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# **Is There A Win-Win Scenario For The Key Actors Concerned With The DPRK?**

**A Virtual Think Tank (ViTTa®)  
Report**

Produced in support of the  
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(Joint Staff, J39)

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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

**[Q1]** Is there a win-win scenario for all of the key actors (DPRK, ROK, US, China, Russia)? If so, what might this look like?

### Subject Matter Expert Contributors

**Dr. Bruce Bennett**, RAND; **Dean Cheng**, Heritage Foundation; **Dr. Richard Cronin**, Stimson Center; **Debra Decker**, Stimson Center; **Abraham Denmark**, Wilson Center; **Ken Gause**, CNA; **Dr. James Hoare**, Chatham House; **Dr. David Hunter-Chester**, Training and Doctrine Command G-2; **Dr. Maorong Jiang**, Creighton University; **Dr. Jeffrey Knopf**, Middlebury Institute of International Studies; **Matt Korda**,<sup>1</sup> NATO; **Dr. Gregory Kulacki**, Union of Concerned Scientists; **Inhyok Kwon**, RAND; **Group Captain (Indian Air Force ret) Ajey Lele**, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses; **Dr. Rod Lyon**, Australian Strategic Policy Institute; **Dr. Patrick McEachern**,<sup>2</sup> Wilson Center; **Dr. Rupal Mehta**, University of Nebraska, Lincoln; **Dr. Andrew O’Neil**, Griffith University; **Ankit Panda**, The Diplomat; **Ariel F.W. Petrovics**, University of California, Davis; **Dr. James Platte**, United States Air Force Center for Strategic Deterrence Studies; **Dr. John Plumb**, RAND; **Joshua Pollack**, Middlebury Institute of International Studies; **Anthony Rinna**, Sino-NK; **Dr. Todd C. Robinson**, Air Command and Staff College; **Dr. Gary Samore**, Harvard University; **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. Michael Swaine**, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; **Dr. William Tow**, Australian National University; **Dr. Steve Tsang**, University of London; **Dr. Miles Yu**, United States Naval Academy

### Summary Response

This report summarizes the input of thirty-three 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 the possibility of a win-win scenario for the key actors involved with the DPRK. This summary details the various perspectives that emerge.

### Bottom Line Up Front

- Several contributors note that while Japan is not listed as a “key actor” in the question, it is certainly a key actor in relation to the Korean Peninsula and Asia Pacific region and should be considered as such in this assessment.
- Twenty-one of the thirty-four contributors (about 62%) do not believe that a win-win scenario exists for all of the key actors. These contributors generally assess that the current interests of the key actors involved, particularly the US vs. DPRK vs. China and Russia, are irreconcilable (i.e., the DPRK considers its nuclear capability as indispensable, while the US insists on final, fully verified

<sup>1</sup> Korda’s contribution in this report reflects his own views and opinions, and does not reflect those of NATO or its Member States.

<sup>2</sup> McEachern’s views expressed in this report are his own, and do not necessarily reflect those of the US government or Department of State.

denuclearization [FFVD]. China and Russia want to see US influence in the region diminished, while the US, obviously, does not).

- Eight of the thirty-four contributors (about 23%) believe that a win-win scenario for all of the key actors may be possible, at least in the short-term, but doubt that such a scenario could actually be achieved over the long-term. These contributors generally highlight a misalignment of long-term interests among the key actors and an overall lack of trust in the DPRK to fulfill any agreements it makes as the key barriers to a win-win scenario for all of the key actors.
- Five of the thirty-four contributors (about 15%) believe that a win-win scenario for all of the key actors is possible without much qualification. These contributors acknowledge the differences in interests amongst the key actors, but generally assess that there is room for negotiation in pursuit of a win-win outcome.

## Is There A Win-Win Scenario For All Of The Key Actors?

While the contributor response to this question is mixed, and no unanimous answer emerges, twenty-one of the thirty-four contributors (about 62%) do align in offering a negative assessment of the possibility of a win-win scenario for all of the key actors, with seventeen contributors (50%) arguing that there is no possibility at all. On the other hand, five contributors (about 15%) believe that a win-win scenario is possible without much qualification. Eight other contributors (23%) believe that a short-term win-win scenario may be possible, but doubt that a long-term solution would be possible given the misalignment of interests amongst the key actors involved and likelihood of the DPRK not holding up its end of the bargain.

Most contributors reflect on this question by assessing the interests of the key actors cited in the question (DPRK, US, ROK, China, Russia), with several contributors also stressing the importance of considering Japan's interests as well. The contributors that believe that a win-win scenario is a possibility identify the interests of each key actor that could be satisfied in order to achieve such a win-win solution, whereas the contributors that do not believe a win-win scenario is possible similarly identify each key actor's interests but emphasize points of conflict.

Because of the variety of opinions offered by the contributors, the remainder of this summary is organized into three sections: first discussing the assessments of the contributors that do not believe that a win-win scenario exists (the majority), then presenting the assessments of the contributors that believe a win-win scenario may be possible but is unlikely to be achieved, and finally considering the assessments of the contributors that believe a win-win scenario is possible without much qualification.

### School Of Thought I: There Is No Win-Win Scenario

Contributors that offer a negative assessment of the possibility of a win-win scenario for all of the key actors generally describe each actors' interests as conflicting, if not irreconcilable. The crux of the argument reflected by these contributors appears to come down to the assumption that the DPRK is unwilling to truly give up its nuclear capability because it perceives it as a necessity to preserving its sovereignty and the security of the regime. Therefore, the United States' ultimate goal of final, fully verified denuclearization (FFVD) is, in reality, a non-starter. Additionally, the US presence in Northern Asia fundamentally runs counter to DPRK, Chinese, and Russian interests. Even if short-term improvements in relations were possible, if the US truly desires a denuclearized DPRK and maintenance

of its influence in the region, there will never be a feasible win-win scenario for everyone. While Japan's desire for stability seems to require a committed US presence, the ROK's position appears to be a bit more nuanced. Fear of DPRK military capability seems to align the ROK's interests with a continued US military presence, but the ROK also has economic and social interests in achieving a rapprochement with the DPRK that might not necessarily align with US interests.

### DPRK Interests

Contributors who offer a negative assessment of the possibility of a win-win scenario describe the DPRK's interests as focusing on (in decreasing order of importance):

- Nuclear weapons as essential for deterring threats to sovereignty.<sup>3</sup>
- Paramount goal of Kim Jong-un to preserve his regime and hold on to power.<sup>4</sup>
- Security assurances of DPRK sovereignty.<sup>5</sup>
- Diminished or eliminated US presence on the peninsula.<sup>6</sup>
- Desire for legitimacy on the world stage.<sup>7</sup>
- Peace treaty and a formal end to the Korean War.<sup>8</sup>

A frequently cited interest of the DPRK is its presumed need to possess a nuclear deterrent to a perceived US threat to its sovereignty. If this is the case, then the current US position of demanding FFVD would be in direct and irreconcilable opposition to this need. Another non-negotiable interest would be if the DPRK genuinely insisted on a complete withdrawal of US forces from the Korean Peninsula, something in which the US does not seem interested in entertaining. The other cited DPRK interests do not appear to be necessarily diametrically opposed to the interests of the other key actors, including those of the US. For instance, if the US does not pursue regime change and is willing to assure DPRK non-aggression, if not an outright declaration of the end of the Korean War, and a degree of diplomatic legitimacy, then these perceived interests of the DPRK could be accommodated.

### US Interests

The US interests most often cited by the contributors who offer a negative assessment of the possibility of a win-win scenario include:

- No ability for the DPRK to strike US territory with nuclear weapons.<sup>9</sup>
- FFVD.<sup>10</sup>
- Halt testing of nuclear devices and missiles.<sup>11</sup>

Several contributors highlight either short-term or long-term goals of FFVD. Given that the DPRK appears to perceive its nuclear capability as essential to its survival, this US goal appears to be a non-starter. Moreover, some of the contributors that highlight the United States' interest in preventing the DPRK from being able to strike US territories also express doubt that the DPRK would ever truthfully

<sup>3</sup> See contributions from Denmark; Pollack; and Robinson.

<sup>4</sup> See contributions from Cronin; Kwon; and Rinna.

<sup>5</sup> See contributions from Petrovics and Swaine.

<sup>6</sup> See contributions from Kwon; Mehta; Pollack; Robinson; and Swaine.

<sup>7</sup> See contributions from Mehta and Swaine.

<sup>8</sup> See contributions from Kwon and Swaine.

<sup>9</sup> See contributions from Cronin and Jiang.

<sup>10</sup> See contributions from Bennett and Kwon.

<sup>11</sup> See contribution from Petrovics.

eliminate its capability to do so. Similar doubt is also conveyed by the contributors that highlight the United States' interest in halting DPRK testing activities.

### ROK Interests

Contributors who offer a negative assessment of the possibility of a win-win scenario did not enumerate ROK interests as often as those of the other key actors, but ROK interests that are cited include:

- FFVD.<sup>12</sup>
- Security.<sup>13</sup>
- Rapprochement with the DPRK and the opening of markets.<sup>14</sup>

As stated above, FFVD is probably a non-starter for the DPRK. Moreover, the ROK's general security concerns may align its interests with a continued US military presence, an interest that runs counter to Chinese and Russian interests. The ROK's interest relating to rapprochement, however, especially if coupled with the possibility of economic benefits, appears to be a more concrete interest upon which the DPRK and ROK might align, even as noted by this admittedly skeptical group of contributors.

### Chinese Interests

The Chinese interests most often cited by the contributors who offer a negative assessment of the possibility of a win-win scenario include:

- Stability.<sup>15</sup>
- Diminution or elimination of US presence in Northern Asia.<sup>16</sup>
- FFVD.<sup>17</sup>

China appears to have a key interest in maintaining a stable DPRK to preserve the balance of power in the region, to counter US interests, and to prevent disruptive political and economic events at China's border. China also appears to be interested in both FFVD and diminished, if not eliminated, US influence in the region. The US, not surprisingly, does not appear to have an interest in diminishing its influence in the region, and the DPRK has no interest in FFVD; thus, these conflicting interests obviate any win-win scenario. The issue of stability, however, is an interest that is likely shared by all of the key actors.

### Russian Interests

The contributors who offer a negative assessment of the possibility of a win-win scenario address Russian interests the least. The two Russian interests cited most frequently, however, are diminishing US influence in the region and on the world stage,<sup>18</sup> and acting as a spoiler to any agreements in an effort to

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<sup>12</sup> See contribution from Bennett.

<sup>13</sup> See contribution from Petrovics.

<sup>14</sup> See contributions from Hoare and Jiang.

<sup>15</sup> See contributions from Cheng; Cronin; Mehta; and Rinna.

<sup>16</sup> See contributions from Cheng; Cronin; Denmark; and Swaine.

<sup>17</sup> See contribution from Bennett.

<sup>18</sup> See contributions from Denmark; Mehta; and Pollack.



limit US influence.<sup>19</sup> Contributors also point to Russia's interests in regional stability in general and FFVD on the Korean Peninsula.<sup>20</sup>

### Japanese Interests

Contributors that offer a negative assessment of the possibility of a win-win scenario also contend that this analysis would be incomplete without considering Japan's interests.<sup>21</sup> Japan's primary interest, according to these contributors, appears to be ensuring stability in the region.

## School Of Thought II: There Might Be A Win-Win Scenario But It Is Unlikely To Be Achieved

Six contributors believe that a win-win scenario might be possible, but express doubt that it could actually occur. Two other contributors believe that short-term win-win scenarios could happen, but assess that there is no sustainable long-term win-win scenario. Thus, about 23% of the contributors believe that there is a qualified win-win scenario possibility. An examination of how this group of contributors identifies each key actor's interests offers insight into how they arrived at this assessment and just how likely they envision a win-win scenario being.

### DPRK Interests

The contributors who advocate for a qualified possibility for a win-win scenario highlight four DPRK interests:

- Security assurances.<sup>22</sup>
- Economic aid and opportunity.<sup>23</sup>
- Peace treaty and an end to the Korean War.<sup>24</sup>
- International legitimacy.<sup>25</sup>

These contributors emphasize some of the less important interests enumerated by the more skeptical contributors, and notably do not mention the DPRK's perceived need for a nuclear capability or desire to ensure the preservation of the Kim regime. The interests that these contributors mention are inherently more negotiable, and therefore diplomatically achievable.

### US Interests

The contributors who advocate for a qualified possibility for a win-win scenario highlight four US interests:

- Preventing DPRK ability to strike US territories with nuclear weapons.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>19</sup> See contributions from Cheng and Cronin.

<sup>20</sup> See contribution from Bennett.

<sup>21</sup> See contributions from Cheng and Petrovics.

<sup>22</sup> See contributions from Knopf; Korda; Lyon; and Platte.

<sup>23</sup> See contributions from Knopf; Korda; Lyon; and McEachern.

<sup>24</sup> See contributions from McEachern and Platte.

<sup>25</sup> See contributions from Lyon and Platte.

<sup>26</sup> See contributions from Lyon and Platte.

- Cessation of nuclear and missile testing.<sup>27</sup>
- US remains on the peninsula.<sup>28</sup>
- Eventual FFVD.<sup>29</sup>

These contributors believe that a compromise may be possible in which the DPRK retains some of its nuclear capability but is limited in such a way that it cannot pose a threat to US territories (the mainland and Guam). This could be achieved, the contributors suggest, through a cessation of DPRK nuclear and missile testing. These contributors generally believe that there is a possibility for an eventual FFVD, but also suggest that the US expects to remain on the peninsula for the time being.

### ROK Interests

The contributors who advocate for a qualified possibility for a win-win scenario offer little reflection on ROK interests and demands for such a settlement, which appear to amount to removal of the military threat (beyond nuclear weapons) to ROK, stabilization of the peninsula, and FFVD.<sup>30</sup>

### Chinese Interests

The contributors who advocate for a qualified possibility for a win-win scenario highlight three Chinese interests:

- Diminishing US presence in Northern Asia.<sup>31</sup>
- Reversal of the THAAD missile defense system.<sup>32</sup>
- Economic development in the DPRK.<sup>33</sup>

These contributors assess that there is room for a diminution of US presence that could be negotiable with the Chinese, and note that the Chinese would like to see the THAAD missile defense system rolled back (the Chinese claim that the THAAD missile defense system provides the US with electronic spying capabilities within Chinese territories). These contributors also contend that US-supported economic development in the DPRK would benefit China both in stabilizing the peninsula and opening up new economic opportunities for China.

### Russian Interests

The contributors who advocate for a qualified possibility for a win-win scenario suggest that Russia could also benefit from both a decreased US presence and increased economic development in the DPRK.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> See contribution from Korda.

<sup>28</sup> See contribution from Korda.

<sup>29</sup> See contributions from Korda and McEachern.

<sup>30</sup> See contributions from Lyon; McEachern; and Platte.

<sup>31</sup> See contributions from McEachern and Platte.

<sup>32</sup> See contribution from Lyon.

<sup>33</sup> See contributions from Korda and Platte.

<sup>34</sup> See contributions from Korda; Lyon; McEachern; and Platte.

## Japanese Interests

Contributors who advocate for a qualified possibility for a win-win scenario assess that Japan may be advantageously positioned in a possible resulting win-win scenario because such an outcome would likely reduce the military threat from the DPRK and could enable Japan to resolve its abductee issue, both of which are central Japanese interests.<sup>35</sup>

## School Of Thought III: A Win-Win Scenario Is Possible

Five of the thirty-four contributors (about 15%) believe that a win-win scenario for all of the key actors is possible, without much qualification. These contributors identify several key actor interests that could be satisfied in order to achieve such a win-win solution, and suggest that differences in interests between the various actors may be negotiable in pursuit of a win-win outcome.

## DPRK Interests

Contributors who assess that a win-win scenario for all of the key actors is possible highlight five DPRK interests:

- Keep most or all of its nuclear weapons.<sup>36</sup>
- Remain sovereign.<sup>37</sup>
- Preserve the Kim regime.<sup>38</sup>
- Ease sanctions and receive economic assistance.<sup>39</sup>
- Peace treaty and an end to the Korean War.<sup>40</sup>

The DPRK interests identified by this group of contributors are similar to those identified by the contributors that offer a negative assessment of the possibility of a win-win scenario. The primary difference between these two groups of contributors, however, is in their assessment of how negotiable these points are, particularly between the US and the DPRK.

## US Interests

The primary US interest highlighted by the contributors who assess that a win-win scenario for all of the key actors is possible is the United States' fundamental interest of preventing the DPRK from being able to launch a nuclear strike against the US and its territories.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> See contribution from Platte.

<sup>36</sup> See contribution from Samore.

<sup>37</sup> See contribution from Gause.

<sup>38</sup> See contributions from Hunter-Chester and Plumb.

<sup>39</sup> See contributions from Plumb and Sankaran.

<sup>40</sup> See contribution from Plumb.

<sup>41</sup> See contributions from Gause; Plumb; Samore; and Sankaran. Additionally, Decker suggests that movement toward establishing a norm against non-use/development of nuclear weapons could be in everyone's best interests.

## **ROK Interests**

The principal ROK interests highlighted by the contributors who assess that a win-win scenario for all of the key actors is possible are the avoidance of war and the signing of a peace treaty formally ending the Korean War.<sup>42</sup>

## **Chinese, Russian, and Japanese Interests**

Only one contributor who assesses that a win-win scenario for all of the key actors is possible addresses the interests of the Chinese, Russians, and Japanese.<sup>43</sup> This contributor contends that all three have a vested interest in avoiding war on the peninsula.

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<sup>42</sup> See contributions from Plumb and Samore.

<sup>43</sup> See contribution from Samore.

## Subject Matter Expert Response Submissions

### Dr. Bruce Bennett

Senior International/Defense Researcher (RAND)

5 September 2018

It will be a win for everyone in the region except, perhaps, for North Korea if the North dismantles its nuclear weapons program. The question is whether or not North Korea will perceive that a dismantling of its nuclear weapons program is a win.

- a. In 1992, North Korea agreed to the South/North Denuclearization Joint Declaration in which the North promised to “...not test, manufacture, produce, receive, possess, store, deploy or use nuclear weapons,” to “not possess nuclear reprocessing and uranium enrichment facilities,” and to use “nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes.” These commitments very clearly equate to the US concept of final, fully verified denuclearization (FFVD) of the North Korean nuclear weapon program. North Korea is in violation of essentially all of these provisions (it even “uses” nuclear weapons for coercion, deterrence, and to stimulate regime idolization). It has been in violation of some of these provisions since before the declaration was made.
- b. North Korea committed in the April 27 Panmunjom Declaration (item 1.1) to fully implement “all existing agreements and declarations adopted between the two sides thus far” and to realize (item 3.4) “through complete denuclearization, a nuclear-free Korean peninsula...” That means North Korea has agreed, again, to have no nuclear weapons and no nuclear weapon program of any kind.
- c. Many experts have criticized the June 12 Singapore Agreement signed by President Trump and Kim Jong-un as being weak on North Korean denuclearization. But US officials made their point subtly. Item 3 of that agreement says: “Reaffirming the April 27, 2018 Panmunjom Declaration, the DPRK commits to work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.” The first phrase is thus not a throw away: it clarifies the second. As stated in item b above, the April 27 Panmunjom Declaration requires North Korea to fully implement the 1992 South/North Denuclearization Joint Declaration: Complete North Korean abandonment of its nuclear weapons and related nuclear weapons production program. That is the standard that the United States required of him in Singapore and that *Kim agreed to*.
- d. So the North has now agreed three times to go to zero nuclear weapons and no nuclear weapon production capability. Thus, the historical evidence suggests North Korea feels no responsibility to follow the agreements it makes, which makes me ask: What would be the utility of the peace agreement the North is so fervently pursuing, if the agreement comes before the conditions for peace are established and North Korea so consistently violates the security-related agreements that it makes? Now the optimist in me is hopeful that Kim Jong-un has decided to become an honorable leader. But the realist in me does not expect him to go to a full zero on his nuclear program—even if he says he has gone to zero nuclear weapons, I expect him to hide nuclear weapons. It is a shame that the Kim family regime has decided not to honor its commitments for decades. Until this year, North Korea has been very vocal that they see nuclear weapons is the key to North Korean regime survivability, the number one objective of the North Korean regime. So, it is unlikely that North Korea will see giving up its nuclear weapons as a “win.”

