial nature of the US-DPRK relationship (i.e., stop *contesting*), relations between the two countries could begin to normalize and the motivations that have driven the DPRK's antagonistic and threatening operations could start to dissipate as a result.[26] In this scenario, developing mutual trust between the US and DPRK is important. Focusing on getting to know the DPRK better and creating opportunities for the DPRK to become less limited in what it can do (e.g., assist the DPRK in developing alternatives to weapons sales) will go a long way toward building mutual trust and advancing cooperative relations.[27] Ultimately, as Ken Gause of CNA proposes, "we can continue the endless game of whack-a-mole or we can begin to think differently about North Korea. Not as an adversary, but as an opportunity."

Additional Approaches

Finally, contributors offer several additional ways in which the US and its partners can effectively contest DPRK operations. These additional approaches are generally cited by just one contributor and,

[19] See contributions from Sankaran and Tow.
[20] See contribution from Tow.
[21] See contribution from Yu.
[22] See contribution from Yu.
[23] See contribution from Plumb.
[24] See contribution from Plumb.
[25] See contributions from Bennet; Gause; Hoare; and Kulacki.
[26] See contributions from Gause and Kulacki.
[27] See contribution from Hoare.

therefore, are not classified as prevailing approaches[28] in this summary. Each, however, merit consideration. These additional approaches include:

- Conducting an information campaign to empower the people of the DPRK and possibly bring about change in the decision making calculus of DPRK leadership.[29]
- Putting pressure on China elsewhere in Asia.[30]
- Maintaining maximum sanction pressure on the DPRK until it takes meaningful steps toward denuclearization.[31]
- Addressing the wider problem of nuclear weapons spread in Asia.[32]

[28] Approaches are classified as "prevailing approaches" if they are cited by several contributors.

[29] Platte explains that "North Korea has met such information campaigns with hostility in the past, as evidenced by its vitriolic reaction to South Korean broadcasts across the DMZ and balloon launches that carry information from South Korea to North Korea. Thus, an information campaign should be done covertly to minimize escalatory reactions from North Korea. The campaign does not have to specifically target destabilizing the Kim Jong Un regime but aim to give North Koreans information and inspiration that they need to push for change within their country. The current progressive government in Seoul may also be wary of running an information campaign for fear of disrupting negotiations with North Korea, so the United States would have to cautiously construct such a campaign. Partnerships with private groups in the United States, Japan, and South Korea, particularly North Korean defector groups, should be considered to help spread necessary, appropriate information in North Korea."

[30] Spalding suggests that "one possibility would be to withdraw ground forces from the ROK and redeploy to the South (possibly Philippines and Vietnam). Armed with conventional ballistic and cruise missiles these forces would facilitate a ground based archipelagic defense pressuring PLA forces throughout the first island chain. This could be accompanied by the reintroduction of tactical nuclear weapons in the ROK for F-35s. The resulting balance of nuclear forces on the peninsula and increased military presence in the south would force China to reevaluate its strategy possibly causing them to rethink their approach to the DPRK."

[31] See contribution from Sun.

[32] Cimbala believes that "an Asian Nonproliferation and Nuclear Threat Reduction Council (ANNTRC) should be established among states in the region, supported by the UN and including NWS and NNWS that are shareholders or stakeholders in Asian Pacific regional stability (shareholders live in the neighborhood or deploy significant military forces there; stakeholders are others whose economies or security are directly affected by Asian Pacific stability or lack thereof). The Asian Nonproliferation and Nuclear Threat Reduction Council would be a forum for the discussion of issues and concerns about nuclear weapons spread and, as well, a possible template for constructive conflict avoidance, resolution, or containment (in the case of dangerous incidents or outbreaks of regional war with the potential for nuclear escalation). Ultimately, this council might be broadened in its mandate to include non-nuclear related security and stability issues: an Organization for Security and Cooperation in Asia (OSCA) modeled along the lines of the present Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)."

Subject Matter Expert Response Submissions

Dr. Bruce Bennett

Senior International/Defense Researcher (RAND)
25 May 2018

The best approach would be to convince North Korea to trust the US and cooperate with it. The South Korean government believes that the United States is already succeeded in doing so—it believes that Kim Jong-un is prepared to abandon his nuclear weapons new favor of an alliance with United States—but that he is having trouble convincing his senior elites that this is the direction that North Korea should go. Such a relationship may yet be possible (the optimist in me hopes so), but I think it is a long shot. Instead, many US experts believe that some variation of the US maximum pressure campaign is required to force Kim into cooperation. Most experts on North Korea oppose the key alternative: military attacks on the North to eliminate its nuclear weapons—the losses on all sides could be way too high.

Dr. Stephen Cimbala

Distinguished Professor of Political Science (Penn State Brandywine)
16 May 2018

US objectives include the denuclearization of North Korea, the deterrence of armed attack on South Korea or Japan, and the construction of a durable, deterrence-stable and crisis shock resistant security architecture for the Asia-Pacific region. This implies a regional security architecture in which the control of nuclear weapons spread is important, as is the diplomatic management of relations among the existing nuclear weapons states in Asia to ensure against deliberate or accidental-inadvertent nuclear first use.

The denuclearization of North Korea cannot be accomplished in a single bilateral negotiation, nor as a fait accompli growing out of a militarily imposed solution. The negotiations that may result in the denuclearization of North Korea will, of necessity, involve other regional US partners and allies: including South Korea, Japan, China and Russia. This format will require consultation and collaboration among the five parties negotiating with Pyongyang as to their immediate, intermediate and longer range objectives.

Denuclearization of North Korea will require the five negotiating partners to agree measures for continuing reassurance and stable deterrence. Reassurance starts with what North Korea wants most: a permanent end to the Korean war in the form of a peace treaty signed by the relevant powers (North and South Korea, the United States and China) and supported by the other negotiating partners (Russia and Japan) as well as the UN Security Council. The treaty should provide explicit acknowledgment of North Korea as a state member of the international community and renounce efforts at imposed regime change by outside powers. Absent such an agreement, North Korea has little or no incentive to provide concessions on military or other matters as a result of diplomatic negotiations.

