

Challenges for the U.S.-ROK Alliance:
Three Crisis Scenarios



edited by Brad Glosseman

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The Young Leaders Program invites young professionals and graduate students to join Pacific Forum policy dialogues and conferences. The program fosters education in the practical aspects of policy-making, generates an exchange of views between young and seasoned professionals, promotes interaction among younger professionals, and enriches dialogues with generational perspectives for all attendees. Fellows must have a strong background in the area covered by the conference they are attending and an endorsement from respected experts in their field. Supplemental programs in conference host cities and mentoring sessions with senior officials and specialists add to the Young Leader experience. The Young Leaders Program is currently supported by the Freeman Foundation, the Luce Foundation, the Strong Foundation, and the Yuchengco Group, with a growing number of universities, institutes, and organizations also helping to sponsor individual participants. For more details, see the Pacific Forum CSIS website, www.pacforum.org, or contact Brad Glosserman, director of the Young Leaders Program, at bradgpf@hawaii.rr.com.

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The views expressed here represent personal impressions and reflections of the Young Leaders program participants; they do not necessarily represent the views of the relevant governments, or the co-sponsoring or parent organizations and institutes.

Introduction

Tensions in the U.S.-ROK relationship are not new. The two countries' alliance has survived repeated stresses and strains. President Jimmy Carter's promise to reduce the U.S. force presence in South Korea in 1977 alarmed conservatives in both countries who feared the move would undermine deterrence and send the wrong signal to North Korea. The kidnapping of dissident Kim Dae-jung in 1973 prompted harsh warnings to Seoul from the U.S. that his "disappearance" would do great damage to the alliance. The 1993 North Korean nuclear crisis raised fears in South Korea of a U.S. preemptive strike that would leave the peninsula in flames; the subsequent 1994 U.S.-North Korea Agreed Framework angered then ROK President Kim Young-sam who felt marginalized by its negotiating process.

More recently, the coming to power of progressive leadership in Seoul, coupled with a conservative president in the U.S., has exacerbated tensions. The two governments disagree over the nature of the threat posed by Pyongyang, how to deal with its nuclear weapons program, the proper response to China's growing presence in the region, and the appropriate balance of power within their alliance. Attempts to realign the U.S. military in South Korea are moving forward, but not without misgivings in both countries. Korean demands for more equality within the alliance – manifested most plainly in the call for the transfer of operational control of its forces during wartime to an ROK officer – are seen simultaneously as long-overdue shifts in responsibilities and the first steps toward U.S. abandonment of the alliance and undermining the deterrence of North Korea.

In October 27, 2006, the Pacific Forum CSIS and the Korea Research Institute of Military Affairs (KRIMA) held a one-day conference that explored the troubles in the U.S.-ROK military alliance. In addition to the 39 experts on the military and the alliance who attended the meeting, 13 Pacific Forum Young Leaders were also present.

As at other Young Leader events, participants were given pre-conference readings to supplement the discussions. Prior to the meeting, they received a special briefing from the U.S. Pacific Command on U.S. policy toward the Korean Peninsula that provided context and background for the conference that followed. After the meeting, they held their own roundtable to provide the next generation perspective on the issues and concerns that dog the alliance.

If their thinking is representative, the bilateral partnership has a solid future. Our Young Leaders agree on the need for a strong U.S.-ROK alliance. Korean and American Young Leaders called on their governments to make a stronger case to their respective publics for the partnership since the bilateral relationship must be more deeply rooted in both societies if it is to survive. At the same time, however, Korean Young Leaders want relations with North Korea to improve. They have no illusions about the nature of the government in Pyongyang, but they know that tensions – much less war – don't serve their national interest. While they want reunification, they want it to occur when it will not impose as much of a financial burden on South Korea.

This new outlook toward North Korea does not mean that the alliance is no longer important. Young Koreans, like their American counterparts, appreciate the vital role it plays on the peninsula and in the region. But they also acknowledge that the alliance must be restructured,

with Korea shouldering more of the burden of its own defense. This should not be equated with a weakening of the U.S. commitment to defend the ROK. Both Pyongyang and Seoul must be confident that the U.S. will stand with South Korea in the event of a conflict. Some of our Korean Young Leaders admitted that some of their peers have a deep antipathy toward the U.S. This sentiment has many roots: a resentment of junior partner status in the alliance, the view that the U.S. has promoted the division of the peninsula, anger at U.S. policy generally, and the (mis)perception that the U.S. supported dictatorships in Seoul. One Korean Young Leader cautioned against lumping all those views together and warned that supporters of alliance modernization should not be viewed as against the alliance.

Modernizing the alliance also means being prepared to take on new security challenges off the Korean Peninsula. This poses special challenges for Koreans, who are increasingly conscious of Chinese concerns, Taiwan in particular. A Chinese Young Leader insisted that China shouldn't be overly concerned about the continued existence of the U.S.-ROK alliance – a departure from the traditional rhetoric that casts such institutions as “cold war legacies” – but he argued that neither Seoul nor Washington should see this alliance – or any of the others – as a device to contain China. They can be stabilizing but they shouldn't target any particular country.

In the past, Young Leaders wrote papers that analyzed topics related to the conference agenda. To encourage collaboration – the Young Leader program is also intended to stimulate networking among participants – we have moved to group projects that YLs begin at the conference and complete later. This requires them to communicate after the formal program is over and work out differences on key issues. In addition to forcing them to sharpen their arguments, it alerts them to the difficulties involved in diplomacy and negotiation: since participants come from a range of backgrounds, finding consensus can be difficult and time consuming.