### Dean Cheng

Senior Research Fellow (Heritage Foundation)

30 May 2018

At present, there is no win-win scenario for all the various actors.

DPRK: DPRK’s goal is regime survival for the Kim family, but it recognizes that the long-term trends are against it. Even with nuclear weapons, it is able to function mostly at Chinese sufferance (along with some Russian aid). The South is far more capable, economically but also politically. The best outcome, short of some kind of reunification on North Korean terms (which is objectively unlikely) is a reversion to some kind of multi-lateral Cold War, in which North Korea can play multiple players against each other, reaping benefits while making limited surrenders of national sovereignty.

For the US, ROK, and Japan [another key actor, which is not listed here], the current status quo is arguably acceptable, but with the constant uncertainty tied to North Korean actions and the ability to threaten Seoul at any time.

For the PRC, the current situation is sliding away from acceptable. While China does not want instability on the Korean peninsula, the continued presence of the US as a major player in peninsula affairs is going to be unacceptable as China's political, military, and economic capabilities increase. China wants to see the US depart mainland Asia (and ideally, East Asia entirely). At the same time, however, it does not want to see NK collapse, nor does it want to see a renewed Korean War.

For Russia, at the moment it is apparently happy being a spoiler, providing aid and assistance to North Korea, which complicates China's approach. China and Russia/USSR competed for influence over North Korea throughout the Cold War; Russia, China, and Japan competed for influence over Korea during the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

## Dr. Richard Cronin

Distinguished Fellow (Stimson Center)  
3 September 2018

A win-win outcome for all actors could be visualized in theory, perhaps, but only if every party took a minimalist view of its interests, which they do not. The DPRK wants to maximize the retention of its missile and nuclear capabilities to deter any threat from the US and gain leverage against South Korea and Japan, and even against China, which it does not trust—and vice versa. Because regime survival is a bedrock interest, Kim will not rule out concessions that could not only bring about a peace accord and remove sanctions but reap economic benefits, while still preserving the core of his nuclear and missile capabilities. He has bent all effort to that objective.

The ROK's goals are relatively modest but very difficult to achieve—peace, positive engagement with the North, participation in any economic opening, maintaining a level of US diplomatic support, and keeping the US alliance and nuclear umbrella so long as the nuclear threat is not fully negated.

China is playing a long game to gain regional hegemony, which also means getting the US off the Korean Peninsula and militarily disengaged from Seoul. But Xi Jinping is also in a personal and political hurry. China doesn't want the DPRK to become a failed state but also it does not want to see a continuation or increase in the possibility of precipitous US military action against the Pyongyang. China has made this clear in two unprecedented meetings between Xi Jinping and Kim Jong-un in early 2018 in Beijing and Dalian.

Russia will try to increase its now reduced influence and do what it can to play the spoiler and/or use the US need for cooperation in the UN Security Council to increase its leverage against the US and European allies in Syria, etc.

An "America First" approach would focus primarily on negating the DPRK's ability to hit US territory or intermediate range targets such as US bases like Guam or Hawaii with nuclear tipped missiles. Neither the ROK nor Japan can count on having its own regional political and national interests upheld at the expense of primary US security objectives. Although President Trump has been on a learning curve and often adjusts in the face of blowback or the revelation of US equities he heretofore didn't understand or didn't care about. Fundamentally, his vaunted hard-ball style of business deal-making is not really suited to dealing with bilateral and international relationships that require constant attention and adjustment to changing circumstances.

By acknowledging after the Singapore summit negotiations with the DPRK will likely be a long, step-by-step process the President has undercut his own much repeated mantra that the US would make no concessions on sanctions, a peace treaty to replace the Korean War Armistice or other DPRK goals until Pyongyang fully complies with full and irreversible denuclearization.

On the surface the Singapore summit did not turn out to be the debacle that many analysts expected, but Kim gained priceless international and domestic stature by enticing the leader of the world's strongest power to meet with him as an equal and even more so, by effectively defusing the US military option so long as he avoids creating significant new nuclear and missile provocations.

## Debra Decker

Senior Advisor, Managing Across Boundaries Initiative (Stimson Center)

21 May 2018

A winning scenario for all the actors would be to assert norms against nuclear weapon development and use. Unfortunately, the nuclear weapon states have asserted the importance of nuclear weapons through threatening their use (both blithely in statements and in official doctrine) and by investing in upgrades to their own nuclear capabilities. It will be hard to convince other states that feel threatened, like the DPRK, not to follow suit. It would be in everyone's interest to assert a commitment to restart efforts to comply with Article VI of the NPT.

## Abraham Denmark

Director, Asia Program (Wilson Center)

6 June 2018

Unless each of the key actors finds a way to fundamentally redefine how they have traditionally envisioned strategic success on the Korean peninsula, it is unlikely that a scenario can be found in which each major actor can genuinely declare victory. This is due to the reality that each of the major players hold objectives that are mutually exclusive and impossible to reconcile. Yet if the key actors find a way to adjust their approach and re-define their preconceptions for success, strategic opportunities become more achievable.

North Korea's denuclearization is the most critical issue to address. While each major actor other than Pyongyang would prefer to see North Korea's denuclearization, they prioritize denuclearization to radically different degrees. So long as North Korea believes it requires nuclear weapons for its own self-defense, and so long as the other actors are firmly committed to their opposition to a nuclear North Korea, this issue will remain fundamentally intransigent.

Moreover, several key actors differ greatly on the future of American power on the Korean peninsula, and especially the U.S.-ROK Alliance. While some in the region have long seen the U.S. Alliance as a restraint on South Korea, others (especially in Pyongyang, Moscow, and Beijing) see the continued U.S. military presence in Korea as a symbol of American power and influence in East Asia. Beijing is especially sensitive to a large-scale U.S. military presence in such close proximity to its border, and in recent years has evinced growing discomfort with robust U.S. alliances along China's periphery. Beijing, Moscow, and Pyongyang may see negotiations about denuclearization and the future of the Korean peninsula as an opportunity to circumscribe, diminish, and eventually evict U.S. military forces on the Korean Peninsula.

An added irritant to these calculations is the looming specter of geopolitical competition between China and the United States. It has become apparent that many in China, along with some American academics, have increasingly come to view the Korean peninsula through the prism of competition. The result has been for many in China to see American success in Korea – especially as it comes to strengthening its Alliances – as starkly contrary to Chinese interests. For their part, many American scholars have seen any North Korean success as a victory for Chinese interests. If such perceptions were to solidify in Beijing and Washington, a “win-win” scenario in Korea will become – by definition – impossible.

Additionally, there are significant disagreements between the key actors about how Korea may eventually reunify. While some in the United States have at times advocated for an explicit policy of regime change against North Korea, official U.S. policy has only gone so far as to declare in 2009 that the U.S. and ROK share a joint vision for “peaceful reunification on the principles of free democracy and a market economy.”<sup>44</sup> This scenario – while potentially acceptable to most other actors – would certainly be a non-starter for Pyongyang.

To achieve a “win-win” scenario, each major actor will need to fundamentally redefine their conception of victory. While an analyst could spin out any number of scenarios, one accumulation of factors seems to have the greatest potential to be acceptable to the key actors: a scenario in which North Korea completely and verifiably denuclearizes and engages with the ROK on a mutually-acceptable path toward peaceful reunification. Yet such a scenario would depend on North Korea genuinely agreeing to denuclearize in a way acceptable to the other actors – a decision that North Korea's leaders are highly unlikely to make.

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<sup>44</sup> <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/DCPD-200900468/pdf/DCPD-200900468.pdf>

It is also unclear how any “win-win” scenario will deal with the future status for U.S. forces in Korea and the U.S.-ROK Alliance. The United States and ROK have traditionally seen these forces as critical to the defense of South Korea and not up for negotiation with the North, yet both North Korea and China see U.S. forces as both a threat and a symbol of continued American presence and influence in the Peninsula. Moreover, it is unclear how a unifying Korea may see the U.S.-ROK Alliance in the context of an incipient competition between China and the United States – some in Korea may see a continued Alliance as a way to balance against Chinese power, while others may see it as an impediment to closer ties with Beijing.

These questions point to the underlying complexity of structural dynamics on the Korean peninsula, and serve to highlight a fundamental truth: due to drastically differing interests between the key actors on the Korean Peninsula, there is no likely combination of factors that could lead to a win-win scenario in which no side will need to compromise their ambitions. Historically, such a combination of intractable, incompatible strategic objectives has been a recipe for conflict. Indeed, it seems that every actor will likely need to find a way to redefine their objectives if they seek to find a solution that is acceptable to all involved.

## Ken Gause

Director, International Affairs Group, Center for Strategic Studies (CNA)  
4 June 2018

The win-win situation, assuming it can be realized, is based on the notion that CVID is not possible as long as North Korea remains a sovereign country—the so-called “nukes in the basement” scenario. The ambiguity this creates allows the US and North Korea (and by extension China, Russia, and the ROK) to declare victory. North Korea agrees to denuclearize. North Korea gives up its declared program (which may or may not be the entire program). It agrees to a moratorium on testing so as to ensure that its program remains unable to strike the US mainland. North Korea becomes an undeclared, defacto nuclear power, which serves its purposes internally. At the same time, the US is able to declare victory on denuclearization.

### **ADDITIONAL INPUT FROM GAUSE ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2018**

The statement above was made before the summit. Now that the summit has happened and the US did not force North Korea into any concessions, which I believed was possible if KJU needed a fallback position, the dynamics have changed.

I believe that KJU came to the summit with a fallback position if the US pressed. But that did not happen. North Korea now believes it can retain a **declared** nuclear capability. A win-win situation is becoming increasingly difficult because the US and North Korea are dug in on their positions, and neither appears willing to make initial concessions.

To return to the situation I outlined in the win-win scenario (in my June 4 statement), North Korea would have to declare its intention to part with its nuclear program. This would likely take place at a Party meeting. By renouncing the program, KJU could find flexibility to give up some of the nuclear program, declare that it is entirely dismantled, while keeping some “nukes in the basement.” It essentially means going the route of Israel, an undeclared nuclear capability.

If KJU were to go this route, it could come with serious implications for his legitimacy inside the regime. For that reason, I do not see that happening. At least not in the foreseeable future.

## Dr. James Hoare

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

I cannot see it for the DPRK and the ROK. They both see it as a zero-sum game. Each claims to be the government of the whole peninsula, and claims the allegiance of all Koreans. Security for each of them means the disappearance of the other and its incorporation into a new state. But even that would not be completely reassuring. If the DPRK were to come out on top – highly unlikely – it would be faced with a what it would see as a basically hostile group twice the size of its total population. It has always been suspicious of even small groups that do not, or might not, conform – e.g., those with relatives in the ROK, those who came back from Japan. If it was the ROK that came out on top – the most likely outcome but one that lies a long way off – it too would have suspicions about crypto-communists etc. There would be fear that the others were stronger because they had an ideology in a way that the ROK does not.



On the whole, the nearest one could get to a win-win situation would be for the status quo to continue but without nuclear weapons (including US nuclear weapons, which would mean the end of targeting the DPRK) and with a North-South rapprochement. A deeper and more sustained engagement policy between the Koreans, plus international agreement to leave them manage their own affairs might help.

### **Dr. David Hunter-Chester**

Senior Research Analyst, Athena Team (Training and Doctrine Command G-2)  
Senior Research Analyst (Intelligent Decisions Systems, Inc.)  
4 September 2018

In exchange for economic aid and a peace agreement, the DPRK reduces some of its warhead stockpile, stops testing missiles, pulls back its forces and military systems on the DMZ, and greatly reduces its military strength. In time the DPRK begins releasing its people from gulags. The U.S. remains stationed in South Korea. Russia is able to take advantage of improved infrastructure to get LNG to market. China has fewer refugees and Japan feels less threatened.

### **Dr. Maorong Jiang**

Associate Professor, Political Science and International Relations (Creighton University)  
Director, Asian World Center (Creighton University)  
3 June 2018

North Korea's recent announcement for a total denuclearization within its regime created an unprecedented expectation from the possible US-North Korea Summit for a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula. My proposal is to provide both a realistic and an optimistic projection. Realistically, total denuclearization in the Korea Peninsula will not be possible. Instead, the US should acknowledge North Korea's ability to maintain a carefully limited nuclear program while drawing the DPRK into the international community. Over the long term this may very well present the best opportunity to stabilize the North's nuclear endeavor, and most possibly, DPRK's nuclear capability might serve US strategic interests in engaging, if not containing Russia and China. What separates this proposal from previous attempts at engagement is a combination of new geopolitical dynamics, both cross and mutual-benefit, and a fundamental transformation in Washington's willingness to take decisive action against Pyongyang if a deal cannot be reached. With an understanding of the historical and current situations on the peninsula, an accord based upon cross-benefit and positive reinforcement that paves the way for future cooperation offers the best chance for US-DPRK engagement.

In order to enjoy the acknowledgement of its ability to maintain a carefully limited nuclear program, North Korea must commit itself to abide by international norms and conventions adhered to by other nuclear states under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and to the verifiable abandonment of its long-range missile program. Pyongyang also must return to the International Atomic Energy Agency. It must subject itself to vigorous inspections, constant monitoring, and verification of all measures agreed to through a strong, reliable, and permanent program not subject to reversal. Failure to cooperate fully in the implementation of these steps will result in rejection of any nuclear program for North Korea and the re-implementation of the strongest international sanctions.

The goal of approaching a win-win scenario for all the key actors (DPRK, ROK, US, China, Russia) is reachable, but US must combine short (rapprochement), medium (reconciliation), and long (transforming) term strategies in order to achieve a win-win scenario, and a very possible stable situation favorable to the US and our allies without resorting to militarized conflict. These steps should be conducted through diplomacy, negotiations, acknowledgment by joint statements (communiques) and mutual implementations.

North Korea is in a unique geopolitical situation because of its proximity to both China and Russia. Previous strategic assessments regarding military options have always caused anxiety in Washington because the possibility of running the risk of escalating to all-out war on the Peninsula. Geographical facts precluded a military option, because the risks of escalation and a broadening of the conflict were simply too high. When considering ongoing tensions in the Asia-Pacific region, the risk that misinterpretation and misunderstanding could lead to a mushrooming of the conflict would trump the utility of a military option. The volatility of the wider region made the risk of escalation simply too great to entertain a military option.

Today, decision makers in Washington have to deal with a multitude of complicated foreign policy issues. Crises in the East China Sea, South China Sea, Afghanistan, and the Ukraine, just to name a few, can dominate a day's schedule. Furthermore, these are some of the hot spots of the moment – they do not reflect systemic problems, including the Korean Peninsula, but also Israel, Palestine, South Asia, and the Persian Gulf. On a daily basis, all of these potential areas of conflict place great strains on planning and policy making. Add in other issues, both domestic and foreign, that requires the administration's time, and suddenly the ability to expend sufficient time on the Korean Peninsula looks increasingly less likely. Take into account the current fiscal realities in Washington and resource constraints can rapidly eviscerate policy options. In this environment, breaking the deadlock in Northeast Asia changes dynamics for Washington decision makers at a particularly important period given the US rebalance regarding the Asia-Pacific region.

Specifically, a change in regional dynamics would allow US policy makers to corral the regional focus more directly on territorial disputes in the East and South China Seas. Currently China, Japan, North Korea, South Korea, and the United States are locked in a never-ending cycle of relationship ebbs and flows. Maneuvering will persist no matter the standing of North Korea; however, reducing the tensions in the region – implicitly improving relations amongst the Northeast Asian states – will mitigate some of the posturing that has taken place. From a Washington policymaker's vantage point, this will allow the US to place a greater focus on territorial issues that are still in their infancy rather than dwell obsessively on the Korean Peninsula.

In a strategic sense, for the US this deal is clearly about changing the geopolitical dynamics in Northeast Asia in Washington's favor. For over sixty years, whenever Pyongyang has decided to flail out, the region has been trapped in a temporary paralysis. Even after the end of the Cold War, Northeast Asia is one of the few places where mid-twentieth century dynamics, including stratification, persist. The US-DPRK engagement, generating a win-win scenario among all interested parties, will decrease tensions in the region, thus Washington will have reached a notable success in its history of involvement in Northeast Asia. Broadening US policy options around the world, as a result of improved stability on the Korean Peninsula, is in the best interests of the US Administration and should be its seminal goal.

From Kim Jong-un's perspective, what the United States presents the DPRK gives him strategic flexibility and significant prestige without substantially altering his regime's status. From a realist and positive viewpoint, the acknowledgment of DPRK's ability to maintain a carefully limited nuclear program is better for the long-term US strategic interests and a controllable situation in every respect – be it defense, economics, or social, in the region where Russia and China will remain as short-term challengers and long-term rival powers.

China will probably be the most concerned about improved US-North Korea relations; however, that may not be readily apparent at first. The Xi Jinping Administration will more than likely avoid making too many public statements on the matter because it is not likely to view improved US-North Korea ties as an improvement from its perspective. However, greater North Korean autonomy and a more stable Northeast Asia will lead to a greater focus placed on events elsewhere in the Asia-Pacific region. Given ongoing tensions in both the East and South China Seas, Beijing may regard increased focus on its coastal territorial disputes as a negative. From a different perspective, on the positive side, improved US-North Korea relations actually make China's problems with North Korean immigration and separatist sentiment among its ethnic Korean population less significant. A more stable DPRK will help reduce the inflow of refugees into Liaoning and Jilin provinces in northeast China, thereby improving civil governance in the area. In general, these developments will help curtail some of the separatist concerns CCP officials have over the ethnic Korean minority. So, while at first US-North Korea cooperation may seem to work in China's detriment, over the long run it will actually work in Beijing's favor.

Russia is something of an outlier in this examination, if only because its relationship with North Korea has been very frenetic in recent years. Presumably, Russia's biggest concern is the perception that improved US-North Korea relations only further contain Russia. Given Moscow's weakening economic position, handling this issue may not be so difficult. It is noted, as Victor Cha points out, that "Russia's ultimate dream is to run gas pipelines through northern Korea to the energy-hungry economies in the ROK, Japan, and other parts of East Asia, and to reconnect the Trans-Siberian Railway to enable cargo transport from Europe to Asia." Therefore, incentive already exists for a stable Northeast Asia. Three specific factors could very easily work to further alleviate Russian suspicions. First, Russia's growing cooperation with Japan and South Korea already serves as a means to circumvent the mercurial North Korea. Second, Washington can go a long way in alleviating Russian fears by approaching them on the issue of missile defense in the Asia-Pacific. The opportunity to reduce concerns over the North Korean nuclear program could potentially lead to a change in the missile defense posture of the US and its allies and partners in the region. While particular systems will still need to remain in place, there can at least be a dialogue in shifting or clarifying the focus. This is probably a small concession, and it is a long way off, but just broaching the subject could have utility for the US and Russia. Third, Vladivostok freezes for nearly six months out of the year, so a warmer water port in North Korea that Russia would have access to could be a huge boon for the economy in the Russian Far East. These three factors can help reduce the Kremlin's concerns over Pyongyang-Washington engagement.

It is highly anticipated that assurance aspects for South Korea will be built into the proposed accord. From a conventional standpoint, DPRK troops present a significant threat to South Korea. Add in the threat posed by Pyongyang's missile systems

and its nuclear capability, the risks posed to the government in Seoul increase exponentially. Rather than demand the North eliminate its nuclear capability, which still does not address its conventional strength, it is prudent to work toward developing dialogues that reduce the possibility for misperception and misunderstanding. Collectively, the proposed accord addresses a number of assurance and deterrence challenges that are vital for South Korean policy makers.

Clearly South Korea has the most to gain from North Korea-US engagement. There will certainly be concerns about US unilateralism and what an agreement might mean for the DPRK's long term prospects. However, for a variety of reasons, this proposal works in the South's favor. From an economic standpoint, opening markets in the North at least carries with it the possibility of slowly bringing the DPRK economy to a subsistence level. A functioning economy through trade in North Korea is vital in the near future. It will make the task for policy-makers in Seoul much easier. Even the smallest economic successes in the North will lead to a direct loosening of the economic burden on Seoul. Furthermore, from a social standpoint, any chance to bring Pyongyang into the international system will ease the human costs of its further isolation from the rest of the world. Active communication by developing transparency and confidence building measures (TCBM) will promote regional stability, which in turn will improve day-to-day economic functions in the region, especially between the North and the South. Principally, without the looming threat of North Korean provocations, the South will be in a better position to attract foreign business. The benefits to Seoul of Pyongyang-Washington cooperation are incalculable.

