

Unraveling of U.S.-DPRK Nuclear Accord? A Post-Mortem Analysis of the Six-Party Talks (SPT) Process*

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Abstract

A question often asked regarding a “nuclear North Korea” is: “Have the Six-Party Talks produced any tangible results? An answer is both “Yes” and “No.” Pyongyang accepted “the Statement of Principles” in 2005 by pledging to “abandon its nuclear program, rejoin the NPT, and allow IAEA monitors to return, in exchange for North Korea’s receiving food and energy assistance from the other members.” Yet, it reversed this policy in 2009, timed with the inauguration of the Obama Administration. This article proceeds with a brief overview of the evolution of the Six-Party Talks (SPT) process, in terms of a theory of collective action and policy dilemma of coordination perspective. After an analysis and evaluation of the North Korean negotiation strategies, the article closes with a speculation of future problems and prospects for SPT process.

Keywords: Diplomacy, US-DPRK Nuclear Accord, the Six-Party Talks Process, Nuclear Settlement, Denuclearization, Collective Action Dilemma, Game Theory, Nuclear Disablement, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Regime,

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The Problem Stated

Barack Obama's Administration's initial overture toward North Korea, on resuming the Six Party Talks (SPT) process on denuclearization, was vituperatively rejected by Pyongyang in 2009. While President Obama unveiled his new policy initiative toward nuclear nonproliferation in Prague, North Korea, on April 5, 2009, provocatively conducted a long-range missile test followed by a second nuclear weapons test on May 25. The DPRK foreign ministry announced that North Korea not only refused to return to the negotiating table, but would also revoke all its previous concessions. It restarted the nuclear reprocessing plant it had mothballed in 2007, as part of the previous agreement, and also said the Korean Armistice Agreement of 1953 no longer applied.

North Korea's test-firing of its ICBM across the Pacific Ocean, officially a satellite launching, was conducted despite widespread international opposition.¹ When the third stage missile failed to separate, the "payload" reportedly plunged into an ocean. Reacting to a tightening of sanctions by the United Nations Security Council, Pyongyang acted to expel IAEA on-site inspectors, declaring its intention to revive an atomic weapons program. North Korea announced that its second nuclear test on May 25 was successful, again defying international warnings. The U.N. Security Council, convening an emergency session that afternoon, successfully enacted resolution 1874 that reinforced sanctions against North Korea's defiance of not heeding its previous UNSC Resolution 1718, following its first nuclear test on October 6, 2006.

Do these belligerent and provocative acts by the North amount to the unraveling of U.S.-DPRK nuclear accord that the SPT carefully worked out and as stipulated in the Joint Statement of September 19, 2005 on the principles of keeping Korea nuclear-free? The same question also applies to the decision at the Fifth Round Talks on North Korea's "Disablement of the Yongbyon Nuclear Reactor Facilities" on February 13, 2007.

A question often asked as regards a "nuclear North Korea" is: "Have the SPT produced agreements?" In part, the answer is "Yes" as the Six-Party participants eventually adopted "the Statement of Principles" of 2005 after many years of on-and-off negotiations and four rounds of sporadic talks. Pyongyang, this pact stated, would eventually "abandon its nuclear program, rejoin the NPT, and allow IAEA monitors to return, in exchange for North Korea's receiving food and energy assistance from

the other members.” The statement also paved the way for the DPRK to normalize its relations with both the United States and Japan, and, for the negotiation of a peace agreement on the Korean peninsula.”²

This article will proceed first with a brief overview of the evolution of the current policy problem for the Obama Administration, followed by an analysis of the rationale for the Six-Party Talks process in defusing the North Korean nuclear crisis. The article will turn next to an analysis of the role of the Six-Party Talks, as an IGO (inter-governmental organization) of state-actors in terms of both capabilities and limitations. The SPT is primarily track I diplomacy that may or may not be sufficient in attaining its stated policy objective, without simultaneously mobilizing track II diplomacy which entails certain NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) also playing non-state roles in enhancing communications toward a settlement.³ The article closes by speculating on future problems and prospects for the SPT process.

Whether the SPT will ever reconvene despite Pyongyang’s current hard-line stance, remains to be seen. North Korea’s number two man, Kim Young-nam, as President of the DPRK Supreme People’s Assembly was quoted in July 2009, as stating categorically that the six-party nuclear talks “are over for good” as no dialogue or negotiations were possible, as he put it, “where the principles of respect for sovereign rights and equality are denied.”⁴ The same pessimism has also prevailed over the SPT’s ever attaining its stated goal, i.e., building regional peace and security in Northeast Asia via the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.⁵

A brief overview of SPT evolution

The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea) is one of the last Stalinist states in the post-Cold War era. In October 2006, North Korea became a new member of the nuclear club. Over the past two decades it has alternated between confrontation and inch-by-inch conciliation with its neighbors. It has also gone through an oscillation that seems to be driven both by its hard-to-fathom internal political strains and by an apparent belief in nuclear deterrence, and brinkmanship strategy, as the most effective form of diplomacy.

After setting off its first atomic device, the secretive, isolated, heavily militarized and desperately poor country of the “Dear Leader Kim Jong-Il,” whose health is rapidly deteriorating, has slowly moved away from confrontation. On September 19, 2005, for instance, North

Korea signed the Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks on the Principle of Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and related measures. On February 13, 2007, the North also agreed to “disable the Yongbyon nuclear facilities” with a commitment to eventually dismantle its nuclear program. When Pyongyang submitted a 60-page report on its nuclear program, in July 2008, the George W. Bush administration acted to remove North Korea from its list of state sponsors of terrorism. The U.S. Senate reportedly deliberated, however, whether the DPRK should be placed back on the U.S. listing in 2009.

Yet, the SPT progress collapsed during the December 8-11, 2008, Sixth-Round of talks when Pyongyang refused to accept terms for verification in writing, as informally agreed to and proposed by the United States. Between August 2003 and December 2008, the SPT negotiations were held intermittently but often became bogged down by one crisis day after another. The first three rounds of the talks were evaluated as not having made substantive progress.⁶

It was not until the Fourth Round of talks, in September 2005, that real progress was registered. Examples of crisis events thereafter affecting the SPT included the United States’ imposition of sanctions against Banco Delta Asia, in November 2005, on suspicion that this Macao-based bank laundered money for Pyongyang, North Korea’s Taepodong II missile launching on July 4, 2006, and the underground nuclear test on October 6, 2006. Additionally, the 2004 U.S. presidential campaign, prior to George W. Bush’s second term in office (2005-2009), also led the DPRK to hesitate on its timely return to the SPT negotiation. Not until September 2005 were the Fourth Round of talks held.