At this meeting, we divided participants into three groups and asked them to come up with three scenarios that could cause a crisis for the alliance. After the meeting, each group was tasked with writing a scenario that could be acted out by future Young Leaders. (In fact, one of these scenarios – a second North Korean nuclear test – was used in two subsequent Young Leaders' meetings. The results of those simulations will be published shortly.). Each group fleshed out the details of the scenario, including a chronology, a reading list to prepare participants, and questions that would focus on key lessons from the simulation.

The three simulations that they devised – second North Korean nuclear test, a South Korean demand for a nuclear deterrent, and standoff between the Japanese and ROK navies in disputed waters – demonstrate the creativity of our Young Leaders and their concern for the U.S.-ROK alliance. We hope that these scenarios will provide readers a chance to think about key issues; we encourage students and other groups to test them and see what outcomes they have. We welcome your comments.

Scenario 1¹

China Supports North Korean Regime Change

Key Players

China (PRC)
South Korea (ROK)
North Korea (DPRK)
United States of America (U.S.)

Scenario

A Chinese diplomatic mission travels to Pyongyang and receives assurances that North Korea will not conduct any additional nuclear tests. Beijing goes public with this statement and subsequently, suggests re-engaging North Korea.

A GNP² candidate wins the 2007 presidential election in South Korea. After entering the Blue House, the president's first order of business is to show that Seoul will not appease Pyongyang. As a result, the Mt. Kumgang tourist project and Kaesong industrial project are suspended. This deprives North Korea of key sources of income and strains an already weak economy.

Soon after, floods in North Korea increase the tide of North Korean refugees fleeing to China. In response, China moves to complete a reinforced wall on its border with North Korea. The prospect of a barrier to border crossings incites a larger refugee flow from North Korea into northeast China.

Pyongyang demands Chinese cooperation to stem the flow of refugees and to return those who have fled using whatever force necessary. Concerned for its human rights image ahead of the 2008 Olympics, China declines to cooperate with North Korea on return of refugees, but manages to secure its border with troops.

As panic spreads in North Korea, refugees attempt to enter South Korea by all means possible. The landmines located in the DMZ force many defectors to attempt the arduous journey via the Yellow Sea or East Sea.

Human rights groups rally around the world, arguing for protection of these refugees and safe haven for them. The South Korean government tightens its borders to prevent North Koreans from entering the country. There are South Korean citizens on both sides of the spectrum, many supporting the government's decision to prevent admittance to the North Korean

¹ Group members: Justin Bishop, Chung Mi Alexa Choi, Leif-Eric Easley, and Jiyon Shin

² Grand National Party (한나라당): the main opposition party in South Korea. The GNP is traditionally conservative and supports capitalism and free trade. The party favors a strong alliance with the United States and takes a harder line toward North Korea than President Roh Moo-hyun's Uri Party or former President Kim Dae-jung's Millennium Democratic Party.

refugees. Others feel that it is South Korea's responsibility to protect the defectors. Demonstrations and candlelight vigils are held throughout South Korea.

North Korea, slighted by Beijing's refusal to cooperate in returning refugees, decides to rebel against its ally and conducts a second nuclear test. This episode causes Beijing to lose face in the international community. China is angered and embarrassed. In retaliation, China suspends all aid to and trade with North Korea.

One of Kim Jong-il's generals, seeing an opportunity to reach out to Beijing, promises a new government loyal to China if Beijing resumes energy and food aid and trade. Chinese leaders secretly agree to back the North Korean general, who stages a coup. The new North Korean government gives thanks to Beijing and promises to dismantle its nuclear weapons program. Relations between China and North Korea improve quickly.

ROK intelligence reports it learned that Beijing's quid pro quo for supporting the new North Korean government was that Pyongyang avoid deepening relations with Seoul and instead follow China's development model and pay more deference to Beijing. The South Korean government fears that unification will be prevented if North Korea effectively becomes a Chinese-controlled buffer state.

Fearing permanent division of the peninsula, South Korea says it will develop an aggressive policy to prevent the new North Korean regime from consolidating power. Seoul expects Washington's cooperation to counter Chinese influence in North Korea. However, Washington shows reluctance to take a hard line, as the new North Korean regime has promised to dismantle its nuclear capabilities (the U.S. priority) and America does not wish to risk military confrontation with China as a result of South Korea's desire for unification.

Timeline

Feb. 19, 2007: A high-level Chinese diplomatic mission to North Korea secures a promise from Kim Jong-il that there will be no more North Korean nuclear tests.

March 9, 2007: Beijing appeals to the international community to gradually lift sanctions and engage North Korea.

June 20, 2007: A sixth round of Six-Party Talks is held. Absent is aggressive rhetoric of the past, but the meeting only decides to reconvene at a later date.

Dec. 15, 2007: Former Seoul City Mayor Lee Myung-bak wins South Korean presidential election. His GNP party also takes control of the National Assembly.

Feb. 20, 2008: Massive floods in North Korea. Tens of thousands of North Korean refugees flee to China.

March 7-20, 2008: Beijing mobilizes PLA and civil engineering assets to complete a reinforced wall on China's border with North Korea. Seeing the border about to close, more refugees flee to China.

March 23, 2008: North Korea attempts to pressure China into capturing and returning refugees. China, fearing reprisals over its human rights record ahead of the 2008 Olympics, refuses.

March 29, 2008: North Korea, outraged by Beijing's response, conducts a second nuclear test. Outraged by the loss of face, China suspends all trade, economic, and military assistance to North Korea.