Denuclearization may be defined differently by North Korea compared to its five interlocutors in the six party framework (as above). For the United States, officials have stated the venerable formula of CVID (comprehensive, verifiable, irreversible dismantlement) of North Korea's nuclear weapons and supporting infrastructure. It must be realized how ambitious this aim is. Without nuclear weapons or at least the capacity to promptly manufacture and deploy nuclear weapons, North Korea is a much less important international actor. Its leader Kim Jong-un vaulted himself into global prominence in 2017 precisely by a staccato of nuclear and missile tests and by explicit threats of nuclear attack against the United States and its regional allies. In addition, it is thought by military experts that, although the North Korean conventional military forces are large in size, they are inferior to those of South Korea in technology and in other ways. In any war between the two Koreas without the use of nuclear weapons, South Korea (presumably supported by the US) would prevail.

Therefore, the first step in any multilateral negotiation with North Korea is to agree the five partners on a gradualist strategy for DPRK denuclearization. The increments of a gradualist strategy might be as follows: (1) North Korea agrees to a moratorium on all nuclear and missile testing; (2) North Korea agrees to a road map for its future production of fissile materials, with limitations on the amounts of enriched uranium and weapons grade plutonium, as verified by international inspectors; (3) North Korea agrees to limitations on the numbers and ranges of its ballistic missiles; (4) North and South Korea agree to

ongoing bilateral military to military professional exchanges, including shared observers at military exercises; (5) North Korea, South Korea, Japan, China, Russia and the United States agree on cooperative threat reduction measures in the Asia-Pacific theater to reduce the likelihood of any outbreak of conventional war or resort to nuclear coercion. These measures could include steps to avoid accidental or inadvertent naval engagements, air collisions, provocative military exercises, and-or declarations of hubristic no fly zones or expanded air identification zones.

In addition to the conclusion of a peace treaty ending the Korean war, parallel or reciprocal moves by the Five could be as follows: (1) reduction in the frequency and intensity of US– South Korean military exercises (but not their elimination); (2) economic assistance to North Korea for food aid and infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, transportation, electrification, and environmental needs; for example, in the case of transportation, China and Russia agree to finance a "Silk Road–Korean extension" high speed rail and superhighway to carry Russian and Chinese exports through North Korea to South Korea (and Korean exports in reverse); (3) an aggressive program of cultural exchanges between the two Koreas and between North Korea and free market countries, including performances by theater groups and other artists as well as lecture series, student exchanges, research collaboration between academics, and an open door for investment partnerships; (4) admission of North Korea to the international banking system without restriction along with eligibility for development loans from IMF or other international financiers; along with this, encourage US and other free market economy states to establish business schools in North Korea (Wharton Pyongyang); (5) South and North Korea agree to talks on the possibility of reunification or, failing that, demilitarization of the Korean peninsula (to the extent of large scale reductions in the capabilities of their offensive conventional military forces, including long range air, artillery and missiles), supported by agreed transparency measures, possibly including regional or UN observers.

Regardless the particular schedule for implementation of these or other measures, it will also be necessary to address specifically the wider problem of nuclear weapons spread in Asia. An Asian Nonproliferation and Nuclear Threat Reduction Council (ANNTRC) should be established among states in the region, supported by the UN and including NWS and NNWS that are shareholders or stakeholders in Asian-Pacific regional stability (shareholders live in the neighborhood or deploy significant military forces there–stakeholders are others whose economies or security are directly affected by Asian-Pacific stability or lack thereof). The Asian Nonproliferation and Nuclear Threat Reduction Council would be a forum for the discussion of issues and concerns about nuclear weapons spread and, as well, a possible template for constructive conflict avoidance, resolution or containment (in the case of dangerous incidents or outbreaks of regional war with the potential for nuclear escalation). Ultimately this council might be broadened in its mandate to include non-nuclear related security and stability issues: an Organization for Security and Cooperation in Asia (OSCA) modeled along the lines of the present Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Ken Gause

Director, Adversary Analytics Program (CNA)
4 June 2018

Through cooptation. We can continue the endless game of whack a mole or we can begin to think differently about North Korea. Not as an adversary, but as an opportunity. The idea is to take the wedge issue off the table for China. Kim Jong-un is looking for an opportunity to create space for maneuver. The US and ROK can provide this through an end to conflict and normalization of relations. End the adversarial relationship and the regime's motivation for many of its operations go away. Kim has signaled his willingness to enter into such a relationship provided he can trust Washington. He is even willing to push aside the traditional NK demand of removal of US troops from the peninsula. Why? Because once those troops leave, China no longer needs NK. From the US point of view, taking NK off the chess table would put Beijing back on its heels.

Dr. James Hoare

Associate Fellow, Asia-Pacific Programme (Chatham House)
4 June 2018

First, perhaps begin with a more realistic assessment of the likely threat to the US from a small and economically backward country. The US has managed to live with Soviet and Chinese nuclear regimes even at a time of great hostility. Then get to know the DPRK better. This process was begun under President Clinton and it produced real results including the Agreed Framework and the MIA programme. The US, including the US military, leant much about the DPRK and the military on both sides perhaps

began to see each other as people rather than stereotypes. Create opportunities for the DPRK to become less limited in what it can do (i.e., help it develop alternatives to weapons' sales).

Historical understanding is important. History may seem irrelevant but I fear it is not. Of course Japan and the ROK should cooperate against the threat from the DPRK. Trouble is, for good historical reasons, the ROK distrusts the Japanese—especially under Abe—even more than it distrusts the DPRK—and they are none too sure of the US either, even before Mr. Trump.

Dr. Gregory Kulacki

China Project Manager (Union of Concerned Scientists)
22 May 2018

This is not a constructive question. If you view the US and allied role as contesting, rather than cooperating with the DPRK it will undermine efforts to build the mutual trust necessary to resolve the root causes of the DPRK's drive to acquire nuclear weapons and maintain a robust and threatening military posture. There will be many instances where DPRK behavior might be counterproductive, and this should be brought up in the institutionalized channels suggested above. Many of these, if efforts to reduce tension are successful, will be DPRK actions taken against its own citizens with the US, the ROK and Japan find intolerable. In the end the allied effort should be aimed at helping the DPRK move away from the rigid and oppressive means of government it currently practices. China successfully moved in this direction over the past several decades. While it is still ruled by a communist party and still is authoritarian in nature it is much less repressive and antagonistic than it was before normalization of relations. The DPRK can follow the same path.

