

SECURITY CONSTELLATION IN KOREAN PENINSULA: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA’S POLICY ON NORTH KOREA AFTER SIX – PARTY TALKS’ FAILURE

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ABSTRACT

Series of military tension growing in Korean Peninsula between Republic of Korea, State of Japan, and Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has attracted several major powers to get involved, and one of them being the United States of America. However, DPRK or North Korea, had developed nuclear and missile technology, causing massive fear towards states nearby. Attempts to disarm the North had been conducted several times, such as Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) and Six-Party Talks, but all of them seems to fail to fulfill their supposed goal. With the change of regime in the US post – Six-Party Talks, the US government decided to change their course of action in facing DPRK and their nuclear and missile program. With the Foreign Policy Strategy’s Typology concept, this article argues that the US uses *confrontation* strategy to face North Korea’s threats through economic sanction, monitoring, and military actions.

Keywords : United States of America, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Confrontation, Nuclear and Missile Program

INTRODUCTION

North Korea Crisis, as the name suggests, is a regional security crisis caused by Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s series of nuclear and missile tests in East Asia and nearby regions. The first missile test was the launch of Nodong – 1 missile which occurred in 1993 over the Sea of Japan¹. Despite condemnation from the international community, it did not stop there as North Korea continued its

¹ David E. Sanger, Missile is Tested by North Koreans (New York: The New York Times, 1993) <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/06/13/world/missile-is-tested-by-north-koreans.html>.

clandestine nuclear missile development program until recently, in 2017. The most recent test was September 15th missile test over Hokkaido, Japan.

The United States of America, since the start of this crisis, has been involved in almost every peace negotiation for the denuclearization of North Korea. However, US's intervention goes all the way back to the Cold War (1947 – 1991), when there was a struggle for power between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic². Following the defeat of the Empire of Japan in World War II, Korean Peninsula was occupied by two powers with the US controlling Seoul with the rest of the Southern part of Korean Peninsula and the USSR occupying Pyongyang with the rest of the Northern part, and both regions declared independence in around 1947 with the South adopting capitalism ideology and the North adopting communism³, and they were divided with a borderline named the 38th Parallel Line. In 1950, under the approval of Joseph Stalin, the Premier of USSR, Kim Il-Sung as the Leader of DPRK launched an invasion to the South, attempting to “unite” Korean Peninsula under communism, causing the US along with several United Nations' states to counter the invasion. Within a few months, the UN forces managed to push North Korean People's Army (or Korean People's Army) to Yalu River, but the war reached a three – years – stalemate as any progress of the war stalled along the 38th Line because of the participation of Chinese Communist Forces to support DPRK forces⁴. In 1953, an armistice was signed between the warring parties, but there was no formal peace treaty signed until this day.

After the supposed end of Korean War, DPRK became interested in nuclear power, thus began the series of development of nuclear and missile technology to this day, started with the establishment of Atomic and Nuclear Physics Research Institute in 1955 and Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center in 1963 – 1965⁵

² Dates and Events, *Cold War Timeline*, <http://www.datesandevents.org/events-timelines/03-cold-war-timeline.htm>.

³ Keith D. McFarland, *The Korean War: An Annotated Bibliography* (Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2009)

⁴ The State of New Jersey, *In Commemoration of the Korean War: “Freedom is Not Free”*, http://www.nj.gov/military/korea/timeline_1950.html.

⁵ International Atomic Energy Agency, *Research Reactor Details – IRT-DPRK*. <https://nucleus.iaea.org/Pages/Others/Unauthorised.aspx> (July 30th, 1996)

with the support of USSR and PR China. After the 60s, DPRK began independently and massively developed nuclear and missile technology to the point that it worried the international community which forced DPRK into signing Nuclear Non – Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1980s⁶. To disarm DPRK, the US and DPRK signed an *Agreed Framework* in 1994 which demanded DPRK to freeze and dismantle their nuclear and missile program, and in return the US would give energy aid to DPRK. The *Agreed Framework* became the foundation of KEDO where the US, ROK, and Japan became the KEDO Executive Board, but other states could join and give aid to KEDO⁷. However, DPRK later withdrew from NPT in 2003 and restarted Yongbyon reactor, causing KEDO Executive Board to suspend the aid for years until it was terminated in 2006⁸. Seeing the failure of KEDO, the US decided to engage DPRK in diplomatic discussions under the name of Six-Party Talks which started in 2003 and was hosted by PR China. The talks occurred in six rounds, and not showing progress until the fourth round in 2005, in which the US recognized DPRK as a sovereign state, promised not to invade DPRK, and soften their position on DPRK’s “civil nuclear program”. However, this did not last long as situation deteriorate in the fifth and sixth round as DPRK began another nuclear and missile test in 2006 because of sanction on Banco Delta Asia by the US, and the failure of understanding between the US and DPRK regarding verification of nuclear and missile activities in DPRK. Following this issue, DPRK withdrew from the Six-Party Talks and intended not to get back to it⁹. The research question regarding this issue is how the US responded DPRK’s defense policy after the failure of Six-Party Talks. This article made a hypothesis that the US would use *confrontative* type of policy against DPRK in forms of military actions, economic sanctions, and monitoring of DPRK’s activity.

⁶ John Balton, *Nuclear Weapons Program*, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/dprk/nuke.htm> (April 30th, 2015)

⁷ Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization, *About Us: Our History*, http://www.kedo.org/au_history.asp.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Xiaodon Liang, *The Six-Party Talks at a Glance*, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/6partytalks> (July 18th, 2017)

EXPLANATION

John P. Lovell's Foreign Policy Strategy's Typology

Based on John P. Lovell's *Foreign Policy in Perspective: Strategy, Adaptation, Decision Making* book, strategy is "Any predesigned set of moves or series of decisions, in a competitive situation where the outcome is not governed purely by chance¹⁰." In this case, it is barely possible for a conflict to have a coincidental end as conflicting parties have determined what kind of action they should take in facing their opponents to win. In the same book, Lovell also mentioned that there are four base actions a party (in this case, a state) would take during a conflict: *confrontation*, *accommodation*, *leadership*, and *concordance*. To determine which action should be taken, the state would determine on what level their own state's strength and capability is and comparing it with how they view their opponent's strategy.