April 1, 2008: A North Korean general contacts Beijing, promising to install a regime loyal to China if it resumes trade, economic, and military assistance. The general interprets the response he receives from Chinese representatives as a signal to proceed.

April 27, 2008: In a relatively bloodless coup, the North Korean general takes power in the DPRK by toppling Kim Jong-il's regime. The general dismantles North Korea's nuclear weapons, and offers to hand over all weapons-grade material to China.

May 5, 2008: South Korean intelligence sources learn that China's support of the new North Korean regime is based on promises of nuclear dismantlement and loyalty to Beijing. South Korea determines that unification may be delayed indefinitely if this regime is allowed to establish itself in North Korea. South Korea informs the U.S. that it has begun to establish a significant Special Forces presence in North Korea.

May 14, 2008: The U.S. praises apparent dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear weapons and calls for a meeting of the Six-Party Talks to arrange for international inspections. South Korea says that reconvening Six-Party Talks would be "premature."

Discussion Questions

1. What are the national interests of the major players involved? (short-term and long-term goals)
2. What are the domestic political constraints for each player in enacting its policy?
3. What is Japan's role in dealing with the new North Korean regime?
4. What endgame on the Korean Peninsula is preferred by the relevant state actors? (would U.S./Japan/ROK/China prefer a unified/divided Korea?)
5. How does South Korea's Sunshine Policy affect the outcome of the scenario?
6. Under what conditions does your state actor perceive it in China's interest to have North Korea as its "controlled buffer state?"

7. Does the U.S. want to disengage from the peninsula if the North Korean nuclear threat is removed? Were negotiations for the return of Wartime Operational Control to South Korea within 2009-2012 an indicator?
8. To what extent do leadership changes in each country (for example: from Koizumi to Abe, from Uri Party to GNP, from Republican to Democrat, from Kim Jong-il to a military general) effect the outcome of the scenario, or even the long-term goals of each country?
9. What are expectations for the Six-Party Talks and nuclear dismantlement by North Korea?
10. What is the role of the UNSC in the scenario?
11. What are the most important internal and external factors determining North Korea's future?

Suggested Readings

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<http://www.iht.com/articles/2006/10/19/news/letter.php>

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http://www.twq.com/03spring/docs/03spring_shambaugh.pdf

Anne Wu, "What China Whispers to North Korea," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Spring 2005), pp. 35-48. http://www.twq.com/05spring/docs/05spring_wu.pdf

Carin Zissis, "China's Relationship with a Nuclear North Korea", Council on Foreign Relations, October 24, 2006. <http://www.cfr.org/publication/11791/>

Global Security's backgrounder on China's Shenyang Military Area Command <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/china/shenyang-mr.htm>

Map of North Korea

http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/dprk/images/kp05_03a.pdf

<http://www.britannica.com/eb/art-61358>

Scenario 2¹ South Korea Demands a Nuclear Deterrent



¹ Group members: Sun Namkung, Kevin Shepard, Qinghong Wang, and Stephanie Young



Source: <http://sg.news.yahoo.com/061019/16/44511.html>

Scenario

North Korea has successfully tested a nuclear weapon. The U.S. has reconfirmed its commitment to the defense of South Korea under the U.S. nuclear umbrella, but South Korea asks the U.S. to pre-stage nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula. The U.S. is concerned about how China and Japan would react if it decided to redeploy nuclear weapons. South Korean conservatives have stated that if the U.S. does not stage its nuclear weapons in the ROK, then South Korea will restart its nuclear program.

Timeline

1957: South Korea becomes a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

1958: South Korea passes the Atomic Energy Law.

1959: ROK Office of Atomic Energy is established.

1962: Small South Korean research lab is successful at generating a controlled nuclear reaction.

April 1975: ROK Accession to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT).

November 1975: South Korea signs full-scope safeguards agreement.

Sept. 27, 1991: President George W. H. Bush announces the withdrawal from overseas bases and operational deployment of all land- and sea-based tactical nuclear weapons.

Jan. 20, 1992: Joint Declaration for the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula signed by both Koreas, promising not to test, manufacture, produce, receive, possess, store, deploy, or use nuclear weapons.

Oct. 21, 1994: Agreed Framework signed between U.S. and the DPRK. It stipulates the DPRK's graphite-moderated nuclear power plants would be replaced by light-water reactors by 2003. Fuel would be provided when the reactors are shut down until the LWRs go online. DPRK would remain a party to the NPT and be subject to IAEA inspections.

ROK establishes the Technology Center for Nuclear Control (TCNC) at the Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute to conduct inspections under the 1992 Joint Statement.

June 15, 2000: North-South Summit Joint Declaration signed by North Korean leader Kim Jong-il and South Korean President Kim Dae-jung.

Oct. 3-5, 2002: Assistant Secretary of State James A. Kelly visits Pyongyang, North Korea. State Department reveals that Kelly accused DPRK of pursuing a clandestine uranium enrichment program and Pyongyang acknowledged this program.

April 10, 2003: North Korea abandons NPT.

Aug. 27-29, 2003: First round of Six-Party Talks. Chairman's statement says all parties agree to more talks.

Sept. 18, 2003: ROK declares Four Principles in the Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy in ROK.

Oct. 25, 2003: ROK establishes National Nuclear Control Agency.

Feb. 19, 2004: South Korean National Assembly ratifies the NPT Additional Protocol.

Feb. 25-28, 2004: Second round of Six-Party Talks. Chairman's statement includes the goal of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the peaceful coexistence of participating states, and the agreement to hold a round in the second quarter of 2004.

June 23-25, 2004: Third round of Six-Party Talks. Chairman's statement reconfirms desire to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula.

