NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR PROBLEM IN REGIONAL AND GLOBAL CONTEXT

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Introduction

The conflict on the Korean peninsula has both global and regional dimensions, since in its origin lay disagreement between the two Korean states and at the same time it has been influenced by the interplay of the major powers that landed support to the corresponding allies. Due to its specific position in the region between China, Japan and on the border with Russia, Korea has been highly attractive as a sphere of influence for each of the major powers. Thus, the developments on the Korean peninsula have for decades been reflecting both regional dynamics of its direct parties and the transformation of the global political system. Moreover, the routes of the Korean division in general lay in the systemic confrontation of the Cold war, when the Korean peninsula became one of the regional theaters of global political conflict.

The region of North-East Asia has special regional dynamics in the Asia-Pacific: the interests of several great powers are tightly intertwined there, including the interests of the three nuclear powers – China, the USA and the Russian Federation. The regional structure is determined by the absence of institutionalized regional mechanisms of confidence-building and cooperation; the relationships between the regional states are maintained mainly on bilateral basis. The regional environment carries the legacy of historic hostility – the Japanese colonial rule and the following Cold war antagonism, which at times contribute to shaping a negative political climate that prevent countries of the region from efficient cooperation.
During the period after the end of the Cold war, with the new international processes coming to the stage – global transformations that occurred in world politics – the Korean problem has acquired new traits. After the Cold war the region of North-East Asia continues to remain one of the most security rivaled regions. Notwithstanding the fact, that it has become one of the powerful economic centers, it continues to represent unresolved interstate disputes, including disputes over territories. Apart from it, the relationships between regional actors are troubled by significant political, economic and ideological divergence.

The Korean problem is very multifaceted. It contains a series of the most complex issues, which modern world politics has to attend to. First, the problem of the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation control and the question of illegal nuclear status are on the agenda. Second, the North Korean regime has been referred to as one of the states sponsoring international terrorism (one of the so called “rogue states”). Third, the problem of democratization of the DPRK and strategies of engaging it into international cooperation are on the agenda. The intricate nature of the Korean problem can be comprised only through bringing together a complex of factors, causes and controversies.

During the whole period of the division the subject of the inter-Korean conflict consisted in the competition of the two Korean states. Each of them pretended absolute legitimacy over the whole peninsular. Presently, it can be claimed that the process of transformation of the Korean problem has been completed to the extent that allows new tendencies to be fixed with an elevated grade of confidence.

Thus, the matters of security which concern the situation in Korea include unsanctioned nuclear status of the DPRK, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation, military regroup in the region (the system of bilateral military treaties between the USA and Japan, the USA
and the Republic of Korea), together with the threat of a collapse of the North Korean regime and political, economic and social problems it would inevitably cause.

**Geographic frames** of the research could be formally limited to the Korean peninsular and the region of North-East Asia, but the impact of the situation comes further across regional boundaries. It seems reasonable to approach the Korean problem also in the context of world politics. Localizing the Korean conflict exclusively within the frames of the Korean peninsular has not been possible geopolitically from the very beginning of the division. Specific geographic position of the peninsular and interconnection of interests of the third parties made regional powers involve in the settlement. North Korean nuclear weapons programme challenges both regional and global security. Though the capabilities of the rogue states could not be compared to those of the nuclear powers – the USA, Russia, China, Great Britain and France – the threat is represented by the very ambition to acquire nuclear weapons by such states as North Korea.

**Actuality of the dissertation** is determined by the necessity of concerning Korean problem within the international contest, where both regional and world powers are deeply involved. First, the problem has not been resolved notwithstanding the end of the Cold war, of which it was considered reminiscence. Second, the issue has undergone through a series of changes in parallel with the post Cold war processes in world politics. Currently it is directly related to the effectiveness of the international non-proliferation regime. The North Korean nuclear problem has had a major impact on the international non-proliferation regime (NPT) development. The restraints and setbacks of the NPT have become evident in course of the settlement of the DPRK nuclear issue and demonstrated the necessity for its revision. The withdrawal of the DPRK
from the NPT was conducted in line with the provisions of the Treaty. Third, the question is interesting from the point of view of a conflict whose parts are regional and global powers against a minor regional state. Finally, the dynamics of the conflict requires constant updates and new analytical work.

The purpose of the dissertation is to examine the international context over the Korean problem after the end of the Cold war. To ensure the analysis political processes within the North Korean state are considered and the impact of the main powers involved constitutes a subject of analysis.

The following research questions thus have been formulated:
1. to highlight transformations of the North Korean political system after the end of the Cold war;
2. give historic comparative perspective of how the nuclear problem arose and was solved in course of the first (1993-1994) and the second (2002-) nuclear crises;
3. examine policy courses the main powers involved in the conflict – namely, the USA under the Bush administration, the Republic of Korea and Japan as its regional allies, China and Russia advocate;
4. outline main strategies to manage and resolve the North Korean nuclear issue

Main concepts and theories relevant to the research and proposed methods of investigation. The main research method implied to the analysis of the North Korean nuclear problem in regional and global context is the systemic approach. International systems are classified both as social and political and are characterized by interdependency of its constitutive parts. The studies of international systems were conducted by R. Aron, M. Kaplan, B. Badie and M. Smouts,
D. Easton and T. Parsons. The empirical approach to the study of international systems focuses on examining the existing international systems, such as regional ones and revealing specifics of international political situation there, balance of power, socio-cultural realities, etc.

Methodologically, it has been important to dissociate from ideological dogmas in evaluation of events, especially, in regard of the nature of the North Korean political regime and its policies, in order to obtain a more realistic picture of the processes that are currently in course there. The development of the North Korean nuclear crisis has been determined by general transformation of the international system after the Cold war, the reshuffle of power in the region of the North-East Asia, by the dynamics of bilateral relations in the region after the collapse of the Soviet union, the increasing role of the USA and China in the region and by political and economic conditions inside the regional states.

Out of the research methods, the most applicable ones include the method of case-study and the method of comparative analysis in historical prospective. The systemic and multidisciplinary approach have been applied for the study of the research questions, since the complicated nature of any socio-political event implies analysis at the interdisciplinary crossroads.

**Bibliography** The North Korean nuclear problem and the international crises that arise around it have been addressed in the literature from different points of view. A considerable part of research suggests approaching the Korean question as a threat to the regional stability and regional processes in the North-East Asia, with a focus at the USA policies towards the DPRK. Other part of analytical works is dedicated to the issues of domestic and international policies of the regional states, studies of political system and foreign policy interests of the North Korean state. Another part of research regards the issue of
nuclear proliferation containment and the future of the nuclear proliferation regime.

The nuclear status of the DPRK has become a challenge for the USA – both as for the nuclear power and guard of the NPT regime, its regional interests of stability in the region and the system of military-political alliances there. The literature on the US policies towards North Korea is numerous and concentrates on several aspects: finding an adequate strategy of dealing with the DPRK, nuclear issue and its impact on the regional stability and the US dominant role in the region, the future of the NPT regime, issues of human rights in the DPRK, the problem of refugees, etc.

The study of the North Korean regime and its transformation after the Cold war has been conducted in the works of Samuel S. Kim, Ruediger Frank, Jin Woong Kang, Asmolov Konstantin, Andrei Lankov, Hazel Smith, Han S. Park and others\(^1\). One of such complex studies is the “The North Korean System in the Post-Cold War Era”, edited by Samuel S. Kim, where different aspects of the contemporary North Korea are reviewed\(^2\).

The analysis of the first and the second nuclear crises emerged over the problem of nuclearization and international context can be found in numerous works by analysts of the Korean affairs: Victor D. Cha, Samore G., Michael J. Mazarr, Nicholas Eberstadt, James Cotton, Charles L.\(^2\)

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Pritchard, Mark P. Barry, Robert S. Ross, Mark E. Manyin. Among Russian experts on the matter important contributions have been the works of Georgy Toloraya, Vorontsov Aleksander, Alexandr Mansurov, Bulychev Georgy, Zhebin Alexandr, Miheev Vasily.

Strategic approaches of dealing with the rogue states have been developed in the studies of Robert S Litwak, John G. Ikenberry, Robert A. Scalapino, George Perkovich, Ashton B. Carter, Richard N. Haass and others.

The documentary basis of the dissertation includes the UN Security Council Resolutions, the International Atomic Energy Agency data and factsheets on the DPRK’s nuclear programme development, international bilateral and multilateral agreements regarding the Korean peninsula, WMD proliferation related documents addressing global and regional non-proliferation regimes.