Dr. Patrick McEachern

Council on Foreign Relations International Affairs Fellow (Wilson Center)
22 May 2018

Unfortunately, the DPRK has a variety of coercive options in its tool kit, including those it has used in the past and could utilize again as well as those options the DPRK could use for the first time. The use of new tools, in particular, raises the risk of surprise. The United States and its allies have thought deeply about how to deter and manage conflict escalation risks with the DPRK for many years, including efforts to refine this thinking as new scenarios and threats emerge. Contesting North Korean operations involves a range of responses to a range of threats, making discreet principles to guide these responses difficult to articulate except at the most general levels.

At the most general level, American decision makers should prioritize alliance cohesion. While U.S.-ROK bilateral coordination is the norm, there is strategic advantage in trying to advance as much as possible trilateral cooperation with South Korea and Japan. The most effective and seamless responses to DPRK operations benefit from the national capabilities of all three states. Strategic planners in Washington, Seoul, and Tokyo widely recognize the value of trilateral cooperation to advance their countries' highly aligned interests vis-a-vis North Korea. While trilateral (and bilateral ROK-Japan) cooperation has advanced considerably in political fora and certain military arenas ranging from information sharing to search and rescue to missile defense efforts, much work remains to be done.

Strong, bipartisan public concern in South Korea about Japan's possible roles on or around the Korean Peninsula today given its history of colonizing Korea in 1910-45 remains the main barrier. This is not a new problem and will not be resolved quickly. It will require steady and persistent management to make incremental gains in U.S.-ROK-Japan trilateral responses to DPRK operations that threaten the security of all three states.

Alliance decision-making is always more cumbersome than unilateral U.S. decision-making as it injects more "veto players" into the equation. Alliance managers on all sides recognize the time, commitment, expense, and sometimes frustration that goes into intra-alliance negotiations. However, it is important to remember that the payoff is well worth the investment, and alliance decisions even under the time pressure of crisis is superior to unilateral decision-making. The United States maintained 23,580 troops in South Korea and another 44,889 troops in Japan as of December 2017, according to DoD public data. This is in addition to U.S. military capabilities elsewhere in the region and beyond. The U.S. commitment to the defense of South Korea and Japan are critical to deterrence on the peninsula and regional stability. However, it is important to remember that South Korea also has about 625,000 active duty service personnel and another 5.2 million reserves. Japan has about 247,000 active duty and 63,000 reserves. The Global Firepower Index ranks these militaries as the seventh and eighth, respectively, most

capable militaries in the world. This is only a thumbnail sketch of the capabilities added by integrating fully both allies into responses to DPRK operations, and planning that maximizes not only U.S.-ROK but U.S.-ROK-Japan responses to DPRK efforts brings tremendously more strategic value to the situation at hand.

Given China's relationship with North Korea and position as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, it can be tempting to negotiate bilaterally with China on North Korea matters. China's rivalry with Japan runs deep, and China can be expected to try to exclude at least Japan and likely the ROK from its preference for U.S.-China bilateral discussions on North Korea issues, including any UN Security Council action. Washington may be tempted to accept this approach in the hope of bringing along the allies later. This is an example of a tactical approach that loses sight of the strategic importance of prioritizing the allies. China has an important role to play, but the Chinese do not share values and interests with the United States in the same way as its allies. In contesting DPRK operations, a useful guiding principle is “allies first.”

Ariel F.W. Petrovics

PhD Candidate (University of California, Davis)
Researcher (Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory)
22 June 2018

The DPRK has been pursuing larger nuclear yields, more advanced long-range delivery systems, and nontraditional combative strategies. All of these activities are at odds with US and allied interests and create regional instability. The US would best contest DPRK operations through a multilateral, regional engagement strategy–one that integrates persistent cooperative efforts with direct negotiations. DPRK leadership is particularly well positioned to thwart attempts at coercive engagement. Cooperative engagement efforts, on the other hand, offer tangible benefits that simultaneously provide pathways for developing future leverage over Pyongyang. These cooperative engagement efforts would have the best chances of success if they provide a clear pathway for persistent contact, utilizing direct negotiation with the Kim regime, and if they are negotiated through a multilateral framework. Persistent contact is necessary for both verifying compliance and for generating long-term incentives to overcome short-term hurdles. Direct negotiations increase contact and therefore enhance problem-solving opportunities between the relevant decision-makers, escaping traps of miscommunication and opening new in-roads for cross-domain leverage opportunities. However, when trust between the necessary players is very low–as is the case with North Korean negotiations–engagement has the best chances of success when executed through a multilateral framework. Joint oversight and multilateralism in such cases can improve the credibility of rivals’ commitments to one another, using third-party oversight and outside enforcement that ensure all parties will honor their commitments.

Regime security is a critical concern for Kim Jung-Un and the DPRK leadership. Facing internal threats from both domestic instability and external threats from powerful foreign adversaries, Pyongyang has long pursued a combined security strategy. This strategy couples insulation from foreign influence–including public information and economic isolation–with military industrial investment to deter any direct kinetic confrontation. Behind this combined political and military veil, North Korea enjoys significant license to circumvent international norms and destabilize regional agreements, despite its poor social infrastructure, weak economy, and brittle political control.

While this strategy of isolation has helped create the long-term structural instabilities facing the regime, it also helped make the ‘Hermit Kingdom’ especially resistant to external coercion. The traditional coercive tactics of economic sanctions and threats or use of military force promise costs intended to force behavior change. However, these tactics do not impose the intended costs on North Korea. Economic sanctions rely on the pain of access denial to lucrative economic markets–an access that North Korea has long since abrogated as part of its nationalization efforts. Nationalization and economic isolation have led to an industrial economy that is globally non-competitive and is held by a small group of only powerful political elites. Those in power therefore gain little–and in fact risk losing much–if North Korea integrated with the global economy, meaning DPRK decision-makers are particularly insulated from and resistant to the coercion of economic sanctions.

Likewise, military force relies on the credible threat of destruction. Given North Korea’s retaliatory capability on Seoul, Tokyo, and even San Francisco, however, any military action against the DPRK would bring unacceptable counterstrikes. The Kim regime recognizes this, and therefore judges most military threats to be largely incredible. As long as its blustering, posturing, and low-level incursion do not cross a critical–and very high–threat threshold, they believe they can largely act with impunity from US retaliation.