Aug. 17, 2004: ROK Ministry of Science and Technology reports to the IAEA under the Additional Protocol of past uranium enrichment experiments.

Oct. 25, 2004: Seoul changes the mission of the TCNC to "material control and accounting of nuclear materials, inspection interface with the IAEA, export controls, and Korean representation in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

Feb. 10, 2005: North Korea announces that it has nuclear weapons and cancels talks.

July 26-Aug. 7, 2005: Fourth round, first phase of Six-Party Talks. U.S. and North Korea cannot agree on “peaceful” use of nuclear power.

Sept. 13-19, 2005: Fourth round, second phase of Six-Party Talks. Parties sign Joint Statement.

Nov. 9-11, 2005: Fifth round, first phase of Six-Party Talks. The Joint Statement is modified from “word for words” and “actions for actions” principle to “commitment for commitment, action for action” principle. No agreement for next round of talks.

July 5, 2006: North Korea test launches seven missiles – six medium-range *Nodongs* and *Scuds* and one long-range *Taepodong 2*.

Oct. 9, 2006: North Korea announces successful underground nuclear test.

Oct. 16, 2006: U.S. intelligence releases air sample results collected Oct. 11. Test detects radioactive debris suggesting an underground test in the vicinity of Punggye.

Oct. 19, 2006: U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice affirms U.S. nuclear umbrella to South Korea during a press conference with Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon.

Mounting Crisis

Leading elites – educators, former defense ministers, and politicians – voice pro-security sentiments. “It is time to give careful consideration to the redeployment of the tactical nuclear weapons as part of efforts to make North Korea give up its nuclear weapons programs,” says a professor at Chun-ang University in Korea.

A joint statement issued by a group of former ROK defense ministers states that “During the Security Consultative Meeting talks, the government should strongly take action to strengthen the alliance with the U.S. To that end, it should strongly ask the U.S. to redeploy tactical nuclear weapons in South Korea.”

Kho Jo-heung, a GNP lawmaker, says in a parliamentary hearing, that “We have to make the U.S. military bring back tactical nuclear weapons or possess our own nuclear weapons.”

On Feb. 16, 2007, North Korea conducts a second nuclear test to commemorate the birth of Dear Leader Kim Jong-il.

Ruling Party leaders officially disband the “Uri Party” as President Roh Moo-hyun continues to lose public support for engagement policies seen as having aided the North Korean nuclear program.

Leading opposition party GNP gains strength as hardliners press for strengthened military preparation. Military officials consider developing nuclear weapons to pressure China to intervene and shut down the North Korean program to prevent a nuclear ‘domino effect’ in the region. Public opinion polls show that the majority of South Koreans support a nuclear deterrent,

including the advance deployment of U.S. weapons and the creation of a domestic nuclear weapons program.²

Democratic leadership in the U.S. Congress calls for the withdrawal of unnecessarily deployed troops around the world, and relying on technological advances and mutual defense guarantees to protect allies. South Korean conservatives and liberals call for more shows of faith from the U.S., without demanding specific steps.



Flashpoint

In the build-up to presidential elections in South Korea (December 2007), South Korean conservative GNP leaders increase demands for nuclear weapons. When combined with a growing wave of nationalism surrounding elections, opinion leaders are divided between demanding U.S. nuclear deployments and developing a domestic nuclear program.

Prior to defense ministerial talks between the U.S. and South Korea, South Korean politicians and military representatives promise South Korean voters that the issue will be put to U.S. representatives at this round of talks, and that the U.S. must make its intentions known. The U.S. has been *relatively quiet* regarding the possibility of a nuclear South Korea, and is working with neighboring countries to assess the impact of various options.

U.S. and ROK defense ministers meet tomorrow. South Korea will demand either U.S. nuclear weapons or technical assistance for a domestic program.

² Survey reported by *Donga Ilbo* Aug. 6, 2005. <http://www.donga.com/fbin/output?f=t..8060087&main=1>



Country Summary, Questions, and Suggested Readings

China

China developed nuclear weapons in 1964 as a result of the Sino-Soviet rift in the 1950s. Although the PRC and the DPRK established an alliance after the Korean War in the 1950s – and it is still valid – bilateral relations have undergone many tensions since the Cultural Revolution. The competition of personality cults between Mao Zedong and Kim Il-sung resulted in Beijing and Pyongyang trading recriminations at the peak of the Cultural Revolution. After Nixon’s trip to China in 1972, Beijing became Washington’s *de facto* ally against Moscow. Meanwhile, the DPRK stayed close to the Soviet Union and received economic and military assistance from Moscow, including nuclear technologies. In 1979, China launched economic reforms and the “Open Door” policy, but the DPRK has kept its Soviet-style economic system and the “Closed-Door” policy, even after the end of the Cold War.

China gradually replaced the Soviet Union as the largest energy and food supplier to the DPRK after the collapse of the U.S.S.R. in 1991. Meanwhile, Beijing and Seoul normalized diplomatic relations in 1992. Although China has access to both Koreas and all other major powers in the region, Beijing did not press for Korean Peninsula reconciliation or that between Pyongyang and Washington in the 1990s. For Chinese leaders, the unification of Korea is a domestic issue for the Korean people that can be solved under South Korea’s Sunshine policy, and U.S.-DPRK distrust is a relic of the Cold War, which can only be solved through bilateral dialogue between Pyongyang and Washington. The success of the South-North Summit in 2000 and the bilateral resolution of the first North Korean nuclear crisis (1993-1994) proved Beijing’s position on Korea issues was correct.