The Fifth Round was delayed until February 2007, yielding a disarmament-for-aid pact under the February 13, 2007 Accord on the DPRK nuclear disablement. The progress of its implementation stalled in 2007-2008, however, primarily due to the verification standoff, even if significant pressure was placed on the talks to ward off further deterioration. One example of this pressure was the personal visit of U.S. chief negotiator Ambassador Christopher Hill’s to Pyongyang in early October, during the final year of the Bush administration.

Why did North Korea choose to challenge the new Obama administration by its provocative acts, first the April 5 test firing of the long-range missile and, then the second nuclear test of May 25, 2009? Pyongyang was apparently driven by its own logic of nuclear deterrence and was in a hurry, instead of waiting for the Obama Administration to

adopt a new North Korea policy. The Obama policies toward North Korea have been, as one analyst has put it, one of “reactive response” that unfolded gradually, in response to North Korean provocations.⁷

North Korea has not been high on the Obama administration's list of priorities, although his administration has not pursued an ABB (Anything But Bush) policy along the lines of the ABC (Anything But Clinton) approach of the early Bush administration. Instead, Obama drew several lessons from Bush's experience, according to this observer. For instance, in response to perceived failures by Christopher Hill--the Bush administration's chief negotiator with North Korea—to reassure allies in Tokyo and Seoul, the US now committed itself to more effective coordination. This has been shown already, through efforts to enhance the quality of consultations and, most recently, through affirmation of the written US commitment to “extended deterrence,” as part of the US-ROK Joint Vision Statement issued during the Obama-Lee White House 2009 summit on June 16, 2009.⁸

Despite North Korean provocations, Obama's approach is said to have undergone “an understandable case of attention deficit disorder vis-a-vis North Korea.” President Obama had so many domestic and foreign issues on his policy menu that “North Korea has become the top crisis at the bottom of the American agenda,” according to the same analyst. There was little near-term prospect that Washington would devote the effort required to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue, especially given the heightened political risk of any attempts to engage a regime that had not yet signaled a willingness to come out of its shell. North Korean provocations had made the American task of coordinating with South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia somewhat easier, at least momentarily.⁹

One recent study has identified a set of five factors behind Kim Jong-Il's acts of provocation: 1) desire to be a permanent nuclear state; 2) pay-off to the military and succession; 3) enhanced prestige and scientific nationalism; 4) advertisement of its wares on global market; and, 5) a greater stake in future negotiations.¹⁰ Pyongyang's demonstration of its dual-use technologies, both nuclear and rocketry were also well-suited for the Kim regime's survival strategy. The July 4 fireworks display in 2009, launching seven Scud missiles, was a clear violation of the UNSC Resolution 1874, which demanded that “[North Korea] not conduct any further nuclear test or any launch using ballistic

missile technology” [and] . . . that “the PRK shall suspend all activities related to its ballistic missile program.”

The Rationale: Theory and Policy Analysis

Collective Action Dilemma and the SPT

The SPT can be looked at from the perspective of group theory organization: that is, how individual members of an association called the SPT, placed together by major powers in world politics, will attain a set of common and joint interests, i.e., promote a nuclear-free zone for the Korean peninsula. SPT members each acting voluntarily as a sovereign state, have agreed to try to achieve their professed common interests of promoting the denuclearization of the Northeast Asia region. A group theory view of how difficult it is to make individual members pursue their joint welfare, as contrasted to individual welfare, is well documented in the literature as it was initially developed by an economist, Mancur Olson, in his 1965 seminal book, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Application of this group theory will yield a more realistic and credible analytical model for the study of such international organizations as the SPT.

Olson set out in this book to challenge the prevailing optimism about group theory, an attitude that had dominated the field of “pressure and interest group” politics in social science research. This theory claimed that a set of individuals with common interests would voluntarily act to further those.¹¹ Olson’s “collective action dilemma” theory, on the other hand, provided an alternative economic explanation. As he argued on the opening page of his 1965 book:

The idea that groups tend to act in support of their group interests is supposed to follow logically from this widely accepted premise of *rational, self-interest* behavior. In other words, if the members of some group have a common interest or object, and if they would all be better off if that objective were achieved, it has been thought to follow logically that the individuals in that group would, if they were *rational and self-interested*, act to achieve that objective.¹²

Olson’s challenge to the orthodox theory of group and organization politics was based largely on the premise that one who could not be excluded from obtaining the benefits of a collective good, once the good

is produced, had little incentive to contribute voluntarily to the provision of that good. Clearly, the DPRK from the very outset of the SPT in 2003 seems to have been motivated by a “rational and self-interested” mindset, which in the end has turned out to be not selfish.

“The view that groups act to serve their interests presumably is based upon the assumption that the individuals in groups act out of self-interest”.¹³ Olson was less pessimistic in his group theory, however, because he also considered it an open question as to whether “intermediate-size groups” would or would not voluntarily provide collective benefits. “His definition of an intermediate-size group depended not (so much) on the number of actors involved as on how noticeable each person’s (i.e., state-actor’s) actions were”.¹⁴ The SPT process, as a small N sized group, therefore could be considered as one such “intermediate-size” group of activities.

The tragedy of the commons, the prisoner’s dilemma, and the logic of collective action are all closely related concepts in game theory models. Each of these concepts has defined the accepted way of viewing many problems that the individuals (state-actors in our case here) would face when attempting to achieve collective benefits. At the heart of each of these models is the free-rider problem. Whenever one particular state actor (i.e., the DPRK) cannot be excluded from the benefits that others would provide, each actor in the group will be motivated not to contribute to the joint effort, but instead to free-ride on the efforts of others. If all participants in the group choose to free-ride, however, the collective benefits obviously will not be produced.

The temptation to free-ride, in fact, may have dominated the SPT decision process by Pyongyang, in particular, and thus all ended up where no one member wanted to be. Alternatively, some members still wished common results while others free-rode, leading to less than an optimal result. Collective action dilemma models were thus extremely useful and relevant for explaining *how perfectly rational individual state actors could produce, under some circumstances, outcomes that seemed not “rational” at all when viewed from the perspective of all those SPT member countries involved in negotiation.*¹⁵

What makes these game theory models useful and powerful, as a tool of policy analysis, is that they tended to capture important aspects of what had actually transpired in the SPT process of negotiations and bargaining.