While coercion has tended to harden Pyongyang’s resolve against international cooperation and in favor of their nuclear program, offers of integrated cooperation have historically produced reciprocal advances. Specifically, cooperation that necessitates repeated interaction over time–such as building civilian energy plants or encourage diplomatic integration–has

proven relatively successful with little risk of extortion. Inducements that instead offer immediate, short-term payouts–such as one-time transfers of foreign aid–do little to signal US commitment to cooperation and can even risk inviting future extortion for greater concessions.

In order to make these promises of cooperation credible to a mistrustful DPRK, however, they can best be pursued through a multilateral framework that delegates oversight and enforcement to an agreeable third party. For example, the DPRK is unlikely to accept unilateral American verification of DPRK commitments, but has on several previous occasions allowed IAEA inspectors. Similarly, talks conducted with the relevant parties are less likely to be sidetracked by dissatisfied regional parties. Finally, such multilateral negotiations can offer greater rewards for compliance–and potentially offer greater opportunity costs for reneging–thereby holding North Korea at the negotiation table even when the inevitable disagreements surface. As a result, persistent cooperative engagement efforts negotiated and executed through a multilateral framework offer the best chances of success.

Dr. James Platte

Assistant Professor (United States Air Force Center for Strategic Deterrence Studies)
1 June 2018

The United States can best contest North Korean operations by closely coordinating with partners and allies in the region to deter by denial and by conducting an information campaign to help empower North Korean people. A pillar of North Korean strategy is to decouple the United States and its allies in East Asia, South Korea and Japan. The principal target of North Korea's decoupling strategy is South Korea, as one of Pyongyang's long-term strategic objectives is to bring about the end of the US-South Korea alliance and expel US forces from the Korean Peninsula. Then North Korea could directly bargain directly with South Korea to form a new political environment on the Korean Peninsula. Decoupling the United States and Japan also can help North Korea achieve this end-state by raising doubts about overall US commitment to the region and disrupting rear base support in case of conflict on the Korean Peninsula. Thus, the best way for the United States to counter this North Korean strategy is to deny North Korea from achieving its decoupling objectives.

North Korea has a long history of testing the US-South Korea alliance and has used violent and non-violent methods to do so. For example, North Korea conducted a series of low-level military strikes and provocations along the demilitarized zone (DMZ) that separates North Korea and South Korea during the mid to late 1960s. With the United States heavily engaged in Vietnam during that time (and South Korea supporting the war effort in Vietnam by sending the second-most number of foreign troops behind the United States), North Korean leader Kim Il Sung sought to test US commitment to defending South Korea by attacking US military personnel along the DMZ. North Korea also conducted several high-profile provocations, including capturing the USS Pueblo, shooting down an EC-121, and raiding the Blue House in an attempt to assassinate South Korean president Park Chung-hee. The United States did not end it support for South Korea in response, but Park was concerned by the lack of a strong military response by the United States to punish North Korea.

Soon after this, Richard Nixon announced his Guam Doctrine and withdrew the Seventh Infantry Division from South Korea. Seoul's confidence in its ally was shaken by this, and North Korea responded by proposing inter-Korean dialogue, which resulted in a joint communique on 4 July 1972. Diplomacy between Seoul and Pyongyang eventually collapsed, and after South Korea was shocked again by Jimmy Carter's decision to withdraw all US ground forces, Ronald Reagan reassured South Korea about US commitment to the alliance.

This period shows how North Korea has used violent and non-violent means over time to attempt to decouple the United States and South Korea. Kim Jong Un inherited this strategy from his grandfather, and his push to develop nuclear weapons could be part of this decoupling strategy. In addition to their deterrent value, Kim Jong Un could use his nuclear weapons to compel concessions from South Korea, the United States, or Japan, such as easing of sanctions or cessation of alliance activities. Such a compellent nuclear posture would not require North Korea to use nuclear weapons, but either implicit or explicit nuclear threats could be used to compel. For example, in case of a conflict on the Korean Peninsula, North Korea could issue a threat stating that if Japan allows the United States to use military bases in Japan to support operations in Korea, then Japan could be attacked with nuclear weapons. This would present Tokyo with an apparent choice of either supporting the US-Japan alliance or avoiding nuclear attack. These types of scenarios are already troubling policy makers in Japan and South Korea, so the United States must counter this through close coordination, appropriate signaling, and sustaining commitment to its allies. In this way, the United States and its allies can deter by denying North Korea from achieving its objectives.

It also should be noted that the scenario involving a nuclear threat against Japan shows that North Korea could welcome a lower-level conflict to start in order to rhetorically escalate to the nuclear level. When tensions with North Korea flares up, the

United States and its allies must be cautious not to provoke conflict, as that may be what North Korea desires. If North Korea has adopted a compellent nuclear posture, then it could be more escalatory and destabilizing than a deterrent posture. Compellence is more time-sensitive than deterrence, and compellent threats must be acted on occasionally in order for them to remain credible. A robust deterrence posture by the US and its allies must be formulated to counter North Korean compellence and avoid escalation.

As part of deterrence by denial, the United States should work to improve regional defenses, including ballistic missile defense, to deter North Korea from attempting nuclear or large-scale conventional attacks. Improving trilateral cooperation and interoperability among the US, South Korean, and Japanese forces also would help deny North Korean decoupling goals and strengthen regional defenses. A lack of trust and cooperation between Japan and South Korea has long been a problem, but the United States must continue to work on improving trilateral coordination. Finding areas of common interest and defining common threats and red lines could work to improve trilateral military cooperation.

Deterring so-called grey zone attacks, such as the sinking of the ROK's Cheonan or the bombardment of Yeonpyeong in 2010, will remain very challenging. The United States has preferred de-escalation in response to such attacks, and must diligently signal to both North Korea and its allies that a lack of kinetic response does not equate to lack of US resolve to defend its allies. These types of attacks are an aspect of North Korea's cycle of provocations strategy, which can sow doubt in allies' minds about the deterrent value of forward-deployed US troops. It is important that the US remain committed to its allies in the face of such grey zone provocations but also clarify what US extended deterrence goals are, namely the deterrence of strategic attacks.