But the Bush administration's identification of North Korea as part of the "axis of evil" along with Iran and Iraq during the 2002 State of the Union address and Pyongyang's decisions to restart its nuclear programs dramatically changed the atmosphere on the Korean Peninsula. Beijing changed its position on Korea issues and decided to play a more active role. Therefore, China hosted the Six-Party Talks on the North Korea nuclear crisis since 2003.

China's priority in dealing with North Korea is to maintain peace and stability in Northeast Asia. Beijing objects to any military resolution of the North Korea nuclear crisis and regime change that might trigger a flood of North Korean refugees to northeast China. At the same time, China opposes the nuclearization of North Korea, which might trigger nuclear domino effects among its neighboring countries. Beijing wants gradual peaceful regime change in North Korea following China's model. Chinese leaders understand clearly that China shares more common interests with Japan, the U.S., and South Korea than North Korea, China is one of the biggest beneficiaries of the international system, and the Pyongyang regime has fundamental divergences with the post-Cold War international system.

Key Questions to China

1. What interests would be affected by the U.S. decision to a) provide weapons? b) technical support? c) neither?
2. What governments or organizations need to be considered when making a decision regarding the nuclear fate of South Korea?
3. What domestic parties or organizations would be part of the U.S.' policy decision, and what role would they play?
4. What is the likely reaction of relevant governments and organizations, and by what means can China best influence these reactions?
5. What bilateral and multilateral obligations restrict Chinese options regarding South Korea and nuclear weapons?
6. What policy decision would best serve Chinese interests?
7. What a) public b) private means can be used to influence the U.S. policy choice?

Reading List for China

"China and the Korean Peninsula: Playing for the Long Term," By David Shambaugh (Spring 2003) http://www.twq.com/03spring/docs/03spring_shambaugh.pdf

"China and the North Korean Nuclear Crisis," By Jing-dong (Jan. 22, 2003) <http://cns.miis.edu/research/korea/chidprk.htm>

"China Maneuvers to Bring a Soft-landing to the Korean Crisis," By Yu Bin (Feb.11, 2003) [YaleGlobal http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=952](http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=952)

“China’s Mediation on Backfires on North Korea,” By Nayan Chanda (April 28, 2003)
YaleGlobal <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=1501>

“The North Korean Nuclear Test: Regional and International Implications,” By Erik Quam (Oct. 12, 2006) http://cns.miis.edu/pubs/week/pdf/061016_dprk_forum_report.pdf

“China Gets Tough with North Korea,” By Susan L. Shirk (Oct. 26, 2006)
YaleGlobal <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=8341>

“China’s Relationship with a Nuclear North Korea,” By Carin Zissis (Oct. 24, 2006)
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“Chinese Nuclear Policy and the Future of Minimum Deterrence,” By Yao Yunzhu (Sept. 2005)
<http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/2005/Sep/yaoSep05.asp>

Japan

Japan’s stance on nuclear weapons is fixed by the use of those weapons against it during World War II and its signing of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1974. This antinuclear stance has been extremely popular among the people and politicians for 60-plus years. Now that North Korea has tested a nuclear weapon, other regional powers are worrying about Japan’s commitment to its nonnuclear stance.

If South Korea decided to re-start a nuclear program, Japan would have heated debate. The country would be split into those that remember the suffering brought about by the atomic bomb and those who do not recall the devastation of World War II and the atomic bomb detonation. While some U.S. politicians and pundits may call for Japan to develop its own bomb, no U.S. official does. It is unclear what impact a Japanese bomb would have on the Japan-U.S. alliance.

Key Questions to Japan

1. What interests would be affected by the U.S. decision to a) provide weapons? b) technical support? c) neither?
2. What domestic parties or organizations would be part of the Japanese policy decision, and what role would they play?
3. What governments or organizations need to be considered when making a decision regarding the nuclear fate of South Korea?
4. What is the likely reaction of relevant governments and organizations, and by what means can Japan best influence these reactions?
5. What bilateral and multilateral obligations restrict Chinese options regarding South Korea and nuclear weapons?

6. What policy decision would best serve Japanese interests?
7. How would the U.S. decision affect U.S.-Japan military relations?
8. What a) public b) private means can be used to influence the U.S. policy choice?

Reading List for Japan

Articles:

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Desperate Men Do Desperate Things

<http://www.strategypage.com/qnd/korea/articles/20061102.aspx>

Japan Weighs Whether to Debate Nuclear Option

<http://www.voanews.com/english/2006-10-31-voa33.cfm>

Aso, Rice, Ban Turn Tables on Six-Way Talks

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20061031a3.html>

Japan Won't Develop Nuclear Weapons, Abe Says in CNN Interview

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601101&sid=aTU64QqAylKY&refer=japan>

Japan Welcomes North Korea's Return to Six-Nation Nuclear Talks

http://www.thenews.com.pk/update_detail.asp?id=12152

Activists Plan to Nip Nuclear Ambitions

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Even Nuclear Talk Detracts <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/eo20061030kn.html>

United States of America

It is widely assumed (even though Washington will “neither confirm nor deny”) that from 1958 until 1991, U.S. nuclear weapons were positioned in South Korea. In September 1991, President George H. W. Bush approved a unilateral disarmament initiative that called for the removal of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons worldwide. The Nuclear Weapons Deployment Authorization (NWDA) and National Security Directive 64 (NSD-64) paved the way for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

In line with the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Proliferation Security Initiative, Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, and a number of other international and bilateral agreements,

the U.S. attempts to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons. ROK attempts in the 1970s were shut down due to U.S. pressure. ROK experiments in 1982 and 2000 attempting to extract plutonium and enrich uranium led to calls from the U.S. for “full and transparent disclosure,” but did not trigger a call from the U.S. for UN oversight.