I will provide the following projections for short, medium and long terms, along with explanation on selected projections.

#### 1. Short-Term (1-3 Years): Rapprochement Period

- A. US develops transparency and confidence building measures with DPRK (TCBM)
- B. US acknowledges DPRK's ability to maintain a carefully limited nuclear program
- C. US promises no regime change in DPRK to bar Pyongyang going on the offensive
- D. US works with other signatory countries to formally end the Korean War

**Specifies on transparency and confidence building measures (TCBM):** Developing the TCMB should be considered a mechanism for strengthening strategic stability. Nuclear weapon states are held to a higher standard as more is expected of them in order to curtail catastrophic incidents. The ability to observe North Korea's nuclear program and Pyongyang's agreement to provide advance notification of other major military activities demonstrates an increased willingness to participate in the international community. Regarding observation missions the US and DPRK, as part of the 1994 Agreed Framework, had previously agreed to an inspection regime. Tying inspections to something the US might have difficulty in delivering seems problematic now, but the lesson to be learned in this is to link inspections to something that can be done immediately – like legitimizing the nuclear program. Such action bypasses the political hurdles in Washington, specifically Congressional approval. Returning to the current dealing with DPRK, Kim Jong-un's acceptance of a mutually agreed proposal, nuclear inspections and the like, will be crucial steps in making the nuclear program palatable. Acknowledging Pyongyang's ability to maintain a carefully limited nuclear program is contingent on its continued work to maintain and bolster the TCMB regime.

With the US "no regime change" promise and its acknowledgment of DPRK's ability to maintain a carefully limited nuclear program, North Koreans will experience the reliable credibility of the US government. Trust and goodwill between Washington and Pyongyang serve as both the condition and the consequence to develop TCMB. Across the spectrum of defense, economics, and societal disciplines, TCMB offers a holistic approach to reducing mistrust and misunderstanding. With TCMB in place, direct, bilateral dialogue with the US would grant North Korea a level of policy autonomy it has not enjoyed, quite possibly, in its history. This step would afford Kim Jong-un the opportunity to return to the policy approach of his grandfather, Kim Il-sung, during the Cold War – multiple powers vying for the North's favor. Broadly speaking, this is the most impactful message that can emerge from a Pyongyang-Washington breakthrough.

**Specifies on the acknowledgment of DPRK's ability to maintain a carefully limited nuclear program:** Following the geopolitical transformation that transpired with the fall of the Soviet Union and the North's economic collapse, Pyongyang has become focused on ensuring regime survival. The regime has sought to offset the patronage system with fresh instruments intended to blackmail other states into providing tacit support. For a variety of reasons, the Kim family regime has concentrated on nuclear weapons as the primary mode to achieve this goal. In particular, as other legitimizing mechanisms erode, the state's threat of nuclear reprisals in the event of a foreign attempt to force regime change has become the single greatest pillar keeping Kim Jong-un in power. The use of political coercion – through the nuclear weapon program – has ensured regime survival but at considerable cost. Viewed as a pariah state throughout much of the international community, Pyongyang has fulfilled its own prophecy. Isolated from much of the rest of the world, North Korea's prospects for economic recovery and a renaissance in the North are bleak at best. With few friends left, the Kim family rules a state that is on virtual life support, prolonged largely by the threat of nuclear retaliation. Indeed, some may argue that the DPRK's very survival is now dependent on nuclear weapons, which unfortunately, makes it all the less likely that North Korea will relinquish its nuclear weapon program any time soon. Regardless, the dark cloud this capability has created will help prolong the regime's existence but could also ensure its perpetual stagnation in addition to regional instability.

The Kim family regime has made its nuclear weapons program the hallmark of a state loathed the world over for its flaunting of internationally accepted norms of behavior. Under the protection of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), the government has had the freedom of action to oppress its people and coerce neighboring states with the use of blackmail and extortion tactics. Despite conventional forces in a state of almost perpetual decay, the DPRK has had the freedom of action to conduct skirmishes with the ROK without fear of reprisal. This blatant disregard for accepted international norms and the lack of a response in kind largely stems from its nuclear arsenal. The threat of an apocalyptic conflict, a 21<sup>st</sup> century employment of the nuclear brinkmanship concept, has created an asymmetric scenario in Northeast Asia. Therefore, North Korea has transformed nuclear weapons into the ultimate insurance policy. In doing so, it is increasingly less likely Pyongyang will forfeit its lone tool for regime survival any time soon. Even more troubling, beyond just a defensive tool, Pyongyang's nuclear weapon capacity has become an instrument of offensive coercion. Simply possessing WMD capability proven to have the range to strike South Korea has emboldened Pyongyang into taking aggressive actions against Seoul.

As it further enhances delivery systems, North Korea will be able to elevate the deterrence value of its nuclear program. Someday soon it will pose a distinct threat to neighbors in the Asia-Pacific region, and possibly even the US homeland. The danger in the modernization of the North's delivery systems is that it may further empower the regime to take even more provocative action beyond just shelling South Korean islands, torpedoing South Korean submarines, and conducting missile tests over Japanese territory. The unconventional challenge Pyongyang symbolizes has afforded it the operational space needed to adopt provocative domestic and foreign policies beyond any international standard of acceptability.

It is worth noting that once it becomes clear that a state possesses nuclear weapons the window of opportunity to deter acquisition is shut, leaving little hope for relinquishment. To be clear, once completed, the domestic costs associated with ending a nuclear weapon program are even higher than they were during the research and development phase. The opportunity cost of acquiring the capability makes it almost impossible to justify forfeiture. With that being said, the desirability of any military option decreases exponentially once it has been successfully tested. It is widely believed that the North Koreans will consider nuclear retaliation against the United States directly if it is attacked. In virtually every scenario, the risks of a detonation are simply too great to take military action. Essentially, nuclear states achieve the basic goal of acquisition – regime security from foreign aggression.

Unfortunately, the resolve of the global order to compel a state to relinquish its weapons is, to put it mildly, fickle. With the understanding that deterrence has failed the international community will often, gradually, reengage with the state in question. This pattern has been seen in cases such as China, India, and Pakistan.

In this vein, although acknowledging Pyongyang's ability to maintain a carefully limited nuclear program is a major public relations victory for the North, the negative pressure the program has garnered the Kims throughout the years would suddenly be greatly relieved by this move. Just as significant, it gives Kim Jong-un a seat at the table of nuclear states and elevates his prestige – no small victory for a man in his thirties. Considering that legitimacy for its hallmark weapons program has been Pyongyang's seminal policy objective for decades, this offer would radically transform and empower Kim Jong-un's standing, both at home and abroad.

With respect to specific details in the proposal, this accord is designed to promote cross and mutual-benefit. Some elements are mutually beneficial insofar as they pose advantages for both states, the special economic zones (SEZ) being a prime example. However, cross-benefit also exists where one aspect of the accord may benefit the US and another will benefit North Korea. This comprehensive approach to creating value establishes an environment wherein both North Korea and the US will find advantages to cooperation. Once the terms of the deal are announced, the first matter that will assuredly draw attention is the acknowledgment of Pyongyang's ability to maintain a carefully limited nuclear program. The fact of the matter remains that if a state is determined to break with international norms of behavior, compelling that state to change policy direction is profoundly difficult. Short of military confrontation, options to bring a state back into the fold are limited. It is important to note that even when the bitterest of enemies, India and Pakistan, fought during the Kargil War, neither of them used the nuclear weapons that each possessed.

Additionally, the threat of international condemnation and definitive response(s) are largely believed to have deterred a launch during the India-Pakistan conflict. Likewise, it has always been understood by all key stakeholders that a second Korean War might very well lead to a nuclear exchange. For instance, traditionally North Korea's conventional superiority meant that the US and South Korea might well utilize nuclear capabilities as a deterrent. Indeed, part of the explanation for why conflict has not reignited on the Peninsula has been the threat of nuclear retaliation. Whether Pyongyang possesses such capabilities really only further complicates matters for strategic planners but does not change many of the basic challenges. Namely, the threat posed by the North's conventional forces and their proximity to regional population centers is an additional planning factor that must be considered, but nothing more. In any event, the North Korean nuclear program, while an operational obstacle, is not going away any time soon. *Ceteris paribus*, it would be better to gain the benefits of accepting the programs' legitimacy rather than continuing to hold out in the vain hope that Kim Jong-un will abandon its nuclear capabilities.

**Specifies on the promises of no regime change:** Offering the North, essentially, a promise that the US would not pursue regime change is to bar Pyongyang going on the offensive. It will be deadly wrong if one considers Washington's promise and aid as an appeasement to Pyongyang. As a matter of fact, America's promise and aid offer the North a chance to develop both human and physical capital. Thinking from a North Korean perspective, food aid is a tool to improve the physical well-being of the people. Likewise, energy aid is a valuable asset in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of North Korean industry and raising the value of the state's physical capital. It goes without saying that the Kim Jong-un regime would be benefited by investing in its human and physical capital to improve standards of living without losing the state's identity.

## 2. Medium-Term (3-7 Years): Reconciliation Period

- A. US lifts economic sanction with conditions met by the DPRK
- B. US gradually increases its energy and food aid to DPRK
- C. US normalizes its diplomatic relations with DPRK
- D. US engages trade with DPRK

**Specifies on trade:** In this time of tremendous change in North Korea and the region, the US has an opportunity to alter politics fundamentally in Northeast Asia in a monumental fashion. Starting from 2002 when the North and South Koreans launched the most notable Kaesong Industrial park as a collaborative economic development, this Special Administrative Industrial Region provided North Korea with an important source of foreign investment. Following Kim Jong-Il's interests in China's booming special economic zone of Shenzhen, the young Kim re-opened the Kaesong Industrial Park as an attempt to normalize diplomatic relations with Seoul in 2013. There is reason to believe that economic necessity inside DPRK demands the regime to channel its motivation for trade, especially through free-trade zone developments with ROK and PRC.

US trade engagement with DPRK would make the DPRK's position tenable over the long term, especially considering the fact that its bitterness toward China may present a challenge down the road if and when the North has to rely on its old ally. However, for now and the foreseeable future, a void exists that Washington policy makers can fill in order to change the strategic outlook on the peninsula. Taking advantage of the willingness on both Washington and Pyongyang to engage in dialogues, the United States can move to direct, bilateral talks on trade initiatives. Offering a mutually-beneficial relationship that outlines areas of cooperation and positive reinforcements which both parties will find advantageous is a means to convince the North to practice continuing engagement.

While Washington will have to allow Kim Jong-un a wide berth to manage the growth of these areas, even the slightest progress is better in comparison to the closed-door, self-reliant economic policy that has prevailed over the DPRK's history. Given the closed nature of North Korean society, even the smallest opening could help curtail problems which are the result of years of Northern isolation.

In a similar vein, allowing increased tourism to and from North Korea can help tear down some of the cultural barriers that have developed. Again, this process will be slow in development, but once it starts, it can prove beneficial over the long term. The notion of entering the international system is extremely sensitive for North Korea; however, recent actions on the part of Kim Jong un, including engaging with regional neighbors and exploring the use of SEZs suggests a new willingness to function in the international community. What makes this accord particularly valuable is that it offers the North an opportunity to engage abroad in ways it can control, which is a truly valuable negotiating chip for the US.

Just as America often seeks to bring closed societies into the global community, it also strives to represent the interests of the disenfranchised around the world. The success of this noble pursuit may be debated, but time and again Americans have gone to great lengths to help raise living standards for those beyond their borders.

Given Pyongyang's long-held views on human rights, any progress here will require great compromise elsewhere. However, to improve the lives of North Koreans that have suffered for far too long, what this proposal requires of the US Administration is worth it. Reenergizing the food aid program will greatly boost the livelihoods of many North Koreans given the likely trickle-down effect that will take place. However, the most important and most difficult issue that must be addressed are the political prisons – a tragedy that simply cannot be ignored any longer.

The desire to address these issues is nothing new for many Americans. This agreement simply elevates philanthropic pursuits and reprioritizes Washington's focus on helping raise standards of living for many in the North. These steps are vitally important to bringing along US domestic support for the accord.

## 3. Long Term (7-10 Years): Transforming Period

- A. US permits North Korean visits to US civilian and military nuclear facilities
- B. US is willing to become DPRK's new super power patronage
- C. US' strategic engagement with North Korea strengthens the regional stability

**Specifies on North Korean visits to US nuclear facilities:** Offering Kim Jong-un's regime additional TCBM's in the form of US nuclear site visits and various notifications are additional mechanisms to reduce tensions in Northeast Asia. Being able to see US nuclear facilities allows the North opportunities to understand better various options for the direction its nuclear program could take. There are differences in personnel quality, procedures, and so on among the US, Russia, and China – and these visits would give North Korean experts the chance to observe how Americans approach the nuclear profession. Certainly, it is a learning experience that all could benefit from. Specific details in terms of the background(s) and quantity of observers can be negotiated at a later date, but the program in its entirety will help minimize suspicions between the two states. Likewise, notifying Pyongyang of major US military activities and movements reduces the risk of misunderstanding. It further increases the value and credibility of accepting both the nuclear program and the negative security guarantee by reducing the likelihood of a surprise attack. Taken collectively, all of these mechanisms would help improve strategic stability and give Kim Jong-un a feasible alternative to the current stalemate.

**Specifies on US as DPRK's new patronage:** The history of DPRK, since its founding in 1948, reveals one crucial characteristic of this tiny state, that is, it must use great power patronage as leverage to ensure its regime survival. Throughout the Cold War years, Kim Il-sung used the PRC and USSR against one another. Kim Il-sung successfully created a bidding war between the two great poles of communism that allowed North Korea to receive preferential trade agreements and technological assistance. The fall of the Soviet Union, and the diplomatic rapprochement between PRC and ROC in 1992 resulted in the absence of a friendly great power by its side, Kim Jong-Il realized that North Korea's structural fragility became rapidly apparent. Kim Jong-Il took considerable effort and time to find a way to replicate the patronage competition that had supported the regime throughout the Cold War. When the DPRK was fraught with famine in the 1990s, Kim Jong-Il had to rely on overseas development assistance and charitable donations from states such as Japan, the PRC, the ROK, and the US.

During the late years of Kim Jong-Il and since Kim Jong-un's time, North Korea has been forced to search for the means and mechanisms to modernize its patronage system to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century geopolitical realities. Rather than feeding off competing communist states, the DPRK is now employing a range of diplomatic tools to leverage assistance from China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, and the US. Arguably, the bipolar balance North Korea sought to strike during the Cold War has been replaced by a multipolar system with at least five states finding themselves driven to support the Kim family. Despite tremendous economic failings, astronomical military investments, and a deplorable human rights record, the Kim dynasty continues to survive by applying the time-honored skill of leveraging the international political environment.

**Specifies on US' strategical engagement with North Korea and the regional stability:** Early 21<sup>st</sup> century saw both a record economic growth and more political/military resolution for its continental disputes with neighboring countries. For Chinese political leaders, it is no longer enough to emphasize domestic economic growth. However, as years of double digit growth fade into memory many are looking to find other potential sources of economic growth. In parallel, there is a growing sense that the defense spending that has come with economic success gives China better foreign policy options. Many Chinese would argue that the days of having to accept foreign designs for their homeland have come to an end.

Today, the most recognizable epicenters of confrontation are in the East and South China Seas. Recent history over the last two centuries saw a rolling back of Chinese dominion across much of its periphery. The island chains to its east and south are no different. European colonialism and Japanese imperialism led to Chinese losses across the region. Given the natural resources believed to exist under the ocean floor and the two seas' role as vital shipping lanes, control of the various island chains in the area is critically important. Beijing has taken to provocative military action in an attempt to force countries like Japan, the Philippines, and Vietnam to withdraw their territorial claims. Domineering actions on the part of the Chinese have not gone unnoticed. Many countries in the Asia-Pacific region are developing intraregional defense partnerships, while also turning to states like the US and Russia for assistance. As the Xi Administration continues to take an assertive stance on territorial disputes, the response from China's neighbors will only become more abrasive.

Into this volatile mix North Korea sits almost completely alone. Having discussed the DPRK's geopolitical position throughout this document, the main point of emphasis at this juncture is its limited options. If engagements with Japan, Russia, and South Korea prove unrewarding – and there are ample reasons to suggest that they might – and if North Korea cannot develop a partnership with the US, then it will suddenly be back in the same place it has been for over two decades. Pyongyang will once again be reliant on Beijing for its continued existence. Given Kim Jong-un's attempts to distance himself from his patron it would not be unreasonable to suggest that China would want to take a more assertive role in North Korea as well.

At the present time there is an opportunity for meaningful US-North Korea engagement. The deterioration in China-North Korea relations has led to a series of changes in the DPRK senior leadership – in both human and policy perspectives. To date, these shifts can be seen in Pyongyang's sudden attempts at engagement with Moscow, Seoul, and Tokyo. And, perhaps most notably, the circumstances surrounding the execution of Jang Sung Taek could not have more thoroughly demonstrated Kim Jong-un's desire to separate himself from Beijing. Into this transformative time, Washington can interject with a bold and daring engagement strategy. By participating in direct talks with the North, Trump Administration officials can circumvent some of the cancerous obstacles that come with multilateralism. Even more noteworthy, making acceptance of the North's

nuclear program and a negative security guarantee the hallmarks of this proposal represent a substantive policy shift in the US. The proposal outlined here and the manner with which the entire process associated with it could be executed, outlines a way forward thinking approach in resolving the most pressing issues in the region. The ultimate goal for the US in embarking on this path is strengthening regional, and consequently strategic, stability – something both noble and attainable.

#### **Final Note**

What separates this proposal from so many other attempts at engagement with North Korea in the past lies in how the nuclear question is addressed. The emphasis of previous agreements was forcing Pyongyang to relinquish its nuclear weapon program. However, the international community has exhausted all normal options for curbing the North's nuclear ambitions. Literally, almost all efforts, including Trump's latest threat with "fire and fury," failed. The intrusiveness of prior accords helped reinforce negative assumptions on the part of all participants. Concerns bred suspicions, followed by mistrust, and, ultimately, accusations whenever there was so much as a hint of noncompliance. And while it can be argued that US officials were more willing to accept a greater degree of DPRK noncompliance than vice versa, the American media's ability to excite public opinion certainly limits options for US decision makers. Washington officials are simply unable to look the other way when the strategic picture outweighs minor operational missteps.

This proposal suggests that the US, through the Trump-Kim Summit and all channel talks with the North Koreans, acknowledges Pyongyang's ability to maintain a carefully limited nuclear program. Furthermore, the embedded TCBM's offer the opportunity to build communication and confidence on a bilateral basis. This is vital in reducing the long-term tensions that have been permitted to build up due to a lack of communication. In parallel, economic engagements in particular offer tangible benefits to cooperation. Significant increases in Pyongyang's revenue stream will encourage more joint ventures as it will reduce the North's reliance on other states – namely China. The open-ended and mutually beneficial characteristics of this proposal serve as advocacy tools for further cooperation.

#### **ADDITIONAL INPUT FROM DR. MAORONG JIANG ON 10 JUNE 2018**

##### ***Limited Nuclear Program for Pyongyang is Best Bet for US Diplomatic Win at Summit and Beyond***

The United States, through the Trump-Kim summit and all other diplomatic talks with the North Koreans, must acknowledge Pyongyang's ability to maintain a carefully limited nuclear program, rather than push for total disarmament. This proposal for engagement between the U.S. and North Korea is, admittedly, exceptional in how the nuclear question is addressed. The international community has exhausted all normal options for curbing the North's nuclear ambitions. All efforts, including Trump's latest threat of "fire and fury," have failed.

To see the issue from Pyongyang, North Korea has transformed nuclear weapons into the ultimate insurance policy. Under the protection of weapons of mass destruction, the government has been able to oppress its people and coerce neighboring states through blackmail and extortion tactics. This blatant disregard for accepted international norms by the North, and the absence of a strong regional response, stems from North Korea's nuclear arsenal. Viewed as a pariah state throughout much of the international community, Pyongyang has fulfilled its own prophecy. The Kim family regime has made its nuclear weapons program the hallmark of a state loathed the world over for flaunting internationally accepted norms of behavior. Isolated from much of the rest of the world, North Korea's prospects for economic recovery and a renaissance in the North are bleak at best. These weapons are its lone status symbol. With few friends left, the Kim family rules a state that is on virtual life support, prolonged largely by the threat of nuclear retaliation. Indeed, some may argue that North Korea's very survival is now dependent on nuclear weapons, which unfortunately, makes it all the less likely North Korea will relinquish its nuclear weapons program any time soon.