In concert with assuring allies and strengthening deterrence by denial, the United States and its partners in the region should conduct an information campaign that would empower North Korean people and try to bring about change in the decision making calculus of North Korean leaders. North Korea has met such information campaigns with hostility in the past, as evidenced by its vitriolic reaction to South Korean broadcasts across the DMZ and balloon launches that carry information from South Korea to North Korea. Thus, an information campaign should be done covertly to minimize escalatory reactions from North Korea. The campaign does not have to specifically target destabilizing the Kim Jong Un regime but aim to give North Koreans information and inspiration that they need to push for change within their country. The current progressive government in Seoul may also be wary of running an information campaign for fear of disrupting negotiations with North Korea, so the United States would have to cautiously construct such a campaign. Partnerships with private groups in the United States, Japan, and South Korea, particularly North Korean defector groups, should be considered to help spread necessary, appropriate information in North Korea.

Dr. John Plumb

Senior Engineer (RAND)
4 June 2018

We should seek the capability to rapidly destroy North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile systems. This capability would enhance regional deterrence, both by bolstering US and partner security, and by nullifying or significantly eroding North Korean confidence in their ability to use their nuclear weapons or missile systems in a conflict.

To accomplish this, the US and its partners should:

1. Relentlessly develop and implement tools, procedures, and weapons to find, fix, and finish DPRK's missile and nuclear programs, including its mobile missile systems and command and control infrastructure. This could leverage both US and partner sensors and non-nuclear offensive systems. Utmost speed is essential to the ability to fix/finish.
2. Plan for and practice rapid surgical strikes against DPRK nuclear systems and long-range missile systems.

Developing these offensive capabilities should not be to the exclusion of efforts to reduce tensions on the peninsula.

Dr. Jaganath Sankaran

Assistant Research Professor (University of Maryland)
Research Associate (Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland)
4 June 2018

The U.S. and its allies are contesting DPRK operations across a variety of domains. Each domain poses unique challenges. Plus, the means available and the methods used vary across these domains. In cybersecurity, for instance, DPRK is more capable than it is in other military domain. In cyberspace, it seems that the U.S. and its partners can, for the most part, independently defend their national assets. The U.S. may have to share its intelligence findings and in some instance provide training, but South Korea and Japan will need to develop the national workforce and skills independently to defend against DPRK cyber operations. Similarly, the United States may benefit from Japanese and South Korean intelligence findings, but the cyber defense of US homeland and forward-deployed forces' networks may have to occur independently of allied participation.

In almost all other domains, the United States will probably be contributing a large proportion of the forces. Also, in all other domains, there is a very strong need for coordination, cooperation and burden sharing among the U.S. and its allies to contest DPRK operations. The need for coordination is probably most acute in the case of missile defense. In this domain (of missile warfare), countermeasures have to be anticipatory, i.e. defensive systems need to be emplaced earlier than a threat might be realized. The recent experience of THAAD deployment to South Korea offers several lessons. While the previous Park Geun-Hye administration was enthusiastic in supporting the decision, the current Moon Jae-in administration seemed more inclined to offer concession to China. While offering such concessions may be necessary for South Korea, it might undermine alliance unity and effectiveness. If DPRK missile threats continue to grow, the U.S. and partners will need more information sharing and system integration arrangement to offset the threats. In other domains such as army, naval, and air power, the United States will be contributing a substantial portion of the forces in the region. It is imperative that a strong forward-deployed presence is maintained to deter and defend if necessary. The U.S. and its allies will need to make sure that reduction in troop strength should follow only after a substantial change in DPRK's military abilities and political attitude.

Dr. Sheila Smith

Senior Fellow for Japan Studies (Council on Foreign Relations)
28 May 2018

Two vulnerabilities challenge the US and its alliances with ROK and Japan. The first is the missile threat to Japan, which on its own has no credible deterrent. Pressures will grow in Tokyo for a deeper discussion of SDF capability as peace talks proceed or even if they fail. The alliance seems too unpredictable in today's NE Asia. The second is the lack of confidence between Seoul and Tokyo. This is the Achilles heel of our allied military operations, and prevents full operational integration between the two alliances. Should talks between Seoul and Pyongyang produce a renewed effort at North-South peace, this will only worsen.

For the US-Japan alliance, the US and Japanese militaries need to address how they will fight together. Combined exercises and contingency planning is not currently up to the task of considering a military conflict in the region. This needs to be amended quickly. Finally, a broader understanding between Tokyo and Washington is needed on how to operationalize Article Five protections. To date, this has been done only through exercises but not via a high-level strategic understanding. The US has assured Japan it will treat the Senkakus as an Article Five territory, and yet there is no clear understanding what this means in terms of military operations. Similarly, there needs to be a fuller development of how to operationalize Article Five in new domains such as cyber and space.

Brig Gen Rob Spalding

Special Assistant to the United States Air Force Vice Chief of Staff (United States Air Force)
15 May 2018

US needs to put pressure on China elsewhere in Asia. One possibility would be to withdraw ground forces from the ROK and redeploy to the South (possibly Philippines and Vietnam). Armed with conventional ballistic and cruise missiles these forces would facilitate a ground based archipelagic defense pressuring PLA forces throughout the first island chain. This could be accompanied by the reintroduction of tactical nuclear weapons in the ROK for F-35s. The resulting balance of nuclear forces on

the peninsula and increased military presence in the south would force China to reevaluate its strategy possibly causing them to rethink their approach to the DPRK.

Yun Sun

Co-Director, East Asia Program (Stimson Center)
Director, China Program (Stimson Center)
29 May 2018

US needs to provide unswerving, consistent commitment to the defense of Japan and South Korea. US needs to maintain maximum sanction pressure on DPRK until it takes meaningful steps toward denuclearization. US needs to maintain absolute ability of deterrence against DPRK.

Dr. William Tow

Professor (Australian National University)
12 June 2018

The key part of this question is 'the US working with its partners'. If President Trump insinuates to Chairman Kim Jong-un during their summit in Singapore that the U.S. could withdraw part or all of US ground forces currently deployed in the ROK, South Korean defence planners would justifiably begin to speculate about the continued viability of US extended deterrence commitments. Such uncertainty would extend to Japanese defence policy planners. Accordingly, the US needs to remain steadfast in its efforts to coordinate its regional defence and security policies with its South Korean and Japanese allies. The costs for not doing so could well be to accelerate nuclear proliferation in Northeast Asia as Japan, followed inevitably by South Korea in the absence of a Korean integration on DPRK terms, opts to deploy indigenous and independent nuclear weapons capabilities. This development would be highly destabilising for the region and the world.