The Role of SPT in Realizing Denuclearization: Policy Analysis

What is the purpose of the SPT, and its proper role as a forum for attaining the peaceful settlement of the DPRK's ambitious nuclear weapons program through disarmament? Can the Six-Party Talks bring about an outcome of "dismantlement" of the DPRK nuclear weapons program, via disablement of the Yongbyon nuclear installations as an intermediate stage, toward attaining the final goal of DPRK nuclear disarmament?

The nuclear disablement of North Korea, as the first step, was to be attained in 2008 closing down the Yongbyon nuclear reactor installation. In June 2008, Pyongyang submitted an inventory of "all" of its past nuclear activities, as expected, and dramatically destroying its cooling tower at the Yongbyon nuclear facility. This prompted the Bush administration to take action, hastily perhaps as seen in hindsight, so as to move forward on the path toward disarmament by announcing the removal of the DPRK from the list of state sponsors of terrorism. But this act did not hold beyond December of 2008. What went wrong?

A last round of the SPT, as it turned out to be, to date, at least, was held December 8-11, 2008, but negotiations failed on "issues of sequencing and verification". The final session of the Sixth Round of talks was aimed at solidifying a protocol to verify North Korea's nuclear declarations, determining a timetable for disablement of its nuclear facilities, and setting a schedule for the delivery of the remaining energy aid to North Korea. Even after extending conversations one day beyond schedule, the meeting still could not produce a single Six-Party agreement, and the parties were therefore forced to return home without aid or verification understandings in hand.¹⁶

In light of this failure to attain a settlement of the nuclear dispute in December 2008, we need to ask what went wrong and why? What lessons can be drawn from the SPT failure? In this regard one needs to be certain of the role of the SPT process from the perspective of foreign policy and international political theory. We also need to be clear that an adoption of the verification protocol was not the same as nuclear "dismantlement or disarmament" of the DPRK nuclear arsenal. In short, the politics of the Six-Party talks was mixed up with a vocabulary of nuclear "disablement," in the sense that "disablement" does not translate automatically to "dismantlement" of the DPRK nuclear installations.

The Six-Party talks as a multilateral process is clearly a means to achieve a foreign policy end, rather than an end in itself. It has been set

up as an instrument and a mechanism for bringing about the settlement of issues between the DPRK, with its ambitious program of nuclear weapons development, and the remaining five members of the Six-Party talks. The five were united in denying North Korea from making a nuclear breakout by turning the fuel rods extracted from its nuclear reactor into reprocessed weapons grade plutonium to be used to acquire WMD capabilities, in defiance of the IAEA and NPT obligations.

Like any other diplomatic forum, the Six-Party talks was as efficient and effective as an instrument as each of the member states was prepared to have it be. The first step toward dispelling any false expectations, was to ascertain both “limitations and possibilities” of what the Six-Party talks could accomplish. The following are two key questions that may help ascertain the proper role of the Six-Party talks as diplomatic tool. First, how successful was the ‘disabling’ of the Yongbyon reactor facilities? Second, why the delay in verification by North Korea of what they had already agreed to do? In other words, what lay behind their change of minds mid-course during the Six-Party talks?

In explaining the process, with the less-than-perfect settlements and solutions in September 2008, it is useful to consider the current state of “nuclear disablement and dismantlement” politics as a type of game theory situation called “a mixed motive,” rather than as either “a zero-sum” or “a non-zero-sum” game. A zero-sum game is any game in which the interests of the players are diametrically opposed, while a non-zero-sum game is an interactive situation in which the players have mixed motives, that is, in addition to conflicting interests, they may also share some common interests.¹⁷

An arms race was going on between the DPRK and the United States, as the chief protagonists of the Six-Party member states. The basic assumptions of game theory apply to the conflict situation of the Six-Party strategies on nuclear deterrence and decision-making. Game theory is the science of interactive decision-making. Before applying these concepts to the real-world situation on the Korean Peninsula, a brief survey of the current status of disablement, declaration, and delays in verification is necessary.

Evaluation: How Successful was the “Disabling” of the Yongbyon Reactor Facilities?

In July 2007, the DPRK was expected to shut down and seal the Yongbyon nuclear facility, in accordance with the February 13, 2007

Six-Party agreement on “Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement” and the October 3, 2007 accord on “the second phase actions.”¹⁸ The DPRK agreed in the February 13, 2007 accord on “Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement,” to shut down all its existing nuclear facilities, beginning with the core facilities at the Yongbyon nuclear complex, by December 31, 2007. The Yongbyon nuclear complex houses the three core facilities of North Korea’s plutonium program: the 5-MW(e) reactor, a reprocessing facility, and a fuel fabrication facility.¹⁹

These facilities were operating until they were shut down in July 2007 as part of the Six-Party negotiations. In addition, North Korea invited back IAEA personnel to monitor and verify the shutdown and the sealing of these facilities. The DPRK subsequently agreed in the October 3, 2007 agreement on “Second-Phase Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement” that it would disable all its existing nuclear facilities, beginning with the core facilities at Yongbyon.

Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill traveled to meet his North Korean counterpart, Kim Kye-gwan, on September 1-2, 2007, in Geneva. They reached agreement on the basics of what would become the October 3, 2007 document on "Second-Phase Actions". Among the understandings were, disabling the reactor, the reprocessing facility, and, the fuel fabrication plant at Yongbyon, and listing the nuclear material and equipment that were to be eliminated in phase three. North Korea also pledged "not to transfer nuclear materials, technology or know-how" to third parties – the first time it had done so. The United States, in return, promised to fulfill its commitment to terminate the Trading with the Enemy Act and to de-list the North as a state-sponsor of terrorism".

After November 2007, U.S. experts were on the ground at Yongbyon, continuously overseeing disablement activities.

- Eight out of 11 agreed disablement activities at the three core facilities were completed, and work on disablement activities continued.
- U.S. experts oversaw the discharge of the spent fuel rods from the 5-MW(e) reactor. As of mid-May 2008, more than one-third of the spent fuel rods had been discharged successfully.

- These actions had halted the DPRK's ability to produce additional weapons-grade plutonium for its nuclear weapons program.