The structure of the dissertation is threefold. Substantial changes that occurred in the DPRK’s domestic and international circumstances after the end of the Cold war are analyzed in the first chapter. The country found itself in a profound economic crisis, which could be overcome only through modernization and economic reform. North Korea’s positions were complicated by almost complete international isolation as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, and even before – from the year 1990, when the Soviet government established diplomatic


relations with the Republic of Korea. The North Korean regime seemed to be subject to dramatic transformations due to global democratization processes. However, the North Korean regime has survived and managed to keep its closed character even after the death of the first leader of the country – President Kim Il Song in 1994 – when the power was successfully passed to his son, the current leader Kim Jong II.

To analyze the question of the etymology of the North Korean nuclear problem an insight into the origins and motivations of the DPRK nuclear ambitions, strategies, international/national impact is given. The North Korean nuclear problem is, in fact, the issue of unsanctioned nuclear developments that the country leads both for peaceful and, as suspected, also military purposes. Politically the problem manifests itself in a conflict situation, that at times breaks up into international crises. Nuclear development started in the DPRK in the 1960s with the Soviet assistance. In 1974 North Korean joined the IEAE and on the 12th of December 1985 – to the NPT. An overview of the system of international agreements relevant to the mater follows.

**The 2nd part of the dissertation** concerns the situation over North Korea nuclear issue in the context of global and regional politics. The specific feature of the region is the concentration of nuclear powers (Russia, China, USA) and states potentially capable of creating nuclear arms in a short term (Japan, South Korea).

The chapter reviews approaches to North Korea of the main international parties concerned, which are the USA, Russia, Japan, China and the Republic of Korea. Historically, the international context as a result of interaction of the regional powers – the USA, Russia, China and Japan – has been of crucial importance on the Korean peninsular. The national division itself has been the result of global political and ideological confrontation of the Cold war period. The situation of the
Korean peninsula represented one of the regional conflicts, exemplifying block confrontation of that period. The changes of political climate of the Cold war reflected the situation on the Korean peninsula, where periods of political detent were followed by some progress in the inter Korean dialogue.

**In the third part** the Korean problem is analyzed in the context of the new international political situation. Current developments in Korea reflect primarily relationship between the minor state – the DPRK – and the major power – the USA. In the new international political context the problem of North Korean nuclearization came to the agenda. The end of the cold was marked by progress in the control over nuclear technologies, as the competition between the major powers in this sphere seemed to be over. However, several years after the problem of horizontal spread of nuclear technologies came to the global political agenda. In the new international situation the role of nuclear technologies has seriously changed: it can now be used in the conflicts between major powers and minor states, which are often on the marginal position in international relations, as a containment instrument. Such states refer to nuclear leverage in order to secure their international political and economic positions. Regional actors have to address, first of all, the nuclear DPRK. The process of elaborating and approbating mechanisms of settlement of conflicts where nuclear factor is concerned is currently in course in world politics: the existing international law lacks in providing adequate legal basis and effective response instruments to resolve such situations.

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7 The situation over the Iraqi presumed nuclear programme has become an example of the use of force in nuclear proliferation control activities. North Korean has avoided the same destiny – the priority has been (not without hesitations) given to peaceful methods of settlement.
Bilateral forms of dialogue, used during the first nuclear crisis regulation in 1993-1994, showed their general effectiveness. At the same time, positions of such international organizations as the UN and the IEIA were seriously undermined. With the new spiral of nuclear crisis (2002), the Six-party format of negotiating a solution was formed (USA, Russia, China, Japan, South Korea, North Korea), which is able to provide multilateral guaranties of fulfillment of agreements negotiated. The difficulties of the negotiation process are attributed to dissent between the contracting parties that however, manages to arrive at the agreement. However, it has become clear that the prospects of settling the North Korean nuclear problem by the means of diplomacy are in multilateral dialogue framework.

In the conclusion main outcomes of the research and the results of the analysis of the research questions are formulated.
Part 1 North Korea and nuclear issue

1.1. Changes in the international and domestic situation in the DPRK after the end of the Cold war

1.1.1 Political situation: closed character of the North Korean political regime

One of the distinctive features of the modern political development is the problem of the States’ capacity to deal with numerous challenges and difficulties it has to face. First of all, there is still a number of countries, which remain on the sideline of globalization, and, subsequently, on the sideline of modern International processes; the situation is aggravated by the attribution of some of these countries to rogue states. The End of the Cold War was marked by the collapse of several states and visible dilapidation of the role of State-centric model of International Relations. The role of the State in world politics has become an issue of top priority after the end of the Cold war, when analysts started discussions over its rivaled role and capacities, passing some of its functions to other actors. The capacity of the State to fulfill its functions in a situation of dramatic political changes (any critical situation – armed conflict, natural disaster, death of a charismatic leader, etc.) is rivaled and can lead even to the State’s collapse.

In this light the situation in the region of North East Asia proves the opposite – in contradiction to the tendency of the undermined state role, political process within the regional states has major impact both on domestic situation and regional system of relations in general. Thus, the importance of any process of political transformation enhances, as the
regional interaction is directly subjected by the States that form it and political situation that develops inside them.

The particular situation over the problem of analyzing the actual state and developments of the North Korean situation is, first of all, the lack of verifiable information, caused by the regime’s strict control over the informational flows. As any other totalitarian state, the DPRK exercises its legacy and enjoys support inside the country through constantly involving the population into logic, different from the ideas of human rights, personal freedoms and security guarantees.

Thus, when trying to deal with the current situation inside the DPRK in order to understand its policies and create scenarios of how the situation might evolve in the future, it is necessary to take into consideration mostly the impact of its policies on domestic and international situation, in this way drawing conclusions on the decision-making process, the difficulties the political elite has to face and even political and economic resources available. Obviously, this task appears quite hard to deal with and final conclusions might be rather descriptive than documented and easily verifiable. In these circumstances would be adequate a qualitative analysis, rather than a quantitative.

The term “totalitarianism” is used in political science to describe political regimes where the state controls all aspects of social and political life, when the government represses any activities by individuals or groups and maintains itself in power through the use of police, propaganda that excludes any criticism of the regime. Internal and external difficulties are manipulated in order to encourage national unity.
The isolationist tendency is also one of the main traits of a totalitarian regime.\(^8\)

It is noteworthy, that the ability of the state to exercise its functions may become subjected to weakening or failure in cases of original weakness of the state, or because of the adherence to power by the rulers, who do not care for the state affluence. The governing capacity of such states becomes most vulnerable in periods of political unrest. If the state institutions are weak and the existing state legitimacy fails to maintain them, there may emerge a cycle of descending state capacity. The case of North Korea demonstrates the dangers caused by the loosing of control over the territory by the totalitarian leader (for example, in case of aggravation of the economic disaster). In this situation the regime would lack wide popular support and thus will loose its legitimacy. These cases have already been registered in North Korea, especially in the regions close to Korea-Chinese state border, where the control over the movement of population is rather weak. There are also problems with state censorship of the media, which kept the population in an information vacuum for decades, leaving the population only with information provided by state propaganda machine.

A practical long-term goal of North Korea is the maintenance of the existing status-quo, since it permits to save the foundations for the existence of the dominating regimes. The situation is aggravated by the fact that sustaining the functional capacity of the existing regime in the situation of isolation turns out to be beneficial for its regional counteragents. Moreover, the current vector of international migrations shows that in case of a humanitarian catastrophe or the abandonment of

statehood the burden of refugees will be shifted to the neighboring states, as well as to the developed states of the world. In case of state failure and the emergence of a military conflict, neighboring states will inevitably be involved (willingly or not) into it. This model is quite vibrant in case of North Korea, with the destabilization of negotiations on nuclear issues at background. Potential possibility of the North Korean collapse is currently seen as a threat to the regional security.

The State of the North East Asia, similar to other countries, are seriously influenced by the globalization processes, which foster them to a constant “adjustment” to the global development level and generally accepted standards, increasing their competitiveness and through this – their own sustainable development. The imperative of globalization inevitably requires openness of political systems, thus regulative functions of the State have to be reassessed. In case of North Korea, such challenges actually mean a kind of enforces and hardly controlled adaptation, dangerous because of its complex nature and also due to the fact that the DPRK for decades failed to adhere even to global modernization processes. Indeed, almost complete isolation from global processes and global economy obviously has negative consequences for the development of the North Korean State. However, no political organism is static – it exists and develops under the influence of various factors. This statement applies to the DPRK as well, though it is seemingly immune to reforms, both external and internal.

The phenomenon of non-transparency of North Korea is at large explained by the need to sustain the existence of the incumbent political

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10 The empirical part of this research relies on the theoretical findings made by Karl Popper, Hannah Arendt, Carl Friedrich, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Juan Linz, Philippe Schmitter, Guillermo O’Donnell, Terry Lynn Karl and Alfred Stepan, who have elaborated on types of political regimes and their characteristics.
regime under conditions of deep economic crisis and resentment on behalf of the international community. There is a possibility, however, that any dramatic changes (or reforms) will inevitably lead to the collapse of the political system, and, in the gravest scenario, the disappearance of the state with its unique identity from the world map.