		State B		View on Opponents' Strategy	
				Threatening	Supporting
State's Strength	Strong			Confrontation	Leadership
	Weak			Accommodation	Concordance ¹¹

Confrontation literally means a hostile or argumentative situation or meeting between opposing parties¹². *Confrontation* is preferable by state A when State A considers itself to be *strong* and considers State B to be *threatening* their identity and interests. In other words, *Confrontation* is the use of the state's *hard power* to press opposing parties to abide to the major party's will, and the use of *hard power* is usually shown through military, economic, or political power. Some favorable actions a state takes during a *confrontation* are embargo (the stopping of material supply towards certain parties), boycott (unilateral action of one party towards certain parties), blockading (prevention of any supply transports of certain

¹⁰ John P. Lovell, *Foreign Policy in Perspective* (Mochtar Mas'oed, Ilmu Hubungan Internasional: Disiplin dan Metodologi, LPP3ES, 1990).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² English Oxford Living Dictionary, *Confrontation*, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/confrontation>.

parties), and armed conflict. As for the last option, it is considered a last reserve when there is barely anything left to solve the issue between states but to have each state firing weapons at each other, but it is considered the least favorable as the chance of material and life losses is inevitable.

Accommodation is a convenient agreement purposed to adapt or adjust to someone or something¹³ with the hope that the said agreement can reduce tension between parties. This type of option is chosen when State A happens to be in a *weak* state and they face a *threatening* opponent. In *accommodation*, conflicting parties will have diplomatic talks with hope to prevent any *hard power* being used.

Leadership means the action of leading a group or organization¹⁴. This type of action is a favored option when State A considers themselves as a *strong* state and they view State B happening to be *supportive* towards State A's decisions. In this case, *soft power* (persuasion and bargaining) is used as the main method of state A instead of violent, *hard power* based, actions. However, some occasions see both being combined in the process.

Concordance can be literally translated as “being of one mind”, which is later translated as an agreement or consistency¹⁵. Concordance option is chosen when State A views themselves to be *weak* and they realize that State B is in *supporting* stand. In this condition, State A will prevent contradictive policies with State B being made to ensure the single – minded state of both states.

North Korea and the US Before and During Six-Party Talks

Hostile relations between the US and DPRK had been going since the Korean War when DPRK invaded ROK on June 25th, 1950 to “unite” both Koreas under communism ideology. Kim Il-Sung as the Premier of DPRK had an approval from Joseph Stalin, the Premier of USSR, to invade the South, which was much of a surprise for the US as the US was in the Cold War against the USSR and thus

¹³ English Oxford Living Dictionary, *Accommodation*, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/accommodation>.

¹⁴ English Oxford Living Dictionary, *Leadership*, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/leadership>.

¹⁵ English Oxford Living Dictionary, *Concordance*, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/concordance>.

believed that the invasion was a part of USSR's plan to dominate global politics. Under the approval of the UN, US and several UN states launched a counter – offensive on the North, but failed and being pushed back all the way to the Southern part of ROK because of the low morale and training of ROK forces and the unpreparedness of UN forces to face the hot summer season, and meanwhile the Korean People's Army (DPRK's army) was well – equipped and well – trained. Because of this failure, US' President Harry S. Truman sent General Douglas MacArthur to lead the UN forces, and change the fundamental strategy of UN forces from defensive to offensive (wipe out the communist' forces to the North), which was proven a success as the KPA was forced to Yalu River, DPRK – PR China border. However, because of the fear of border invasion, Chinese Communist Forces backed KPA in the war and brought the war back to the 38th Parallel Line, causing a stalemate for the rest of the war. General MacArthur sought to destroy PR China along with DPRK in a full – scale war but was fired from duty for disobedience by President Truman before having a chance to fulfil it. With new officers in command of UN forces in Korean War, President Truman began to negotiate with DPRK and PR China to end the war through a diplomatic talk. It was not until July 27th, 1953 that an armistice was signed between the major warring parties, but there was no formal peace treaty ever signed by them to this day¹⁶.

As the US got themselves involved in the Vietnam War in 1955, this became the opportunity for DPRK to develop “peaceful” nuclear technology with the support of USSR¹⁷. Despite so, tension kept growing as DPRK kept provoking both ROK and the US from 1960s to 1980s. Several incidents involving DPRK were the assassination attempt on President Park Chung-Hee on January 21st, 1968, the seize of US intelligence ship *USS Pueblo* two days later, the shooting down of US reconnaissance plane in April 1969, the “axe murder” of two US soldiers by DPRK soldiers, bombing incidents in Rangoon, Burma (now Yangon, Myanmar) in 1983 and in a ROK plane in 1987. Because of these incidents, the US decided to enlist DPRK into their state sponsor of terrorism. Despite high tension between them,

¹⁶ History.com, *Korean War*, <http://www.history.com/topics/korean-war>, (2009)

¹⁷ Lee Jae-Bong, US Deployment of Nuclear Weapons in 1950s South Korea & North Korea's Nuclear Development: Toward Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, <http://apjff.org/-Lee-Jae-Bong/3053/article.html> (February 17th, 2009)

there was once an attempt for reunification of Korea in 1972 conducted by both Koreas after the US declared a relief of tension (*détente*) towards the USSR and PR China as DPRK's allies, causing DPRK to temporarily stop their series of provocations. Three bases of the reunification of Korea during that time were: **peaceful, without foreign influences, and based on national unity**. However, the attempt failed as DPRK unilaterally suspended the talk¹⁸.

The 1985 US intelligence report of DPRK's nuclear activity caught the international community's attention as they forced DPRK to sign the Nuclear Non – Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and followed by US – DPRK signing of *Agreed Framework* in 1994 which would later be the foundation of KEDO¹⁹. The point of the *Agreed Framework* was if DPRK was willing to dismantle all of the nuclear and missile program, the US would provide:

- finance and construct in the DPRK two light-water reactors (LWR) of the Korean Standard Nuclear Power Plant model and, in so doing;
- provide the DPRK with an alternative source of energy in the form of 500,000 metric tons of heavy fuel oil each year for heating and electricity production until the first of those reactors is completed.
- conduct its activities in a manner that meets or exceeds international standards of nuclear safety and environmental protection; and
- provide for the implementation of any other measures deemed necessary to accomplish the foregoing or otherwise to carry out the objective of the *Agreed Framework*²⁰.