Nuclearization of Pakistan and India did not lead to sanctions from the U.S. Rather, diplomatic relations and military cooperation with Pakistan have grown, and President Bush and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh agreed to share civilian nuclear technology. It is an open secret that U.S. ally Israel possesses nuclear weapons, yet Israeli-U.S. ties are no weaker for it.

Recently, U.S. reliance on nuclear weapons has increased. The 2001 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) calls for reshaping the Cold War nuclear deterrent strategy, fully integrating nuclear and conventional capabilities, and ‘normalizing’ nuclear weapons.

The Bush administration believes that “nuclear forces continue to play a critical role in the defense of the United States, its allies, and friends,” and has reaffirmed its promise to include South Korea under its nuclear umbrella. As the U.S. military undergoes force transformation to create strategic flexibility in its operations, the USFK has seen a reduction and redeployment of troops and a continuing consolidation of U.S. bases in South Korea.

Key Questions to the United States of America

1. What interests would be served by a) providing weapons? b) technical support? c) neither?
2. What governments or organizations need to be considered when making a decision regarding the nuclear fate of South Korea?
3. What is the likely reaction of relevant governments and organizations, and what are their strategic concerns and/or plans regarding each of these options?
4. What bilateral and multilateral obligations restrict U.S. options regarding South Korea and nuclear weapons?
5. By what policy decision would best serve U.S. interests?
6. What a) public b) private means can be used to pursue the U.S. chosen path?

Reading List for United States of America

U.S. Nukes in ROK-background, <http://sg.news.yahoo.com/061019/16/4451l.html>

US treaty & organization membership, http://nti.org/e_research/official_d...y/pdfs/usa.pdf

ROK Nuclear Overview: http://www.nti.org/e_research/profil...ear/index.html

ROK treaty & organization membership: http://www.nti.org/e_research/offici...dfs/skorea.pdf
<http://www.nukestrat.com/korea/koreahistory.htm>
<http://www.nukestrat.com/korea/withdrawal.htm>
<http://cns.miis.edu/pubs/week/041109.htm>

Republic of Korea (South Korea)

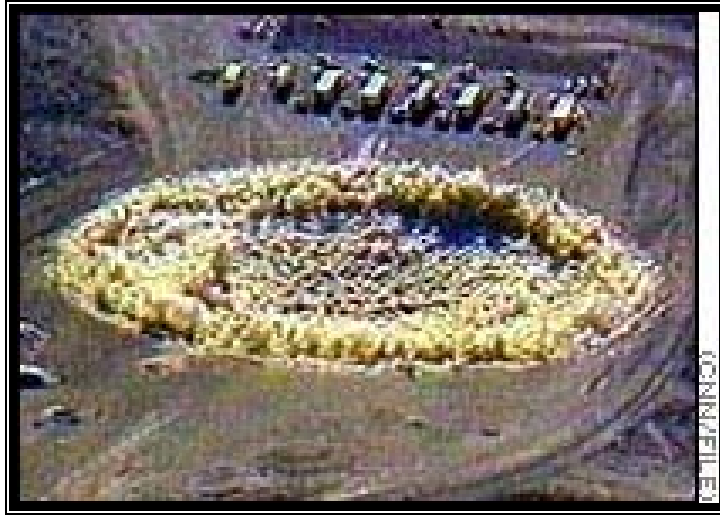
The second nuclear test by North Korea on Kim Jong-il's birthday (Feb. 16) rattles the South Korean public belief in a benign North Korean state. A South Korean reconnaissance satellite captures the cratered landscape left by the test.

The Roh Moo-hyun administration believed that the Sunshine Policy could moderate North Korean behavior and that it needed more time to work. The Blue House blamed Washington's hawkish actions (financial sanctions against Banco Delta Asia in Macau) for sabotaging rapprochement between the two Koreas and as well as the Six-Party Talks. Former President Kim Dae-jung said, in a speech following the first nuclear test Oct. 9, 2006, that North Korea's nuclear test was a testament to the failure of the hostile policies of the United States, and not of South Korea's engagement policy. The second test added emphasis to this belief.

A public opinion survey conducted by *JoongAng Ilbo* on Oct 10, 2006, the day after North Korea's first nuclear test, showed that 65 percent of South Korean adults believe that South Korea should develop nuclear weapons. In a poll conducted by *Donga Ilbo* a year earlier (July 2005), 51.9 percent were in favor of South Korea possessing its own nuclear arsenal. The percentage increases to 62.6 percent when the question is whether South Korea should possess nuclear weapons if North Korea possesses nuclear weapons. In a telephone survey conducted by Research Plus days after the first test, 43 percent of South Korean surveys blamed the U.S. for North Korea's nuclear test. Only 37.2 percent thought North Korea was responsible. There is lingering hostility toward the U.S. for the North Korean nuclear tests.

Conservative lawmakers like Grand National Party legislator Suh Sang-kee have publicly suggested South Korea should build its own atomic bombs. It has also been suggested that production of plutonium bombs would be preferable as they would be easier to manufacture.