Rather than demand the North eliminate its nuclear capability, it is far more prudent to work toward developing dialogue that reduces the possibility for misperception and misunderstanding. Embedding transparency and confidence-building measures into the engagement process will provide the opportunity to build bilateral assurance over time and reduce long-term tensions. Simultaneous economic engagement will offer tangible benefits. Significant increases in Pyongyang's revenue stream will encourage joint ventures and will reduce the North's reliance on other states – namely China. An open-ended and mutually beneficial approach will provide ongoing tools for advocacy and expanded cooperation. Offering the North a promise that the U.S. will not pursue regime change will effectively bar Pyongyang from going on the offensive. It is wrong to consider such a promise from the U.S. as appeasement to Pyongyang. Rather, America's promise and offer of aid to the North gives Pyongyang a chance to develop both human and physical capital. We should view food aid as a tool to improve the physical well-being of the North Korean people. Likewise, energy aid is a valuable asset in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of North Korean industry and raising the value of the state's physical capital.

What makes this proposed course particularly constructive is that it offers the North an opportunity to engage abroad in ways Pyongyang can control—a truly valuable negotiating chip for the U.S. An accord based upon cross-benefit and positive reinforcement paves the way for future cooperation and offers the best chance for U.S.-North Korea engagement over the long

term. This is a crucial moment for meaningful U.S.-North Korea engagement. The ultimate aim for the U.S. should be strengthening regional and strategic stability. That goal is both noble and attainable.

### ***US Win-Win Strategy to Transform North Korea***

North Korea's recent announcement on total denuclearization creates a perceived olive branch ahead of the possible U.S.-North Korea summit for a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula. Realistically, a total denuclearization on the Korea Peninsula will not be possible and neither should the U.S. demand such a step. Instead, the US should acknowledge North Korea's ability to maintain a carefully limited nuclear program while drawing North Korea into the international community. Over the long term, this may present the best opportunity to stabilize the North's nuclear endeavor, and possibly serve U.S. strategic interests in engaging, if not containing, Russia and China.

The U.S. must combine short- (rapprochement), medium (reconciliation), and long- (transforming) term approaches to achieve a lasting win-win strategy. An American promise not to pursue regime change combined with acknowledgment of Pyongyang's ability to maintain a carefully limited nuclear program and normalization of diplomatic relations with South Korea, Japan and the United States would realize that goal. From a positive viewpoint, U.S. acknowledgment of North Korea's ability to maintain a carefully limited nuclear program is better for the long-term U.S. strategic interests. A controllable situation in every respect – be it defense, economics, or socio-culturally– is desirable in a region where Russia and China will remain as short-term challengers and long-term rival powers.

For Kim Jong-un, a promise that the U.S. would not pursue regime change is to bar Pyongyang going on the offensive. It gives Kim strategic flexibility and significant prestige without substantially altering his regime's status.

At the same time, North Korea must commit itself to abide by international norms and conventions adhered to by other nuclear states under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and to the verifiable abandonment of its long-range missile program. Pyongyang also must return to the International Atomic Energy Agency. It must subject itself to vigorous inspections, constant monitoring, and verification of all measures through a strong, reliable, and permanent program not subject to reversal. Failure to cooperate fully in the implementation of these steps should result in rejection of any nuclear program for North Korea and the re-implementation of the strongest international sanctions.

In this time of tremendous change in northeast Asia, the U.S. has an opportunity to alter politics and economics fundamentally and in monumental fashion.

In 2002, when the North and South Koreans launched Kaesong Industrial Park, a notable economic collaboration, we saw this Special Administrative Industrial Region provide North Korea with an important source of foreign investment and an open door to the world. Following Kim Jong-Il's interests in China's booming special economic zone of Shenzhen, the Kim Jong-un re-opened the Kaesong Industrial Park as an attempt to normalize diplomatic relations with Seoul in 2013. There is reason to believe that economic necessity inside North Korea demands the regime channel its motivation for trade, especially through free-trade zone developments with the South and China. U.S. trade engagement with North Korea would make Pyongyang's position tenable over the long term, especially considering the fact that bitterness toward China may present a challenge down the road if and when the North has to rely on its old ally.

Taking advantage of the willingness in both Washington and Pyongyang to engage in dialogues, we could see a loosening of the long-term tensions worsened by a lack of communication. Economic engagements, particularly, offer tangible benefits and steps toward cooperation and normalization. Offering a mutually-beneficial relationship that outlines areas of cooperation and positive reinforcements which both parties will find advantageous is a means to convince the North to practice continuing engagement.

The Hermit Kingdom will not come out of its shell overnight; neither will the U.S. drop all its many veils. But significant increases in Pyongyang's revenue stream will encourage more joint ventures and will reduce the North's reliance on other states – namely China. The open-ended and mutually beneficial characteristics of this long-term strategy serve as advocacy tools for further cooperation.



## Dr. Jeffrey Knopf

Professor (Middlebury Institute of International Studies)

13 June 2018

Yes. It will not be easy to reach. It depends most fundamentally on internal decisions within North Korea, which mainly means decisions by Kim Jong Un. It depends on what kind of future KJU wants for the DPRK. If Kim decides that he wants to “come in from the cold” and turn the DPRK into a semi-normal country, then a win-win is achievable. If Kim wants to keep North Korea isolated in order to maintain the Kim family dynasty and uphold the existing ideological belief system, then a win-win settlement will not happen.

The basic outlines of a “good” outcome have been clear for the last 25 years. The North gives up nuclear weapons in a verifiable way. The outside world lifts economic sanctions. The US, ROK and Japan provide direct economic benefits, including energy assistance. The US and perhaps also China provide various forms of security assurances. The US signs a peace treaty officially ending the Korean War, and at the very end of the process normalizes diplomatic relations. There may be a reduction in US troops in South Korea, but they are not removed entirely. China may work with the Workers Party in the DPRK to help them reform along the lines of the Chinese Communist Party.

Russia is the possible wild card here. Given current US-Russia relations, they may see a benefit in the continuation of tensions between North Korea and the West. But given a real chance to denuclearize the Korean peninsula, they probably will not stand in the way and will allow this outcome to happen.

## Matt Korda<sup>45</sup>

Arms Control, Disarmament, and WMD Non-Proliferation Centre (NATO)

6 June 2018

When gaming out a win-win scenario on the Korean Peninsula, one must consider each country’s red line—and make sure not to cross it. Fundamentally, each of the key regional players has an acceptable threshold for risk that must be acknowledged in order to move towards a resolution. This paper lays out six distinct negotiating principles which respect the red lines of the five primary actors specified in the question: the United States, South Korea, North Korea, China, and Russia.

### **1. The United States must stop demanding immediate nuclear rollback:**

The prospect of achieving a North Korean commitment to “complete, verifiable, immediate dismantlement” (CVID) in Singapore is magical thinking. Kim Jong Un considers his nuclear deterrent to constitute both his ruling legitimacy and his personal security guarantee against external aggression—and thus his nuclear weapons are sacrosanct. The US negotiators must immediately abandon their CVID position and accept that verifiable “denuclearization” is a gradual process spanning years (or possibly decades). The stakes for this summit are high and expectations are in danger of spiraling out of control; they must be kept in check or else risk the collapse of the entire process.

North Korea keeping its nuclear weapons for the foreseeable future is not necessarily incompatible with the risk thresholds of the other key regional actors. The United States can live with North Korean nuclear weapons if the nuclear risk to the US homeland is mitigated—meaning that Kim Jong Un must impose significant restrictions on his nuclear and long-range missile programmes.

### **2. North Korea must verifiably freeze its nuclear and long-range missile programmes.**

Kim Jong Un sees his nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) as his primary deterrent against the United States, but they are not the only form of leverage that he has. Even without them, North Korea could still hold US regional assets in Japan, South Korea, and Guam at considerable risk.

A freeze on Kim’s long-range missile programme would halt North Korea’s progress at a critical point in its testing cycle. The Hwasong-15—North Korea’s most credible ICBM—has only been successfully tested once. Without further tests, it is very difficult to assess whether the missile would consistently reach its target. To that end, freezing North Korea’s long-range missile programme should be a primary negotiating target for the United States.

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<sup>45</sup> This contribution reflects the views and opinions of the individual author, and does not reflect those of NATO or its Member States.

A freeze on North Korea's nuclear weapons programme should also be a crucial element of any future arrangement. This would comprise three key components: 1) no nuclear tests, 2) no fissile material production, and 3) no export of nuclear materials. North Korea would, however, be allowed to retain some, if not all, of its current nuclear weapons stockpile.

If these freezes have any hope of succeeding, they must be built on verification, not trust. North Korea has cheated while making similar promises in the past, and there is no reason to expect that they will not cheat again—unless Kim agrees to accept the presence of international observers in North Korea. Demolishing the tunnels at Punggye-ri was a welcome start, but without the presence of CTBTO observers, it constituted little more than a performative gesture and thus cannot be considered real progress. Allowing international observers to verify North Korea's progress would also signal that North Korea is both willing and able to satisfy its international commitments—a necessary step on the path towards eventual “conventionalization” of the regime.

Crucially, freezes on North Korea's nuclear and long-range missile programmes must not inhibit North Korea's ability to pursue the development of either space-launch vehicles (SLVs) or peaceful nuclear energy. These civilian programmes retain a high symbolic value to North Korea, and, as Hecker, Carlin, and Serbin have noted, “military programs are now so advanced that the civilian programs pose little incremental risk, and their longer-term risks can be managed.”<sup>46</sup> However, there can be no surprises—if North Korea is planning on launching an SLV, they must inform the international community in advance, as a transparency and risk reduction measure.

China and Russia would support freezes on North Korea's nuclear and long-range missile programmes. Both countries have a vested interest in preserving the stability of the Korean Peninsula, and China in particular has expressed concerns about the potential for a North Korean nuclear accident near its border.<sup>47</sup> However, both countries—particularly China—are also keen to see a reduction of US troops in the region, and would likely seek to include such provisions as part of a regional settlement. For the sake of US, South Korean, and Japanese regional interests, this cannot be allowed to happen.

### 3. The United States must retain its strategic presence in Northeast Asia.

An arrangement which primarily mitigates the nuclear threat to the US homeland risks sending the wrong message to US allies, who may fear that the US is “selling them out” in exchange for a deal that only addresses US interests. As a result, this negotiation strand requires particular attention.

Fundamentally, President Moon needs to avoid war on the Korean Peninsula, and will pursue whichever course of action is the least likely to instigate conflict. Thus far, he has chosen a dual-track policy of deterrence and dialogue: enhancing his home-grown defensive and offensive capabilities while simultaneously holding out a hand to Kim Jong Un (quite literally). President Moon believes that a stronger North-South relationship reduces the risk of a conflict. To that end, Moon would cautiously embrace an arrangement that 1) reduces US-DPRK tensions, 2) freezes North Korea's nuclear and long-range missile programmes, and 3) allows the North Korean economy to develop, thus providing an opportunity for further inter-Korean engagement—provided that such a deal does not undermine the United States' security guarantee to South Korea or its policy of extended nuclear deterrence.

Although the size and nature of US regional military exercises may be on the negotiating table, the United States must retain its strategic presence in Northeast Asia and resist any North Korean demands for troop redeployments. In order to preserve the integrity of their respective alliances with the United States, the South Koreans and Japanese need to know that US troops will be at risk in the event of a regional conflict. This security guarantee is irreplaceable, and US allies around the world will be watching the American negotiating team closely to see how it handles this extremely sensitive issue.

### 4. Kim Jong Un requires security assurances.

American allies are not the only ones that require security assurances; Kim Jong Un will not give up the primary element of his security guarantee without a credible replacement. Kim wants a negative security assurance that the United States does not seek regime change against him. This could be provided with a non-aggression pact, or perhaps with the promise of a future peace treaty. Kim also seeks a positive security guarantee that North Korea would receive military support from China in the event of a conflict. The combination of these positive and negative security assurances may be enough to loosen Kim's grip on his nuclear and long-range missile programmes—provided that he is also afforded space for economic development.

<sup>46</sup> Siegfried S. Hecker, Robert L. Carlin, and Elliot A. Serbin, “A Technically-Informed Roadmap for North Korea's Denuclearization,” *Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University* (28 May 2018), 29 May 2018, <[https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/hecker\\_carlin-serbin\\_denuc\\_rlc.pdf](https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/hecker_carlin-serbin_denuc_rlc.pdf)>.

<sup>47</sup> Keith Bradsher, “Near North Korea's Border, a Chinese Paper Offers Tips on Nuclear Fallout,” *The New York Times* (6 December 2017), 6 June 2018, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/06/world/asia/china-north-korea-nuclear.html?>>.

### 5. North Korea must be given space for economic development.

Kim Jong Un's *byungjin* line emphasizes dual-track development of both nuclear weapons and the national economy. Now that he has seemingly reached a point of confidence with the former half of that policy, he is aiming to concentrate on the latter half.<sup>48</sup> Economic development will require a degree of sanctions relief and international aid, which could be justified in return for concrete steps demonstrating Kim's willingness to freeze his nuclear and long-range missile programmes.

The economic side of the *byungjin* line offers significantly more opportunities for "conventionalization" of the regime than the nuclear side. South Korea's President Moon is keen on further developing inter-Korean ties, and particularly economic ones. These economic opportunities can be used as carrots to gradually coax North Korea into pursuing more conventional policy goals. There would certainly be red lines (for example, Kim would react harshly to any internal or external challenge to his autocratic ruling style); however, the more that the North Korean economy develops, the more difficult it would be for Kim to resist gradual internal reform.

China and Russia would support North Korean economic development, as it would offer them both significant money-making opportunities. Russia and China are both keen on expanding their trading opportunities with North Korea, which are currently blocked by UN sanctions. Additionally, pursuing partnerships with North Korea could also open up more trading routes with South Korea, such as the proposed railway modernization project from Seoul to the Chinese border via Pyongyang—a plan proposed by President Moon during the Inter-Korean Summit.<sup>49</sup>

### 6. North Korea must commit to eventual denuclearization.

Finally, the international community requires a pledge by North Korea that it is serious about its proposal for "phased, synchronized denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula."<sup>50</sup> The phrase used is aspirational and open to interpretation, but it interestingly mirrors the language of the NPT-designated Nuclear-Weapon States (NWS), who often advocate for a "step-by-step approach to nuclear disarmament."<sup>51</sup>

One should obviously not make the mistake of equating the two camps: for one thing, the NWS have repeatedly demonstrated their commitment to the global non-proliferation architecture, while North Korea has repeatedly attempted to undermine it. However, it is important to recognize that concrete, verifiable steps towards "denuclearization" can still be taken underneath the umbrella of aspirational language—just as the NWS are doing. Down the line, these steps could perhaps be expanded to include the prospect of North Korea giving up its chemical and biological weapons programmes—and perhaps signing the CTBT.

### Conclusion

While many of the specific measures contained within each of the guiding principles are flexible, the principles themselves are not. All six should be included within any "win-win scenario," as they are mutually reinforcing and acknowledge each party's national interests and red lines. This is absolutely necessary in order for the primary actors to take ownership over any potential resolution.

## Dr. Gregory Kulacki

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

I do not feel qualified to speak about Russia so any comments I make below do not include consideration of Russian concerns or interests. Avoiding a military conflict is a win-win for everyone. No one wants a war. The decisions of all actors are intended to accomplish that objective, including the DPRK's decision to acquire nuclear weapons. Recognizing this mutual interest in avoiding a conflict should be repeatedly discussed and publicly recognized in unilateral, joint and multilateral statements. A unilateral US statement recognizing that the DPRK is pursuing nuclear weapons because that is what its leaders believe is necessary to avoid a war would help build trust and establish a foundation for constructive engagement.

<sup>48</sup> Robert Carlin, "A New Strategic Line," *38 North* (23 April 2018), 5 June 2018, <<https://www.38north.org/2018/04/rcarlin042318/>>.

<sup>49</sup> S. Nathan Park, "An Ingenious Plan to Modernize North Korea's Trains," *CityLab* (4 May 2018), 5 June 2018, <<https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2018/05/inter-korean-summit-rail-project/559652/>>.

<sup>50</sup> "N. Korean diplomat reaffirms commitment to 'phased, synchronized' denuclearization" *Yonhap* (10 April 2018), 4 June 2018, <<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2018/04/10/0401000000AEN20180410003300315.html>>.

<sup>51</sup> "Joint Statement from the Nuclear-Weapon States at the London P5 Conference," *Foreign and Commonwealth Office* (6 February 2015), 3 June 2018, <<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/joint-statement-from-the-nuclear-weapon-states-at-the-london-p5-conference>>.

## Inhyok Kwon

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31 May 2018

I doubt that there is a win-win scenario with which all the key actors could be satisfied. However, there is a situation which all the players might accept: North Korea completely abandons its weapons of mass destruction in exchange for a peace treaty with guarantees to secure the Kim regime and a reduction in U.S. footprint in the Korean peninsula.

Since the most urgent threat to the national security of the U.S. and the ROK is the DPRK's development of nuclear weapons and inter-continental ballistic missiles, DPRK's abandonment of weapons of mass destruction could alleviate many security concerns of the two allies.

Of course, a reduced U.S. footprint might negatively affect long-term US influence in Northeast Asia. However, If U.S. forces focus on scaling down joint military exercises with ROK forces and reducing strategic assets deployed over the peninsula, they might be able to minimize the adverse impact on strategic U.S. objectives in Northeast Asia. These measures are also well aligned with the South Korean government's plan to reduce tensions in the peninsula and then to foster an amicable relationship with North Korea.

North Korea might not consider this as the most favorable offer, but also not the worst offer under the current situation: North Korea is in a tug-of-war with the U.S. over the agenda for their upcoming summit. The offer may be acceptable because annual joint military exercises have been perceived as a severe threat to the security of the regime, and the DPRK wants a formal U.S. promise not to invade.

China has no reasons to oppose this scenario because the long-standing US military footprint in the Peninsula is perceived in Beijing as an attempt to encircle China and as an obstacle for its pursuit of regional hegemony in Northeast Asia. The D.P.R.K.'s nuclear weapons also might have been a burden to China in the sense that Beijing must be cautious in exerting pressure on the D.P.R.K. due to their nuclear weapons. Russia also has no reasons to oppose the plan to reduce US footprint in this area.

## Group Captain (Indian Air Force ret) Ajey Lele

Senior Fellow (Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses)

21 May 2018

Please do not exclude Japan. It is also an important actor and needs to be engaged constructively. Win-win situation is possible only when the US gives up the maximalist position of total denuclearisation in immediate future. ROK, Japan, China and Russia could as a group evolve as an entity with an aim to emerge as a Net Nuclear Security Guarantor.

As step one, IAEA along with members from each of these states, could formulate a joint investigative mechanism to verify DPRK's claims about their nuclear wherewithal. Simultaneously, a separate group (formed under the UN) could be asked to examine DPRK's missile and satellite programme. This group could be of members from states which have no stakes in this conflict but, who understand and practice Rocket Science like experts from states India, Israel, Brazil, France, etc.

Based on the recommendations by these two groups, DRPK could be asked to begin the process of phased reduction of their assets. All this could succeed when there could be certain amount of give and take.

Sanctions could be reduced/removed based on the steps taken by DPRK to make some progress towards reaching the final goal of total denuclearisation. DPRK could be allowed to continue with their space programme as a benign process and could be permitted to develop their own satellites (if need be with international assistance) however, they should be asked to get these systems launched from the other states or private agencies.

## Dr. Rod Lyon

Senior Fellow, International Strategy (Australian Strategic Policy Institute)  
28 May 2018

No Japan on this list? Japan, fearing marginalization, would regard it as a 'loss' that it doesn't even make the cut.

For the others, is there a 'win-win-win-win-win' scenario?