In March 9th, 1995, KEDO was established with the United States of America, Republic of Korea, and Republic of Japan as the founding member and Executive Board. In KEDO, other states were welcomed to join the organization and give aid, such as providing funds, goods, and services. New Zealand, Australia and Canada joined KEDO in 1995, then followed by Indonesia, Chile, and

¹⁸ Bae – Ho Hanh, Jung Ha Lee, and others, *North Korea*, <https://www.britannica.com/place/North-Korea/From-1970-to-the-death-of-Kim-Il-Sung> (January 19th, 2018)

¹⁹ However, Kim Il-Sung passed away in 1994. He was later replaced by his son, Kim Jong-Il, who took office in 1997.

²⁰ Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization, *About Us: Our History*, http://www.kedo.org/au_history.asp.

Argentina in 1996. On September 19, 1997, the European Union (EU) joined KEDO with representation on KEDO's Executive. Poland also joined in 1997. In December 2001, the EU extended its membership in KEDO for five years and increased its yearly donation from 15 to 20 million Euros. The Czech Republic and Uzbekistan became members in 1999 and 2000. In addition to its member states, KEDO received material and financial support from nineteen other non – member, contributing states²¹. However, this plan was a failure as DPRK was engaged in an undeclared uranium enrichment program in November 2002, causing KEDO Executive Board to suspend the aid for years, until it was fully terminated on May 31st, 2006²².

Plan to “disarm” DPRK later continued in 2003 as Six-Party Talks was initiated by the United States of America, Republic of Korea, State of Japan, Russian Federation, People’s Republic of China, and Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, with China being the host of the Talks²³. During the first round of the talk on August 27th, 2003, DPRK demanded normalization of relation and a non – aggression pact with the US, but the US rejected this proposal, which was later replied by DPRK with a plan of another missile test. During the second round on February 25th, 2004, Chinese foreign minister and Russia’s negotiator, Vice Foreign Minister Alexander Losiukov, showed a report that DPRK was willing to dismantle their nuclear weapon program, but not the peaceful nuclear program. Regarding this report, the US, ROK, and Japan, which on the previous trilateral agreement agreed on Complete, Verifiable, and Irreversible Dismantlement (CVID), demanded a full dismantlement of any nuclear program of DPRK since they viewed that civil – level nuclear program was less beneficial for economic use and could be a disguise of other activities. On June 23rd, 2004, the third round of Six – Party Talks was initiated, and the US and ROK managed to prepare a set of “step – by – step” dismantling procedure for DPRK that gives DPRK three months of preparatory period to freeze the nuclear programs and a request of transmittal of a full account of activities. DPRK’s Deputy Foreign Minister Kim Gye – gwan stated that DPRK

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

was willing to accept a “freeze for compensation” program that would lead to the goal of Six – Party Talks²⁴.

Significant progress was made during the fourth round of the meeting after the US recognized DPRK as a sovereign state and ensured that they would not invade DPRK on July 25th, 2005 and was followed by DPRK’s returning to NPT and the acceptance of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors back to DPRK in September that year. It took at least one year between the third and fourth round because of tension between the US and DPRK as the 2004 US Presidential Election was won again by President George W. Bush and DPRK had almost no interests to join the Six-Party Talks because of they suspected that the US would try to overthrow Kim Jong-Il’s regime. However, progress began to deteriorate once more as the US gave sanction to DPRK’s trading firm, Banco Delta Asia, and DPRK responded by boycotting Six-Party Talks and conducting nuclear and missile tests between 2005 and 2006. Despite this, the remaining five parties managed to bring DPRK back to negotiating tables and continued Six-Party Talks in February 2007 with an agreement that DPRK, in 60 days, would shut down Yongbyon facility and enlist their nuclear activities in return for heavy fuel oil aid and the US removing them from state sponsor of terrorism and Trading with the Enemy Act list. The sixth round began on March 19th, 2007 which discussed about the mechanism of denuclearization and enlisting of nuclear activities, but this came with no progress as DPRK walked out because of delay of funds’ release from Banco Delta Asia, and a disagreement with the US about the list of nuclear activities and sample collecting²⁵. Despite numerous warnings from the US, ROK, and Japan, DPRK tested the three – stage Taepo Dong – 2 rocket as a part of their civil space program, and the UNSC responded by extending sanctions on DPRK based on Resolution 1718. On April 14th, 2008, DPRK stated that they would withdraw from the Six – Party Talks and will not agree to any previous agreement made during the talks²⁶. It was later followed with official statements from Pyongyang that DPRK

²⁴ Xiaodon Liang, *The Six-Party Talks at a Glance*, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/6partytalks> (July 18th, 2017)

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

had no intention to resume any multilateral negotiations and Six – Party Talks were to be discontinued²⁷.

North Korea's Policy after Six-Party Talks

Following the failure of Six – Party Talks, DPRK restarted the development of their nuclear and missile technology and doing it more eager than before. Meanwhile, a change happened in the US as President Barack Obama won the US Presidential Election at the end of 2008 and entered office in early 2009, replacing former President George W. Bush. This series of events eventually brings changes to the atmosphere of diplomatic relations between DPRK and the US, also DPRK with their neighboring states. However, DPRK was in need of increase of funding, and eventually recognition, from adversaries, donors, and other states, regarding their nuclear and missile program. To fulfill this demand, DPRK eventually used the same, guaranteed-for-success strategy: to cause another new security crisis in the region²⁸. However, being all – offensive towards their oppositions is not the only thing DPRK can do, as DPRK was engaged in multiple bilateral diplomatic discussions with ROK, their neighboring state who they saw as US's puppet state²⁹. The series of diplomatic discussions happening since 2008 is referred by ROK's Ministry of Unification as South – North Dialogue in Korea³⁰, in which both ROK and DPRK discussed various issues regarding their relations, from economic issues, military activities, humanitarian issues, resolving incidents, to plans for reunification.

North Korea during Kim Jong-II's End of Term

On July 2nd – 4th, 2009, DPRK conducted two more missile tests, making them a “powerful message” towards the United States as the tests were

²⁷ Ramon Pacheco Pardo, *North Korea - US Relations Under Kim Jong II: The Quest for Normalization?* (London: Routledge), p. 105

²⁸ Andrei Lankov, *The Real North Korea: Life And Politics In The Failed Stalinist Utopia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 175.