It would not be difficult for South Korea to become a nuclear state. South Korea currently produces nuclear energy, a national strategic priority with 20 reactors that provide 40 percent of the country's electricity needs. The ROK still operates four heavy-water moderated CANDU reactors that are fuelled by natural uranium. South Korea has the technical know-how to develop a nuclear weapons program fairly quickly. In 2004, under the International Atomic Energy Agency's Additional Protocol, South Korea acknowledged that it had carried out secret chemical uranium enrichment research (1979-1981), separated plutonium (1982), and manufactured depleted uranium armaments (1983-1987). In response to these revelations, the ROK National Security Council released "Four Principles on the Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy" (Sept. 18, 2004) to calm international reaction.



Key Questions to South Korea

1. What interests would be affected by the U.S. decision to a) provide weapons? b) technical support? c) neither?
2. What domestic parties or organizations would be part of the South Korean policy decision, and what role would they play?
3. What governments or organizations need to be considered when making a decision regarding the nuclear fate of South Korea?
4. What is the likely reaction of relevant governments and organizations, and by what means can South Korea best influence these reactions?
5. What bilateral and multilateral obligations restrict South Korea's options regarding nuclear weapons?
6. By what policy decision would best serve South Korean interests?
7. What a) public b) private means can be used to influence the U.S.' policy choice?
8. How would a U.S. decision to a) deploy nuclear weapons b) supply technology c) neither affect U.S.-ROK military relations?

Reading List for South Korea

Nuclear Power in Korea (November 2006) <http://www.world-nuclear.org/info/pr...inf81print.htm>

The Nuclear Fuel Cycle (August 2005) <http://www.world-nuclear.org/info/pr...inf03print.htm>

Plutonium (September 2006) <http://www.world-nuclear.org/info/pr...inf15print.htm>

Uranium and Depleted Uranium (October 2005)
<http://www.world-nuclear.org/info/pr...inf14print.htm>

Uranium Enrichment (November 2006) <http://www.world-nuclear.org/info/pr...inf28print.htm>

The NPT <http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Doc...infcirc140.pdf>

Plenary Discussion

1. What choices by other teams were surprising? Why?
2. Had these choices been known, how would they have affected your team's decisions?
3. What is the potential for this situation to occur? Escalate?
4. What key red-lines were set out by each team?
5. What would North Korea's response have been to any of the decisions made here?

Scenario 3¹ North Korean Vessel Suspected of Carrying Fissile Materials Enters Disputed Waters



Scenario

A North Korean ship is discovered harbored in the southern Chinese port of Macau. The U.S. is monitoring the ship, its suspected cargo, and crew. U.S. intelligence identifies 13 crewmembers, one of whom is suspected to be a former head of the DPRK special operations unit. Although intelligence cannot confirm the cargo, the profile of the crew and the existence of an Iranian nuclear scientist in Macau, fuel suspicion that the DPRK vessel contains fissile material.

While in port, intelligence services cannot account for three of the ship's crew, including the North Korean special forces operative, for a period of three days. To help track the crew, Washington seeks cooperation from Beijing in locating the crewmembers and identifying their activities. Instead, the U.S. is told that the crewmembers of the North Korean ship have returned – their prior whereabouts and actions unknown.

¹ Group members: Jordan Dover, Dianna Hummel, Junbeom Pyon, Ana Villavicencio, and Shanshan Wang

In February, the North Korean vessel departs Macau and instead of going directly to a harbor on the western side of the Korean Peninsula, detours south toward an eastern port in North Korea due to the dispatch of U.S. ships from Incheon. The ship crosses into Japanese waters 20 km southeast of the disputed Dokdo/Takeshima Island. Japan's Maritime Self Defense Force dispatches two high-speed ships to intercept the North Korean vessel.

The North Korean ship takes a course through the disputed territory. Before it reaches this location, the Republic of Korea (ROK) identifies the ship and dispatches three naval vessels to intercept both the North Korean and Japanese ships; the ROK already has two small navy vessels stationed at Dokdo/Takashima. Concerned by the ROK actions, Japan alerts Washington and seeks support. Seoul tells its navy to interdict the North Korean ship and prevent the Japanese MSDF from entering the area with priority placed on the later. Seoul also appeals to Washington for support and alerts Gen. Bell of USFK.

Participants:

1. DPRK
2. China
3. Japan
4. South Korea
5. United States

Scenario Timeline:

Oct. 3, 2006: North Korea announces that it plans to carry on a nuclear weapons test. No exact date was given as to when the test will be carried out.

Oct. 9, 2006: North Korea announces it has successfully conducted a nuclear test.

Oct. 9, 2006: In separate news conferences in South Korea, Japanese Prime Minister Abe and ROK President Roh both condemn the test

Oct. 11, 2006: Rumors of a second nuclear test prove false after Japanese broadcaster NHK reported seismic activity in the region.

Oct. 12, 2006: Japan bans North Korean imports, citing both nuclear test and abductions issues.

Oct. 14, 2006: UN Security Council passes resolution 1718 imposing weapons and financial sanctions on North Korea.

Oct. 14, 2006: Japan decides to block all North Korean ships from entering Japanese ports until April 13, 2007 and to ban all imports from North Korea for the same period.

Oct. 15, 2006: Japan announces it is considering additional measures against North Korea in addition to resolution 1718.

Oct. 16, 2006: U.S. intelligence officials confirm North Korea's claims reporting air samples taken from the test site containing radioactive materials.

Jan. 1, 2007: Ban Ki Moon officially becomes UN secretary general.

Jan. 6, 2007: U.S. intelligence reports that a North Korean ship is harbored in Macau, China. Approximately 13 sailors are identified to be on board.

Jan. 19, 2007: Kang Cheol-In, a former head of the special operations unit in DPRK, is identified as on board the North Korean vessel in Macau.

Jan. 23, 2007: U.S. learns that an Iranian scientist has entered Macau to attend a forum on nuclear proliferation.