The United States thus remained committed to the full implementation of the September 19, 2005 Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks, which unanimously reaffirmed the goal of the Six-Party Talks as the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner.²⁰

On June 26, 2008, North Korea and the U.S. concluded the last in a series of steps they had promised to implement in February 2007, part of the SPT process on disablement of the North Korean nuclear installment. North Korean diplomats presented a declaration of its nuclear weapons program to their Chinese counterparts who had been coordinating the six-nation talks. In return, President Bush announced the lifting of some trade sanctions and removed North Korea from the U.S.-list of state sponsors of terrorism.²¹

After a delay of more than sixteenth months, North Korea, on June 27, 2008, dramatically demolished the cooling tower of its main nuclear reactor in Yongbyon, signaling its commitment to stop making plutonium for nuclear bombs. Demolition of the sixty-foot-tall cooling tower, in the presence of selected media representatives, including CNN, was the most visible symbol of the North's serious intentions, coming approximately twenty months after the first detonation of a nuclear bomb in an underground test.²² This action did not leave the conventional uranium route of North Korea's nuclear weapons program as well as the Syrian connection through which Pyongyang had transferred the nuclear technology to a third country.

A U.S. ship carrying 37,000 tons of wheat arrived in North Korea on June 29, perhaps not coincidentally, as part of the U.N. World Food Program. It was the first installment of 500,000 tons of assistance promised by Washington. The U.S. aid was not said to be directly related to the nuclear talks between the two countries, but the WFP said this shipment would help feed more than five million starving people in the communist country.²³ Because of an acute and worsening food shortage, the U.N. agency warned in April 2008 that time was running out to avert a humanitarian tragedy in the DPRK. Famine in North Korea had already killed an estimated one million in the mid-1990s, and had become a serious international policy concern, together with the human rights issue in the North.²⁴

These actions by Pyongyang and Washington, after so many false moves and delays seemed hopeful indeed. Whereas the DPRK has submitted its listing of the plutonium-based nuclear program and activities to the Six-Party Talks, the Bush administration reciprocated by lifting limited sanctions and delisting North Korea as a terrorism sponsoring country. At least this mood of relief prevailed among those in the policy community and in various capitals, including Washington, D.C. Does that mean, however, that North Korea had finally abandoned its nuclear weapons?

An answer was “not quite”. In fact, the North Korean regime had re-considered nuclear deterrence as a key to its own self-defense and regime survival. It had also considered attaining a new nuclear status as a key ingredient for boosting domestic morale and securing regime survival. An ultimate goal of “complete and verifiable” nuclear disarmament of North Korea, therefore, was not attained and still had a long way to go.²⁵

Why Delays in Disabling, Declaring, and Verification?

The Six-Party Talks on denuclearization of the Korean peninsula proved to be a greater challenge for the Bush administration in its last months. The complexity of the negotiations and the presence of the multiple partnerships would make policy coordination difficult with each of the participating countries advancing its own national interests and aspirations.

For the Kim Jong-Il regime, the Six-Party talks could be seen as a way of buying time. It could also be seen as a desire by the United States to avoid the use of force and possible war. Disablement, in the final analysis, was a means to an end rather than an end in itself, and, as such, it was not a lasting solution to the challenge of disarming “nuclear” North Korea.

Collective Action Dilemma & Coordination Failure: A Game Theory Interpretation

The reason for the latest stalemate and stagnation in the SPT process, from the theoretical perspective, had more to do with the systemic and structural problem of the “Collective Action Dilemma” than an absence of political will or good intentions. The five member countries of the Six-Party talks, other than North Korea, were jointly engaged in the search for an acceptable solution to the North Korean nuclear program. As such, they had to confront the challenge of “free riding” by North Korea. In the anarchic world of sovereign nation-states, a government

must be prepared to cope with what is known as the challenge of the “Public Goods and the Prisoner’s dilemma.”²⁶

Institutions like the SPT may be seen as “games in extensive form,” in which actors’ behaviors are structured by the rules of the game. In the absence of mutual trust and credible sanctions against defection, however, cooperation is difficult to achieve. In the SPT process, each party had an individual incentive to defect and become a “free rider.” Success depended on the broader social context within which any particular game was played out with mutual trust and good will. Social capital, such as trust, norms, and networks that could also improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions was absent.²⁷

In the absence of mutual trust and commitment, each of the Six-Party talks individually had an incentive to defect and become a “free-rider.” This was exactly what North Korea in 2008 had chosen to exercise. Each member state expected the others to defect, leaving the defector with the “sucker’s payoff.” These models of collective action and the prisoner’s dilemma were useful in explaining how perfectly rational individuals and state actors could produce, under some circumstances, outcomes that didn’t seem to be “rational” when viewed from the perspective of all those involved.²⁸

The US and the DPRK were playing a game of hide and seek. In the context of the Six-Party talks, they had interacted repeatedly since 2003 to make sure that North Korea would abide by the pledges it already made for disablement of the Yongbyon nuclear installation, with the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament. In the absence of mutual trust, however, cooperation was not forthcoming and no steps toward institution-building were to take hold, despite a series of ad hoc agreements. Then, all hell broke loose from the U.S. point of view. This was because of the inertia of the “Politics of Delay”.

What transpired in 2008 was by no means unique and unanticipated. In fact, throughout 2007 the Six-Party talks were suspended, and, after a nine-month hiatus, finally met in July, 2008. After three days of talks in Beijing, the six negotiated the completion of phase two of the DPRK denuclearization and opened a new phase of denuclearization. On July 12, North Korea agreed on a timetable to complete the ongoing disabling of its principal nuclear facilities by the end of October and also accepted general principles for verification. Verification and monitoring procedures were among the first steps to be taken for dismantling Pyongyang’s nuclear weapons.²⁹

The text of these Six-Party nuclear talks, issued on July 12, indicated that “the verification mechanism consists of experts of the six parties and is responsible to the Working Group on Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. It will include visits to facilities, the review of documents, interviews with technical personnel and other measures unanimously agreed upon among the six parties.”³⁰ At this meeting the North received a four-page draft verification protocol which included interviews, on-site visits, and materials sampling.

Pyongyang, however, refused to accept some of the proposed terms. The DPRK asserted, for instance, that it had never agreed to make verification of the nuclear declaration a precondition for removal from the terrorism list. The North then reiterated its demand for a simultaneous nuclear inspection in the South, claiming that all six parties must undergo inspection “in the final phase of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula.” The official “Chairman’s Statement” sounded good and proper. Yet, a more somber and realistic picture was given by one of the astute observers to the process.³¹

It was true that “the North was more forthcoming about its plutonium program” wrote Leon V. Sigal in his timely essay, “How a mock trial could turn into defeat on North Korea’s nuclear arms?”³² Pyongyang had said, for instance, that it had made about 37 kilograms of weapons grade reprocessed plutonium, including a yet-undefined amount it had expended in its nuclear test. But Pyongyang had “refused to say where it was assembling its nuclear device and it did not disclose the exact amount of plutonium it had produced in each of its reprocessing campaigns.”