DPRK assumed that the Obama administration will pay less attention towards them and their nuclear and missile goal; meanwhile, what they need to be accepted as a nuclear state is attention from major nuclear states.

²⁹ Peter Hayes, Chung-In Moon, *The Future of East Asia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018)

³⁰ South Korean Ministry of Unification, *South-North Dialogue in Korea*, http://www.unikorea.go.kr/eng_unikorea/relations/dialogue/.

intentionally done near the US's Independence Day. In November 2009, DPRK's media announced that Pyongyang had managed to reprocess all fuel rods from Yongbyon Nuclear Reactor. One year after the announcement, visiting US inspecting scientist received announcement that DPRK had managed to construct a uranium enrichment facility³¹. As a result, UN Security Council passed Resolution 1874 On June 12th, 2009, which contained sanction on DPRK's weaponry, luxury goods, and financial economic activities related to the country's military activities and inspection of DPRK's ships suspected of loading military equipment, but still allowed the trading of nonmilitary and food supply.

Military provocations kept coming from DPRK which eventually caused material and life loss, some of them were including the Cheonan Incident, which is the sinking of ROKS Cheonan, a *corvette* type ship owned by the South, that was sunk by DPRK's submarine – launched torpedo on March 26th, 2010. The investigator team's final report stated that the torpedo used in the incident was DPRK's type CHT – 02D torpedo, and despite the torpedo did not directly hit the Cheonan, the shockwave from its explosion was enough to split the ship in two³². In response towards the incident, ROK government decided to cut all economic trade with DPRK and determined not to lift the sanction until an apology was issued by Pyongyang. Despite this, DPRK refused to apologize, calling the call for apology “an intolerable mockery”, as DPRK denied any involvement regarding Cheonan Incident³³. Following the Cheonan Incident was the artillery – shelling of Yeonpyeong Island on November 23rd, 2010, which killed two ROK marines and two civilians, and injured dozens more. Pyongyang claimed that the shelling was the response towards ROK naval exercise in the sea; ROK admitted the presence of the exercise but claimed that none of the shots were fired directly

³¹ Ramon Pacheco Pardo, *loc. Cit.*, p. 103.

³² Brad Lendon, *S. Korea's final report affirms Cheonan was sunk by N. Korean torpedo*, <http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/asiapcf/09/13/south.korea.cheonan.report/index.html> (September 14th, 2010)

³³ BBC News, *North Korea: 'No apology' for S Korea Cheonan sinking*, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-32013750> (March 24th, 2015)

at DPRK's territory^{34,35}. The bombardment incident was considered one of the deadliest confrontations between the two Koreas since the Korean War and managed to attract attention of major international powers, such as the US, Russia, PR China, Great Britain, and the United Nations, who all stood to condemn the attack on Yeonpyeong³⁶.

To add, DPRK also detained three trespassing US citizens to their territories between 2009 and 2010, named Euna Lee, Laura Ling, and Aijalon Mahli Gomes. Three of them were sentenced to years of hard labor and were not released until high – profile visits from former US President Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter³⁷.

During this period, DPRK and ROK managed to conduct the 74th South – North Dialogue in Korea which discussed various issues, such as the 37th inter – Korean Working – Level Military Talks on October 2nd, 2008, which discussed about ROK demanding the stopping of the slandering of President Myung – Bak and conduct a joint investigation on Mount Geumgang Incident (earlier on July 11th, 2008, Mrs. Park Wang – Ja, a tourist from ROK, was shot dead by a DPRK soldier for entering restricted area). DPRK, on the other hand, demanded ROK to stop civic organizations from sending propaganda leaflets to DPRK territory and threatened to close down Gaeseong Industrial Complex in DPRK if the leaflet propaganda went on. The economic talk was the Economic and Energy Cooperation Working Group talks on March 27th – 28th, 2008 about the implementation of October 3rd, 2007 agreement of Six – Party Talks and ROK's provision of equipment and materials needed for the achieving of October 3rd Agreement. Humanitarian talks during this period was the plan for reunification of separated families over the

³⁴ Peter Foster, *North Korean attack on Yeonpyeong Island is worst against civilians in 20 years*, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/southkorea/8153100/North-Korean-attack-on-Yeonpyeong-Island-is-worst-against-civilians-in-20-years.html> (November 23rd, 2010)

³⁵ BBC, *North Korean artillery hits South Korean island*, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-11818005> (November 23rd, 2010)

Yeonpyeong Island is an island located near the Northern Limit Line (naval border between ROK and DPRK). Throughout history, the island has been a part of territorial dispute between the two Koreas since the 70s.

³⁶ Tania Branigan and Ewen MacAskill, *North Korea: a deadly attack, a counter-strike – now Koreans hold their breath*, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/nov/23/north-south-korea-crisis-conflict> (November 23rd, 2010)

³⁷ Ramon Pacheco Pardo, loc. cit., p. 104

Chuseok day (Korean Thanksgiving Day), and ROK used this opportunity to have an inter - Korean Red Cross talk on August 26th – 28th, 2009³⁸.

North Korea under Kim Jong-Un

After his father's death in 2011, Kim Jong-Un became the new Premier of DPRK and proposed a new, more straightforward strategy: *Byeongjin* strategy, which was to simultaneously develop state's economy and nuclear weapons. He declared that DPRK is constitutionally a nuclear state and would not seek denuclearization goal. This newly issued policy was not denied even by the officials of DPRK to be fundamentally different from Kim Jong Il's government which saw denuclearization as the result of multilateral negotiations with neighboring states³⁹. To prove his commitment to the new strategy, DPRK massively developed their nuclear and missile technology to the point that they managed to test a hydrogen bomb on January 6th, 2016, which was considerably 1000 times more powerful than the atomic bombs used to wipe out Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the end of World War II⁴⁰. Between 2011 and 2017 alone, Kim Jong-Un's DPRK managed to conduct 89 missile tests. This number is way more than his grandfather and father's periods combined, which was only 31 tests⁴¹. On September 3rd, 2017, DPRK managed to conduct their sixth nuclear test which caused a 6.3 magnitude earthquake. Following the test, DPRK claimed that the nuclear device tested was an ICBM-mountable Hydrogen bomb⁴². For the missile program, the latest missile test in 2017 was the Hwasong-15 ICBM, which was launched on November 29th⁴³. Worries rose in internal ROK as their defenses were designed to intercept land-launched ballistic missiles, but not the submarine-launched ones⁴⁴.