The problem regarding nuclear potential of the DPRK, which involves directly or indirectly interests of many countries, is in fact a conflict between legitimate states (including North Korea). The North Korean nuclear problem has not arisen, as it often claimed by the media, exclusively as a result of personal interests of the country’s elite, whose power subjectivity, which is the foundation of legitimacy of the existing regime, is defined by the acting totalitarian leader. Obviously, the “authority leverage” may provide the acting leader the possibility to maintain his legitimacy for an indefinite period. Having lost such leverage, a leader looses a chance to uphold its legitimacy, which may lead to the outburst of the potential of distrust of the regime, and thus provoke social unrest.

The settlement of the North Korean nuclear problem has been closely connected to prognoses of the regime close collapse, which has proved to be wrong. The first crisis of 1993-1995, which concluded with signing the Geneva Agreement, was actually settled with the perspective that the state’s collapse would have happened in the short term.\(^\text{11}\)

North Korea lacks significant economic and political leverages and resources, and thus, can not project an adequate influence on the unsatisfactory external conditions. So, it is likely to initiate a local conflict (with the direct or indirect involvement of great powers) in order to attract

international attention, which may catalyze foreign investment. The initiated conflict helps to create a “negative publicity” by drawing a formally negative image of a country at war, which in future may cause the positive change of attitude of the great powers. Another thing is that the role of the military factor is still very high in the DPRK. Actually, with the come to power of Kim Jong Il, the role of the army has been emphasized on the contrary to the party, whose power has seriously diminished.

The politics of provocation, often employed by North Korea on the world arena, can be regarded as an instrument of coercion on other countries. Moreover, even when it advances to the level of international interaction, the DPRK aims at short-term goals only, – which is proven by the fact of its formal participation in numerous international organizations. For example, North Korea is a member to the UN and regional organizations, and formally exercises diplomatic and consular relations with many countries.

In general, the wreckage of internal stability of the non-transparent states may become a potential threat to regional security, since it is the State which, regardless of the type of governance and political regime, acts as a levering mechanism of the conflict potential. This is performed regardless of the parallel existence of another trend in modern International Relations, where the State has to compete with new non-state international agents. The threat of statelessness or the dilapidation of the State is the inability of non-transparent states to control the upsurge of its conflict potential to the level of open fire and non-contained hostility. The State acts as a managing lever of the conflict potential of the territory, and in case of its weakening or failure internal political processes become uncontrollable.
In the 1990s the North Korean State demonstrated an exceptional stability of state power, while the collapse of socialist systems and the chain reaction it caused made many experts believe that the failure of DPRK was imminent. The domestic situation an the international environment seemed to be complicated – hard economic situation and food shortage and the death of Kim Il Sung, missing international political and economic backing after the socialist system fall down.

The course of social and political transformation in the DPRK has been certainly based on the principles of Confucianism. The North Korean state, generally considered a communist or a socialist state combines in its ideology main traits of the above mentioned ideas together with strongly inherited Confucian traditions.

The Korean reality before the proclamation of independence was the one of traditional Confucian one and later on was used for the state-building and implemented in the formula of the “family-state”. The state tried to employ fundamental Confucian ideals and practices as ideological resources\(^{12}\).

Even the transfer of power from Kim Il Sung to Kim Jong Il was effected in the line with the Confucian father-to-son tradition. When Kim Il Sung passed away in 1994 analysts argued that the North Korean system would collapse and his successor would hardly be able to succeed to power. However, Kim Jong Il came to power without any dissident movement against him in witness.

Political system of North Korea under Kim Jong Il is different from what it used to be in the times of Kim Il Sung, who managed to establish his absolute leadership by the beginning of the 1970s. The leadership of

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Kim Il Sung since was unrivaled and absolute. In effect, the legacy of Kim Il Song as the founder and the first President of the State has remained preserved after his death: the legacy of his son’s political leadership seem to be based on the premise that he would follow the line of his father\textsuperscript{13}. The North Korean system was created as dependant on the single leader and to be stable needs to maintain the memory of his accomplishments in order to remain stable.

The end of the Cold war brought significant changes in the position of North Korea: international isolation and a systemic economic decline as a result of the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the communist block. With the loss of the main trade partners the DPRK has to look for alternative ways of survival. A series of natural disasters contributed to the fact, that the government could no longer guarantee a level of subsistent for the people. The end of the Cold war has posed the problem of new security allies and security guarantees: the new leadership had to take measures to assure both international and domestic security. After the death of Kim Il Sung, whose authority in the national army was strong, the new leader had to consolidate the government, the party and the army around himself to guarantee the preservation of the North Korean system\textsuperscript{14}. There has been a rotation of personnel: a new generation has entered the power set-up, particularly at the middle level.

The amendments made to the Constitution of the DPRK of 1972 reflect noticeable changes in the leadership structure and government


\textsuperscript{14} Kim Jong Il was born in 1942 in the Soviet Union – the fact that is denied by the official North Korean version of his biography. He graduated from the Kim Il Sung University in 1964, majoring in political economy. Kim Jong Il was promoted a successor to his father from the middle of the 1970s. In 1991 he was appointed the Supreme Commander of the armed forces. In 1993 – the Chairman of the National Defence Committee (NDC). In 1997 Kim Jong Il became the General Secretary of the Workers’ Party of Korea.
First of all, the office of the President was abolished and Kim Il Sung proclaimed in the Constitution’s preamble the “eternal President” of the State.

National Defense Committee (NDC) is the central military body of the State. Kim Jong Il himself occupies the post of the Chairman of the NDC and is in charge of the national armed forces. The Supreme People’s Assembly (SPA) has remained the central legislative body of the government and the supreme authority of the state. The Chairman of the Standing Committee of the SPA has acquired some functions typical of the head of the state, such as receiving foreign envoys, ratifying or abrogating treaties concluded with other countries, instituting honorary titles and diplomatic ranks. The head of the State in the DPRK is in fact represented by the SPA Presidium – a collective body. The SPA Presidium is the highest organ of power in the intervals between sessions of the SPA. Thus, the DPRK has shifted from being a presidential republic to parliamentary republic.

Changes occurred in the relationship between the party, the military and the government. The Korean Workers’ Party (KWP) was the center of power during the Kim Il Sung rule. The edited Constitution still confirms that the nation is lead by the KWP. The Party’s leading role has been taken over by the military. Kim Jong Il was appointed the KWP’s General Secretary in 1997 with a simple announcement by the Central Committee of the party – without a party conference or a central Committee meeting.

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16 DPRK’s Socialist Constitution, Article 110.
17 DPRK’s Socialist Constitution, Article 106.
18 Kim Jong Il is not the head of the State, as many journalists and even analysts sometimes mistakenly claim.
19 DPRK’s Socialist Constitution, Preface: “The DPRK and the entire Korean people will uphold the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung as the eternal president of the Republic, defend and carry forward his ideas and exploits and complete the Juche revolution under the leadership of the Korean Workers’ Party.”
The KWP’s central Committee has not been called in full session from 1993\textsuperscript{20}.

In fact, the military have considerably consolidated their position in the government. The security concerns increased from the beginning of the 1990s have contributed to professional military officers’ engagement in the government. In the situation of the changing international environment and domestic economic hardships emphasized by the natural disasters, only the army could safeguard both internal and external security of the regime. Kim Jong Il introduced the “songun policy” (military-first politics, or the priority of the arms, of a gun policy), aimed at promoting the army and the military sector in general, including military build-up and production, as the pillar of the State.

The amended Constitution adopted on September 5\textsuperscript{th} 1998 by the first session of the 10th Supreme People’s Assembly also reveals the effort made by the DPRK government to revive the economy in recession. In the first half of the 1990s it became evident that the continuation of the previous economic policies, based on mobilizing domestic resources, self-reliance and holding campaigns such as the “Arduous march” (1994-1997) and the “Forced march” in 1998, failed. It should be underlined that there are no economic reforms in course in North Korea, but certain adjustments made by the government in order to handle challenges that have arisen recently. The Constitution (1998) stipulates that the DPRK economy is self-sustaining; however, a new provision that guarantees private property has been added. The private property regards the property for individual possession and consumption of the citizens\textsuperscript{21}.

