

# **North Korea: A Proliferation Failure**

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# Koreans and Nuclear Weapons

- 1945: Hiroshima and Nagasaki: more than 20,000 Korean victims and some survivors still alive
- 1951-53: US almost used 8 bombs in Korea
- 1993/4: US contemplated the bombing of the Yonbyon nuclear facilities
- North Korea believes that nuclear war on the peninsula is possible (US tactical nuclear weapons)
- North Korean leadership believes that nuclear weapons are **weapons of liberation, deterrence and prestige**

# History of North Korea's Nuclear Program

- In the 1950s North Korea sent students/engineers to the Soviet Union to study nuclear technology: influenced by the **Atoms for Peace** speech by Eisenhower at the UN GA in December 1954
- North Korea and the Soviet Union concluded two agreements on nuclear research in 1950s
- Established the Atomic Energy Institute in 1962
- Established a nuclear research facility at Yonbyon in 1964
- Signed the **NPT** in December 1985 under the Soviet pressure: Refused to sign the safeguard agreement with the IAEA until 1992
- Started ambitious nuclear program in late 80s

# The First Nuclear Crisis, 1992-1994

- 1989: CIA suspects North Korea of having a nuclear weapons program
- 1992: North Korea signed the Safeguard Agreement with IAEA
- 1992: IAEA conducted 6 **ad hoc** inspections in North Korea: minor problems
- September 1992: IAEA demanded **special inspections** to be carried out: North Korea refused
- March 1993: North Korea announced its decision to leave the NPT
- April 1993: US and North Korea started negotiations in Geneva

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 20, 1994

Excellency:

I wish to confirm to you that I will use the full powers of my office to facilitate arrangements for the financing and construction of a light-water nuclear power reactor project within the DPRK, and the funding and implementation of interim energy alternatives for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea pending completion of the first reactor unit of the light-water reactor project. In addition, in the event that this reactor project is not completed for reasons beyond the control of the DPRK, I will use the full powers of my office to provide, to the extent necessary, such a project from the United States, subject to approval of the U.S. Congress. Similarly, in the event that the interim energy alternatives are not provided for reasons beyond the control of the DPRK, I will use the full powers of my office to provide, to the extent necessary, such interim energy alternatives from the United States, subject to the approval of the U.S. Congress.

I will follow this course of action so long as the DPRK continues to implement the policies described in the Agreed Framework Between the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Bill Clinton".

His Excellency Kim Jong Il  
Supreme Leader of  
the Democratic People's Republic of Korea  
Pyongyang

# The Geneva Agreement 1994

- October 21, 1994: US and North Korea signed the **Agreed Framework** in Geneva
- Under the Agreed Framework, U.S. agreed to arrange for North Korea to receive two light-water reactor power plants (LWR), and 500,000 tons of heavy fuel oil annually until first LWR came online; the **US agreed to normalize diplomatic relations**
- In return, North Korea agreed to freeze its graphite-moderated reactors and related facilities and to eventually dismantle these reactors and related facilities; **North Korea agreed to remain in the NPT**

# KEDO Projects

- 1997: LWR Project started
- December 2002: US nullified the Framework Agreement
- 2006: construction completely stopped: one reactor was 50% and the other only 15% finished
- Main problems: change of President in the US from Clinton to Bush in 2001
- US Congress dominated by the Republicans did not support the Project

# The Second Nuclear Crisis, 2002-

- 3 - 4 October 2002: US Envoy James Kelly visited North Korea
- 17 October: Kelly reported that North Korea admitted to have a HEU program
- November: the US stopped delivery of oil to NK
- NK announced to reactivate its reactor in Yonbyon
- December: NK ordered IAEA inspectors to leave
- 10 January 2003: NK announced its withdrawal from the NPT, taking effect the next day
- April 2003: NK informed the US that it possesses two nuclear devices and is building more

# North Korean Nuclear Capabilities

- already in early 90s, NK had reprocessing and enrichment know-how and facilities
- It carried out numerous high explosive tests
- It has about 45 kg of plutonium
- North Korea has already conducted three nuclear tests: 2006, 2009, 2013
- Started HEU Program in late 2010 (6-8 kg per year): about 2000 centrifuges
- North Korea has ambitious long range ballistic missiles program (ICBM)

# The US Strategy under Bush

- Goal: Regime change through isolation and sanctions
- Determined to force North Korea to give up the nuclear program first; military option contemplated
- After the first test in October 2006, Bush offered NK to sign a peace treaty with SK, if NK gives up its nuclear program (at the APEC Summit in Hanoi): NK refused
- Offered to talk and delete North Korea from the list of states sponsoring terrorism

# NK Policy unter President Obama

- Second test in May 2009 made Obama choiceless
- Strategic patience: wait and see
- No dialogue for the sake of dialogue
- Pivot to Asia in order to counter Chinese expansion
- After the third test: no or less interest in NK
- Demanding complete and verifiable denuclearization of North Korea

# North Korea's Expectations

- Kim wishes to get a call from Obama
- Hopes to make a deal with the US
  - Security guarantee: peace treaty or non-aggression treaty
  - Political recognition as a normal state
  - Economic compensation for the loss of hard currency earning
  - Non-intervention in its economic affairs
- Insists on having the right to develop nuclear deterrence

# Six Party Talks

- January 2003: North Korea withdrew from the NPT
- August 2003 China started the Six Party Talks (US, China, Russia, Japan and North and South Korea)
- 19. September 2005 Joint Agreement
- December 2008 last meeting was held
- 29 February 2012: Reap Day Deal:
- Failed to be implemented in April 2012

# What to do now?

- South Korea must act and talk with North Korea directly (stop believing in the collapse theory)
- North and South Korea (both are UN members since 1991) need to recognize each other and sign a peace treaty (or a non-aggression treaty)
- Terminate the war-like situation in North Korea
- US and Japan should recognize NK as a sovereign state, not treat as a rogue or criminal state
- US and North Korea should implement the Leap Day Deal from 29. February 2012
- The Six Party Talks is the only mechanism to deal with the nuclear issue of North Korea