The total of Pyongyang’s plutonium announcement was at the lower end of US estimates – “enough plutonium for at least a half dozen nuclear weapons,” according to the annual threat assessment given to the U.S. Congress in 2007 – but well within the range of possibility. Pyongyang had agreed to provide the operating logs of the reactor and reprocessing plant which, if complete, could help verify the amount of plutonium, but it wanted to delay verification until the next phase of the Six-Party talks. In May it finally relented and turned over some 18,000 pages of records to Washington. It also promised to blow up the reactor’s cooling tower, as a symbolic climax to the disabling process.

Moreover, when fully disabled, the North’s plutonium program would take a year or more to restart. By early 2008, eight of the eleven disabling measures, including those at the North Korean reprocessing

facility and fuel fabrication plant, had been completed without much difficulty. That was not the case for the two most critical steps: removal of all the fuel rods from the Yongbyon reactor and disposal of the replacement of fuel rods. De-fueling by the North was initially delayed to prepare the cooling pond where the spent fuel rods would be stored.

Then, North Korea, accusing the other parties of not living up to their obligations, delayed even further. Russia, which was supposed to provide North Korea with 50,000 tons of fuel oil by December, did not deliver the full shipment until late January. China and South Korea, which were each supposed to supply the equivalent of 50,000 tons of fuel in the form of steel and other material to refurbish conventional power plants in North Korea, were also late with their respective deliveries. And the United States did not "advance the process" either of ending the Trading with the Enemy Act sanctions or delisting the North as a state sponsor of terrorism.

In response, at a point where fewer than 20 percent of the 8,000 fuel rods had been removed, Pyongyang slowed the de-fueling to 32 rods per day, down from 80. At that rate, the de-fueling would not be completed until late 2008. Disposal of the replacement fuel rods made no headway at all, not surprisingly, leaving the North in a position to stop unloading the reactor, reload it with replacement fuel rods, and restart it to generate more plutonium – nuclear leverage that the disabling would deny it.

Diplomacy: A Quid-pro-Quo on Nuclear Settlement?

The United States and North Korea, at a meeting in Singapore on April 7-8, 2008, agreed to a compromise on uranium enrichment and Syria, another key concern to the U.S. In return for Washington's lifting sanctions under the Trading with the Enemy Act, and removing Pyongyang from its state sponsor of terrorism list, the North would "acknowledge the US conclusions" – the list of enrichment equipment and components and the information Hill had shown Kim about Syria – "and take serious note of US concerns."

That would allow completion of the plutonium program. That also left the United States a list of enrichment equipment to be dismantled, albeit one that the North might reopen in the next phase of negotiations. And the agreement would also keep the Syria issue on the bilateral agenda, without being resolved. That outcome was a big win for US security objectives. It was preferable to waiting for a possibly incomplete North Korean list that would then have to be verified and

which might have only further delayed disabling and left Pyongyang with its nuclear leverage intact.³³

Yet the arrangement outraged those in Washington who viewed the declaration as a way to extract a North Korean confession of its past misdeeds and saw this deal as another instance of Pyongyang's cheat-and-retreat tactics. It even prompted anxious questioning among erstwhile supporters of deal-making and was attacked by right-wingers in the Republican Party who had opposed negotiations with North Korea since 1994. These critics included the party's presumptive presidential nominee, John McCain.

It also sparked anger in Japan, where dropping the North from the list of state sponsors of terrorism, absent further progress on the abduction issue, had become a right-wing cause. Prime Minister Fukuda decided to resume talks with the North on June 11-12. During the talks, Japan offered a partial relaxation of sanctions, and the North reciprocated by promising to reopen its investigation of the abductions and to hand over four Red Army Faction members, who had fled to North Korea after hijacking a JAL passenger jet in 1970. But reaction from the LDP right wing prompted the government to back off from easing sanctions.

The vehemence of the reaction in Washington was a sign of how far many were from accepting the principle of reciprocity underlying Six-Party talks. More fundamentally, many had yet to absorb the lesson that it was inconceivable for North Korea to denuclearize permanently until the United States took convincing steps toward reconciliation. That could take years.

The long series of steps that were needed to achieve denuclearization was daunting. It included, for instance, the storage and eventual shipping of spent fuel now being removed from the reactor, the dismantlement and decontamination of the nuclear facilities, verification of denuclearization and the disassembly of nuclear weapons and removal of all fissile material from the country. All of these measures, once negotiated, would require an unprecedented degree of cooperation by North Korea, and reciprocal steps by the other five parties – above all, the United States.

The U.S. and North Korea would also need to discuss the possibility of not only unannounced visits to the Yongbyon nuclear facility for inspection—the key issue in the verification process—but also sample taking, as well as the IAEA's active role. Thus, they failed to reach an agreement.

If President Bush yielded to his right-wing critics, he could jeopardize his most positive foreign policy legacy—continued accommodation with China—which was taken to be the key to peace and security for all of Northeast Asia. China was a factor in Bush's turnabout on North Korea – not because of its supposed influence over Pyongyang, but because of the president's desire to sustain engagement with Beijing.

North Korea's missile tests in July 2006 had demonstrated its unwillingness to yield to pressure—from the United States or China. Yet Chinese support for a Security Council resolution warning of sanctions only intensified pressures from right-wing Republicans, bent on forcing China to bring North Korea to its knees.

With Democrats challenging President Bush's China policy on trade and human rights, his cooperative course with Beijing was in trouble. With a North Korean nuclear test impending, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger went to Beijing for talks with Chinese President Hu Jintao. They met, by unhappy coincidence, on October 10, one day after the North's nuclear test. Kissinger had brought a message for Pyongyang underscoring Bush's willingness to sign a peace treaty, once North Korea was made nuclear-free and to have a regional security dialogue that included North Korea at the top table.³⁴

Consequences of a Less than Perfect Solution on Disarmament

Diplomatic give-and-take with North Korea on disabling the Yongbyon nuclear facilities was yielding some payoffs for American and regional security. Turning the talks into “a mock trial” of North Korea, however, would only be a waste of time, as analyst Leon Sigal put it.³⁵ Still, with North Korea dragging its feet on the verification requirement, the United States initially decided to keep North Korea on the terrorist list “indefinitely,” in the absence of a verification agreement.