\textsuperscript{21} Article 24: “Private property is confirmed to property meeting the simple and individual aims of the citizen. Private property consists of socialist distributions of the result of labor and additional benefits of the State and society. The products of individual sideline activities including those from the kitchen gardens of cooperative farmers and income from other legal economic activities shall also belong to
From the end of the 1990s North Korea has taken important measures to provide survival of the national economy. Besides other activities, the crucial point was the historic meeting of the North and South Korean leaders in June 2000 on Pyongyang, which has been for the first time since the history of divided Korea\textsuperscript{22}. The meeting gave momentum for the further diplomatic expansion of the DPRK, which resulted in establishing diplomatic relations with most of the European countries, Canada, Brazil, New Zealand, Philippines and others. The initiatives to enlarge the contacts with the international community had a practical goal of contributing to the revival of the DPRK’s economy through attracting loans, investment through specially created economic zones. The 2002 “July 1 Measures” – the initiative that introduced special economic zones in Sineuiju, Geumgang mountains and Gaesong sought to improve economic conditions through measures of openness\textsuperscript{23}. The measures included the abolishment of fixed prices (including the prices of general products, such as rice) and the rise of wages to adjust the prices. Another significant measure was the emergence of markets in North Korea, which was preciously prohibited. Currently markets operate countrywide and deal not only with the products of farming or kitchen gardens, but with industrial goods as well (factories can sell a part of their surplus in the markets). Finally, the system of centralized planning has shifter towards a higher grade of autonomy for provincial entities and enterprise in making decisions.

The Measures testify that the North Korean government is aware of the shortcomings of a planned economy and is trying to improve its

\textsuperscript{22} On June 13-15 2000 South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung and the North Korean leader Kim Jong Il held talks in Pyongyang.

\textsuperscript{23} Yoon Hwang, Kim Il-gi. North Korea’s Reform and Openness after July 1, 2002 Measures // Korea Focus, Summer 2006, pp. 96-111.
investment climate. The path North Korea has taken is of gradual marketization of its economy and would inevitably lead to further openness that might start bringing into the country capitalist practices, which in itself can catalyze changes in the way of thinking in the DPRK. The North Korean government has demonstrated itself inclined to follow reforms gradually, without accelerating the process and under strict control – the activities in the special economic zones and the movement of the citizens are regulated. The reforms were introduced in order to put under regulation the process that had been already in course in the country due to its deepening economic crisis, when the state was no longer able to assure individuals and enterprises their necessities. And although the changes have been partial, the previous economic mechanisms with the economic planning system.

1.1.2 Prospects of reform and international engagement

The North Korea political system, as every social system, is subjected to the processes of change and continuity. Changes might occur on different levels, but a considerable change is entitled to bring changes in the political system’s fundamentals – values, governing mechanisms, functions and processes. Obviously, any fundamental changes require deep transformation, break of the former values and structures, which might occur through dramatic events, such as a war or a revolution. Each system tends to reproduce itself constantly, on the basis of many interlocking structures that guarantee self-preservation. James Rosenau

evidences parameters of a system, which preserve it and “prescribe the goals, means and resources of the system’s role-occupants, including the mechanisms of enforcement”\(^2\). As a result, a system is reproduced on the basis of its fundamental parameters that guarantee its preservation. Thus, it is important to identify and examine characteristic features of the North Korean system to analyze the way it works and the possible evolution.

The principal question to pose is the stability of the North Korean regime and its capacity of maintaining control over its territory and population. In such an analysis, the crucial matter is if the regime manages to survive as a sovereign political entity with its unique features. However, it is necessary to point out that a number of distinct changes have taken place in the DPRK since Kim Jong Il came to power. Although definitely with a strong orientation to the traditional political course, the system subjected notable alterations.

The amendments to the Constitution of the DPRK of 1972, adopted by the Supreme People’s Assembly on the 5\(^{th}\) of December 1998, introduced a preamble where Kim Il Sung is proclaimed “eternal President” of the nation and the DPRK itself is named “the Kim Il Sung State”\(^2\). The traditionally privileged Korean Workers’ Party (KWP) has lost its usual influence while the power vacuum has been filled by the military. In 1998 and 2003, there were the elections to the Supreme National Assembly. Their results have shown that the new power headed by Kim Jong Il, the chairman of the State Defence Committee and the General secretary of the Korean Workers’ Party, has stabilized. The changes introduced to the Constitution of the DPRK had a high legal status. However, actual power in North Korea is in the hands of the

\(^2\) James Rosenau, p.79.
\(^2\) The first DPRK constitution was adopted on the 8\(^{th}\) of September, 1948. It was substituted in 1972 by the new Constitution. The 1972 socialist constitution is still in force. Amendments were made in 1992 and 1998.
military. The role of the KWP has been reduced to the organizational and ideological support of Kim Jong Il’s decisions and those adopted by the National Defence Committee which he heads. The “songun policy” (the priority position of the army) proclaimed in 1995 has led to further militarization of the entire socio-political life in the country.

However, it can not be claimed that there is a military rule in the DPRK. It is rather the reliance on the military. However, the proclamation of the songun policy (the priority of the army, the priority of the gun), the strengthening of the army and the military in all spheres of life – economy, politics and culture – are a sure confirmation of the DPRK’s continuing militarization. The slogan “The Army is the party, the people and the state” is in effect a reflection of the role played by the military in North Korean society. This role continues to gain strength\(^\text{27}\). The role of the army is not limited to fulfilling military functions only. The army has been actively involved in economic activities, mainly construction. Along with the need of strengthening national defence, the army can be regarded as a conservative and reliable force to prevent social unrest or any domestic instability in course of overcoming of the present socio-economic crisis in the country.

Ideology in North Korea remains the main instrument of securing the political regime legitimacy. The Constitution underlines that the DPRK is the country has “Kim Il Sung’s Juche state construction ideology”\(^\text{28}\). The Juche ideology, thus, remains unrivaled. However, as it used to be in the Kim Il Sung era as well, ideological dogmas are being evolved, added and/or reinterpreted in accordance with current realities. The new introduction has been the “songun policy”. At the same time, the

\[^{27}\text{The Korean People’s Army accounts for 1.2 million men.}\]
\[^{28}\text{DPRK’s Socialist Constitution, Preface.}\]
ideological pressure is reported to have eased: many Koreans avoid mass meetings they were obliged to visit before, are more open to foreigners, social scientists’ discussions appear more spontaneous, etc. At the same time, the North Korean mass media remain strictly controlled by the State – the DPRK has been classified 195 out of 195 by the Freedom House “Freedom of the Press 2007” rating. The Constitution guarantees freedom of speech, but in practice these rights are nonexistent: the media is run by the state, radios are permanently fixed to state channels, and all publications are subject to strict supervision and censorship. As regarding general situation with human rights in the DPRK, the resolutions adopted by the UN every year continue to express serious concerns at persistent reports of human rights violations in North Korea.

There are no known associations or organizations other than those created by the government. Strikes, collective bargaining, and other basic organized-labor activities are illegal. Still, it is thought that North Korea has taken a step away from the classical model of a totalitarian state. The state ideology of Juche, which was initially a version of Marxism, has been gradually transformed in a specific teaching – the outcome of the Korean tradition. Political course of the DPRK continues to move in the direction of nationalism with an emphasis on the national exclusiveness of the Koreans. North Korean propaganda claims that a powerful state has already been built in the sphere of ideology (the Juche ideas), the military sphere (the fortress). The third component of the powerful state concept, economy, is in the state of realization.

29 Such judgments based on personal experience can be found in the works of A. Lankov, S. Kurbanov, A. Mansurov and others, who visited North Korea recently.
A number of government measures, aimed at making certain changes in the economy, have been implemented. The analysis of the North Korean current state of affairs requires an outlook of domestic and international causation of the transformations in social, economic and political spheres that occurred in the country after the end of the Cold war. Some experts argue that what is now taking place in the DPRK is in fact a building of market practices, when individuals and entities enter into private economic relations with other individuals or entities. North Korea went through a series of economic difficulties after having lost contributions from trade with the ex-communist countries. A series of natural disasters contributed to the worsening situation and the state eventually was unable to provide basic need of the population. The response to the critical situation was the request for broad international assistance, both from states, international organizations, and the NGOs.

The government eventually had to accept as inevitable the situation of the state-guaranteed provision system to be abolished giving place to primitive market interactions of the population. The state, unlike it happened in other countries with stately controlled economies, for long refused to recognize the changes that had already occurred and the sphere of market exchanges has not been regulated by any legislation until the amendments to the Constitution of 1998.

In the beginning of the 21st century DPRK has taken numerous activities to open itself to the global community: diplomatic relations with most EU countries, Philippines, Canada, Brazil and others were established. In economy, a series of measures were introduced, culminating in the “July 1 Measures” in 2002. The scope of diplomatic

activities and the attempt of economic reform were aimed definitely at improving North Korea’s economic situation through broad international backing and gradual moves in economic management.

The objects that the DPRK pursued after announcing of the “July 1 Measures” include:\(^{32}\):

1. Readjustment of prices in compliance with production costs, but also international prices and supply-demand situation (an element of market economy).