Accordingly, there should be no visible let-up in the scale or tempo of US-ROK and US-Japan defence cooperation – i.e. military exercises, joint planning (bilaterally, and, where possible, trilaterally) in the absence of a complete nuclear disarmament process undertaken by the North Koreans. Greater attention should be directed toward integrating missile defence strategies/capabilities and pursuing new forms of anti-submarine warfare to neutralise the burgeoning DPRK SSBN program and to counteract its attack submarine capabilities.

If Pyongyang does show explicit and verifiable signs of nuclear disarmament, there should be a comprehensive process established for joint planning and coordination of economic assistance by the US, Japan and the ROK directed toward the DPRK.

Intensified intelligence collaboration between Japan and the ROK should be pursued vigorously by the United States, despite historical tensions between those two countries – and certainly to a greater extent than was evident following the inception of the Framework Agreement, the Perry Plan, the Six Party Talks and other precedents for negotiations and policy coordination in Northeast Asia. The US should energetically pursue similar cooperation with allies in the East China Sea (under the leadership of the US Indo-Pacific Command) and adopt a more holistic approach to contingency planning involving other regional flashpoints (the South China Sea, Taiwan, etc.). In this context, intensified attention should be directed toward converting the Quadrilateral Initiative from an idea into a working security arrangement with its own institutional instrumentalities (an annual, fully-fledged summit, more standardized defence exercises rather than intermittent participation in the Malabar maneuvers, etc.).

The US should consult extensively with other regional allies (certainly Australia) and with security partners (such as India, Singapore and Vietnam) most likely to cooperate with it in the event of a future North Korean crisis escalation. Consultations with China also need to be pursued to the extent that policy misunderstandings/miscalculations can be minimised.

Dr. Miles Yu

Professor (United States Naval Academy)
6 June 2018

The most effective approach would be to work with allies to form constant maritime patrol [essentially naval blockade] to eliminate all illicit trade with the DPRK; to enhance surveillance and monitoring mechanisms along the China-DPRK border to prevent resumption of trade.

Subject Matter Expert Biographies

Dr. Bruce Bennett

Senior International/Defense Researcher (RAND)

Bruce W. Bennett is a senior international/defense researcher at the RAND Corporation who works primarily on research topics such as strategy, force planning, and counterproliferation within the RAND International Security and Defense Policy Center and the RAND Arroyo Strategy, Doctrine, and Resources Program. Bennett's work applies war gaming, risk management, deterrence-based strategy, competitive strategies, and military simulation and analysis. He specializes in “asymmetric threats” such as weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and how to counter those threats with new strategies, operational concepts, and technologies. He is an expert in Northeast Asian military issues, having visited the region more than 110 times and written much about Korean security issues. He has also done work on the Persian/Arab Gulf region. His Northeast Asian research has addressed issues such as future ROK military force requirements, the Korean military balance, counters to North Korean chemical and biological weapon threats in Korea and Japan, dealing with a North Korean collapse, potential Chinese intervention in Korean contingencies, changes in the Northeast Asia security environment, and deterrence of nuclear threats (including strengthening the U.S. nuclear umbrella). He has worked with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, U.S. Forces Korea and Japan, the U.S. Pacific Command and Central Command, the ROK and Japanese militaries, and the ROK National Assembly. Bennett received his B.S. in economics from the California Institute of Technology and his Ph.D. in policy analysis from the Pardee RAND Graduate School.

Dr. Stephen Cimbala

Distinguished Professor of Political Science (Penn State Brandywine)

Stephen J. Cimbala is Distinguished Professor of Political Science at Penn State Brandywine. He is the author of numerous works in the field of national security studies and nuclear arms control, among other topics. Dr. Cimbala is also an award winning Penn State teacher. His most recent work is Getting Nuclear Weapons Right (Lynne Rienner Publishers: 2018). He is available at sjc2@psu.edu

Ken Gause

Director, Adversary Analytics Program (CNA)

Ken Gause is the director of the Adversary Analytics Program, a part of CNA's Strategy, Policy, Plans, and Programs Division. He is CNA's senior foreign leadership analyst and has spent the last 20 years developing methodologies for examining leadership dynamics of hard-target, authoritarian regimes. In particular, he is an internationally respected expert on North Korea who has written three books on North Korean leadership. His latest book is *North Korean House of Cards: Leadership Dynamics Under Kim Jong-un*. Leadership and opposing force (OPFOR) analysis are core areas of expertise within CNA Strategic Studies and Gause has personally directed studies on the North Korean, Iranian and Russian leadership and decision-making. His work on foreign leadership dates back to the early 1980s with his work on the Soviet Union for the U.S. government. Over the last three decades, he has devised analytical techniques used to understand adversary decision-making. These techniques span a five-tier set of methodologies that range from biographical analysis to studies on how to impact and shape an authoritarian or totalitarian regime's actions. These studies include a range of approaches from sophisticated game design to proprietary analysis based on a "virtual network" of researchers around the world dedicated to providing analysis on regimes of interest, their leadership, and how they make decisions. Gause has also published numerous articles on leadership structures for such publications as Jane's Intelligence

Review, Jane's Defense Weekly, and the Korean Journal of Defense Analysis. He has a B.A. from Vanderbilt in Russian and Political Science and an M.A. from The George Washington University in Soviet and East European Affairs.

Dr. James Hoare

Associate Fellow, Asia-Pacific Programme (Chatham House)

Since retiring from HM Diplomatic Service in 2003 - where his last post was establishing the British Embassy in North Korea – Dr. Hoare has pursued a second career as a broadcaster, writer and occasional teacher on East Asia. Much of his work concerns North Korea but he also has expertise on China and Japan. He has published several books, some with his wife, Susan Pares, also a former diplomat. He is a graduate of Queen Mary University of London (BA 1964) and the School of Oriental and African Studies (PhD 1971).