A diplomatic source in Washington observed that President Bush had decided to postpone the removal since North Korea had failed to agree on verification. On August 11, 2008, when the White House was to certify delisting of North Korea as state sponsor of terrorism, nothing happened, despite the fact that there was no opposition from Congress to the administration plan.³⁶ Instead, North Korea remained on the list. A diplomatic source in Washington said Bush had decided to postpone the removal, since North Korea had failed to verification.

By law, the U.S. president could have removed the North from the terrorism list on August 11, just forty-five days after he formally notified

Congress his intention.³⁷ U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, in fact, told Japan's Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura about the impending policy change. Bush's hopes of reaching a breakthrough on the nuclear deal with North Korea, before he left office in January, was the immediate casualty of this unfortunate turn of events.

On August 21, the North blamed the U.S. once again for delaying action on the terrorism blacklist. The U.S. said it would take North Korea off the list only after the county first agreed to a full nuclear verification plan. Two months had elapsed since the blow-up of the cooling tower of the Yongbyon nuclear reactor, however, and gone with it was any optimism about nuclear disablement as Pyongyang announced it was taking countermeasures to restore "the nuclear facilities."³⁸

In retrospect, Bush's delay in delisting of North Korea was a costly policy error. The U.S. decision may very well have heralded an extended chilly period in the days ahead in its relations with the North. This was so, despite the fact that Six-Party Talks delegates from the U.S., South Korea, and Japan were meeting with the Chinese delegates in Beijing during the first week of September.

An additional factor in the delay of nuclear declaration and verification, however, may have involved the North Korea's new calculation. The time was running out for negotiation and bargaining with the lame-duck Bush Administration. The DPRK might therefore take a calculated risk with the new Democratic Administration of Barack Obama and hope for a better deal after January 2009.

Pyongyang must have made its own strategic decision on delaying the SPT process. The declared statement of the North Korean nuclear program, for instance, had already been made long before North Korea could expect further quid-pro-quo delivery of rewards and compensation from the other SPT members. This was in accordance with the joint statement provision and the terms of agreement then being implemented at a snail's speed.

The SPT process on denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, in short, had proven to be a greater challenge, given the complexity of issues, with unintended consequences, and each of the multiple partners having a contending set of national interests and aspirations. This chapter in the SPT, through promoting disablement of the North Korean nuclear program, could thus be seen as a reflection of the Bush Administration's new strategic plans, a temporary measure for buying

time, or a temporary setback and delay, so as to avoid the use of force as a means of an eventual denuclearization of North Korea.

Disablement after all, in the final analysis, was a means to an end rather than an end itself. Disablement, as such, was clearly not a lasting solution to the challenge of disarming the “nuclear” North Korea. A recalibration of the new strategic thinking was called for with new administrations in Washington and Tokyo after 2008.³⁹

What Lies Ahead?

A “Nuclear” North Korea, *Sui generis* or *deja vu*?

In the days after North Korea carried out its first nuclear test on October 9, 2006, reinforced by its second nuclear test on May 25, 2009, South Korea and the United States saw a “very different world.” South Korea as a U.S. ally became increasingly helpless in the face of the North’s evolving nuclear threats. Seoul could only confront a nuclear-armed North Korea with its conventional military might and a revamped security alliance with the United States.⁴⁰

The DPRK is *sui generis* as an “aspiring” nuclear power; it is the only country that withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), in clandestine violation of the NPT non-proliferation norms and obligations, to go ahead with acquiring nuclear weapons and the WMD capability of its own; it has succeeded in emerging as the ninth member of the nuclear club, together with the original five (the U.S., Great Britain, France, Russia and China) after joining the NPT on December 12, 1985.

The remaining three additional nuclear weapons-states, which never signed the NPT to begin with, were Israel, India, and Pakistan. The DPRK was the only country that had attempted to benefit from its IAEA membership at an early stage, with technical assistance and support. After joining the NPT in 1985, at the urging of its ally, the former Soviet Union, it took advantage of the loopholes in the IAEA and NPT regime red tapes so as to enhance its own national interests.⁴¹

North Korea had deliberately forsaken its “safeguards” accord obligations by announcing its intention of withdrawing from the NPT, first on January 12, 1993 (which it reversed only one day after its taking effect on March 12) and, second, on January 10, 2003, to take effect on April 10, thereby creating a negative ripple effect on the NPT regime, the first country to do so.

The DPRK is the only country that has taken advantages of both joining the NPT, with the privilege of receiving technical support, and also withdrawing from IAEA so as to enjoy the double benefits. This history of the DPRK's self-promoting behavior vis-à-vis the NPT underscores the logical foundation for the Six-Party insistence on the Verification Protocol of the DPRK's nuclear disablement.⁴²

Only four countries, in addition to Libya, have to date abandoned a nuclear weapons program: South Africa, Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Ukraine. Some eight countries are said to possess the technical know-how to acquire nuclear weapons: Bulgaria, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway and Spain. Some twelve countries have also had nuclear weapons programs, at one point, but were pressured to abandon these programs during the Cold War era: Argentine, Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Poland, Romania, the ROK, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan and Yugoslavia.⁴³

The DPRK clearly poses a threat to the viability and continuity of the existing NPT regime. Three challenges related to the nuclear proliferation today are mentioned in the literature: states within the existing NPT regime, states outside the present NPT regime, and challenges coming from non-state actors, including terrorist groups. Three different approaches to nonproliferation challenges are also identifiable: institutional approaches anchored in the NPT regime, non-treaty-based approaches that Israel, India and Pakistan have adopted, and a set of ad-hoc, non-institutional and non-conventional approaches to future challenges on proliferation. The DPRK's nuclear "disablement and verification" protocol must be considered as an integral "part and parcel" of this global challenge in the 21st century.⁴⁴

Despite the fact that the DPRK's denuclearization status was addressed primarily by the U.S. and China, within the context of the Six-Party talks, the challenges posed by North Korea are both global and regional in nature, and the United Nations' role in safeguarding the NPT regime is a key to the future of humanity in the 21st century. In this regard a recent study report on the possible U.N. role in the DPRK denuclearization seems right on target. As the author, Anne Wu noted: "The perception of the NPT as a hollow shell with respect to containing proliferation could trigger further defections from the treaty and encourage non-nuclear parties to begin to pursue nuclear weapons programs of their own." The UN's facilitation of an early end to the crisis might therefore be seen as a wake-up call, whereas continued

peripheral and ineffectual involvement will only serve to further erode confidence in the global nonproliferation regime.”⁴⁵

Underlying the resistance and reluctance of the DPRK to participate fully in the Six-Party Talks illustrates the recent history of what happened to North Korea following the September 2003 Koizumi-Kim Jong-il summit, which Pyongyang now considers a diplomatic setback and defeat. In this regard what the Japanese call the “Peninsula Questions” episode, referring to the DPRK nuclear standoff, seems appropriate.