2. Increase of incomes in order to adjust them to the increased living costs, but also on the economic sector basis and performance-based.

3. Legalization of markets, previously absent in the country. Currently over 300 markets are reported to operate in North Korea.

In general, the issue of reformability of the North Korean economy is under question. It is widely argued that North Korea might successfully follow the Chinese path of reforms. However, it would pose threats to the North Korean system, that its leaders might consider incompatible with maintaining the unique regime’s features. The move toward introduction of new principles in economy regulating does not imply that full-range economic reforms occur in the short term. It is acknowledged, that in case of North Korea the probability of reforms may be discussed rather in the middle or long term. Some changes have occurred recently, including the significant July 1\(^{st}\) 2002 measures, however, it could be hardly claimed

\(^{32}\) See Yoon Hwang and Kim Il-gi. North Korea’s Reform and Openness after July 1, 2002 Measures // Korea Focus, Summer 2006, pp. 96-111.
that the DPRK’s economy has entered the path of reform: the changes have not matured in real policy changes and have been extremely partial.

After the death of the charismatic leader – Kim Il Sung – the power has been passed to his successor smoothly and there are no visible signs of struggle for power inside the elite. The stability of political situation in the country does not offer opportunities for reform that appears when a change of leadership through competition for power occurs. The system of North Korea is highly institutionalized, which is not an advantage in changing economic course. In fact, the regime in the DPRK has been stable and the institutions have been maintained non-interrupted for the whole period of the system’s being.

The economic structure of the DPRK also contributes to making reforms a difficult enterprise. In North Korea reforms have to be concentrated on the industrial sector, which would need investment, modernization and reorganization of management system. Military spending is highly disproportional. The exact data is not available, since the DPRK government does not provide information, but defence spending of the DPRK is estimated to constitute around 25% of the country’s GDP. DPRK give priority to the development of military sector over economic goals: it has repeatedly demonstrated scarce interest in a sustained economic recovery and its short-term and immediate benefit oriented tactics.

Finally, the attitude of international environment can be estimated as twofold: on the one hand, improvement of situation in the DPRK – economic reforms, normalization of situation with the human rights, etc. is advocated, on the other hand, there is not any strong commitment to

31 If compared to China, whose experience of reforms is often put as a possible way for North Korea to follow, the DPRK’s economy is highly urbanized. See Robert Dujarric and Young-Ho Park. North Korea’s Reformability in Comparative Perspective // Korea and World Affairs, Spring 2005, p. 57.
contribute to reforming North Korea (with the exception of South Korea that is particularly sensible to any changes in the North). Obviously, economic reforms do not limit their impact only to the economic sphere: as it happened in former socialist countries, economic transformation eventually undermined and destroyed communist regimes. When the State’s monopoly over economic management is rivaled, the authority of the government and the Party inevitably weakens. Other actors are to acquire growing influence in the policy-making process – private businesses, foreign corporations – that would lead to the decline of the leader’s role and, eventually, undermine the institutionalized top-bottom power structure of the DPRK. This would happen due to the widening gap between the official ideology and the reality of reforms, destroying coherence and thus bringing conflicts.

The isolation that the DPRK keeps from the outside world has been kept through all the history of the State. It is especially strict in case of interaction of North Korean with their co-nationals from South Korea. The risk of ideological contagion through international exchanges makes the government prevent any contact of its citizens with the external world. The DPRK’s government, though highly protective of its self-help economic system, realized that in order to survive and to develop it is necessary to be engaged in international economic system. The contradiction is between this economic imperative and the regime’s closed character has been overcome through the policy of an enclave opening to the external world.

If the efficiency of the North Korean economic system increases due to broad foreign cooperation, promoting functioning of economic

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34 North Korean citizens are kept out from the Mt. Geumgang tourist area that is visited by South Korean tourists.
institutions based on the principles of transparency and accountability, political freedoms might also appear in the conditions of liberal market economy situation. Moreover, in the current situation of a slow marketization, the absence of legal basis for market activities, adequate banking, legal and judicial system might lead to negative consequences, that would be later hard to cope with (illegal business, corruption), which might finish in destabilization in the country.

The experience of newly industrialized countries shows that an authoritarian regime is entirely compatible with the possibility of economic development. The question then arises: what should the result of economic collaboration be – a change of the political regime or a change of the economic system?

With globalization and regional integration growing stronger, it is important that the path of a nation’s development be chosen by taking into consideration the experience of other countries with similar structure. There are several projects of regional involvement of North Korean economy, such as the Gaesong Industrial Complex situated on the border between the DPRK, China and Russia or joint energy projects (a pipeline through the DPRK territory). However, any changes in economic management in the DPRK, although facilitated by the international support and involvement, have to gain ground inside North Korea with favorable conditions created. International economic cooperation could foster such conditions, but it would be difficult to expect changes as they might mean the absorption and disappearance of the North Korean regime. For this reason, purely economic collaboration will not have the desired effect. North Korea fears that integration will ruin the regime’s basics and thus continues to use economic ties with only partial efficiency – mainly as a means of gaining short-term goals and one-time profit.
facilitate North Korea’s participation in international exchanges it is essential that the expansion of economic ties is accompanied by a political breakthrough in the outside world. In this light, recognition of the DPRK by the United States and Japan and normalization of relations would be helpful

On the contrary, imposing economic sanctions has proved its little efficiency in changing the situation in the North. In case of the “rogue states” against which they are used, such sanctions would rather lead to lowering the people’s standard of living and thereby destabilizing the regime. The reliance on economic sanctions therefore seems erroneous, since they do not frighten North Korea.

The effectiveness of sanctions against the DPRK has been low and has not achieved the aim of discouraging North Korea from its nuclear programme or any other illicit activities. Imposing sanctions has rather had the opposite effect. Moreover, the failure of a hard approach that may result in noticeable changes may lead to irreversible consequences that would be hard to deal with

However, in view of recent changes the maintenance of status quo also seems troublesome. The revival of the North Korean economy is essential and crucial for the survival of the DPRK’s political system in general.

1.2 Nuclear issue

35 Asmolov Konstantin. Russian and South Korean Scholars on Today’s Problems of North Korea and Interkorean Relations // Far Eastern Affairs, 2006, No. 4, p.140.
1.2.1 An insight into the history of the problem. Nuclear ambitions: origins and motives

To analyze the question of the etymology of the North Korean nuclear problem an insight into the origins and motivations of the DPRK nuclear ambitions, strategies, international/national impact is given. The North Korean nuclear problem is, in fact, the issue of unsanctioned nuclear developments that the country leads both for peaceful and as it is suspected, also military purposes. Politically the problem manifests itself in a conflict situation that at times breaks up into international crises. Nuclear development started in the DPRK in the 1960s with the Soviet assistance. After the Korean War Kim Il Song, and especially in the late 1960s and early 1970s efforts to develop the science and technology needed for nuclear weapons and missiles were undertaken. North Korea started focusing more on self-determination and, especially, on self-defense.

At the same time, the other Korean state – South Korea, against which the fight for legitimacy was lead for decades, started its rapid and successful economic break-through and by the middle of the 1970s surpassed the North both in the indicators of economic development and in military might. North Korea had strong and numerous conventional military potential, but technically elevated industrial basis of the Republic of Korea and its commitment to the alliance with the USA permitted Seoul to guarantee an actual supremacy. The United States deployed nuclear weapons to South Korea in 1958 (remained until 1991). North Korean vision of nuclear threat from the USA contributed to its national nuclear programme development.
The Korean nuclear program can be divided into four main stages: 1) inception (the 1950s), 2) indigenous accumulation of knowledge and technical expertise (early 1960s-mid-1970s), 3) rapid expansion (late 1970s-early 1990s), and design switch/maturation (from 1994). From the beginning of the 1950s North Korea started creating technological and institutional base for its nuclear development program. The Atomic Energy Research Institute was established in 1952. Pyongyang began to send scientists and technicians to the Soviet Union there for education and training. Soviet help included establishing a an atomic energy research complex in Yongbyon, which was part of the cooperation agreement concluded between the USSR and the DPRK. In 1965 a Soviet IRT-2M research reactor and other facilities were assembled for this center. From 1965 till 1973 enriched fuel supplied to the DPRK for this reactor. In the 1970s Pyongyang received a plutonium reprocessing technology from the USSR. From the 1980s North Korea scientists were able to conduct independent researches and modifications of nuclear technologies available at the time. In the middle of the 1980s Pyongyang began construction of a 50MW(e) nuclear power reactor and expanded its uranium processing facilities. In the 1980s North Korea began to construct facilities for uranium fabrication and conversion. In 1974 North Korean joined the IEAE and on the 12th of December 1985 – to the NPT (Pyongyang agreed to sign the NPT exchange for Soviet assistance in the construction of four light water reactors). The DPRK