- Perhaps, but logic would suggest that no-one could win big; the Venn diagram of the intersection of five distinct circles of interest would have to be comparatively small.
  - And jumping through a small hoop rather than a large one always means that the ground upon which the participants must land is more predetermined.
- Everyone would have to 'win' incrementally.
- And probably, different players would have to win on different axes:
  - DPRK on international acceptance, security guarantees and economic rewards
  - ROK on enhanced stability on the peninsula, and improved inter-Korean relations
  - US on capping of the nuclear problem, the removal of the ICBM threat to CONUS, and restoration of its reputational position as key 'manager' of Northeast Asian security
  - China on being seen as a positive contributor to finding a diplomatic solution, on retaining its position as long-term strategic and economic partner of the DPRK, on diluting the prospects for nuclear proliferation on its doorstep, and—it hopes—on successfully reversing THAAD deployment in ROK
  - Russia's 'win' is harder to see
    - Russia's biggest win would probably have to be defined as a weakening of the US position in the world, and the relative enhancement of its own position vis-à-vis other great powers
      - It pursues that interest everywhere including in Northeast Asia
    - But it could probably define a smaller win for itself in relation to the successful capping of nuclear proliferation in Northeast Asia
    - And it might well hope for better economic relations with a more economically vibrant DPRK
  - Japan's played the abductee card so hard for so long now that their non-return would be a noticeable absence from any final agreement
    - Though it's easy to see other possible 'wins' for Japan
    - For example, the winding back of DPRK ballistic missile capabilities to MTCR guideline limits—were that to be part of any agreement—would be a big improvement for Japan
      - Though North Korea's satellite launch capability would still leave it with the technical capacity to target Japan and further afield
- It would be easier to get to win-win with fewer players
  - And that's an important factor for a Trump-Kim summit: trying to find a solution that makes everyone happy could unreasonably constrict their own bargaining space
    - If the priority is denuclearization—or at least a set of major constraints upon the North Korean arsenal—the Singapore summit should focus on that.

## Dr. Patrick McEachern<sup>52</sup>

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

Yes, I believe there is a win-win scenario for all key actors. It would be a difficult and long process, but a peaceful and sustainable outcome requires a win-win in my view.

First, a brief but an important note on the question. In addition to the five countries listed in the question, it is important to keep Japan included as a "key actor." Japan is a critical U.S. ally in the region that plays an indispensable role in the United States' ability to deter and, if necessary, defend against North Korean aggression. Japan hosts the largest contingent of U.S.

<sup>52</sup> McEachern's views expressed in this report are his own, and do not necessarily reflect those of the US government or Department of State.

troops in the region (and more than any other single nation in the world). These troops and our bases in Japan would play a pivotal role in the event of conflict in Korea. UN Command-Rear bases in Japan would provide essential services, such as military hospitals in the case of another Korean war. Our Japanese ally appropriately was a member of the Six Party Talks and remains critically engaged on Korean matters. A win-win scenario should consider Japanese equities as well.

With the exception of North Korea, the five other nations in the Six Party Talks favor North Korea's complete denuclearization. While the United States and its allies may prioritize denuclearization higher than China and Russia, there is still common purpose among the five states on denuclearization as a central goal. A win-win scenario must include North Korea making a strategic decision to forego a nuclear deterrent against its stated top security concern—the United States. After spending decades developing nuclear weapons and ballistic missile technology at great cost, it is a tall order to convince and cajole North Korea to relinquish the world's most powerful weapons that it has articulated as central to its national security strategy. However, a difficult task is different from an impossible one, and North Korea's competing objectives creates leverage for the five parties to seek denuclearization.

North Korea has a long list of demands of the United States and international community that it often articulates as removing the "U.S. hostile policy." This is a malleable concept that captures the full corpus of Pyongyang's objectives vis-à-vis Washington. However, North Korean comments in 2018 amid an inter-Korean summit and ahead of the first U.S.-DPRK summit suggest two broad sets of North Korean goals: sanctions relief and "a peace regime." Sanctions relief is a straightforward concept but peace regime is not. A "peace regime" is a term found in the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six Party Talks that can take on many different specific meanings. As a general statement, North Korean demands on "peace regime" can be expected to focus on North Korea political-military demands related to the U.S. military footprint in and around the Korean Peninsula. The specifics of North Korean economic and political-military demands have prompted widespread speculation, and it remains to be seen what they would settle on as sufficient to start sealing, disabling, and dismantling their nuclear program.

China and Russia favor moves that would reduce the U.S. military footprint in Northeast Asia as well as North Korean denuclearization. I expect they would endorse readily a U.S.-DPRK agreement that involved these sort of reciprocal actions. The interests of South Korea and Japan are broadly aligned with those of the United States. While the particulars requires extremely active alliance management efforts, I believe both Seoul and Tokyo could support an agreement with these tradeoffs as much as Washington could.

Given chronic distrust between both sides, I expect any U.S.-DPRK or multilateral nuclear agreement to require reciprocal and phased actions as suggested in the 1994 Agreed Framework and explicitly included as the "commitment for commitment, action for action" principle in the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six Party Talks. North Korea will view with suspicion any U.S. demands to denuclearize completely before seeing any rewards, just as the United States and its allies would be suspicious of North Korean demands to lift sanctions or adjust security posture before Pyongyang denuclearized. Seeking a win-lose agreement where the United States and its allies get complete denuclearization first or for free is ideal, but I cannot see how or why North Korea would accede to this. North Korea repeatedly notes it is not a defeated power and will not wave the "white flag of surrender" in diplomatic negotiations. This is one area where we should take the North Koreans at their word.

A win-win outcome will mean very consequential tradeoffs for the United States that the president will have to determine, hopefully in consultations with the South Korean president and Japanese prime minister, if they are in the best interest of our country.

## Dr. Rupal Mehta

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29 May 2018

The short answer is unfortunately no. International relations rarely lead to win win scenarios given the divergent preferences of actors involve. This is even more the case given the current political climate where the US is facing a decline in credibility given the unilateral decision to withdraw from the JCPOA and other international agreements. What is possible, though potentially unlikely given the confusion surrounding the aims of US foreign policy, is an acceptable equilibrium which is close(r) to the Obama-era status quo. While some actors will be more or less pleased with the newly devised status quo, it will hopefully prevent conflict or military action in the interim and work to achieve strategic stability.

Broken down by actors, below is what is the most reasonable and feasible status quo:

- **DPRK:** At the time of writing, this is the best possible situation for North Korea. The regime has received international recognition and normalization, words of praise from the President, and capitulation on a big policy for the North Koreans:

decreased US presence/less involvement with South Korea (ostensibly alliance de-coupling). In exchange for a more managed nuclear weapons program – potentially retention of their nuclear infrastructure in exchange for inspections/access, North Korea is likely to receive foreign assistance/negative security assurance from US or threats of regime change. This is exactly what the North Koreans wanted and they really had to do very little to achieve it: they received significant concessions from the United States who, unfortunately, will get very little in return if the North Koreans do not denuclearize. The biggest downside (to the US) of this status quo is the (continued) damage to our alliances. The North Koreans will want less US involvement with SK and since the administration has already agreed to some of that, it's not an unreasonable request.

- **ROK:** Arguably, at this time, the South Koreans have lost the most – this is a significant loss for South Korea given its 60+ year relationship with the United States. As a result of these discussions, the US has started the process of removing itself from its obligations to the ROK. The best possible outcome for the South Koreans would be a small retraction of the US decision to limit its involvement on the Peninsula and return to previous alliance conditions (this is difficult to imagine given the South Koreans' lack of credibility in the U.S.). Ideally, the North Koreans accept this and doesn't demand more concessions from SK. But given how relatively easy it was for alliance decoupling to emerge in the first place, this is unlikely. A return to the status quo would include reinstating military exercises with the South Koreans, commitments to our continued military presence in the region, and assurances that we will defend South Korea against foreign adversaries. The biggest potential downside if a return to the status quo is not reach and if US doesn't uphold alliance commitment, is that the ROK may decide to acquire nuclear weapons and given their high latent capacity, this is definitely feasible.
- **US:** For the United States, this is likely to be a lose-lose situation. The United States has suffered a loss of reputation for US from allies in the region, and likely the broader international community.<sup>53</sup> At the same time that the administration has decided to abrogate the JCPOA despite compliance with the agreement, the administration has also ostensibly normalized the North Korean regime (despite its rampant human rights violations and historical belligerence to states in the international community) – even praising the North Korean leader. This coupled with shifting alliance dynamics worries other US allies in the system. What a new status quo could look like: a) some degree of relationship with ROK but not as extensive as previously; b) better management of situation in North Korea (i.e. further away from conflict). Indeed, a decreased role on the Peninsula may actually be in line with an evolving US foreign policy that is focused on domestic national security rather than broader alliance management. Unfortunately, this could result in nuclear proliferation in the region if NK maintains its nuclear program and if the South Koreans, concerned about their own security, choose to do so.
- **China:** At the time of this writing, is another big winner. The maximum pressure coalition has all but collapsed and much of the rhetoric coming out of China (and North Korea) blame the US for it. China, never a huge fan of economic sanctions against DPRK given its high volume of trade, has been given the implicit green light to maintain economic and political relations with NK. The Chinese will undermine the resumption of a maximum pressure approach without the promise of denuclearization. For the Chinese, a stable but nuclear DPRK is better than most other options. Further, in the interim, the Chinese have not only won a big economic concession from the US on trade but have also eased tensions and warmed relations with the administration without having to give up anything or really alter its North Korea policy. The Chinese will do whatever they can to maintain this status quo or preclude the opportunity to go back to a more tense geostrategic environment.
- **Russia:** The verdict is not quite in on Russia but it seems like Russia could be a winner in this status quo for several reasons. First, if the US does end up reducing its presence in East Asia or reducing commitments to the ROK, especially given confusion and mistrust from South Korea, it's beneficial to Russia. Russia would prefer that the US doesn't fully project power into East Asia. Discord between the US and its allies is exactly what US adversaries, such as Russia, want. Second, with the United States more focused on the DPRK question and its next steps, the Russians are able to capitalize on this split attention to progress their objectives in the Middle East, including Syria. From the Russian perspective, a status quo that has the US working to manage the North Korean nuclear program (and thus less focused on other issue areas in the international system), less committed to South Korea, and deemed less credible by other states in the international system is a win-win for Russia.

In sum, there is no win-win for all of the actors involved. A new equilibrium will leave some states more or less satisfied than the previous status quo. Unfortunately, given the events that have already occurred, none leave the US better off or as the victor. The only realistic benefit may be an avoidance of conflict in the region.

<sup>53</sup> Pew. "U.S. Image Suffers as Publics Around World Question Trump's Leadership." <http://www.pewglobal.org/2017/06/26/u-s-image-suffers-as-publics-around-world-question-trumps-leadership/>

## **Dr. Andrew O'Neil**

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31 May 2018

I am very skeptical of the possibility that there is an optimum outcome on the Korean Peninsula from which all parties gain. The fundamental reason for this is that all countries with a direct stake in the Korean Peninsula have competing, and in some cases fundamentally irreconcilable, agendas. Indeed, outside the Middle East, the Korean Peninsula is the most acutely zero-sum in the world in terms of countries believing that if another side gains, they by definition must lose. That said, there are some basic things the key actors agree on. The first is that no-one wants Korean reunification because of what it would entail by way of financial cost and geopolitical upheaval. Despite idealized references to reunification in the context of inter-Korean reconciliation, neither Seoul nor Pyongyang are genuinely committed to this endgame. For North Korea, the reasons are obvious, but even in South Korea public opinion polls indicate that very few citizens are prepared to make sacrifices analogous to those of West Germany in the 1990s. It suits the geo-strategic purposes of China and Russia to preserve the DPRK as a single state entity, and for the US a unified Korea would raise questions about the future American force presence in the region, and potentially give China more control over the peninsula. Japan shares this perspective, but with the added twist of historical baggage in relation to Korea. The second is that no-one, save for North Korea itself, wants a nuclear-armed DPRK. The problem is that there is no consensus on how to address this policy challenge even at a conceptual level, let alone a with a disarmament strategy that could be implemented in practice. Indeed, the US and its allies are themselves split on the issue. The Trump administration has at times signaled it might be able to live with a nuclear-armed North Korea that did not have an ICBM force capable of hitting the US homeland, which for the Japanese (and probably the Australians as well) would be an unacceptable outcome.

## **Ankit Panda**

Senior Editor (The Diplomat)  
21 May 2018

It is difficult for me to imagine a scenario that is positive-sum in outcome for all five of these actors. Russia and China, in particular, have maximalist objectives with regard to the United States' forward-based military presence in Northeast Asia, which North Korea may be more inclined to tolerate as part of a comprehensive argument given that the U.S. presence paradoxically gives Pyongyang a degree of leverage over Beijing. I would also venture to include Japan as a primary actor in this analysis. The closest scenario that is uniformly positive-sum still has the United States coming up short, in my view: China, South Korea, Russia, and North Korea might all benefit from a comprehensive agreement that sees the U.S. military presence on the Peninsula seriously limited in exchange for North Korea agreeing to a cap on its nuclear capabilities and pursuing economic modernization.

## **Ariel F.W. Petrovics**

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22 June 2018

While the US primary objective of a denuclearized Korean peninsula is unlikely in the foreseeable future, there are win scenarios that all key actors would prefer over the status quo. Rather than the operational objective of denuclearization, these win conditions could support American strategic objectives in the region and beyond.

The most likely medium-term scenario that all key actors would accept is a nuclear-armed but status-quo accepting DPRK. This outcome would keep the Kim regime at the head of a North Korea that continues to hedge by resisting both Chinese and US/ROK influence, but ceases its nuclear posturing, missile testing, and nuclear proliferation. This scenario would include IAEA verification of a weapons freeze, and would bring the DPRK on as a signatory to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). This is a strategic win for the United States and South Korea in that it halts destabilizing nuclear posturing and works toward greater



verification and oversight. This is a strategic win for North Korea in that it is a tacit acceptance of its nuclear position, preserving its deterrent and the regime's domestic face. This is a win for China in that it prevents the border instability that would occur in the case of military intervention, but also does not threaten to economically integrate the DPRK into the US/ROK sphere of influence.

This outcome would be potentially unstable, however, without tangible reassurances for US allies in the region. South Korea and to a lesser extent Japan would face a nuclear armed and potentially therefore more adventurous adversary in their immediate neighborhood. This outcome would likely necessitate a renewal of American commitment to protect its allies from DPRK incursions, including not only the new nuclear component but also conventional and nontraditional threats.

This outcome would therefore necessitate an agreement in which the US renews its commitment to South Korean and Japanese security. However, for these commitments to reassure allies without threatening DPRK acceptance of the status quo or regional actors broader interests, they would be explicitly negotiated as part of the DPRK nuclear freeze. In addition, these commitments would be minimally offensively capable and have little impact on US broader global objectives. For example, short range missile defense with local air and naval support might be used to reassure US allies while minimally threatening Chinese regional activity or second-strike capabilities.

## Dr. James Platte

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1 June 2018

Creating a win-win scenario for all of the key actors in the North Korea nuclear crisis seems unlikely and exceedingly difficult to achieve, as decades of bargaining over the situation have not put the region much closer to a win-win scenario. But that is not to say that a win-win scenario does not exist or absolutely cannot be achieved. Before envisioning what a win-win scenario might look like, though, it is important to remember what lies at the core of this crisis. North Korea's nuclear program dominates the headlines and is at the top of the US negotiating agenda, but this crisis is part of the unresolved inter-Korean conflict that goes back to the division of the Korean Peninsula in 1945.

After the division, there was a failure by the two Korean governments and by the international community to form a unified Korean government, and North Korea attempted to reunify Korea by force in 1950. The United States intervened on the side of South Korea to repel North Korea's invasion, and China intervened on the side of North Korea to push US-led forces back to the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. The two Koreas have been locked in a stalemate since an armistice ceased combat in 1953. This stalemate has occasionally seen low-level armed conflict or provocations, but it is mostly an inter-Korean competition for legitimacy and survivability. A win-win scenario must include an acceptable resolution to the inter-Korean conflict for both South Korea and for North Korea. Joint South-North statements in 1972, 1992, 2000, 2007, and 2018 have put top priority on ending the conflict and finding a path to reunification, reflecting the necessity of resolving this conflict.

For North Korea, an acceptable resolution to the inter-Korean conflict starts with long-term regime security and legitimacy. South Korea represents an existential threat to the North Korean regime. In seemingly all measures except for nuclear weapons, South Korea is the stronger, more successful Korean regime, and North Korea fears that it could simply be absorbed by South Korea. North Korea also perceives an existential threat from South Korea's ally, the United States. The presence of US forces in South Korea, the US security commitment to South Korea, and US economic sanctions against North Korea form the basis of what Pyongyang terms the US "hostile policy" toward North Korea. Relieving the pressure from combined US-ROK military forces, US economic sanctions, and threats to its legitimacy are primary North Korean strategic goals. Withdrawal of US forces from South Korea and reunification on Pyongyang's terms certainly seems like other strategic goals for North Korea, but these events would not be a win-win scenario for South Korea (just as reunification on Seoul's terms would not be a win-win scenario for the North Korean regime) or likely not for the United States.

For South Korea, an acceptable resolution to the inter-Korean conflict would be the removal of North Korea's military threats to South Korea. North Korea's nuclear weapons constitute the largest military threat to South Korea, but South Korea also faces conventional, unconventional, and cyber threats from North Korea. South Korea has dealt with North Korean military threats throughout the country's existence, but a sustainable cessation of those threats is what Seoul most desires. South Korea could achieve this, at least in part, through a robust strategic deterrence policy, but the elimination of those threats would be more of a winning scenario.

China has two primary competing interests in Korea. First, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) would like to maintain a buffer zone on its border and limit US influence in Asia by keeping Korea divided (or ultimately by pushing US forces out of Korea). A reunified Korea, presumably under Seoul, could be US-aligned and potentially stronger than either South Korea or North Korea

now, which would challenge Chinese power and influence in the region. Second, China would like a more economically open, less disruptive North Korea. These two interests can be difficult to reconcile, since the CCP seems unwilling to push too hard for the latter in order not to risk losing the former. Maintaining the status quo while slowly opening North Korea's economy may be an acceptable compromise to the CCP. Russia has similar interests to China, namely the desire to limit US influence in the region and see a more economically viable North Korea. But Russia's stakes in Korea are not nearly as high as China's.

The United States chiefly seeks long-term stability and economic viability on the Korean Peninsula and in East Asia. Similar to South Korea, the United States wants the elimination of the military threat posed by North Korea to US interests in East Asia, along with North Korean capabilities to strike US territories in the Pacific Ocean or the US mainland. A more economically open North Korea also would be in US interests, but eliminating North Korean threats to regional stability and economic viability may be sufficient for a winning scenario.

Finally, Japan should not be left out of this discussion. Japan has been the target of North Korean aggression and faces a significant military threat from North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. Japanese politicians often cite a resolution to the abduction issue as a top priority, but the elimination of North Korea's military threats to Japan takes precedence and may be sufficient for creating a winning scenario. Japan participated in the Six Party Talks and will continue to demand a role in negotiations involving Korea, as Japan's security is directly related to Korea.

A win-win scenario for all of these actors may not be the ideal end state that each one desires. Compromise on some secondary goals may be necessary in order to advance the core interests of all of the actors. With that in mind, what could a win-win scenario look like? First, going back to the fundamental issue here, the inter-Korean conflict must be resolved. This is the most difficult challenge to overcome because a win-win scenario here means that both Korean states must remain intact. Human rights advocates may assert that the Korean people overall would win through reunification under Seoul. Reunification under Seoul also likely is the surest way to eliminate the military threats posed by North Korea and economically open up the northern half of the Korean Peninsula. But reunification under Seoul does not fit the definition of a win-win scenario for all of the actors here, at least not in the short-term.

A win-win scenario thus begins with the preservation of the North Korean regime, despite Pyongyang's history of not sticking to bilateral or multilateral commitments, strategy of a cycle of military provocations, and reprehensible human rights record. Pyongyang must feel assured of its long-term regime security while not being a disruptive military threat to Korean Peninsula and regional stability and economic viability. All regional actors must ensure Pyongyang that they will not pursue regime change, and North Korea must be recognized as a legitimate state. For its part, North Korea must also recognize the legitimacy of South Korea and of US alliances with South Korea and Japan. North Korea must not use the existence of those entities as a pretext for provocations or threatening behavior.