³⁸ Special Office for Inter – Korean Dialogue, Ministry of Unification, *South – North Dialogue in Korea No. 74 (February 2008 – December 2009)*

³⁹ Sung Chull Kim and Michael D. Cohen, *North Korea and Nuclear Weapons: Entering the New Era of Deterrence* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2017), p. 114.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

⁴¹ Joshua Berlinger, *North Korea's missile tests: What you need to know*, <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/05/29/asia/north-korea-missile-tests/index.html> (December 4th, 2017)

⁴² CNN, *North Korea Nuclear Timeline Fast Facts*.

⁴³ Joshua Berlinger, *op. cit.*

⁴⁴ Sung Chull Kim and Michael D. Cohen, *op. cit.*

Even having differences with the previous government did not make DPRK stop causing incidents in the border, as DPRK's ships were repeatedly reported wandering around ROK – owned naval territory near the NLL borders at night in 2014. Despite having no weapon contact, ROK warned their nerve – wrecking neighbor not to violate NLL borders⁴⁵. Another incident was involving DPRK's surveillance of ROK's activities as three DPRK drones crashed near Paju and Baengnyeongdo, ROK, in March 2014. One of the drones contained pictures of ROK's military installations and the Blue House, ROK's presidential compound; ROK made this a proof that DPRK was spying on them, but DPRK denied the ownership of the drones⁴⁶. To add, another incident involving North – South border was the land mine incident in August 2015, in which two ROK soldiers on routine patrol were injured after a land mine exploded at the southern side of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). The land mine was suspected to be planted by DPRK's General Bureau of Reconnaissance as a part of internal DPRK government's "loyalty race": the race of winning Kim Jong – Un's attention regarding "crisis manufacturing" plan happening between DPRK's military officials. Experts believed that the provocation was intended to cause conflicts in internal ROK, build up tension, and regularly provoke the South. As a response, ROK relaunched the previously – halted loudspeaker propaganda to invite nearby DPRK soldiers to defect to ROK⁴⁷. Responding to the propaganda, DPRK launched a counter loudspeaker propaganda and a warning missile shot to Yeoncheon, demanding ROK to stop their loudspeaker propaganda. It was later followed by both sides exchanged rifles, artillery, and rockets fire, but no casualties reported from both sides⁴⁸.

⁴⁵ North Korea News.net, *Maritime incursion by North Korean warship sparks tension*, <http://www.northkoreanews.net/news/220229236/maritime-incursion-by-north-korean-warship-sparks-tension> (February 26th, 2014)

⁴⁶ BBC News, *South Korea: Drones 'confirmed as North Korean'*, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-27321668> (May 8th, 2014)

⁴⁷ Lee Sang Yong, Kim Ga Young, *'Loyalty race' leads to land mine attack*, <http://www.dailynk.com/english/read.php?num=13400&cataId=nk00100> (August 12th, 2015)

⁴⁸ Choe Sang – Hun, *North Korea and South Korea Trade Fire Across Border, Seoul Says*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/21/world/asia/north-korea-and-south-korea-exchange-rocket-and-artillery-fire.html> (August 20th, 2015)

Increasing sanctions from the United Nations and pressure from the international community made DPRK thinking of new tactics to fund their nuclear and missile program. To evade more sanctions to be applied on them, DPRK conducted several deceptive shipping practices with several tactics applied to hide the identity of the ships, the cargo being shipped, and the origin and destination of the cargo. Some of the tactics applied were:

- Physically hiding the identity of the ship (mainly through repainting their International Maritime Organization (IMO) identification numbers);
- Ship-to-Ship (STS) Transfer of cargo, which was the attempt to trade cargo at sea rather than ports;
- Falsifying documents related to the cargo and the carrier ships (bills, origins, invoices, list of packages, insurances, recent port calls, etc.); and
- Intentionally disabling and manipulating their ships' Automatic Identification System (AIS) in terms of ships' IMO numbers, names, and more, to hide their ships' movements during transfer of cargo moving from or to DPRK⁴⁹.

Being all-offensive towards their oppositions is not the only thing DPRK can do, as DPRK was engaged in multiple bilateral diplomatic discussions with ROK, their neighboring state which they saw as the US's puppet state⁵⁰. ROK's Ministry of Unification refers the series of diplomatic discussions happening since 2008 as South-North Dialogue in Korea⁵¹. During Kim Jong-Un's period, DPRK and ROK managed to conduct three South – North Dialogue in Korea (No. 75, 76, and 77) discussing many issues ranging from military, politics, economic, humanitarian, and other issues. Several talks included the 38th working – level Military Talks following the Cheonan Incident, 4th Working – Level Talks on the Gaesong Industrial Complex, inter – Korean Red Cross Talk for the reunion of separated families, The Inter – Korean Working – Level Talks for the GIC, the Inter

⁴⁹ United States' Department of the Treasury, *Sanctions Risks Related to North Korea's Shipping Practices*, https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/OFAC-Enforcement/Documents/dprk_vessel_advisory_02232018.pdf (February 23rd, 2018)

⁵⁰ Peter Hayes, Chung-In Moon, *The Future of East Asia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018)

⁵¹ South Korean Ministry of Unification, *South-North Dialogue in Korea*, http://www.unikorea.go.kr/eng_unikorea/relations/dialogue/.

– Korean High – Level Authorities’ Meeting following the Landmine Incident in Paju, and more⁵²⁵³⁵⁴.

US’ Policy after Six-Party Talks

Examining US’ Policy using Foreign Policy Strategy’s Typology

In the case of North Korea Nuclear and Missile Crisis, it is important to address both the US and DPRK into the Typology table. The United States of America is addressed as State A, as for DPRK being addressed as State B, in which the US will examine their own capability in military, political, and economy, and examine the stance of DPRK towards them to later determine a proper measure taken for handling the Crisis.