40 According to the Treaty’s provisions, a new member must sign the Guarantee Agreement with the IEAE within a 18-month period that regard control over its nuclear activities and implies regular inspections by the IEAE experts. Meanwhile, in the DPRK’s case the process took the unprecedented 7
had to provide an initial declaration on nuclear facilities and materials available and to provide access for the IAEA inspectors in order to verify the declared status. Inspections started in May 1992 and concluded in February 1993. The IAEA experts found out several incorrect data regarding plutonium procession and requested access to two suspect nuclear waste sites (reprocessed plutonium), North Korea rejected inspections.\textsuperscript{41}

North Korea’s nuclear arms programme includes developing ballistic missile technologies, which causes particular concerns due to its presumed ability to deliver nuclear warheads. North Korea possesses short and intermediate-range missile systems (medium-range Nodong missiles), but it is not clear if it has acquired capabilities of delivering nuclear weapons with its ballistic missiles. However, according to the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency, a two-stage Taepodong-2 could reach part of U.S. territory and a three-stage missile could strike the continental part of the United States. North Korea is reported to be able to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) by 2015.\textsuperscript{42} According to the Center for Nonproliferation studies at least two other mobile missiles are being developed, which would rise up North Korea’s military capabilities. Currently, the missiles available to North Korea can theoretically strike the territory of Japan South Korea.

The missile development program in the DPRK started in the 1960s with the USSR’s assistance: the Soviet Scud-B missiles were passed to North Korea, however, it is not clear whether they were received from Egypt or the USSR. China transferred to North Korea’s surface-to-air and


anti-ship missiles. North Korea has received missile technology or materials from Europe, China, Japan, Russia, and Syria\textsuperscript{43}.

North Korea’s motivation of developing longer-range missiles is obviously in case of Japan and South Korea – preventing the USA forces from using their military bases in Japan and the Republic of Korea in a possible conflict. Long-range missiles capable of striking the territory of the United States could serve as a deterrence measure to prevent use of nuclear weapons against the DPRK.

With the collapse of the Communist bloc North Korea found itself in diplomatic, political isolation, while its economy experienced deep crisis. Consequently, its willingness to develop an alternative leverage of influence was not irrational, but rather rational and predictable.

Political regimes pursue the goal of providing national security, maintaining political identity and economic prosperity to meet the needs of the state and its people. These goals are pursued with a regard to the circumstances, domestic and international context, in which a regime operates. In case of North Korea, the international environment after the end of the cold war was rather confusing, economic conditions complicated, and the North Korean government employed policy resources available at the moment to meet the goal of regime’s survival as a unique political entity.

Domestically, the risk of legitimacy crisis was posed (possible system collapse was expected to happen by the majority of analysts), the North Korean government opted for maintaining legitimacy base primarily on ideology rather than on effective economic success and the population’s well-being. North Korean regime has survived and managed

to keep its closed character even after the death of the first leader of the country – President Kim Il Song in 1994 – when the power was successfully passed to his son, current leader Kim Jong Il. The goal of political sovereignty, neglecting actual dynamics of international politics, has worked for increasing national pride and national self-esteem, which has contributed to the legitimization of the regime.

Obviously, any security deterrence based on conventional weapons against stronger adversarial forces for North Korea is definitely inadequate. The conventional military balance on the peninsula has shifted against North Korea. As US and South Korean forces have modernized and strengthened their military capabilities, and North Korea’s forces have suffered from economic deprivation, obsolete equipment, poor maintenance, and inadequate training. However, numerous North Korean conventional forces make an offensive invasion to change political regime extremely unattractive. With its massed artillery near the DMZ, North Korea retains the ability to inflict heavy casualties and collateral damage on allied forces and civilians. Korea may not be able to seize Seoul, but it can devastate it. In theory, US forces could carry out limited pre-emptive attacks to destroy known North Korean nuclear facilities and missile emplacements, although such an attack almost certainly would not destroy all secret facilities and hidden weapons and it would risk provoking a North Korean retaliation that could trigger a catastrophic war. The possibility that North Korea has acquired nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons makes the prospect of a general war even more difficult to contemplate. Recent developments in Afghanistan and Iraq have contributed to convincing the DPRK’s

government that its policies of nuclear weapons’ development could be optimal.

Another security challenge that the North Korean regime faces is economic of survival. From the beginning of the 1990s North Korea suffered massive starvation and economic stagnation. The government initiated diplomatic campaigns to receive food aid and economic assistance, admitting its failure to guarantee minimum needs of the citizens.

Pyongyang is using the nuclear issue as bargaining leverage, actually the only one that remains to it. It has made efforts to engage Washington in bilateral dialogues with the intention of using the nuclear issue for the purpose of negotiations. In fact, the decades of the inter-Korea relationship of hostility and legitimacy competition have gone with the South Korean engagement policy, started with the Sunshine policy of President Kim Dae Jung. The fact that the demise of the North Korean regime is not favoured by any of the neighboring countries, including South Korea in the first place, has become clear to Pyongyang. It can be argued that the nuclear developments in the North are not aimed at deterrence of the South.

The desperate state of economy and inability to overcome food shortages demanded implementing effective strategy to attract foreign aid. In this case the nuclear issue has been used as a bargain mechanism, but, obviously, the nuclear issue is not targeted only to force global community to subside economic assistance. Mainly, the target is receiving security guarantees from potential aggressors. In this light it is unlikely that Pyongyang abandons its only deterrence mechanism. The motivation of the DPRK becomes stronger in the international context, when the Bush administration executed regimes’ destruction basing itself on the
premises that those were “rogue” and “evil” regimes. Since North Korea has been included in the list of the “axis of evil”. For Pyongyang, considering the case of Iraq and situation over the Iranian nuclear potential, a use of military force by the US represents a real probability.

The Yongbyon nuclear facilities remained freezed till October 2002 in accordance with the Geneva Agreements. In October 2002, however, North Korea was accused by the US of developing secretive uranium-enriching capabilities, which violated the Agreed Framework provisions. The USA stopped providing heavy-fuel oil to the DPRK and the construction of two light-water reactors. North Korea responded by expulsing the IAEA inspectors from its Yongbyong facilities and claimed that it would draw form the NPT.

In order to explain North Korea’s foreign policy strategies and tactics on the nuclear program, perceptions held by Pyongyang about world politics, the regional structure in the Eastern Asia and a role it plays in it should be examined. Pyongyang has pursued its own national interest putting security issue on the first place.

The idea to acquire nuclear technologies dates back to the end of the Second world war, when the Japanese Empire had to surrender after the atomic bombs were launched to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As soon as Kim Il Song consolidated his power by the end of the 1960s, a programme of developing technologies needed for nuclear weapons started. North Korean scientists were sent to Moscow, while Soviet scientists came to Korea for consulting. Reasons to foster the programme were numerous for North Korea – contradictions between the Soviet Union and China, rapid development of the South Korean economy – made DPRK focusing on self-defense and exploring alternative military
might. The need for self-reliance in the realm of defense was further enhanced after the dissolution of the Communist block, when North Korea found itself isolated. In this light, the North Korean strategy is not irrational or unpredictable, but aimed at solving the problems it currently faces politically and economically.

Political regimes pursue their goals – primarily, sovereignty, national security and economic prosperity – with a variety of strategies depending on the greater context in which their regimes operate. Different strategies might be implied according to various security contexts. The North Korean regime has employed policy strategies and tactics according to the sources available that most effectively respond to achieving those goals. As mentioned above, the regime has opted for strengthening its domestic legitimacy through ideological control, providing legitimacy to the regime, where the top authority cannot be subjected to criticism. The North Korea regime thus continues to remain stable.

In the defense realm North Korea elaborated the strategy against external threats mainly on the self-defense basis. In this case, security deterrence with the use of nuclear weapons becomes highly attractive. Self-reliance plays a double role – it strengthens national pride contributing to the regime’s legitimization.

Motivations that lay behind the DPRK’s nuclear weapons program are likely to be numerous. Part of them is determined by a significant external threat. The DPRK opted for a mighty military forces from the very beginning of the State’s history due to international environment in which it was established and the Korean war that followed shortly afterwards. The aim to have a strong and numerous conventional army has been one of the regime’s prior goals (the policy of “songun” – the
priority of the army – introduced in the middle of the 1990s underlines the importance of the defence). Nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles in this light, probably, is the additional and important option. Some analysts argue that North Korea is motivated to develop nuclear weapons because of its experience of having been exposed to nuclear threat from the USA during the period of the Korean war\textsuperscript{45}.