What author Yoichi Funabashi calls “the (Korean) peninsula question,” tracing back into the late 19th century security environment in Northeast Asia, may or may not repeat itself in the 21st century. However, it is time to come up with credible and possible scenarios suited to today’s age of complex interdependence and globalized world economy. Only with careful comprehensive planning, can we hope to start laying a foundation for the future structure of lasting peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

Problems and Prospect

Acquiescence in the North Korea’s nuclear program would fly in the face of American foreign policy, especially strengthening the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) regime, founded in 1967, as well as what U.S. President Obama professed to put forward in Prague on April 5, the very day North Korea chose to launch its third ICBM into the Pacific Ocean. It would work to undermine the prospects of the U.S. proposed negotiations with Iran. If the North’s methods of brazen confrontation are tolerated, nuclear proliferation could also occur elsewhere.

A long-term solution to Korea’s nuclear problem cannot be achieved by America alone. Nor is it sustainable without the key players of Northeast Asia; that means China, South Korea, the United States and Japan, with an important role for Russia as well. Wise diplomacy will move urgently to assemble the incentives and pressures to bring about an elimination of nuclear weapons and stockpiles from North Korea. It is not enough to demand unstated pressures from other affected countries, especially China. A new concept for the political evolution of Northeast Asia’s regional security order is urgently needed.

North Korea said, on August 25, 2008, that it halted disablement of its nuclear facilities because the U.S. refused to strike it off a list of state sponsors of terrorism. Despite this worsening turn of events in the SPT

process of nuclear disablement, Pyongyang subsequently continued to acknowledge the *modus operandi* of bi-multilateral diplomacy that the Six-Party talks represent for a while.

Now that the DPRK has announced that it will not return to the SPT, no one can be sure whether North Korea can be persuaded to return to the negotiations. Pyongyang should know that it will be more advantageous for them to maintain the SPT process intact.

But North Korea's regime is unlikely to repeat its previous mistake of "confession diplomacy" as happened in the Koizumi-Kim summitry of September 2002. Once before, the North Koreans were burned by Kim Jong-il's 2002 confession of the 1980s kidnappings of Japanese nationals.⁴⁶ They felt that they had only raised new hurdles to normalization with Tokyo, as they were still wary of disclosing the list of enrichment equipment or nuclear proliferation activities.

Hence, it seemed only natural that North Korea not only refused to itemize the Pakistan-supplied centrifuges and components that it had acquired in the late 1990's, but they flatly denied the existence of any equipment they would be obliged to abandon in the next phase of the Six-Party talks. The former U.S. Chief negotiator Christopher Hill opted instead to draw up his own list of what US intelligence believed the North had acquired. On March 1, 2008, Hill gave that list to the Chinese to pass on to the North Koreans, but at a meeting in Geneva on March 13-14, Kim Kye-gwan refused to check off the items on the US list. Kim also denied North Korean involvement in Syria's nuclear efforts. North Korea's tendency toward cheating and defection, so as to benefit from a "free-riding" behavior, was clearly evident in this and other related episodes in the SPT process of negotiation.

Conclusion

While diplomacy needs to be backed up by the most effective possible use of force, with threats as possible tools, it is still the best option for avoiding war. Ironically, the Clinton era US-DPRK missile deal-making was aborted eight years later at the dawn of the 21st century. The Bush era US-DPRK nuclear deal under the Six-Party talks in 2008 may or may not be repeated in the days ahead under the Obama Administration. Hopefully, this will not be the case.

It is both ironic and tragic that the moment of truth arose at the end of Bush's eight years in office. An era of the Bush's controversial foreign policy and security challenges of the post-9/11 War on Terror

came to a close, as the DPRK nuclear issue flared up once again, and the stalemate settled in on the Six-Party talks process in 2009. Fortunately, a personal letter from U.S. President Barack Obama to Kim Jong Il was delivered by the U.S. visiting negotiator Stephen Bosworth to Pyongyang, on December 8-10, 2009, and North Korea reportedly expressed possible interests in returning to future SPT sessions in 2010.

North Korea says, however, that its nuclear weapons programs are a deterrent to threats from the U.S., insisting it will not abandon its arsenal unless there is an end to what it considers U.S. hostility. Pyongyang also wants to forge a peace treaty with the U.S. to replace the fragile armistice that ended the 1950-53 Korean War. The U.S. position is that any peace treaty should be discussed within the Six-Party talks on ending the North's nuclear ambitions. U.S. special representative for North Korea policy Stephen Bosworth, during his Pyongyang visit in December 2009, reportedly hinted at holding such four-party discussions on the peace treaty within the Six-Party framework.

Moreover, this time around in 2009-10, the Lee Myung-bak administration seems to be more realistic and is well aware of the risk and danger of making undue concessions to the North on matters of national security. Hence, a new defense white paper that calls North Korea a “substantial threat,” not necessarily a “main enemy,” was released early in 2009.⁴⁷ Also, a 2008 Lee Myung-Bak-Hu Jintao third summit in Seoul, on the day after the closing of China’s successful hosting of the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, laid out a new regional context for future dealings with North Korea.

Closer strategic cooperation between Beijing and Seoul, vis-à-vis the North Korean nuclear and security threat, is likely to materialize in the days ahead thanks to the Seoul-Beijing rapprochement and the strategic cooperation accord just concluded.⁴⁸ Further tapping of the possibilities and limitations of realigning and retooling of the U.S.-ROK alliance is also underway, with a view to seeking alternative strategic visions vis-a-vis North Korea. Depending on how Obama’s new Asia policy and his strategy toward a “nuclear” North Korea unfold, the future path may not exclude an off-shore global strategy for the United States.⁴⁹

Notes:

¹ Pyongyang’s missile testing in 2009, unlike the first Taepodong I missile testing in 1998, was announced in advance. Both test firings did not succeed in placing a satellite into orbit, despite Pyongyang’s claim to the contrary.

² Zissis, Carin. "The Six-Party Talks on North Korea's Nuclear Program," New York: Council on Foreign Relations *Backgrounder*, October 14, 2008 updated.