After the fall of USSR, the US stood as global superpower politically, militarily, and economically. The US is a **strong** state to begin with as their military strength ranks the first, followed by Russia and PR China⁵⁵. The US is also one of the economically strongest in the world despite being in a race with PR China in terms of economic growth with the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reaching US\$ 19.417.144⁵⁶. In terms of political power, being one of major international donors has given the US influence across the globe as the US donated US\$ 32.7 billion in financial assistance⁵⁷. To add, the US is one of the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNCS) or usually referred as the “Big 5” and also one of approved nuclear state in the NPT. At the same moment, the US viewed DPRK, along with their nuclear and missile development, as a major threat towards them and their allies, who unfortunately happened to be DPRK’s neighbors: Japan and ROK. It had indeed started decades prior, but the change of

⁵² Special Office for Inter – Korean Dialogue, Ministry of Unification, *South – North Dialogue in Korea No. 75 (January 2010 – February 2013)*

⁵³ Special Office for Inter – Korean Dialogue, Ministry of Unification, *South – North Dialogue in Korea No. 76 (February 2013 – December 2013)*

⁵⁴ Special Office for Inter – Korean Dialogue, Ministry of Unification, *South – North Dialogue in Korea No. 77 (January 2014 – December 2015)*

⁵⁵ GlobalFirePower.com. 2017 Military Strength Ranking, <https://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.asp>.

⁵⁶ StatisticTimes.com, *List of Countries by Projected GDP*, <http://statisticstimes.com/economy/countries-by-projected-gdp.php> (April 23rd, 2017)

⁵⁷ Ian Bremmer, *These Are the 5 Reasons Why the U.S. Remains the World's Only Superpower*, <http://time.com/3899972/us-superpower-status-military/> (May 28th, 2015)

government in internal DPRK (Kim Jong – Un’s presidential term) brought the issue to another level as DPRK had become more aggressive than ever in developing their Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) and causing tension in the region.

Handling such **threatening** stance from DPRK, the US decided to choose **confrontation** actions towards DPRK as the US could not take any chance of letting DPRK develop nuclear weapons that could threaten the international community. Despite so, the US could not deliberately launch a preemptive attack on DPRK for several reasons, such as the fear of immediate retaliations towards ROK and Japan which could eventually severe US’ importance in the region. Therefore, using their hard power capability to act as a *deterrent* looked more favorable for the US.

Listing US’ Policy on North Korea

In 2009, the US had a change of head of state as President Barack Obama won the 2008 Election and had considerably different approach in handling conflicts: combining diplomatic discussions with hard – power pressure simultaneously. In this case, Obama administration was willing to take military actions to ensure the achievement of US’s interests instead of merely depending on diplomatic talks; like what happened with Iran and Afghanistan⁵⁸. The strategy introduced by Obama administration purposed to confront DPRK is known as “strategic patience”: to wait for DPRK to admit their mistakes and later engaging them in a diplomatic discussion. However, the US did not merely sit and wait for DPRK’s next move, but rather taking several measures to put pressure on DPRK at the same moment.

In 2017, President Barack Obama was replaced by President Donald Trump who won the 2016 election in November, and he certainly had his own way to view DPRK and their policy regarding nuclear and missile program. President Trump viewed President Obama’s “Strategic Patience” as a failure as DPRK kept developing their weaponry to an extent that they were able to build a thermonuclear

⁵⁸ Ramon Pacheco Pardo, op. cit.

During Obama administration, they handled the Iran nuclear crisis by combining dialogue and pressure for the sake of tackling Tehran’s nuclear program. On Afghanistan, Obama announced a troop surge, in which the US troops would be sent quickly as well as being brought home.

bomb. To add, President Trump is known for his hot-headed personality which repeatedly causes tension of relations between several countries. Despite differences with his predecessor, President Trump's and President Obama's ways to face DPRK is like one another. The actions taken can be categorized into three parts: **Monitoring & Threatening Statements**, **Economic Sanctions**, and **Military Activities**.

- Monitoring & Threatening Statements

During the Obama administration, the US started focusing on the intelligence gathering capability of ROK and Japan, and thus with both, signed a treaty on intelligence sharing regarding DPRK's nuclear and missile program. This treaty was brought into table following the cyberattack on Sony Pictures Entertainment in the US, in which the US accused DPRK's associates was the one behind the attack. However, the treaty faced a challenge as Japan and ROK had not managed to relieve the World War II sentiment. In this case, both states later asked the US to be the intermediary for intelligence sharing, for regional security being put as a major concern⁵⁹.

Another action taken by the US was done following DPRK's SLBM launch test on April 23rd, 2016. After the launch, President Barack Obama, during a talk with CBS News, warned Kim Jong – Un that the US can destroy DPRK with US's arsenal alone and demanded him not to get “irresponsible and erratic”. Despite saying that the US was capable to do so, Obama also stated that aside of humanitarian costs from the “destruction”, US's major concern is that DPRK is the next – door neighbor to ROK, US's vital ally⁶⁰.

⁵⁹ Ankit Panda, *US, South Korea, Japan Start Sharing Intelligence on North Korea*, <https://thediplomat.com/2014/12/us-south-korea-japan-start-sharing-intelligence-on-north-korea/> (December 30th, 2014)

Until recently, anti – Japanese sentiment in ROK which is caused by Japanese occupation of Korea in WWII is still around, and Japan has different view towards any history related to WWII. One of Japan – ROK major sentiment is the view on “comfort women”.

⁶⁰ David Blair, *op. cit.*

Sitting next – door with DPRK, both ROK and Japan are DPRK's most vulnerable target for retaliation. Meanwhile, ROK is the US's vital ally, and the US agreed to protect Japan according to Japanese Constitution's Article 9.

Known for his hot-headedness, President Donald Trump has insulted Kim Jong-Un and DPRK several times before and during his presidency. Around one year after NBA Star Dennis Rodman visited DPRK and watched a basketball exhibition with Kim Jong-Un, Donald Trump tweeted through his personal Twitter account, saying that DPRK is “The last place on Earth I want to go to.” During his campaign, he insulted Kim Jong-Un several times more; for instance, he stated in a Republican presidential debate that somebody better start having concern on DPRK and “the maniac sitting there”. He also stated in an interview at CBS This Morning that “China must make this guy disappear in one form of another... this guy’s a bad dude – and don’t underestimate him”⁶¹.