Feb. 1-3, 2007: U.S. intelligence loses Kang Cheol-In and two North Korean crew members in Macau.

Feb. 3, 2007: U.S. informs Beijing of the missing North Korean crews and seeks cooperation.

Feb. 3, 2007: Beijing reports that the missing North Koreans have returned to the vessel. No illegal activity was identified.

Feb. 19, 2007: North Korean vessel leaves Macau and heads southeast of the Korean Peninsula and changes direction to the northeast.

Feb. 25, 2007: The North Korean vessel enters Japanese waters EEZ, 20 km southeast of Dokdo/Takeshima islands.

Participant Overviews

DPRK

North Korea has not wavered in its desire to acquire nuclear weapons, which began shortly after the end of the Korean War. The strategy to develop and attain these weapons has been at the center of its national security policy for nearly 20 years. This strategy is critical to ensuring regime survival.

Since 2000 and the expulsion of IAEA inspectors, the North has been working toward this goal and finally achieves it Oct. 9, 2006. The DPRK has determined that the cost of testing a nuclear weapon was low and merely resulted in additional sanctions.

Japan

Japan and North Korea have not normalized ties after WWII. Discussions were held but the 1998 *Taepodong* test, the October 2006 nuclear test, and the unresolved issue of Japanese citizens kidnapped by North Korea have forced the Japanese government to take a hard line in dealing with North Korea.

South Korea and Japan are currently mending their relationship after Koizumi Junichiro's term as prime minister. Territorial issues are still unresolved as are disagreements about Japan's colonialist past. Under Prime Minister Abe relationships are mending, but Japan holds firm to its claim to ownership of the Dokdo/Takeshima islands and the sea around them.

The United States and Japan are close security partners, both taking a hard line when North Korea tested a nuclear weapon on Oct. 9, 2006. The alliance between the two is seen as vital and neither side wants to weaken it.

While Japan is trying to take a more assertive role in international relations it must be aware of its public image and not be seen as overly aggressive and suggesting a return to a more militaristic state.

Republic of Korea

Since December 1997, Seoul has embraced the Sunshine Policy which aims at improving inter-Korean relations under three principles: South Korea will not tolerate an armed provocation hampering peace on the peninsula; South Korea will not try to hurt or absorb North Korea; and South Korea will actively push reconciliation and cooperation with the North beginning with those areas which can be more easily agreed upon.

While the efficacy and the legitimacy of the Sunshine Policy was put into question after the Oct. 9 nuclear test, South Korea's position regarding continued and growing economic assistance to the DPRK remains unchanged. On Oct. 18, 2006, Korea's Unification Minister Lee Jae-Joung stated that "the humanitarian aid for North Korea should be continued even if the North carries out a second nuclear test." He added that the country's two major inter-Korean business projects – Mt. Kumkang tourism and the Kaesong Industrial Complex – are unrelated to UNSCR 1718. Instead, the South Korean government was quick to criticize Tokyo for discussing sanctions, including Chapter VII of the UN Charter against Pyongyang, fearing that the DPRK's nuclear test might prompt debates in Tokyo on acquiring preemptive capabilities and nuclear weapons.

While South Korea signed United Nations Security Council Resolution 1718, it refused to join the U.S.-led Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and to halt assistance to the DPRK.

United States

The U.S. has been studying North Korean national security strategies since the 1950s and remains perplexed. The nuclear issue was seemingly dealt within the Agreed Framework of 1994

but fell apart. The U.S. is now counting on the combination of sanctions and diplomatic efforts to reach a solution to North Korea's nuclear ambitions. However, there is support within the U.S. government to solve this issue militarily if the North sells fissile material.

At the same time, the U.S. has to be sensitive to both Japan and South Korea. In this case, two conflicts have arisen: enforcing sanctions on North Korea, and territorial rights.

People's Republic of China

China is faced with a hard decision. It voted for UNSCR 1718, but was clear that it would be selective in which provisions it would enforce. It seeks to allay fears of the "China Threat" and be seen as a positive responsible force in the world community. It is a member of the NPT and the sole recognized nuclear power in Asia. China has several times been the champion of nonproliferation in Asia.

North Korean ties run deep and serve as means to create more positive international views of China's diplomacy and soft power. South Korea holds a vast market potential that China is eager to tap, as well as use to counter weight a stronger Japan. China seeks to allay U.S. fears of China's threat, fearing possible U.S. isolation and economic consequences. However, China also resents U.S. involvement in an area it seeks as its own sphere of influence. It must weigh all its relationships in Northeast Asia when considering involvement in this issue.

Suggested Reading

1. GlobalSecurity.Org, "Liancourt Rocks / Takeshima / Tokdo"
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/liancourt.htm>
2. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dokdo>
3. Sean Fern, "Tokdo or Takeshima? The International Law of Territorial Acquisition in the Japan-Korea Island Dipute" <http://www.stanford.edu/group/sjeaa/journal51/japan2.pdf>
4. The Associated Press, "South Korea warns of possible physical clash with Japan as talks continue on disputed islets," April 20, 2006
5. BBC News, "Japan asks South Korea to end survey," July 5, 2006
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/5149048.stm>

Questions

1. What are the key national interests/concerns?
2. What is your country's immediate response? Nest?
 - A. What is the administration's immediate response?
 - B. What is the military's immediate response?
 - C. What is the foreign ministry's response?
3. Do the opinions differ? If so why?
4. What decision does your leadership make and why?
5. What are the risk assessments of your country
6. Who are your diplomatic partners and targets?

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