Legitimacy could start with reciprocal diplomatic recognition among Washington, Seoul, and Pyongyang. Seoul and Pyongyang recognizing each other could be a significant step toward resolving the inter-Korean conflict, and Washington and Pyongyang recognizing each other could be a confidence-building measure toward mutual nonaggression. All sides also would have to promise to hold to recognized international law and norms regarding diplomatic missions.

Formal diplomatic ties also could lead to easing of some US sanctions, and all regional actors could agree to work toward assisting the North Korean economy. Kim Jong Un has emphasized economic development under his *byungjin* line, which is a strategy to develop nuclear weapons and the economy simultaneously. Kim declared the state nuclear forces as perfected in his 1 January 2018 new year address, and now he has talked of putting more focus on the economic part of *byungjin*. It is unclear what economic development goals Kim has in mind, but he may be staking part of his personal legitimacy on improving his country's economy. Other regional actors could propose an economic cooperation package to Kim as a way to promote North Korea's economic development, but Pyongyang would have to overcome its reticence of opening up economically. North Korea has feared that opening and reforming economically would expose the deficiencies of its political system, delegitimize the Kim dynasty's rule, cause unrest among its populace and demand for further reforms, and ultimately lead to absorption by South Korea. This is how South Korea's economic success presents an existential threat to North Korea, and it is uncertain how much North Korea would be willing to open and reform economically.

While diplomatic recognition and economic cooperation could work to reduce tension and Pyongyang's perceived need for nuclear weapons, the issue of North Korean denuclearization still must be addressed. It is very unlikely that North Korea would agree to unilateral, immediate denuclearization. The United States, South Korea, and Japan may need to compromise somewhat on their denuclearization demands and initially settle for a freeze and cap to North Korea's nuclear arsenal and ballistic missile programs, while setting a roadmap to complete denuclearization. A freeze and agreement to incrementally denuclearize is not ideal, but it could allow trust to be built up between all sides. In addition, the United States and its allies could work to establish a more stable deterrence posture with North Korea, since North Korean nuclear and missile capabilities would not advance. US assurance of allies during this period would be vital to maintain stability, and allies would have to feel sure that US rapprochement with Pyongyang is not a sign of decommitment.

Achieving these measures will require a series of long, difficult negotiations. These negotiations could culminate in a formal peace treaty that enshrines the above measures that would be taken to recognize the legitimacy of all actors, commit to mutual nonaggression, denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and economic cooperation. A peace treaty likely would dismantle the United Nations Command in South Korea, but North Korea should agree to let Washington, Seoul, and Tokyo separately decide on the future of their alliances. As a signatory of the Korean War armistice, China would have to participate in peace treaty talks, and Beijing could help assure Pyongyang of legitimacy and long-term security.

Outside of Pyongyang, all actors have some interest in fostering a more economically open and vibrant North Korea, although China and Russia may continue to want to balance their economic interests with their desire to check US influence in the region. Kim Jong Un, too, has talked of economic development, but the win-win scenario imagined here depends, in large part, on Kim deciding that economic development takes precedence over nuclear weapons and other military provocations. Without that, it would be difficult to achieve a sustainable win-win situation, and the regional situation could easily lapse back to one of high tension. North Korean leaders have long perceived existential threats from South Korea and the United States, and Kim Jong Un has staked much of his internal legitimacy on developing nuclear weapons to deter outside invasion or interference. Resolving the inter-Korean conflict and convincing North Korea to focus on economic development are two pillars of achieving a sustainable win-win situation, but they are major challenges that can only be resolved through enduring commitment by all regional actors.

## Dr. John Plumb

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4 June 2018

I believe there is a relatively straightforward win-win scenario for all key actors. The end result:

1. DPRK can no longer threaten the region or the United States with nuclear weapons or long range missiles;
2. DPRK does not live in fear of strikes or invasion by US forces and our allies;
3. Kim Jong Un is free to continue to rule his country;
4. DPRK gains economic assistance from and grows economic ties with its neighbors and with the United States through the easing of some sanctions; and
5. Military tension on the peninsula is reduced over time.

This end state requires a formal end to the Korean war, including an agreement by all parties that the DPRK has the right to exist as a separate state and that unification of the peninsula is not a goal; a functional end to the DPRK nuclear and missile programs (face-saving measures may be required but the programs must effectively cease); significant economic assistance to DPRK; and a gradual expansion of economic ties and cooperation with DPRK by ROK, China, Russia, the US and others. To be successful in the long run such an agreement requires an elastic response mechanism to suspected cheating, infractions, or bending of the rules. A brittle agreement (which allows any party to withdraw from their commitments on minor infractions that are a matter of interpretation, on a whim, on unproven suspicions, or based on their own domestic politics) will fail.

Because there is no trust any agreement between North Korea and the United States will require mechanisms to keep both parties adhered to their commitments.

A successful resolution should include a formal end to the Korean War.

China and Russia both stand to gain more than they lose in this scenario. A nuclear or potentially nuclear conflict on the peninsula is not in the interest of China or Russia. The collapse of North Korea is not in the interest of China or Russia. A more stable North Korea with opportunities for economic improvement that is not on the verge of military attack by the US and our allies reduces the chance of collapse of the North Korean state.

## Joshua Pollack

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 15 May 2018

Achieving a “win-win” scenario depends on how the parties understand their interests. In two cases—the ROK and the US—the outcomes of elections tend to produce potentially significant changes on this score. Achieving a “win-win” also depends on willingness to compromise and accept gains that may be less than everything a party feels entitled to receive. If, as a matter of principle, maximal demands cannot be relaxed, then no “win-win” can be achieved.

Assuming no “change” elections within the timeframe under consideration, and assuming an ultimate willingness to relax some demands along the way, it is possible to envision a set of “win-win scenarios” across four issue sets: the DPRK nuclear program, the DPRK space and missile program, the US military presence in Korea, and sanctions.

**DPRK nuclear program.** The DPRK considers its retention of a nuclear arsenal to be the only security assurance it can rely upon. From the DPRK’s perspective, therefore, CVID—understood here as unilateral nuclear disarmament, presumably capped by a return to the NPT—is a non-starter. It is always possible for Pyongyang to affirm the principle of “the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula” or even global nuclear disarmament, insofar as both are goals to be achieved in the indefinite future, especially the latter goal. It is also possible to return to some version of the “recessed” nuclear deterrence that the DPRK practiced prior to its first nuclear test.

US demands involve the declaration, freezing, and dismantlement of the entire DPRK nuclear program. Possible compromise outcomes might involve some version of this outcome for fissile-material production facilities, but without a complete accounting for historical production of fissile materials. (This result would be analogous to the US-DPRK Agreed Framework of 1994.) It would be difficult to entertain the return of the DPRK to the NPT under these conditions, since it would be generally assumed that they retained “bombs in the basement,” making a mockery of NPT Art. II, the commitment of non-nuclear weapon states not to possess such weapons. The DPRK would therefore be likely to remain indefinitely outside the NPT, leaving the nuclear issue unresolved, but on a “back burner.”

Such an outcome would require the US and other parties to tolerate a long-term deviation from their core commitment to nonproliferation—comparable to how Beijing tolerates Taiwan’s de facto independence, while insisting that it cannot persist forever, and cannot be recognized as a permanent, legal fact.

**DPRK space and missile programs.** The United States is liable to find additional missile tests and space launches over Japan to be intolerable, because the Japanese public and government consider them to be intolerable. North Korea insists on its right to conduct space launches, which are forbidden under a Security Council resolution, and has stated that it plans to launch a geostationary satellite—presumably eastward, over Japan’s main islands.

In the past, Japan has strongly protested North Korean space launches either eastward or southward over the Ryukyu Islands, while tolerating space launches southward over the Ryukyus from South Korea’s Naro Space Center. Japan and the United States alike should be prepared to tolerate “Korean” launches of North Korean satellites from Naro or any other South Korean launch site, as long as they do not involve any North Korean launch vehicles. This “Korean” option could provide North Korea with a face-saving way to concede the substance of the matter without having to concede the principle. Alternatively, China could provide launch services to North Korea from the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site in southern China.

**US military presence in Korea.** While North Korea has long favored a peace treaty and the dissolution of the UN Command, its exact preferences on the continued presence of US armed forces in South Korea are less clear. US troops might be seen as a welcome counterweight to Chinese military power, as long as they were not postured to threaten North Korea.

China, for its part, has learned to live with the US military presence in South Korea, provided that the US harbors no ambitions to station troops north of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel, does not enhance its missile defense posture in South Korea, and does not conduct large-scale naval exercises or operations in the Yellow Sea.

Neither the US nor South Korea would be seriously willing to entertain a complete US withdrawal. But North Korea, China, South Korea, and perhaps also Russia would probably favor expediting the transfer of the wartime operational control of the South Korean armed forces from the US to South Korea. The US has already conceded the principle of OPCON transfer, while insisting that South Korea first satisfy certain criteria establishing its readiness.

**Sanctions.** The DPRK is committed to rebuilding its economy, a task that will require resources from abroad. Foreign investment, joint ventures, and trade are increasingly constrained by sanctions under a series of UNSCRs whose legitimacy North Korea rejects. Pyongyang may not be willing to pay any major diplomatic price for unwinding these resolutions, especially

after observing the US reversal on the Iran deal. Similarly, the US will not be inclined to undertake an unwinding of the resolutions without achieving the demands enshrined in them, particularly CVID. A series of case-by-case sanctions exemptions issued through the UN's 1718 Committee, where the key players in the region are represented, is the most broadly acceptable approach, although the North Koreans will chafe at it.

## Anthony Rinna

Senior Editor (Sino-NK)

28 May 2018

It's highly unlikely that there is a win-win situation for all the actors involved. Within the strict confines of the Korean Peninsula, there is at least one potential situation that comes closest to resembling a mutually-agreeable scenario for all of the actors involved. This would, however, come with conditions that would initially be less favorable for the Republic of Korea and the United States. Also, it would only apply in the near- and medium-term timeframes. In the long-term, however, this scenario would be completely disagreeable not only for South Korea and the US, but may also prove to be unfavorable to China and Russia.

The scenario closest to a so-called "win-win" situation on the Korean Peninsula (while falling short of an actually mutually-agreeable state of affairs), in the near-term and medium-term time frames would center on allowing the regime of Kim Jong-un and his immediate entourage to maintain power *on the condition that the North Korean regime committed to denuclearization and disarmament*, which is a very dubious prospect. Kim Jong-un's primary motivation is the preservation of his regime. China and Russia, while they do not particularly favor Kim for ideological reasons, prefer that he maintain his ironclad grip on power in North Korea as an alternative to the potential instability a change in government may produce. For the US and the ROK to allow Kim and his inner circle to maintain political power would remove the need, in the near-term and medium-term, for military action, unless the Pyongyang regime decided to make a first strike against the US or its allies.

In the long-term, the possibility of a win-win within the parameters of the Korean Peninsula is incredibly remote even under the conditions outlined in the near- and medium-term timeframes. Dating back to the 19th century, the Korean Peninsula has played a critical role in great power rivalries. At that time Korea was a tributary state of Imperial China. As China's power declined in the mid- and late-19th century, however, the rising Japanese and Russian Empires moved against China to increase their own power in East Asia, which culminated in a conflict between Japan and Russia over Korea. Beyond the confines of the current security crisis on the Korean Peninsula, Korea will retain its geopolitical importance for China, Russia and the US.

Where Korea's situation today differs from the 19th century is that both North and South Korea are two independent states with their own respective strengths; one with a nuclear deterrent and the other with a powerful economy, a well-developed democratic form of government and a role as an established middle power. Reconciling inter-Korean interests with those of the great powers will be that much more complicated. The unification of the Korean Peninsula is a fundamental interest of all interested parties. Yet everyone has differing views on how to reunify Korea on their terms. Between North and South Korea there will be tensions over whether or not the peninsula reunifies under either Seoul or Pyongyang's authority. China will be opposed to a reunified, pro-US Korea, and will likely use whatever influence it can to make Korea friendly to China. The US therefore must be wary of a reunited pro-China Korea. Russia's primary goal is garnering economic benefits from a unified Korea, but ejecting US forces from the peninsula would also be in their best interests. No matter what happens within the inter-Korean context, the issue of the US's relationships with revisionist powers China and Russia will extend far beyond the timeframe of the Korea crisis. Beyond the Korea crisis, a US military presence on and in the vicinity of the Korean Peninsula offers the US a valuable opportunity to project power against China and Russia simultaneously.

Korean unification and/or disarmament would likely lead to calls for a US troop withdrawal - both from China and Russia, as well as from North Korea. Demand for a US military drawdown may also come from South Korea, depending on the political climate in that country (with a left-of-center government being more likely to initiate such calls). Calls for a drawdown of the US's military presence would occur either as a proposed *quid pro quo* for North Korean disarmament, or because, from an inter-Korean point of view, a US military presence would be unnecessary for Korean security.

While the US could possibly afford to draw down its infantry presence on the Korean Peninsula, devolving a greater burden to the ROK armed forces while maintaining enough troops both for support as well as to account for the structural interoperability between the ROK and US militaries, under no circumstances should the US reduce its air force presence in Korea, or sacrifice its naval maneuverability in the ROK. Nor should the US sacrifice its missile defense capabilities in the region. Depending on the nature of China and Russia's respective relationships with the US, and how much Beijing, Moscow and Washington's interests in Northeast Asia clash, Northeast Asia could in the long term, find itself in a state of either a stable peace or an unstable peace as

a result of a regional great power rivalry. Additionally, even if the Korean security crisis were to be resolved, Korea remains strategically critical for the US's ability to support Japan in light of Japan's tense relationships with both China and Russia.

## Dr. Todd C. Robinson

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(Air Command and Staff College)  
18 June 2018

Assessing whether there exists a win-win scenario for each party involved in the current situation with the DPRK requires us to know what each actor is both ultimately after and is willing to accept short of their desired end state. It is rather easy to conclude, based on past actions and behaviors, that what the other actors, besides the DPRK, desire is a maintenance of the status quo ante; i.e. a denuclearized Korean peninsula with a stable, but un-aggressive Kim regime still in place in Pyongyang that is open to long-term economic and political reform. If the current crisis can be resolved with a return to this kind of situation, I believe each party would call that a win. Assessing what a win looks like for the DPRK may be a bit more difficult. It really comes down to figuring out what kind of nuclear state North Korea really is.

The DPRK's recent actions, including signaling that they would not only be willing to halt further advancement of their nuclear program, but actually consider denuclearizing, goes against both what the scholarly community typically believes about why states acquire nuclear weapons, as well as what it believes<sup>54</sup> motivated the Kim regime to pursue them in the first place. Decades of research<sup>55</sup> suggest that states acquire nuclear weapons primarily for deterrence; i.e. the prevention of unwanted action or behavior by denial or threat of punishment (via retaliation or reprisal). States that seek the deterrent benefits of nuclear weapons typically do so to protect against what they often view as an existential threat to their existence, usually from the threat of another state's own nuclear weapons. Only once has a state that has acquired nuclear weapons for deterrence purposes given them up, South Africa, and this was done not because their external security situation changed, but because of domestic concerns. It is hard to believe, then, that the DPRK would be willing to give up their newly acquired capability, regardless of what the Trump administration may be willing to offer.

An alternate explanation for the DPRK's acquisition of nuclear weapons, one that may give the Trump administration more hope that it will be able to negotiate a solution to the current crisis, is that they have developed nuclear weapons as a bargaining chip that will both ensure their long-term stability, through the attainment of some kind of formalized security guarantee, and provide them with economic gain, most likely through sanction relief and diplomatic normalization. The United States, as the perceived ultimate guarantor of the North Korean regime's long-term stability, as the argument goes, only has to offer the right combination of incentives in order to convince the DPRK that now is the time to give up a capability that has been decades in the making.

What if, however, North Korea acquired and continues to possess nuclear weapons not for deterrence or as a bargaining chip in negotiations, but something else entirely? What might that be? How do we know? And most importantly, how might that change the administration's approach to the upcoming negotiations?

Rather than acquiring nuclear weapons for deterrence, or at least for their deterrent value alone, it is more likely that the DPRK is seeking to alter the status quo on the Korean peninsula, including forcing a US withdrawal from the region. Doing so would reflect a strategy not oriented to deterrence, but as Nobel Laureate Thomas Schelling termed, compellence. If true, the strategy for the Trump administration should be not what they are willing to *give* North Korea to resolve the ongoing crisis, but what are they willing to *give up*? President Trump has seemed willing, at various points over the past year and a half, to re-evaluate US commitments abroad, might he be willing to do so again when it comes to the US' continued presence on the Korea peninsula?

Scholars have long argued that states that acquire or seek to acquire nuclear weapons do so primarily because of their value for deterrence; i.e. the prevention of unwanted actions or behaviors by the threat of punishment. The recently released Nuclear Posture Review<sup>56</sup> reflects this fact, at least for the United States. Furthermore, the deterrent benefits of nuclear weapons are often characterized differently than deterrence by other means, including conventional, cyber, etc. Nuclear deterrence is, in fact, often viewed as an end unto itself, i.e. states pursue nuclear weapons to achieve "nuclear deterrence," rather than deterrence by nuclear means.

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.businessinsider.com/reason-north-korea-needs-nukes-deterrence-vs-expansion-2018-1>

<sup>55</sup> <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0022002706296158>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.defense.gov/News/SpecialReports/2018NuclearPostureReview.aspx>

States motivated to seek nuclear weapons for their deterrent benefits generally do so because there exists some underlying security concern that cannot be alleviated by conventional means alone. In virtually every case where a country has acquired, or even sought to acquire nuclear weapons, there has been some adversary or combination of adversaries that are perceived to be un-deterrable by conventional arms alone. Oftentimes, but not always, these adversaries possess nuclear weapons themselves, which reinforces the oft-cited axiom that nukes deter nukes.

As there has never been a documented case where a state has given up their nuclear weapons once they have been acquired, with the exception of the well-documented case of South Africa<sup>57</sup> in the 1990s, who did so not because they no longer desired their deterrent effects, but because of the changing domestic political dynamics, getting a state that acquires nuclear weapons for their unique deterrence-related benefits to give them up may be difficult, if not impossible. It has been a far more effective strategy, rather, to engage states while still in the process of acquiring nuclear weapons, with a goal of alleviating whatever security issue led to their initial exploration of nuclear weapons development. Because the DPRK has already completed this acquisition process, it may thus be a fool's errand to believe that any combination of economic incentive and security guarantee would be enough for the Kim regime to give up what they have obviously seen as an end goal: the possession of a credible nuclear deterrent. Why, then, might have Kim signaled a willingness not only to enter into such negotiations, but to suggest he might be willing to discuss denuclearization? There are two possible answers. The first is that Kim Jong Un does not view the possession of a nuclear deterrent as a vital component of his regime's long-term survival strategy in the same way that his father and grandfather are thought to believe. This would suggest that there is some sort of diplomatic opening that might be taken advantage of. The second, and perhaps more likely scenario, is that he is being untruthful; perhaps using the negotiations as a means to buy time while they perfect the rather difficult technical task of warhead miniaturization, proof of which would require them to conduct a test in the upper atmosphere instead of the now closed Punggye-ri underground test site.

The logical question for the DPRK is have they done all of the things we tend to look for when states want "nuclear deterrence." For the most part, the answer seems to be yes. For example, they articulated what is, for all intents and purposes, a doctrine in 2013 when they released a "law on consolidating the position of nuclear weapons state for self-defence."<sup>58</sup> This law contains ten statements on North Korean nuclear policy, the first five of which are the most relevant for this discussion.

- The nuclear weapons of the DPRK are just means for defence as it was compelled to have access to them to cope with the ever-escalating hostile policy of the U.S. and nuclear threat.
- They serve the purpose of deterring and repelling the aggression and attack of the enemy against the DPRK and dealing deadly retaliatory blows at the strongholds of aggression until the world is denuclearized.
- The DPRK shall take practical steps to bolster up the nuclear deterrence and nuclear retaliatory strike power both in quality and quantity to cope with the gravity of the escalating danger of the hostile forces' aggression and attack.
- The nuclear weapons of the DPRK can be used only by a final order of the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army to repel invasion or attack from a hostile nuclear weapons state and make retaliatory strikes.
- The DPRK shall neither use nukes against the non-nuclear states nor threaten them with those weapons unless they join a hostile nuclear weapons state in its invasion and attack on the DPRK.<sup>59</sup>

If it is the case that the DPRK was after nuclear deterrence specifically, and their rhetoric and actions support this conclusion (this is what I would want to confirm, that all of their rhetoric points towards deterrence and their development of delivery capabilities has continued unabated), it suggests that there may be nothing that we can do to get them to give up their nukes, if they conform to what conventional wisdom suggests. That being said, there is a first time for everything and conventional wisdom is sometimes wrong.