The exchange of insults got more intense as following the inauguration of President Trump, Kim Jong-Un began to reply President Trump’s insults with another insult. Following the July 4th missile test, Trump tweeted that “Does this guy have anything better to do with his life?”, and during an interview at his golf club, he stated that he will unleash “Fire and Fury the world has never seen before” if DPRK made more threats to the US. Following Kim Jong-Un’s decision not to fire missile at Guam, President Trump appreciated this decision by tweeting that Kim Jong-Un made a “Very wise and well-reasoned decision”. The most iconic insults exchange between the two leaders was during United Nations General Assembly, as President Trump referred Kim Jong-Un by saying “Rocket Man is on a suicide mission for himself and for his regime,” and this insult was replied by Kim Jong-Un during his remark speech by stating “I will surely tame the mentally deranged U.S. dotard with fire.” Just hours after this exchange of insults, President Trump tweeted that Kim Jong-Un, “who is obviously a madman who doesn’t mind starving or killing his people, will be tested like never before”⁶².

- Economic Sanctions

One of major sanctions given by the US was following the Cheonan Incident, as President Obama in August 2010 announced the widening of sanction and the freezing of US’s assets belonging to DPRK’s individuals, firms, and other entities

⁶¹ Matt Stevens, *Trump and Kim Jong-un, and the Names They’ve Called Each Other*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/09/world/asia/trump-kim-jong-un.html> (March 9th, 2018)

⁶² Ibid.

involved in trade in armaments, luxurious goods, money laundering, drugs smuggling, and other illegal activities. Several individuals affected the sanction were Kim Yong Chol, Ri Hong-Sop, Ri Je-Son, Yun Ho-Jin, and the affected firms were Green Pine Associated Corporation, Office 39, the Reconnaissance General Bureau, Korean Heungjin Trading Company, Korea Taesong Trading Company, Munitions Industry Department, Second Academy of Natural Sciences and Second Economic Committee⁶³. The sanction was given towards those entities as US suspected that the money gained from the illegal economic activities would be used to fund DPRK's already – condemned nuclear and missile program. Another major sanction given was following the cyberattack on Sony Pictures Entertainment, as President Obama signed an executive order to deny several individuals from using US's financial assets and order the Treasury Secretary, after consulting with the Secretary of State, to impose sanctions on DPRK's government and the Workers' Party of Korea, along with anyone acting on their support. Entities affected by the sanction were the Reconnaissance General Bureau (DPRK's intelligence agency), Korea Mining Development Trading Corp. (DPRK's primary arms dealer as described by the US' Treasury Department), and Korea Tangun Trading Corp. (DPRK's provider of commodities and technology for DPRK's defense and development programs). The affected individuals were Kil Jong Hun, Kim Kwang Yon, Jang Song Chol, Yu Kwang Ho, Kim Yong Chol, Jang Yong Son, Kim Kyu, Ryu Jin, Kang Ryong, and Kim Kwang Chun. These individuals worked for the two sanctioned companies, but not a part of DPRK's top officials⁶⁴.

During President Trump's administration, economic sanctions became tenser as sanctions in his period applied not only to individuals and entities in internal DPRK, but also everyone in the international community who traded with DPRK. For instance, the death of the US' student, Otto Warmbier, after being

⁶³ Arshad Mohammed, *Obama widens U.S. sanctions on North Korea*, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-korea-north-usa-sanctions/obama-widens-u-s-sanctions-on-north-korea-idUSTRE67T3BX20100830> (August 30th, 2010)

⁶⁴ Julia Edwards and Jason Lange, *U.S. slaps more sanctions on North Korea after Sony hack*, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-cyberattack-sanctions/u-s-slaps-more-sanctions-on-north-korea-after-sony-hack-idUSKBN0KB16U20150104> (January 4th, 2015)

The US suspected DPRK to be behind the cyberattack on Sony Pictures Entertainment as the production house was about to release the movie "The Interview", the comedy centered on the assassination plan on Kim Jong – Un.

arrested for “hostile act” and supposedly tortured by DPRK during his visit to DPRK was responded by the US with the passing of Otto Warmbier North Korea Nuclear Sanction Act in October 2017. The sanction banned any foreign entity that conducted business or cooperated with DPRK from trading with the US⁶⁵. Before the passing of the Act, the US government authorized the Geographical Travel Restriction” which banned US’ citizen from travelling to DPRK for the risk of “long-term detention” as tourists. As for people with “certain limited humanitarian or other purposes”, they could apply for special passports to visit DPRK⁶⁶.

On November 20th, 2017, President Trump issued the re-enlisting of DPRK into the US’ state sponsor of terrorism. The sanction was meant to allow the US to impose sanction towards DPRK’s nuclear and missile development. During his speech following his return from the twelve-days trip in Asia, President Trump stated that “North Korea has repeatedly supported acts of international terrorism, including assassinations on foreign soil,” and “This designation will impose further sanctions and penalties on North Korea and related persons and supports our maximum pressure campaign to isolate the murderous regime⁶⁷.” One of the assassinations referred by President Trump was the assassination of Kim Jong-Un’s half-brother, Kim Jong-Nam, in Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA), Sepang, Malaysia, in February 2017⁶⁸.

The re-enlisting of DPRK into state sponsor of terrorism gave the US broader chance to impose sanctions on DPRK months later as the US’ government gave sanctions towards one individual, 13 companies, and 20 vessels engaged in trade with DPRK which worth hundreds of millions of dollars in November 2017. One of the sanctioned companies was the Chinese Dandong Dongyuan Industrial

⁶⁵ Andy Barr, *The House Passes Barr’s North Korea Sanctions Bill*, <https://barr.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/the-house-passes-barr-s-north-korea-sanctions-bill> (October 24th, 2017)

⁶⁶ Yeganeh Torbati and Se Young Lee, *U.S. State Department to clamp ban on travel to North Korea*, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-usa-tours/u-s-state-department-to-clamp-ban-on-travel-to-north-korea-idUSKBN1A60SE> (July 21st, 2017)

⁶⁷ Jeff Mason and David Brunnstrom, *Trump declares North Korea state sponsor of terrorism, triggers sanctions*, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-missiles-usa/trump-declares-north-korea-state-sponsor-of-terrorism-triggers-sanctions-idUSKBN1DK223> (November 21st, 2017)

⁶⁸ BBC, *Kim Jong-nam: Main players in mysterious killing*, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-39048796> (October 2nd, 2017)

which exported more than US\$ 28 million in motor vehicles, electrical machinery and other equipment associated with DPRK's nuclear reactors. Other three Chinese trading companies exported around US\$ 650 million and imported more than US\$100 million in notebook computers, coal, and iron⁶⁹. One month after the previous sanction, the US banned two DPRK individuals (Kim Jong Sik and Ri Pyong Chol) from making any transaction with US' individuals and business⁷⁰.