³ As for an example of "track two" diplomacy, see the reported conference at UC San Diego in late October 2009, to which both DPRK's Ri Gun and US Ambassador Sung Kim attended. To a similar conference held in Tokyo few years ago, consisting primarily of the private sector academic and think-tank experts on Northeast Asian Security Dialogue, the DPRK official was not invited. See Pritchard, *Failed Diplomacy*, 137-139.

⁴ "N. Korea's No. 2 Leader Says Nuclear Talks Are Over," Choson.com, July 16, 2009.

⁵ As for the contrary stance on optimism, as to "how and why" the SPT will need to be reconvened, see International Crisis Group Asia Report No. 169, *North Korea: Getting Back to Talks*, June 18, 2009.

⁶ Kihl, Young Whan, "Bi-Multilateral Approaches to Defusing Nuclear Crisis: Beyond the Six-Party Talks as Peace Strategy," in Y. Kihl and Hong Nack Kim, eds., *North Korea: The Politics of Regime Survival*. NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2005, 245-267.

⁷ Snyder, Scott A. "What's Driving Pyongyang?" *Council on Foreign Relations Backgrounder*, July 3, 2009.

⁸ As for the Obama-Lee summit talks of June 16, 2009, in Washington, D.C., see: "Remarks by President Obama and Lee M.B. in Joint Press Conference," June 16, 2009. <http://WWW.Whitehouse.gov/the-Press-Office>.

⁹ Snyder, *What's Driving Pyongyang?* Op. Cit.

¹⁰ International Crisis Group, *North Korea Getting Back to Talks*, Asia Report No. 169, June 18, 2009, 5-7.

¹¹ Bentley, Arthur. *The Process of Government*. Evanston, Ill: Principia Press 1949; Truman, David B. *The Governmental Process*, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958.

¹² Olson, Mancur. *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), 1.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ostrom, Elinor, *Governing the commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 6.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Finnemann, Nicole, “2008’s Final Attempt at a Six Party Solution,” *Korea Insight*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (January 2009), 1-2.

¹⁷ Zagare, Frank, “Game Theory,” In Paul D. Williams, ed., *Security Studies: An Introduction*, Op.Cit., 47.

¹⁸ The sources of information on the following analysis are from: *Fact Sheet* “Update on the Six-Party Talks” (2008/369 Released May 10, 2008) Office of the Spokesman, U.S. State Department, Washington, D.C.

¹⁹ David Albright and Paul Brannan, “Disabling DPRK Nuclear Facilities,” Institute for Science and International Security. Washington, D.C. USIP WP Series, October 23, 2007. See appendix to this paper: “How to accomplish disabling of the Yongbyon Nuclear Facilities?” See Appendix below.

²⁰ Ramstadt, D. “North Korea Nuclear Tower is Destroyed by Blast,” *The Wall Street Journal*, June 26, 2008.

²¹ Ibid.

²² “North Korea Nuclear Tower is Destroyed by Blast,” *Digital Chosonilbo.com*, 2008.

²³ “U.S. Ship Delivers Food After Agreement,” *Digital Chosonilbo.com*, 2008.

²⁴ Haggard, Stephan and Marcus Noland. *Famine in North Korea: Markets, Aid, and Reform*. (NY: Columbia University Press, 2007).

²⁵ See, in this regard, “Caution Against Overestimating Pyongyang’s Move.” *NAPSNet Policy Forum Online 08-051A*. 3 July, 2008.

²⁶ On “collective action dilemma” literature, see Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 6. Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work*, 1993, 163-167.

²⁷ Robert Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 167.

²⁸ Putnam, 164.

²⁹ Lee Kwang-ho, “Verification of Pyongyang’s Nuclear Declaration.” 6. *Vantage Point*, Volume 31, No. 8 (August 2008).

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Leon Sigal, “How A Mock Trial Could Turn Victory into Defeat on North Korea’s Nuclear Arms.” *Nautilus Institute Policy Forum Online 08-063A*: August 19, 2008.

³² Ibid.

³³ The information used here comes from Sigal essay, Op. Cit.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ On U.S. North Korea negotiation on the terrorism delisting of the DPRK, see Larry A. Niksch, "The Terrorism List Issue in U.S. Policy Toward North Korea," *International Journal of Korean Studies*. Vol. 9, No. 2 (Fall 2007), 126-155.

³⁷ "Korea 'to Stay on Terror List Until Verification Is Agreed'" *Digital Chosonilbo.com*, July 24, 2008.

³⁸ "Nuclear deal put on back burner: Pyongyang blames U.S. wait, threatens to restore reactor." *Washington Post*, August 27, 2008: A12.

³⁹ As for a more somber yet well-balanced recent analysis for the failed quid-pro-quo settlement between Washington and Pyongyang, resulting in the abortive Sixth Round of the SPT in Beijing, see: Leon Sigal's 2009 Global Asia essay and its analysis, Op. Cit.

⁴⁰ As for my analysis on the issue, see Young Whan Kihl, "Disabling 'Nuclear' North Korea for Regional Balance and Security." *International Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol. XI, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 2007): 94-130, especially 95-100.

⁴¹ On how North Korea got away with not abiding by the IAEA safeguards, required to do so within 24 months of its entry, see Kongdan Oh and Ralph C. Hassig, "North Korea's Nuclear Program," in Young Whan Kihl, ed., *Korea and the World: Beyond the Cold War*, (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1994), 233-250, esp. 235-241.

⁴² Wagheguru Pal Singh Sidhu, "Nuclear Proliferation." In Williams, Security Studies, Op. Cit., 362, 361-375.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 361.

⁴⁵ Anne Wu, Denuclearization, 1-7, 3.

⁴⁶ See Funabashi, Ch 1-3.

⁴⁷ Na Jeong-ju, "Seoul, Beijing to Strengthen Ties over NK Nukes", *Korea Times*, August 8, 2008; Kwang-tae Kim, "China, SKorea Agree to Keep Working on NKorea Deal," *Associated Press, Seoul*, August 25, 2008.

⁴⁸ “Defense White Paper to Call N. Korea ‘Substantial Threat’” *The Chosonilbo.com*, August 29.

⁴⁹ In this regard, see the latest issue of the *International Journal of Korean Studies*, especially, Choong Nam Kim, “Rethinking ROK’s Strategic Posture in the Twenty-First Century” and Patrick M. Morgan, “ReAligning the Military and Political Dimensions of the ROK-US Alliance: The Possibilities.” *International Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol. XI, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 2007): 94-130, especially 29-69, and 70-97.