An alternate explanation for why the DPRK acquired and continues to possess nuclear weapons is as a way to gain bargaining leverage in negotiations with other states, perhaps using a promise of denuclearization as a way to receive sanction relief and diplomatic normalization. This would be similar to what occurred with the Clinton administration and their negotiations with the North Koreans during the 1990s. While this explanation has received quite a bit of attention over the past few months, and seems to be what the Trump administration is banking on, this explanation is a bit difficult to accept because the very process of acquiring their principle bargaining chip is what led to the imposition of economic sanctions and the cessation of normal diplomatic ties in the first place. Furthermore, it ignores that fact that there have been a multitude of efforts made by the

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/09/north-korea-south-africa/539265/>

<sup>58</sup> "Law on Consolidating Position of Nuclear Weapons State Adopted," Korea Central News Agency (KCNA), 1 April 2013, accessed via Open Source Enterprise at

[https://www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS\\_0\\_0\\_200\\_203\\_121123\\_43/content/Display/KPP20130401971143](https://www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_200_203_121123_43/content/Display/KPP20130401971143)

<sup>59</sup> "Law on Consolidating Position of Nuclear Weapons State Adopted," Korea Central News Agency (KCNA), 1 April 2013, accessed via Open Source Enterprise at

[https://www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS\\_0\\_0\\_200\\_203\\_121123\\_43/content/Display/KPP20130401971143](https://www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_200_203_121123_43/content/Display/KPP20130401971143)

United States and others over the past few decades, including the resolutely unsuccessful six-party talks, where the North could have already reaped the benefits that advocates of this line of reasoning suggest they are after. The only conceivable way that this explanation makes sense from the North Korean perspective is if they simply held out for the best deal possible too long and were forced to develop nuclear weapons else future parties to negotiations might think that they were bluffing. This seems both highly irrational and reckless and ultimately unreflective of the calculated manner in which the Kim regime typically operates. Yet, if it is the case that the DPRK has adopted such a strategy, then prospects for some sort of agreement may be greater now than at any point since the end of the Korean War. The question is only whether the Kim regime will be willing to accept the offered terms or, again, choose to proceed with their development of advanced capabilities in return for a better deal.

What if instead of acquiring nuclear weapons for their unique deterrent benefits or as a bargaining chip in potential negotiations, North Korea has done so as a way to compel its adversaries to accept a change in the status quo, such as the withdrawal of US troops from the peninsula, and, if so, what is the likelihood that such a strategy will succeed? Recent research<sup>60</sup> suggests that nuclear weapons are generally poor instruments of coercion, or are, perhaps, only useful if the issuer of the threat possesses a numerical superiority<sup>61</sup> in nuclear capability over its target. In fact, possessing nuclear weapons may make coercive threats even more difficult than if a state did not possess them. Why, then, would the DPRK seek to use their nuclear weapons in such a manner? Two possibilities exist. The first is that they simply overestimate their ability to compel using nuclear weapons. When push comes to shove and they attempt to compel the United States and/or South Korea to accept their demands else further development or even nuclear use take place, history suggests that such a strategy will fail. Alternatively, Kim Jong Un could be probing to see whether a change in the status quo is possible given the occupants of both the White and Blue Houses. Instances of compellence typically fail when states attempt to force change that the target does not want to make. That President Trump<sup>62</sup> has been reported to at least have entertained the idea of altering the dynamics on the peninsula may have signaled to Kim Jong Un that there may be an opening to be taken advantage of; more so, perhaps, than at any other time.

If it is the case that the Kim regime's ultimate goal is to foster a change in the status quo, and are willing to engage in nuclear proliferation to achieve it, it suggests that they are not likely to accept anything short of the full fulfilment of their long-term strategic objectives, whatever those happen to be. No amount of security guarantees or economic assistance are likely to satisfy what Kim Jong Un views as his key to long-term viability. That being said, if President's Trump and Moon are willing to acquiesce to the demands of the Kim regime, then denuclearization may be a possibility. Yet, this may also motivate Kim Jong Un to press his luck and attempt to further compel until the US and South Korea simply have nothing else to give.

How, then, should the US proceed? Is it possible to know what kind of nuclear state the DPRK is before the upcoming negotiations commence? That the Kim regime is willing to discuss denuclearization at all seems to suggest that their status as a deterrence seeking state is suspect. It is more likely that they are either bargain-seeking or intending to compel. If it is the former, then whatever deal is struck should be viewed with a healthy dose of skepticism. After all, a state that is willing to risk both international condemnation and economic and political isolation to achieve its objectives should be treated as such. However, if it is the case that what the Kim regime is ultimately after is a revision of their current situation, and are willing to use the threat of continued development or even use of nuclear weapons to achieve it, then the logical question is whether President Trump will be willing to let them?

## Dr. Gary Samore

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2 June 2018

Yes—A win-win scenario for all the parties is to avoid war on the Korean Peninsula. The most important ingredient to preventing war is a strong US military presence in the region and alliance with the ROK and Japan, including regional and national missile defense, which deters North Korea from using military force. In addition, defense and deterrence can be reinforced with a diplomatic process to reduce tensions and limit North Korea's military threat, including its nuclear and missile programs. Such a diplomatic process includes US-DPRK negotiations on denuclearization and normalization, North-South negotiations on

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.amazon.com/Nuclear-Weapons-Coercive-Diplomacy-Sechser/dp/1107514517>

<sup>61</sup> [https://www.amazon.com/Logic-American-Nuclear-Strategy-Superiority/dp/0190849185/ref=pd\\_lpo\\_sbs\\_14\\_t\\_2?\\_encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=RCSGKCFEJHFNAB779AJ](https://www.amazon.com/Logic-American-Nuclear-Strategy-Superiority/dp/0190849185/ref=pd_lpo_sbs_14_t_2?_encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=RCSGKCFEJHFNAB779AJ)

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.businessinsider.com/trump-withdraw-us-troops-from-korea-john-kelly-2018-4>



conventional confidence-building measures and establishing a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula, and multilateral meetings (e.g. Six Party Talks). While this diplomatic process is unlikely to eliminate North Korea's nuclear, missile and conventional capabilities, it can make these threats more manageable to deter.

## **Dr. Jaganath Sankaran**

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

A win-win scenario is more likely from a short-term perspective than in the long term. In the short term, both the United States and DPRK seem to have something the other wants and is potentially willing to offer in exchange under proper circumstances. The United States can offer sanctions relief, economic opportunities, and financial/food aid to the DPRK. The North Koreans, in return, can offer to halt testing ballistic missiles and nuclear devices. Such DPRK measures will need to be quickly followed by the permanent mothballing of the North Korean nuclear weapons complex.

It is conceivable that something along these lines is viable in the near future. However, caveats are in order. The last time a short-term deal was attempted on similar terms during the Clinton administration, it failed due to a number of factors including the change in political leadership in the United States. This experience combined with the recent withdrawal of the US from the JCPOA should make DPRK cautious in surrendering its nuclear & missile program.

It has become quite clear from the Trump administration's attempts to deal with North Korea that the most pressing issue is defining "denuclearization." We, the United States, imply the denuclearization of North Korea. DPRK implies the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, which arguably includes the removal of U.S. troops. While this differing interpretation is not new, achieving a compromise between these differing interpretations will be immensely challenging.

Even so, one can imagine an arrangement in which the United States and DPRK can both find value. If the North Koreans agreed to halt testing, and verifiably initiated the dismantling of "all their nuclear infrastructure," the United States could offer sanctions relief and economic aid that are paced to match North Korean actions. Other major powers in the region (China, and Russia) and U.S. regional allies (Japan and South Korea) would welcome such an arrangement.

However, seen from a long-term perspective, many vexing issues arise. Can the armistice be replaced with a peace treaty? If so, how? Will the signing of a peace treaty imply the need for the United States to withdraw its troops from the Korean peninsula? What are the conditions under which the United States can have direct diplomatic relations with North Korea? How can the integration of DPRK and South Korea be achieved? All of these are extremely important issues with significant geopolitical repercussions. Unfortunately, there does not seem to be an easy win-win for these issues. China and Russia will prefer the United States to remove its forward deployed forces, while Japan and South Korea would advocate against such a decision. North Korea (and China and Russia) would want the United States to stop all joint military exercises in the region. Such a concession, however, will not be in the interest of the U.S. and its allies. The best to hope for in negotiating is to focus on immediate priorities at first, build trust, and then address other issues.

## **Dr. Sheila Smith**

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

Yes. But I cannot see how we negotiate our way there without undermining or abandoning U.S. alliances.

A DPRK that is at peace with the ROK would end the long tradition of provocation, response and heightened military tension that has characterized the Korean peninsula for decades. The U.S., China and Russia can agree that this is a better option than what we have today. The two Koreas could certainly benefit. Thus, the Panmunjom peace regime is largely about that. There is, of course, a large economic carrot attached to make it more palatable to Pyongyang.

The necessary condition for that, however, has to be a regional effort at disarmament. The military balance on the peninsula must support the stability of that peace regime. One nuclear power and one non-nuclear power do not lead to stability. By definition then either the DPRK has to get rid of its nuclear weapons, or the South needs to acquire them.

The challenge for the U.S., China and Russia then is at what price this attempt to balance North and South militarily comes. Is it removing U.S. troops from the South? Is it removing nuclear weapons from the North? Is it something else?

I think it is something else. I think we will need a regional disarmament effort that will accommodate the fears of the non-nuclear states – ROK and Japan – who must live alongside three acknowledged nuclear powers and an emerging nuclear power. Extended deterrence will become difficult should North and South decide they want peace at any cost. Moreover, Japan is already feeling that the U.S. extended deterrent is insufficient to the changing dynamics in Northeast Asia, despite Tokyo's positive assessment of the Trump Administration's Nuclear Posture Review.

What would this Northeast Asian disarmament regime look like? It will need to address intermediate range nuclear forces (China's especially since Russia and the U.S. have in theory achieved some degree of understanding on INF) as well as the ballistic missiles capable of delivering WMD. At this point the only country that does not have ballistic missiles is Japan. Allowing Japan to acquire them might be easier than ridding them from Russia, China, the DPRK, ROK and the U.S. even if it may unsettle some in the region. The first step would be to find a common framework for defining strategic stability.

An economically vibrant DPRK still seems to be the best investment in future peace and stability. But the underlying strategic trajectory is not in favor of peace in the region. China's rise makes the future uncertain at best, deeply fraught at worst. Even if we can negotiate a peace treaty on the Korean peninsula, it will not be enough to address the growing security tensions among the region's major powers. The broader regional military balance must be addressed alongside the Korean peninsular settlement if peace is to be sustainable.

## **Brig Gen Rob Spalding**

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

China does not view this as a win-win opportunity. If the US gains they lose. China's best option is status quo because it keeps the US Asia focus on DPRK, while also perpetuating the need to appeal to China for their assistance. Option 2 would be a peaceful two-state solution where the US military is forced to leave the peninsula – denuclearization would be a bonus. Option 3 would be a unified Korea where US military is forced to leave the peninsula - denuclearization would be a bonus. Other ancillary issues that are concerning to China are US missile defense systems and associated ISR. The true benefit of status quo is the continued exhaustion of the US military and depletion of its economy.

## **Yun Sun**

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

Unless the three pairs: US-China, ROK-DPRK and US-DPRK significantly adjust their policy bottom lines and expectations, there is unlikely to be a win-win scenario for all.

A potential scenario that could be acceptable to all is the demise of DPRK, followed by unification by absorption, and accompanied significant adjustment to US-ROK alliance. But the path to get from here to there will be highly uncertain.

## **Dr. Michael Swaine**

Senior Fellow (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace)  
25 May 2018

Yes, there is a win-win scenario for all actors, but the likelihood of its occurrence is very low, certainly over the short to medium term. This would include: 1) a more secure, open, and reform-oriented DPRK, established through a process of diplomatic recognition, a peace treaty, more robust security assurances and CBMs in both directions, and a more independently strong

ROK with a reduced US military presence and command position; 2) credible understandings between Beijing, Washington, Seoul, and Tokyo regarding the *long-term* disposition of the Korean Peninsula, likely involving an absence of foreign forces, positive, balanced security relationships with the major powers (and hence a less robust *bilateral* security relationship with either the US or China), and an independently strong and capable Korean military force; and 3) the absence of nuclear weapons on the Peninsula, whether divided or unified. There might be a prospect of developing this type of outcome if the DPRK could be compelled to move in a less confrontational and ideological direction and the US and China were to develop a sufficient level of mutual trust. But we are currently moving in the opposite direction in both of these areas. The Free and Open IndoPacific (FOIP) strategy of the Trump Administration, in its present form, simply serves to accelerate this movement.

## Dr. William Tow

Professor (Australian National University)

12 June 2018

Bottom-line: there is no 'win-win scenario' for all key actors (DPRK, ROK, China, Russia, Japan and the US) in the current crisis environment. The US wants to alleviate the North Korean missile/nuclear warhead threat to the US mainland and territories (mainly Guam) and the DPRK will not relinquish this leverage asset even at the expense of enduring severe economic hardships for its own population. Yet this is the Trump administration's main incentive for engaging Kim Jong-un – to alleviate the threat of DPRK strikes against US territory. The two strategic goals are incompatible. The Kim regime is unwilling and incapable of separating its own identity and legitimacy from the DPRK's long-term state identity. It can and will 'hedge' against or stall on the Trump administration's expectations to find a diplomatic/political solution for advancing that administration's own domestic political standing. China would find a unified Korean peninsula oriented toward a Western liberal democratic system to be disadvantageous to its own interests, and, specifically, to its vision of alleviating US influence and material assets from the Korean Peninsula and throughout the broader Indo-Pacific. Russia is acting on a purely opportunistic motives (as evidenced by the Lavrov-Kim meeting in Pyongyang at the end of May 2018). It wishes to extract diplomatic and strategic leverage on the Korean Peninsula at the US expense without really being a key player in that domain and despite its limited capabilities to affect the Peninsula's long-term economic and political future. ROK President Moon Jae-in remains wedded to a quasi- *Sunshine Policy* posture. His immediate and understandable short-term objective is to preserve the ROK's national survival by avoiding a conflict on the peninsula (in which much of his country would be destroyed or substantially damaged by conventional and possibly nuclear strikes originating from the DPRK). At present, while there is increased positive rhetoric and even limited policy planning being undertaken by the two Koreas, there seems to be a reliance on momentum created by recent good will generated by the inter-Korean summit than hard and systematic long-term thinking about how ROK and DPRK political integration could actually be achieved. I do not perceive that there is adequate coordination between ROK and US defense planners to integrate their two countries' strategic priorities and positions. The Japanese are predominantly concerned (along with the South Koreans) that any 'deal' struck or 'process' commencing at the Trump-Kim summit in Singapore does not 'sell out' the viability of traditional US extended deterrence guarantees for the sake of realising US immunity from DPRK nuclear strikes against the US homeland. In summary, any 'win-win' outcome will only be the product of a long and arduous set of negotiations between all the key parties involved.

### ADDITIONAL INPUT FROM DR. WILLIAM TOW FOLLOWING 12 JUNE SUMMIT

Just a quick follow-up after listening to President Trump's news conference following the Trump-Kim summit. Trump indicated he wanted to stop "war games" that the US and ROK conduct in the latter country because they are too expensive and provocative (although he indicated he wants to keep the US troops deployed in South Korea in place for now). I am not sure how the readiness factor re maintaining deterrence could not be affected by this posture and there are other expenses that could be incurred as a result (such as exercising with South Korean forces on US soil?). Until this is actually operationalised, I think I stand by my basic point that close coordination between the US, the ROK and Japan will be required as long as the DPRK maintains its current size of conventional forces and threatens Seoul with massive artillery and special forces capabilities....as Trump also said in his hour-long news conference, we have a long way to go until stability on the Peninsula is actually realised. I wish I could be as trusting towards Kim and his regime as the US president apparently seems to be...

## Dr. Steve Tsang

Director, SOAS China Institute (University of London)  
25 May 2018

I do not believe a 'win-win' solution is available over the Korean Peninsula situation. The objectives of the dominant players are too far apart to be reconciled. Pursuing an impossible goal distracts policy makers from realistic options that may pre-empt worse outcomes.

A solution agreeable to all, including the relatively peripheral but still important players would be practically impossible to achieve. The core players are of course, the USA, South Korea, North Korea and China. The 'peripheral but still significant' players are Japan and Russia. For this short advice, I will focus on the core players as no solution is possible without getting all four of them on board.

The USA's basic requirement is the complete, irreversible and verifiable destruction of the North Korean nuclear and long range missile programmes. North Korea seeks assured security of the regime, which implies in particular keeping Kim's family in power and getting assistance to make the economy grow strongly, without giving up the nuclear capabilities that ensures regime security. South Korea requires a peaceful solution that will not cripple its economy or make it subordinate to an external player. China's interest lies in its ability to use the Korean situation to project its leadership role and secure concessions from the USA on other matters such as trade. This means it prefers to contain the situation so that its assistance will continue to be required by the others to pre-empt the situation from escalating out of control. There is not enough common ground among the key players for a solution to be acceptable to them all. In so far as 'de-nuclearization' is concerned China's position is close to that of North Korea – de-nuclearization of the Peninsula, not removing North Korea's nuclear capabilities alone – and not in alignment with that of USA.

If the option of force is to be avoided, and personally I think it critical to avoid the use of force which is likely to unleash forces that may have catastrophic consequences, policy makers need to look for a compromise that is tolerable to all though not necessarily acceptable to them. Given the nature of the Kim regime it is difficult to see how he can or will afford not to respond 'robustly' if the USA should conduct targeted strikes, with a very high risk of this spiraling into an unintended escalation.

An outcome tolerable to all may be one that freezes the situation in the short term, which means no more nuclear or missile tests on the part of North Korea. This will have to be part of a long-term phase by phase de-nuclearization of North Korea matched by the signing of a peace treaty, incremental economic aids to North Korea that bind its economy to the South and to the wider world, a drawdown of some US forces in South Korea, with the Chinese being allowed to take some credit for making this happen. Mechanisms will need to be put in place for inspection of North Korean facilities.

I am well aware that this is not an acceptable way forward for the Trump Administration. Nor is it acceptable to North Korea or indeed the other parties. But something along this line can be made to be tolerable. I think this is the most likely way that can avoid a military option becoming unavoidable.

## Dr. Miles Yu

Professor (United States Naval Academy)  
6 June 2018

There is no win-win solution for all because each player involved in this crisis has a different stake and objective. If the DPRK is completely denuclearized, it will lose the crucial leverage with which to negotiate and bargain with the U.S. and ROK; if it doesn't denuclearize, the U.S. and ROK lose. If the DPRK and ROK make peace and go kumbaya with each other, then unification of the two Koreas might well be on agenda, in which case the economically, demographically, culturally more powerful ROK will likely dominate the process, which will in turn displease China because of the deeply rooted anti-China sentiment among the Koreans [due primarily to Chinese chauvinism, revived Korean nationalist pride, territorial disputes over Gando/Jiandao and Mt. Paektu, etc.]. In addition, China has had an historical strategic phobia over a security vulnerability in the Korean Peninsula and considers a divided Korea a crucial strategic buffer zone against the U.S.-led alliance to penetrate China.<sup>63</sup> A unified Korea might also displease Japan, another key ally that has nevertheless been a major punch bag for the Korean nationalists. Russia has been a minor player up to this point, but Russia will likely butt in to claim some relevance in world politics.

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<sup>63</sup> See <https://www.hoover.org/research/chinas-strategic-calculations-and-north-koreas-nuclear-gambit>

The best approach is to jettison the fantasy of a win-win solution for everyone as there is none. The U.S. should focus on what it can gain the most from this and do what is the best for the U.S. which is to completely denuclearize the DPRK and join hands with its allies, ROK AND Japan, in a peaceful regime transformation in Pyongyang, for all the good reasons POTUS Trump laid out in his great speech at the ROK parliament earlier this year.