- Military Activities

Increased provocations committed by DPRK had made the US considering the “display of military might” within the region with expectations that DPRK would eventually not go any further with their provocations. This “display” is basically the increased US military's presence and activity, and the fortifying of US's allies in Korean Peninsula. Fulfilling this plan, the US conducted a series of joint military exercises with ROK and Japan annually or under certain circumstances, such as the Cheonan Incident, the Rim of Pacific (RIMPAC), and more. As for Trump administration, the US and ROK conducted an annual military exercise, the Foal Eagle, on March 1st, 2017, with 31.600 US' military service members participating in the exercise until April 30th. The exercise focused on joint (ground, naval, air) field exercises, and was purposed to increase the readiness to defend ROK, to protect the region, and to maintain stability on the Peninsula⁷¹.

The US also conducted port visits to Hong Kong in 2016 following the Valiant Shield exercise in Guam, but among all measures taken by the US, the most prominent of Obama's period was the Terminal High – Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) agreement with ROK in 2016, which was an anti – ballistic missile defense system. Based on the agreement, THAAD system was purposed for “defensive measure to ensure the security of ROK people, and to protect alliance

⁶⁹ Donna Borak, *Trump administration slaps more sanctions on North Korea*, <http://money.cnn.com/2017/11/21/news/economy/treasury-north-korea-sanctions/index.html> (November 22nd, 2017)

⁷⁰ Donna Borak, *Treasury escalates pressure on North Korea with more sanctions*, <http://money.cnn.com/2017/12/26/news/economy/trump-north-korea-sanctions/index.html> (December 26th, 2017)

⁷¹ Terri Moon Cronk, *U.S., South Korea Launch Annual Foal Eagle Exercise*, <https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1102331/us-south-korea-launch-annual-foal-eagle-exercise/> (March 3rd, 2017)

military forces from DPRK's weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile threats". Despite having signed in July 2016, it was not until May 2017 that the first THAAD battery became operational⁷².

CONCLUSION

Tension in Korean Peninsula has already started long ago, ever since the Korean War, which is the struggle to reunite the north and south Korea under each other's ideology. This war of ideology between the two was eventually backed by two global superpowers at the time, the United States of America (USA) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR). Despite three years of seemingly unending battles, the conflicting parties decided to agree on an armistice, but no formal peace treaty has been signed until today. After the war, as the US participated in another war in Vietnam, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) used this momentum to seek the development of nuclear power. With the help of USSR in the early stage, DPRK eventually managed to reach the level which allowed themselves to independently develop nuclear technology. However, this "development" was also followed by provocative actions by DPRK towards their oppositions, in this case, the US and Republic of Korea (ROK). These provocations were in form of assassinations, terrorism acts, attacks on US and ROK military facilities & vehicles, arresting of US citizens, and more. Despite so, attempts to peacefully unite the two Korea was ever done but failed due to DPRK's withdrawal from the plan.

The focus changed from reuniting Korea to dismantling DPRK's nuclear capability as the world's new concerns were not only on nuclear, but also missile technology that DPRK developed alongside the nuclear program. Thus, the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) was established with the US, ROK, and Japan as the Executive Board. The purpose of this plan was to exchange

⁷² Institute for Security & Development Policy, *THAAD on the Korean Peninsula*, <http://isdip.eu/publication/korea-thaad/> (October 2017)

THAAD is an anti – ballistic missile system developed by Lockheed Martin, a US aerospace, security, defense, and advanced technology company based in Bethesda, Maryland. THAAD system consists of five parts: launchers; missiles; fire control; radar; and support equipment. The reason why this system is favored by the US and ROK is its ability to intercept ballistic missiles being 200 km away and 150 km high, and the radar can identify up 1.000 km missile threats.

DPRK's nuclear and missile technology with heavy fuel oil aid from KEDO member states. However, KEDO was proven to be a failure as DPRK withdrew from both KEDO and NPT and restarting their nuclear program. US officials did not run out of ideas as the US decided to, once again, engage DPRK in a diplomatic discussion at Six – Party Talks. Despite facing a stubborn state as DPRK, the US finally managed to convince DPRK that no invasive action would be taken by the US, to an extent that the US would remove DPRK from their terrorism – sponsoring states' list, and all of this is to make sure that DPRK would eventually cease the nuclear and missile program. However, this plan was proven a failure as later on, DPRK withdrew from Six – Party Talks and further restarted the program.

Following the failure of Six-Party Talks, both the US and DPRK had a change of presidents. President Barack Obama replaced President George W. Bush in 2009 and was later replaced by President Donald Trump in 2017. As for DPRK, Kim Jong-Un, the son of Kim Jong-Il, took his father's position after his father's death in 2011. To add, the new leaders have their own ways to view the tension in the region, and they chose the more aggressive ways to deal with it. Kim Jong – Un decided to do the quite similar plan with his predecessors, but in extent that he would do it more often and more aggressive. This eventually resulted in rapid improvement in DPRK's nuclear and missile program. Along with it, provocations from DPRK kept coming towards their oppositions and the international community, such as cyberattacks, attacks on ships and facilities belonging to the US and ROK, arresting of foreign citizens for trespassing, and rapid missile and nuclear tests, which reached the peak when DPRK blew up their first Hydrogen Bomb (H – bomb). Facing growing threat from DPRK, Obama administration decided to confront DPRK with “strategic patience” strategy, the combination of military actions, economic sanctions, and monitoring of activities to press DPRK into diplomatic discussions. President Donald Trump considered Obama's “strategic patience” a failure and had his own view to stop DPRK from developing their nuclear and missile technology. Actions taken by the US to complete this strategy were the increase of military exercises and presence in and nearby the region, the widening of previously implemented economic sanctions towards DPRK's party and officials involved in the nuclear and missile program, the

freezing of foreign assets belonging to individuals and firms of DPRK, the intelligence sharing between the US, ROK, and Japan regarding DPRK's nuclear and missile program, the US – ROK THAAD agreement, and several threatening statements from the US Presidents.

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