Dr. Gregory Kulacki

China Project Manager (Union of Concerned Scientists)

Gregory Kulacki is an expert on cross-cultural communication between the United States and China. Since joining UCS in 2002, he has promoted dialogue between experts from both countries on nuclear arms control and space security and has consulted with Chinese and U.S. governmental and non-governmental organizations, including the U.S. House China Working Group, the Senate Armed Services Committee, the U.S. National Academies, NASA, and the Office of Science and Technology Policy. Over the last decade, Kulacki has been cited by a number of U.S. and Chinese news organizations, including the Christian Science Monitor, Nature, New York Times, NPR, Washington Post, and Washington Times. Dr. Kulacki, who is fluent in Mandarin Chinese, has lived and worked in China for more than 20 years. Prior to joining UCS, he served as an associate professor of government at Green Mountain College, director of external studies at Pitzer College, and director of academic programs in China for the Council on International Educational Exchange. Dr. Kulacki earned a doctorate degree in political theory and a master's degree in international relations from the University of Maryland in College Park. He also completed graduate certificates in Chinese economic history and international politics at Fudan University in Shanghai.

Dr. Patrick McEachern

Council on Foreign Relations International Affairs Fellow (Wilson Center)

Patrick McEachern is a Council on Foreign Relations International Affairs Fellow in residence at the Wilson Center from September 2017-August 2018. He most recently served as the Deputy Chief of the Foreign Policy and Bilateral Affairs Unit at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. He previously served as a political officer in Seoul, an analyst in the State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research's Northeast Asia Division, a Pat Roberts Intelligence Scholar, and a consular and political-military affairs officer in Bratislava, Slovakia. Patrick speaks Korean and Slovak and holds a PhD from Louisiana State University. He is the author of Inside the Red Box: North Korea's Post-totalitarian Politics (Columbia University Press, 2010) and co-author with Jaclyn McEachern of North Korea, Iran, and the Challenge to International Order (Routledge, 2017). He recently completed another book entitled North Korea: What Everyone Needs to Know (Oxford University Press, under contract) and is currently writing a new book with John Delury entitled Survivor: North Korea from Kim Il Sung to Kim Jong Un.

Ariel F.W. Petrovics

PhD Candidate (University of California, Davis)
Researcher (Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory)

Ariel Petrovics is a PhD candidate at the University of California, Davis and a researcher at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's Center for Global Security Research. Her research examines the effectiveness of foreign policy strategies with specific application to national security and nuclear proliferation. Her work uses cross-national quantitative analysis, original data, and critical case studies to address current security questions, including the effectiveness of nuclear deproliferation policies, engagement with renegade regimes, and the consequences of economic sanctions. She has worked with the US Department of Energy, American Enterprise Institute's Foreign and Defense Policy Department, and the Woodrow Wilson Center's Cold War International History Project. Her work has been published in AEI's Critical Threats Project and UC Berkeley's Policy Matters Journal, and has appeared at multiple conferences including at the American Political Science Association, International Studies Association, and SAIS Johns Hopkins.

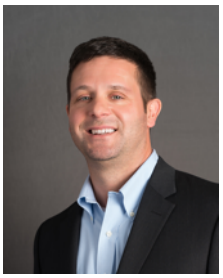
Dr. James Platte

Assistant Professor (United States Air Force Center for Strategic Deterrence Studies)

Dr. James E. Platte is an assistant professor with the USAF Center for Strategic Deterrence Studies (CSDS), and he is the course director for the Deterrence Research Task Force elective cross-listed with the Air War College and the Air Command and Staff College. Prior to joining CSDS in 2017, Dr. Platte was an intelligence research specialist with the U.S. Department of Energy, and he also has worked on nuclear counterproliferation with the Defense Intelligence Agency and the National Nuclear Security Administration. He received his PhD in international relations from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University and has held research fellowships with the East-West Center, Pacific Forum CSIS, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Harvard Kennedy School. Dr. Platte broadly is interested in the military and commercial applications of nuclear energy, and his research particularly focuses on nuclear issues in East Asia, including North Korea's nuclear program, U.S. extended deterrence, and the proliferation of nuclear technology across the region.

Dr. John Plumb

Senior Engineer (RAND)



Dr. John Plumb has served in national security roles for over 20 years at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. He has served at the White House, the Pentagon, and the Senate in senior defense staff roles with a focus on missile defense, nuclear weapons, and deterrence. His past positions include Director, Defense Policy and Strategy on the National Security Council staff – where he worked to counter North Korea's emerging nuclear capability; Principal Director for Nuclear and Missile Defense Policy at the Pentagon – where he helped drive successful missile defense negotiations with NATO and with Japan; and as a Military Legislative Assistant in the Senate. Dr. Plumb also has over 20 years active and reserve service as a US Navy Submarine Officer. A Captain in the Navy Reserve, he currently serves as the Commanding Officer of 80 personnel responsible for the Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection certification of US warships. He holds a Ph.D. in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Colorado and an undergraduate degree in Physics from the University of Notre Dame. He currently works as a Senior Engineer at RAND.

Dr. Jaganath Sankaran

Assistant Research Professor (University of Maryland)
Research Associate (Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland)

Sankaran is an Assistant Research Professor at the Maryland School of Public Policy and a Research Associate at the Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland (CISSM). He works on problems that lie at the intersection of international security and science & technology. Sankaran spent the first four years of his career as a defense scientist with the Indian Missile R & D establishment. His work in weapons design and development led to his interests in matters such as the balance of military power, strategic stability, and arms control. Sankaran received his Ph.D. (International Security Policy) in 2012, writing his dissertation on the role of deterrence, dissuasion, denial, and arms control in preserving peace and stability in outer space. He examined two inter-related issues, in detail: the deployment of U.S. missile defenses in Northeast Asia and the reaction that deployment provokes from China, including its threat to use anti-satellite missiles to destroy critical U.S. early-warning satellites. His work involved detailed calculations and technical simulations on missile defenses/anti-satellite weapons to understand various claims of capabilities and vulnerabilities, while also examining the political factors motivating Chinese and American policy choices. One focus of Sankaran's current research is U.S.-Russia strategic stability and nuclear arms control, particularly the capabilities of U.S. missile defenses and Russian claims about its destabilizing effects. Sankaran served as a technical consultant to a joint U.S.-Russian National Academies study investigating ways to foster cooperation in missile defense and to enable further nuclear arms control. The other current area focus of Sankaran's research is Asia-Pacific. Sankaran studies the growing conventional military capabilities of China and the counter military balancing undertaken by the United States, Japan, India and other states. He is working on a book project to develop metrics for measuring military power to aid strategy and policy formulation. Sankaran was awarded an Abe Fellowship to conduct field research in Japan and China support his research interests on Asia-Pacific security. He has also written on the changing nuclear postures and deployments patterns of China, India, and Pakistan and their interplay. Sankaran has held fellowships at the Los Alamos National Laboratory, the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University and at RAND Corporation. Sankaran has published in *International Security, Contemporary Security Policy*, *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, *Arms Control Today*, *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, and other outlets. His research has also been published by the RAND Corporation and the Stimson Center.