## 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.

### Dean Cheng

Senior Research Fellow (Heritage Foundation)



Dean Cheng brings detailed knowledge of China's military and space capabilities to bear as The Heritage Foundation's research fellow on Chinese political and security affairs. He specializes in China's military and foreign policy, in particular its relationship with the rest of Asia and with the United States. Cheng has written extensively on China's military doctrine, technological implications of its space program and "dual use" issues associated with the communist nation's industrial and scientific infrastructure. He previously worked for 13 years as a senior analyst, first with Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC), the Fortune 500 specialist in defense and homeland security, and then with the China Studies division of the Center for Naval Analyses, the federally funded research institute. Before entering the private sector, Cheng studied China's defense-industrial complex for a congressional agency, the Office of Technology Assessment, as an analyst in the International Security and Space Program. Cheng has appeared on public affairs shows such as *John McLaughlin's One on One* and programs on National Public Radio, CNN International, BBC World Service and International Television News (ITN). He has been interviewed by or provided commentary for publications such as *Time* magazine, *The Washington Post*, *Financial Times*, *Bloomberg News*, *Jane's Defense Weekly*, South Korea's *Chosun Ilbo* and Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post*. Cheng has spoken at the National Space Symposium, National Defense University, the Air Force Academy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Eisenhower Center for Space and Defense Studies. Cheng earned a bachelor's degree in politics from Princeton University in 1986 and studied for a doctorate at MIT. He and his wife reside in Vienna, Va.

## Dr. Richard Cronin

Distinguished Fellow (Stimson Center)



Richard P. Cronin is a Distinguished Fellow at Stimson. Until July 2016 Cronin directed Stimson's Southeast Asia Program and Mekong Policy Project. Cronin joined Stimson in 2005 after a long career as an Asia Specialist with the non-partisan Congressional Research Service. At Stimson, he works on transboundary and nontraditional security issues in Southeast Asia and the South China Sea from a political economy perspective. Among numerous publications he is the author of "Hydropower Dams on the Mekong: Old Dreams, New Dangers," (Asia Policy, July 2013) and the lead co-author of numerous Stimson reports, issue briefs, and presentations, including Mekong Tipping Point (2010), "After Xayaburi and Don Sahong: Time for a New Narrative on Mekong Hydropower," (March 2015), a series of four first-hand "Letters from the Mekong" issue briefs, "After Xayaburi and Don Sahong: Time for a New Narrative on Mekong Hydropower" (Oct 2016). He is a co-author of a Stimson briefing, "A Call for Strategic, Basin-wide Energy Planning in Laos" (Jan 2017). Cronin has testified at US Congressional hearings on Mekong hydropower issues and the South China Sea. Senior US officials have credited Cronin and Stimson with awakening the US Government to the growing threat to peace and stability in the Lower Mekong because of dam development on the Mekong's mainstream. He has been a non-official member of US delegations to several regional meetings of the Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI) and the Friends of the Lower Mekong donor group. Cronin earned a B.S. in economics and history, and an M.A. in European history from the University of Houston. He holds a Ph.D. in modern South Asian history from Syracuse University. He served in Vietnam (1st Lt) with the US Army's 1st Infantry Division in 1965-66.

## Debra Decker

Senior Advisor, Managing Across Boundaries Initiative (Stimson Center)



Debra Decker is a Senior Advisor at the Managing Across Boundaries initiative. She has more than 20 years of experience developing policies and managing processes in the private and public sectors and is a subject matter expert in the field of risk management. Decker is also president of Decker Advisors, LLC, a firm she recently established to focus on framing complex national security problems in innovative ways and engaging stakeholders to develop efficient solutions. Prior to this, Decker was with Booz Allen Hamilton. She has advised the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security on strategy and risk and has specialized in the threats stemming from weapons of mass destruction and in the vulnerabilities of critical infrastructure. As a researcher, Decker was an associate of Harvard's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. Her research has been featured at the World Economic Forum and to Congress. She is a member of the Society for Risk Analysis, the Institute of Nuclear Materials Management, the International Institute for Strategic Studies, and the 2013 ASIS Technical Advisory Committee for developing a national risk assessment standard. She currently serves on the boards of the Washington Foreign Law Society and of TexProtects, which works against child abuse and neglect in Texas. Decker holds an MBA from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, an MPA from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and a B.A. from American University.

## Abraham Denmark

Director, Asia Program (Wilson Center)



Abraham M. Denmark is Director of the Asia Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, where he also holds a joint appointment as a Senior Fellow in the Kissinger Institute on China and the United States. He previously served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia.

## Ken Gause

Director, International Affairs Group, Center for Strategic Studies (CNA)



Ken Gause is the director of the International Affairs Group, a part of CNA's Center for Strategic Studies. 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. David Hunter-Chester

Senior Research Analyst, Athena Team (Training and Doctrine Command G-2)  
Senior Research Analyst (Intelligent Decisions Systems, Inc.)



Dr. David Hunter-Chester is a Senior Research Analyst, working for Intelligent Decisions Systems, Inc (IDSI), on the Athena Team, Training and Doctrine Command G-2. He served in the United States Army from 1981 until his retirement as a Colonel in 2007. Dr. Hunter-Chester was selected as a Foreign Area Officer for Northeast Asia (Japan and Korea) in 1985. His tactical assignments were in Germany and Japan. Among other positions he was the chief of the US Forces Japan liaison office in Okinawa, the head of government relations for US Forces Japan, the Country Director for Japan in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the Executive Assistant for the Office of Policy, Planning and Analysis, Coalition Provisional Authority, Iraq. After retirement from the Army, he was an assistant professor at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and the director for Raytheon's Japan Remote Island Defense Initiative before assuming his present position. Dr. Hunter-Chester has a Master of Arts degree in East Asian Studies from Stanford University and a doctorate in East Asian History from the University of Kansas. He is the author of a book on Japan's Ground Self-Defense Force and of several articles.



## Dr. Maorong Jiang

Associate Professor, Political Science and International Relations (Creighton University)  
Director, Asian World Center (Creighton University)



Dr. Maorong Jiang is an Associate Professor of Political Science and International Relations and Director of the Asian World Center at Creighton University. After his graduate studies at the Beijing Foreign Affairs College, he taught international relations as a regular faculty member at the Military College of International Relations in China. Jiang was selected as a young government official by the US State Department to participate in its prestigious International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP) in 1990. Jiang served as visiting fellow for three years at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, during which Jiang participated in the East West Center's Asian Pacific Leadership Program. Since coming to the U.S. for his doctoral studies in 1996, Jiang's counsel has been sought by several government agencies interested in engagement with both China and North Korea. In addition to being a regular speaker at the Global Reporting Network, at the Honolulu Security Seminars, Jiang participated in the Conference on the Transition of Power: Democratic Enlargement in Asia in 1997 and International Game on Korea Reconciliation and Asian Security in 1998. Jiang has served the U.S. Strategic Command Deterrence and Assurance Academic Alliance since 2015. Most recently, Jiang served as one of the five supervisors in the US Midwest responsible for the Japan Foundation Outreach Initiative Projects at Creighton, and was selected by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan to participate in its "Building a Multi-layered Network of Influential Figures" program in 2016. Jiang's publications and public presentations are mainly on security issues in general, and on US-China and US-DPRK relations in particular.

## Dr. Jeffrey Knopf

Professor (Middlebury Institute of International Studies)



Jeffrey W. Knopf is a professor at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies (MIIS) in Monterey, California, where he serves as the chair of the M.A. program in Nonproliferation and Terrorism Studies. He is also a senior research associate with the Institute's James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies. Dr. Knopf received a Ph.D. in Political Science from Stanford University. Prior to joining the MIIS faculty, he taught at the University of Southern California, the University of California-Santa Cruz, and the Naval Postgraduate School. Dr. Knopf is the co-editor of a forthcoming volume on *Behavioral Economics and Nuclear Weapons*. He is also the editor of *International Cooperation on WMD Nonproliferation* (University of Georgia Press, 2016) and *Security Assurances and Nuclear Nonproliferation* (Stanford University Press, 2012) and the author of *Domestic Society and International Cooperation: The Impact of Protest on U.S. Arms Control Policy* (Cambridge University Press, 1998).

## Matt Korda

Arms Control, Disarmament, and WMD Non-Proliferation Centre (NATO)



Matt Korda works in the Arms Control, Disarmament, and WMD Non-Proliferation Centre (ACDC) at NATO HQ in Brussels. He received his MA in International Peace & Security from the Department of War Studies at King's College London, where he also worked as a Research Assistant on nuclear issues and strategic stability. His research interests and recent publications focus on nuclear non-proliferation, missile defence, and alliance management, with regional focuses on Russia and the Korean Peninsula.

## 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.

## Inhyok Kwon

Assistant Policy Researcher (RAND)



Inhyok Kwon is an assistant policy researcher at RAND and a Ph.D. student at Pardee RAND Graduate School. He has an M.A. in international relations from the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University and a B.Eng. in industrial engineering from the Republic of Korea (ROK) Air Force Academy. Kwon is a former logistics officer in the ROK Air Force. Prior to joining to Pardee RAND, he studied political, security, and economic issues affecting the Korean Peninsula and ROK's foreign policy relations. His research interests include national security strategy, U.S.-ROK deterrence strategy and defense posture against North Korea, and counterinsurgency and stability operations.

## Group Captain (Indian Air Force ret) Ajey Lele

Senior Fellow (Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses)



Group Captain (ret) Ajey Lele is Senior Fellow in the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses and heads its Centre on Strategic Technologies. He started his professional career as an officer in the Indian Air Force in 1987 and took early retirement from the service to pursue his academic interests. He has a Masters degree in Physics from Pune University, and Masters and MPhil degrees in Defence and Strategic Studies from Madras University. He has done his doctorate from the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi. His specific areas of research include issues related to Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), Space Security and Strategic Technologies. He has contributed articles to various national and international journals, websites and newspapers. He has authored six books and has also has been an editor for six books. He is a recipient of K. Subrahmanyam Award (2013) which is conferred for outstanding contribution in the area of strategic and security studies.

## Dr. Rod Lyon

Senior Fellow, International Strategy (Australian Strategic Policy Institute)



Dr. Rod Lyon is a Senior Fellow - International Strategy. Rod was most recently a Senior Analyst with ASPI. He has previously lectured in International Relations at the University of Queensland where he taught courses on conflict, international security, and civil-military relations. His research interests focus on a range of problems associated with global security, nuclear strategy and Australian security. He previously worked in the Strategic Analysis Branch of the Office of National Assessments between 1985 and 1996. As a Fulbright scholar in 2004, he was a visiting research fellow at Georgetown University in Washington DC, researching a project on the future of security partnerships in the post-September 11 environment. He was appointed to the National Consultative Committee on International Security Issues in April 2005.

## 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*.

## Dr. Rupal Mehta

Assistant Professor, Political Science (University of Nebraska, Lincoln)



Professor Mehta's research interests lie in international security and conflict, with a particular interest in nuclear security, latency, extended deterrence, nonproliferation, force structure, and deterrence theory. Her dissertation book project explores the conditions under which states that have started nuclear weapons programs stop their pursuit. She is also a member of the University of Nebraska's National Strategic Research Institute where she consults for USSTRATCOM. Her co-authored work has appeared in the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* and she is a researcher with Center for Pacific Studies at the University of California San Diego where she explores the evolution of cross-domain deterrence in the 21st century. Professor Mehta received a Ph.D. and M.A. in Political Science from the University of California, San Diego, and B.A. in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley (Go Bears). Previously, she was a researcher at the Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington D.C. From 2014-2015, Professor Mehta will be on leave as a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Belfer Center in the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

## Dr. Andrew O’Neil

Dean, Research (Griffith University)  
 Professor, Political Science (Griffith University)



Andrew is Dean (Research) and Professor of Political Science in the Griffith Business School. Prior to being appointed Dean in April 2016, he was Head of the School of Government and International Relations (2014-2016) and Director of the Griffith Asia Institute (2010-2014). Before coming to Griffith in 2010, Andrew was Associate Head (Research) in the Faculty of Social Sciences at Flinders University, and prior to entering academia he worked as a Commonwealth public servant with Australia’s Department of Defence. Andrew’s research expertise focuses on the intersection of strategic, political, and economic change in the Asia-Pacific with particular emphasis on the security dimension of international relations, and he is a frequent media commentator on these topics. Working in teams, Andrew is the recipient of Australian Research Council (Discovery and Linkage Project) funding, and he has also received competitive industry funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Japan Foundation, and the Department of Defence. He is a former member of the Australian Foreign Minister’s National Consultative Committee on National Security Issues and former advisory board member of the Lowy Institute’s G20 Studies Centre. Andrew is the former editor-in-chief of the Australian Journal of International Affairs and is currently an editorial board member of the *Korean Journal of International Studies*, the *North Korean Review* the *Journal of Intelligence History*, and *Security Challenges*.

## Ankit Panda

Senior Editor (The Diplomat)



Ankit Panda is an award-winning writer, analyst, and researcher focusing on international security, geopolitics, and economics. His work has appeared in a range of publications across the world, including the Diplomat, the Atlantic, the Washington Quarterly, Al Jazeera, Politico Magazine, and War on the Rocks. He is currently a senior editor at The Diplomat, where he writes daily on security, geopolitics, and economics in the Asia-Pacific region and hosts a popular podcast. He is also an adjunct senior fellow at the Federation of American Scientists. Panda is additionally an editor at the Council on Foreign Relations and writes a column on Asian geopolitics for the South China Morning Post. Panda has additionally published longer-form scholarly research in journals including the Washington Quarterly and India Review. He is additionally a contributor to the International Institute on Strategic Studies’ Asia-Pacific Regional Security Assessment and Strategic Survey. Panda has also consulted for a range of private and public institutions. He is a frequent participant in Track-2 dialogues in Asia, Europe, and North America. Panda is a graduate of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University.

## 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.

## Joshua Pollack

Editor, The Nonproliferation Review (Middlebury Institute of International Studies)

Senior Research Associate (Middlebury Institute of International Studies)



Joshua H. Pollack is the Editor of the The Nonproliferation Review and a Senior Research Associate, and is recognized as a leading expert on nuclear and missile proliferation, focusing on Northeast Asia. Before joining MIIS in April 2016, Pollack served as a consultant to the US government, specializing in issues related to weapons of mass destruction, including proliferation, arms control, and deterrence. As a defense policy analyst at DFI International, Science Applications International Corporation, and Constellation West, his clients included the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, the Department of Homeland Security, the National Nuclear Security Administration, and the Plans and Policy Directorate (J5) of US Strategic Command. In 2015, he was named an Associate Fellow of the Royal United Services Institute. He also serves as a Research Scientist at CNA, a nonprofit research institution in Arlington, VA. Pollack has contributed to ArmsControlWonk,

38North, and the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. His research has appeared in the The Nonproliferation Review in 2011 and 2015.

## Anthony Rinna

Senior Editor (Sino-NK)



Anthony V. Rinna is a Senior Editor at Sino-NK, a research organization dedicated to the study of the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia. Rinna is a specialist in Russian defense and economic policy in Northeast Asia, and regularly publishes on those topics in academic journals and policy forums. He also frequently gives commentary to the media on Russia's North Korea policy. He has a working knowledge of Korean, Russian and Spanish. A US citizen, Rinna has lived in South Korea since 2014.

## Dr. Todd C. Robinson

Assistant Professor, Military and Security Studies, School of Advanced Nuclear Deterrence Studies  
(Air Command and Staff College)



Dr. Todd C. Robinson is an Assistant Professor of Military and Security Studies with the School of Advanced Nuclear Deterrence Studies (SANDS), at the Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell, AFB. He is a former Stanton Nuclear Security Fellow at the RAND Corporation and previously served as the Associate Director of the University of Illinois' Program in Arms Control, Disarmament, and International Security (ACDIS). His research and commentary have appeared in the Non-Proliferation Review, the Yale Journal of International Affairs, Swords and Ploughshares, and the National Interest. He has a BA in Asian Studies from the University of Alabama, an MA in Security Policy Studies from The George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs, and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

## Dr. Gary Samore

Executive Director, Research, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Kennedy School of Government  
(Harvard University)



Gary Samore is Executive Director for Research at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. In December 2015, Dr. Samore was appointed as a member of the Secretary of Energy Advisory Board (SEAB) under Secretary Ernest Moniz and served until January 2017. He is also a non-resident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution and member of the advisory board for United Against Nuclear Iran (UANI), a non-profit organization that seeks to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. He served for four years as President Obama's White House Coordinator for Arms Control and Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), including as U.S. Sherpa for the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, DC and the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, Korea. From 2006 to 2009, Dr. Samore was Vice President for Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) in New York, where he held the Maurice R. Greenberg chair and directed the David Rockefeller Studies Program. Before joining CFR, Dr. Samore was vice president for global security and sustainability at the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation in Chicago, and from 2001 to 2005, he was Director of Studies and Senior Fellow for Nonproliferation at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London. At IISS, he produced three "strategic dossiers" on Iran (2005), North Korea (2004), and Iraq (2002), which are considered authoritative and exemplary assessments of nuclear, biological, chemical, and missile programs in those countries. Dr. Samore was Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Nonproliferation and Export controls during the Clinton Administration. Before the National Security Council, Dr. Samore worked on nonproliferation issues at the State

Department. In 1995, he received the Secretary of Defense Medal for Meritorious Civilian Service for his role in negotiating the 1994 North Korea nuclear agreement. Prior to the State Department, he worked at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and the Rand Corporation. Dr. Samore was a National Science Foundation Fellow at Harvard University, where he received his MA and PhD in government in 1984. While at Harvard, he was a pre-doctoral fellow at what was then the Harvard Center for Science and International Affairs, later to become the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs.

## 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, 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. Michael Swaine

Senior Fellow (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace)



Michael Swaine is a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and one of the most prominent American analysts in Chinese security studies. Formerly a senior policy analyst at the RAND Corporation, Swaine is a specialist in Chinese defense and foreign policy, U.S.-China relations, and East Asian international relations. He has authored and edited more than a dozen books and monographs and many journal articles and book chapters in these areas, directs several security-related projects with Chinese partners, and advises the U.S. government on Asian security issues. He received his doctorate in government from Harvard University.

## 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. Steve Tsang

Director, SOAS China Institute (University of London)



Professor Steve Tsang is Director of the SOAS China Institute. He previously served as the Head of the School of Contemporary Chinese Studies and as Director of the China Policy Institute at the University of Nottingham. Before that he spent 29 years at Oxford, where he earned his D.Phil. and worked as a Professorial Fellow, Dean, and Director of the Asian Studies Centre at St Antony's College. Steve has a broad area of research interest and has published extensively. He is an Associate Fellow of the Chatham House and an Emeritus Fellow of St Antony's College at Oxford. Professor Tsang regularly contributes to public debates on different aspects of issues related to the politics, history, foreign policy, security and development of the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and East Asia more generally. He is known in particular for introducing the concept of 'consultative Leninism' as an analytical framework to understand the structure and nature of politics in contemporary China. His latest books *China in the Xi Jinping Era* and *Taiwan's Impact on China* were published by Palgrave in 2016 and 2017 respectively.

## 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 (USNA). 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 Biographies

### Dr. Larry Kuznar

Chief Cultural Sciences Officer



Lawrence A. Kuznar (Professor of Anthropology, Indiana University- Purdue University-Fort Wayne and NSI, Inc.) Dr. Kuznar conducts anthropological research relevant to counterterrorism and other areas of national security. His current research focuses on discourse analysis of Daesh leadership messaging to provide leading indicators of intent and behavior and has applied this methodology to Eastern European State and non-State Actors, Iran, and politics in the Middle East and Asia. He has developed computational models of genocide in Darfur and tribal factionalism in New Guinea, mathematical models of inequality and conflict, and integrated socio-cultural databases for predicting illicit nuclear trade and bioterrorism. He has conducted discourse analysis of the expression of conflict and enmity in Arabic, Farsi and Pashto, to identify leading indicators of conflict. Dr. Kuznar's recent research has been funded by academic sources, the Office of the Secretary of Defense Strategic Multilayer Analysis, Air Force Research Lab (AFRL), the Human Social Cultural Behavior (HSCB) modeling program of the Department of Defense, and by the US Army Corps of Engineers. He has also served on the HSCB Technical Progress Evaluation panel and a National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) net assessment panel.

### 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.