Historically, bombardment of Japan demonstrated the power of nuclear weapons and the North Korea leadership was not an exception. Consequently, the DPRK signed Alliance Treaties on Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union and China (1961), which put the country under their nuclear umbrellas. Military alliances with the USSR and China were aimed at strengthening national security. However, North Korean’s perception was that it could not fully rely on its allies: North Korea opted for reducing dependence upon the USSR and China in weapons supply. After the Cuban missile crisis (October 1962), however, Pyongyang began to doubt about the reliability of the allies (the perception was that the Soviet Union had abandoned Cuba). A greater emphasis was placed upon self-sufficiency of the nuclear development.

Obviously, that with the dissolution of the USSR North Korea in the new geopolitical situation could further rely mainly on its own capabilities. Further concerns appeared after the DPRK had been named part of the “axis of evil,” which directly implied the possibility of a preemptive strike against North Korea, as happened in the case of Iraq.

At the same time, reported facts of exporting ballistic missiles indicates that North Korea is interested in commercialization of nuclear

technology and materials (not excluding nuclear weapons). On the other hand, the imperative of defense against external threats is to be considered. In order to analyze the intentions of North Korea relative to its nuclear programme, an analytical question should be chosen. Generally, it is argued whether North Korea is determined to become a nuclear power or it perceives nuclear arms as a bargaining leverage only\textsuperscript{46}. North Korea might have taken a decision that possessing nuclear weapons is essential for the regime's survival and would never abandon the possibility of nuclear deterrence. The experience of the 1993-94 nuclear crisis demonstrated that the DPRK was eager to bargain with the use of nuclear factor. The Agreed Framework actually determined North Korea’s commitment to the NPT regime and Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) monitoring of its nuclear facilities in exchange of the construction of two light-water reactors and supply of heavy fuel oil. The Agreement has not verified actual state of nuclear developing. The nuclear status of the DPRK remained unclear – whether it had enough plutonium to make nuclear weapons. The IAEA special inspections had to lighten upon the North Korean nuclear programme status whole the two nuclear reactors were started to be build and the fuel oil delivered.

The core issue of the second nuclear crisis (October 2002) was the uranium enrichment program. Again, the DPRK used the nuclear weapons program as a bargaining leverage to pressure the United States to involve in direct bilateral negotiations over security assurances and end of economic sanctions that were obstacle to the country’s economic development. It can be assumed that North Korea pursues creating a new relationship with the United States, which will ensure the regime's

survival. North Korea has repeatedly stated that it would negotiate deals directly with the United States\textsuperscript{47}. Thus, nuclear programme efforts might be aimed at creating an additional bargaining option. On the other hand, North Korea's demonstrated willingness to cheat on international agreements (including the Agreed Framework) makes a future deal very difficult to negotiate.

On the other hand, the lack of security guarantees that North Korea faces currently should not be underestimated when analyzing its nuclear policy goals. The concepts of regime change and the possibility of preemptive strikes can not but alert the North Korea leadership. Moreover, significant economic and political reforms are likely to be required in change of security guarantees and economic assistance, which might undermine the regime's political survival. In this context nuclear weapons can be considered a guarantee of the regime’s survival. Considerable effort to develop the national defence and especially, the costly nuclear programme such as long-range ballistic missiles presume that intentions of the DPRK intends at least to have an adequate compensation of considerable resources implied in developing nuclear weapons. The probably of complete and irreversible abandonment seems remote.

An overview of the system of international agreements relevant to the mater follows.

1.2.2 Proliferation regime challenge (legal aspects)

\textsuperscript{47} Participants of the Six-party talks process admitted North Korea’s clear position on negotiating directly with the USA.
DPRK joined the IAEA - the International Atomic Energy Agency – in September 1974. In 1977, in compliance with the agreement with the IAEA, the atomic reactor in Yonbyon was inspected by the Agency’s experts. On December 12, 1985 DPRK signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). It should be noted, that North Korea was hesitant about joining the NPT and it was the USSR that insisted on its decision to join. However, the NPT requires that an acceding non-nuclear-weapon State must put into effect a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA not later than 18 months after its accession. In case of North Korea, instead, it happened only 7 years after. DPRK claimed that it would sign the agreement if certain conditions were fulfilled, among them – which the US nuclear weapons in the South of the peninsular dismantled. After Washington announced withdrawal of its tactic nuclear weapons, DPRK brought its safeguards agreement into force. On 30 January 1992 the DPRK signed a nuclear safeguards agreement with the IAEA, which allowed IAEA inspections to start in June 1992.

The NPT obliges all non-nuclear-weapon States that are parties to the Treaty to put all nuclear activities under control. In order to prevent transformation of peaceful nuclear programmes into military ones. Control measures are described in safeguards agreements, that the IAEA signers with member-states.

The NPT non-nuclear-weapon parties have to inform the Agency about nuclear material imported or produced in the country, while the IAEA experts conduct independent supervision and estimate the accuracy

48 IAEA is an executive UN body, responsible for control of abiding by nuclear security agreements.
of the information submitted. Actually, the states itself executes control over its nuclear materials, the IAEA only contribute to provide information over any changes that might have occurred.

The IAEA inspections’ results are further submitted to national authorities. If the collected data evidences a switch to the usage of nuclear materials for military purposes the IAEA Board of Governors has to decide if the Agency is able to verify the situation or it should be passed over to the UN Security Council for an adequate response by the UN.

The IAEA safeguard system has shown definite weak points during the crises on the Korean peninsula in 1993-1994, as well as in the Iraqi case. Consequently, the IAEA adopted a series of control measures, united in the form of Additional Protocols which are to be signed and ratified by the parties\(^{50}\). The measures suggested by Additional protocol include:

- IAEA inspector access to any location where nuclear material may be present;
- IAEA short-notice access to all buildings on a nuclear site. IAEA inspectors have a “complementary” access with a short advance notice to any place on a nuclear site;
- IAEA collection of environmental samples at locations beyond declared locations when the Agency considers necessary;
- State provision of information about and IAEA verification mechanisms for its research and development activities related to its nuclear fuel cycle;
- State provision of information on the manufacture and export of sensitive nuclear-related technologies.

\(^{50}\)INFCIRC/540.
However, this system of safeguards is not applied equally to all the parties: 47 states out of 189 NPT participants still do not have safeguards agreements entered into force, while additional protocols have been ratified only by 37 non-nuclear-weapon parties.

Another pillar of the regional normative base for nuclear proliferation control is the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula (20 January 1992). The document was signed by the two Korean states. Both DPRK and the ROK are the NPT parties and their obligations are stressed in the Joint Declaration. The parts have also reached an agreement on mutual inspections\(^51\). The Joint Declaration called for a bilateral nuclear inspection regime to verify the denuclearization of the peninsula. The Declaration states that the two sides “shall not test, manufacture, produce, receive, possess, store, deploy or use nuclear weapons”, and that they “shall not possess nuclear reprocessing and uranium enrichment facilities”. A North-South Joint Nuclear Control Commission (JNCC) was given the mandate of verification of the denuclearization of the peninsula\(^52\).

The IAEA activated mechanisms of control and the power entitled to it during the first nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula. After the Safeguards Agreement was signed in May 1999 and the IAEA inspections began discrepancies between the DPRK statements and the Agency’s conclusions were found. The IAEA claimed that an amount of undeclared plutonium existed in the DPRK. In order to further verify its suspects, the IAEA requested access to two sites which it considered related to the

\(^{51}\) “The South and the North, in order to verify the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, shall conduct inspections of the objects selected by the other side and agreed upon between the two sides, in accordance with procedures and methods to be determined by a South-North joint nuclear control commission.” Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, January 20, 1992 - http://www.nautilus.org/DPRKBriefingBook/agreements/CanKor-VTK-1992-01-20-joint-declaration-denuclearization-korean-peninsula.pdf

\(^{52}\) The JNCC was established in March 1992, but failed to reach agreement on establishing a bilateral inspection regime.
storage of nuclear waste. After the DPRK refused the access (including special inspection procedure invoked) the IAEA Board of Governors referred non-compliance to the UN Security Council.

The UN Security Council called the DPRK to comply with the Safeguards Agreement and enable the inspectors to complete their required activities. North Korea made a decision to withdraw from its IAEA membership on 13 June 1994. The Agency continued to consider obligations of the DPRK binding; however the DPRK had a different vision of its obligations and did not allow inspections.

The USA’ initiative to negotiate with the DPRK resulted in signing the Agreed Framework between the US and the DPRK\textsuperscript{53}. The US promised to provide construction of two light water reactors in North Korea (LWR) and the DPRK – to freeze its graphite reactors and of the reprocessing facility, and to cease construction of the larger reactors. The DPRK was also required to remain a party to the NPT. For implementation of the Agreed Framework provisions the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) was established in 1995\textsuperscript{54}. The Agreed Framework was not a treaty in any binding sense but rather a set of guidelines to regulate the behavior of the parties. However, specific issues under the Agreement were repeatedly subject to different interpretation by the two sides. Pyongyang repeatedly complained about delays in delivery schedules. North Korea complained of energy and economic losses sustaining them a consequence of the Agreed Framework.