Dr. Sheila Smith

Senior Fellow for Japan Studies (Council on Foreign Relations)

Sheila A. Smith, an expert on Japanese politics and foreign policy, is senior fellow for Japan studies at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). She is the author of Intimate Rivals: Japanese Domestic Politics and a Rising China (Columbia University Press, 2015) and Japan's New Politics and the U.S.-Japan Alliance (Council on Foreign Relations, June 2014). Her current research focuses on how geostrategic change in Asia is shaping Japan's strategic choices. In the fall of 2014, Smith began a project on Northeast Asian Nationalisms and Alliance Management. Smith is a regular contributor to the CFR blog Asia Unbound, and frequent contributor to major media outlets in the United States and Asia. She joined CFR from the East-West Center in 2007, where she directed a multinational research team in a cross-national study of the domestic politics of the U.S. military presence in Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines. She was a visiting scholar at Keio University in 2007-08, where she researched Japan's foreign policy towards China, supported by the Abe Fellowship. Smith has been a visiting researcher at two leading Japanese foreign and security policy think tanks, the Japan Institute of International Affairs and the Research Institute for Peace and Security, and at the University of Tokyo and the University of the Ryukyus. Smith is vice chair of the U.S. advisors to the U.S.-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Exchange (CULCON), a bi-national advisory panel of government officials and private sector members. She also serves on the advisory committee for the U.S.-Japan Network for the Future program of the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation. She teaches as an adjunct professor at the Asian Studies Department of Georgetown University and serves on the board of its Journal of Asian Affairs. She earned her MA and PhD degrees from the department of political science at Columbia University.

Brig Gen Rob Spalding

Special Assistant to the United States Air Force Vice Chief of Staff (United States Air Force)

Brig Gen Robert S. Spalding III assumed the duties of Special Assistant to the U.S. Air Force vice chief of staff in February 2018. General Spalding received his commission through Fresno State University's Reserve Officer Training Corps program in 1991. He earned his doctorate in economics and mathematics from the University of Missouri at Kansas City in 2007. The general attended undergraduate pilot training in 1993, and was subsequently assigned as a B-52 Stratofortress co-pilot in the 5th Bomb Wing at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota. He subsequently transitioned to the B-2 Spirit at Whiteman AFB, Missouri. In 2001, he was selected as one of three Air Force Olmsted Scholars, and was a distinguished graduate of Mandarin Chinese language training at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California. Afterward, the general attended Tongji University in Shanghai as a graduate research student. He then returned to Whiteman AFB as a B-2 evaluator pilot and assistant director of operations for the 393rd Bomb Squadron. The general was then assigned to the Office of the Secretary of Defense's Prisoner of War Missing Personnel Office as the military assistant for the deputy assistant secretary of defense. During the Iraq surge in 2007, General Spalding deployed to Baghdad and directed the Personal Security Coordination Center. After a stint at the Air War College at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, he was reassigned to the B-2 at Whiteman AFB. While at Whiteman AFB, he was the chief of safety, operations group commander and vice wing commander. He was then selected as a Military Fellow at the Council of Foreign Relations in New York. General Spalding then served as the chief China strategist for the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the Joint Staff at the Pentagon, Arlington, Va. Prior to his current assignment he served at the White House as the Senior Director for Strategic Planning at the National Security Council, Washington, D.C. General Spalding speaks Chinese-Mandarin and Spanish.

Yun Sun

Co-Director, East Asia Program (Stimson Center)
Director, China Program (Stimson Center)

Yun Sun is co-Director of the East Asia Program and Director of the China Program at the Stimson Center. Her expertise is in Chinese foreign policy, U.S.-China relations and China's relations with neighboring countries and authoritarian regimes. From 2011 to early 2014, she was a Visiting Fellow at the Brookings Institution, jointly appointed by the Foreign Policy Program and the Global Development Program, where she focused on Chinese national security decision-making processes and China-Africa relations. From 2008 to 2011, Yun was the China Analyst for the International Crisis Group based in Beijing, specializing on China's foreign policy towards conflict countries and the developing world. Prior to ICG, she worked on U.S.-Asia relations in Washington, DC for five years. Yun earned her master's degree in international policy and practice from George Washington University, as well as an MA in Asia Pacific studies and a BA in international relations from Foreign Affairs College in Beijing.

Dr. William Tow

Professor (Australian National University)

Previously Professor of International Relations at the University of Queensland and at Griffith University, and an Assistant Professor of International Relations at the University of Southern California (USC), Professor William Tow has been a Visiting Fellow at Stanford University, and a Visiting Research Associate at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London. Professor Tow has been principal investigator in two major projects for the MacArthur Foundation's Asia Pacific Security Initiative. He has also been the editor of the *Australian Journal of International Affairs* and has served on the Foreign Affairs Council, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the National Board of Directors, Australian Fulbright Commission.

His research interests focus the United States' alliance system in the Asia-Pacific, Sino-American relations, and Australia-Japan relations. Professor Tow's research interests include alliance politics, US security policy in the Asia-Pacific, security politics in the Asia-Pacific, and Australian security policies.

Dr. Miles Yu

Professor (United States Naval Academy)

Miles Maochun Yu is a professor of East Asia and military and naval history at the United States Naval Academy. He is the author of numerous scholarly articles on military and intelligence history and newspaper columns; his books include *OSS in China: Prelude to Cold War*.

Author Biography

George Popp

Senior Analyst

George Popp is a Senior Analyst at NSI, Inc. where he conducts research and analysis on a broad range of multidisciplinary analysis projects that focus on understanding the political, economic, and social dynamics of emerging conflict situations and environments throughout the world. The bulk of George's work has been in support of NSI's government initiatives, particularly leading and contributing to human behavior analytics efforts completed for the Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) program on behalf of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and in support of direct requests from US Combatant Commanders to the Department of Defense. George has also supported NSI's commercial initiatives, conducting business intelligence analyses for clients in the video game industry. George started with NSI as an Intern, and has risen through the ranks since. He was honored to be promoted to Senior Analyst in 2017. George's degree is in Economics from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.