In October 2002 North Korea announced that it had an uranium-enriching programme. Definitely, such a programme was not in line with


the Agreed Framework or the Non-Proliferation Treaty. North Korea announced its withdrawal from the NPT effective as of 11 January 2003.

The Agreed Framework Between was aimed at securing the DPRK’s compliance with its safeguards obligations. However, this goal failed, since North Korea claimed to have an unsanctioned uranium enrichment programme, decided to relaunch its reactors and expelled the IAEA inspectors.

In July 2006 the UN Security Council adopted a resolution, condemning DPRK missile launches and urged to return to six-party talks, in course from 2002.\(^{55}\) On the 9\(^{th}\) of October, same year, however, DRPK reported to have executed another underground nuclear test. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) reported an explosion with a magnitude of 4.2 on the Richter Scale\(^ {56}\). However, in several days due to the low yield of the device and lack of information on detection of radioactivity caused doubts about whether a nuclear device test was actually carried and if it was successful. The law nuclear yield of explosion (less than one kiloton) and lack of information about radioactivity in the atmosphere makes experts hesitate that it was a nuclear test and is so, that it was successful\(^ {57}\). North Korea’s nuclear test almost certainly failed to achieve its design yield. Despite of a probably failed original design yield, the DPRK has taken into consideration its technological mistakes and has come closer to constructing nuclear weapons (on extended-range ballistic missiles) capable of targeting the neighbouring countries\(^ {58}\).


\(^{56}\) http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/dprk/nuke/Test_USGSreport.jpg


The UN Security Council adopted a resolution imposing sanctions against the DPRK, demanding that the DPRK returned to the NPT and accepted safeguards with the IAEA\textsuperscript{59}. Only in February 2007 the crisis resolution showed progress and the agreement was reached that the DPRK will close and eventually abandons the Yongbyon nuclear facility and will accept IAEA experts to conduct monitoring and verifications in compliance with the IAEA Safeguards Agreement. In July 2007 the Agency confirmed shutdown of DPRK nuclear facilities.

In fact, the Agreed framework of 1994 dealt with plutonium enriching capabilities of the DPRK (facilities producing it were to be shut down and the results verified by the IAEA). North Korea actually was in compliance with the Geneva agreements, keeping frozen the graphite-moderated reactor and its related facilities. On the contrary, the American part had not fulfilled its obligations. In general, the first nuclear crisis demonstrated the isolate role of the UN Security council and the IAEA in resolving the matter, while the only efficient mechanism provided was the Agreed framework – a bilateral agreement, without any binding force. Later on, in course of developments under the six-party talks format and joint declaration s reached have become the only instrument of making North Korea de facto comply with the NPT provisions. The DPRK announced intention to withdraw from the NPT, which is actually allowed under Article X.\textsuperscript{60} Even after North Korea was informed of its noncompliance and tempted to withdraw from the NPT (1993), and the Security Council had to take actions upon it, the Security Council


\textsuperscript{60} “Each Party shall in exercising its national sovereignty have the right to withdraw from the Treaty if it decides that extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of this Treaty, have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country. It shall give notice of such withdrawal to all other Parties to the Treaty and to the United Nations Security Council three months in advance. Such notice shall include a statement of the extraordinary events it regards as having jeopardized its supreme interests.” Article X.1, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.
members were divided. China took the position that the Council should call upon North Korea to permit IAEA inspections and remain a party to the NPT at least until the disputes over compliance were resolved through further negotiation or further Council action. As mentioned before, the crisis was settled through signing the Geneva Framework agreements.

In January 2003 North Korea announced its withdrawal from the NPT. According to the Treaty mechanism the withdrawal was put before the Security Council, which could not develop any action due to disagreements among the permanent members, notably China and the United States. The North Korea’s case fostered discussions over the role of the Security Council. Under the UN Charter, the Council has authority to stop a withdrawal, to impose sanctions on the withdrawing NPT party or to require such a party to give up nuclear materials or equipment acquired while it was still an NPT party since a withdrawal may constitute a possible threat to international peace and security. The IAEA has to report noncompliance with the NPT to the Security Council, which has to bear the main responsibility for maintenance of international peace and security. Although the Security Council failed to command North Korea to take any specific action. North Korea’s withdrawal from the NPT and the future threats to international peace and security that such a withdrawal presents. North Korea’s withdrawal is the first withdrawal from the NPT and there have not been any serious consequences for North Korea. However, the withdrawal threatens at least the neighbours of the DPRK and could well represent long-term threat to international and regional security.

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The international non-proliferation regime is challenged by the DPRK’s position that moreover has been elaborated to be mainly in line with the current international agreements named above. On the other hand, the North Korea’s claim that it possesses nuclear weapons has been crucial for regarding the regime as a violator of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. The NPT does not prohibit to any member-state to develop nuclear programme to be used for peaceful purposes. In fact, the parties to the Agreed Framework (1994) recognized the right of the DPRK to develop such programme for energy production. When withdrawing form the NPT North Korea did not violate the norms of international law, since the Treaty contain the possibility of withdrawal. However, the case is alerting and has created a worrisome precedent. At the same time, the decision of the USA to threaten North Korea with the possibility of preventive nuclear strikes as the state sponsoring international terrorism violates one of the major principles of the NPT – the nuclear states should not threaten non-nuclear states with the use of nuclear weapons against them.

As regarding missile technologies, there is no legal international binding instrument on their production, proliferation and acquisition. The Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) is an informal agreement for cooperation to exchange information and coordinate export of missile technologies. The Hague Code of Conduct has a much wider scope due to larger membership, but is not legally binding. Thus, there is no internationally binding legal instrument to control the spread of missile technologies. Another broader international agreement on missile non-

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62 The MTCR was signed in 1987 and currently has 34 members.
proliferation is the Hague International Code of Conduct (HCOC) that was concluded in 2002 (currently – 124 states). The confidence building measures under the HCOC are rather vague: the members are required to make their programs transparent and to give notice of missile launches. Still, the HCOC as an instrument of control remains rather weak since it focuses on transparency and not on any forceful measures regarding missile non-proliferation.

A further challenge in control over ballistic missiles is that such programmes can be covered by the space launch vehicles development and can be easily transformed to military programmes. In fact, after North Korea had executed the test of the Taepodong-2 missile in 2006, it claimed that it was an artificial satellite launch.

Nuclear deterrence of states that possess even a relatively small nuclear arsenal can be efficient in deterring nuclear superpowers. Currently in the face of new proliferation challenges an approbation of adequate settlement mechanisms is in course.

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64 See Marianne Hanson, The Spread of Missile Technology and its Countermeasures // Danish Institute for International Studies – www.diis.dk
Part 2 International impact: regional and global powers involved

2.1 The USA policies towards North Korea: the shift after the Bush administration in power

The North Korean question and the nuclear issue have been on the agenda of the USA administration since the beginning of the peninsula’s division\textsuperscript{65}. The American policy towards North Korea was shaped under the legacy of the Cold war and the geopolitical situation created in the North-East Asia: the historical experience of shared distrust has driven them apart, while the geopolitical situation of regionally interconnected security imperatives has continued to keep them intertwined.

It could hardly be claimed that the US policy towards North Korea has been subjected to important changes after the end of the Cold war. The first nuclear crisis that ended with signing of the 1994 Agreed Framework between the USA and the DPRK seemed to have settled a basis for bilateral relationship during President Clinton administration’s first term. This agreement provided an barter – frozen activities of the North Korea nuclear facilities in exchange of heavy fuel oil and construction of two light-water reactors to meet the North Korean energy needs\textsuperscript{66}. The agreement that was achieved on bilateral basis seemed to have provided advancement towards the normalization of relations

between Washington and Pyongyang. Actually, the Framework Agreement established a mechanism for a gradual progress towards controlled North Korean nuclear activities. However, the difficulties with the Agreement’s implementation that followed led to the collapse of this accord.

The conflict over the implementation of the 1994 Agreement arose from both parties – on the one hand, the USA claimed that in course of the years followed the conclusion of the Agreement its intelligence services uncovered numerous indications of violation of the Agreed Framework and of a new nuclear weapons programme concentrated on producing highly enriched uranium (HEU). The DPRK authorities, on their part, alleged significant irregularities in heavy oil fuel provisions and uncompleted light-water reactors’ construction in accordance with the terms of the Agreement. However it was not until the George W. Bush administration came to power that it was officially claimed that the USA possessed a clear evidence of the DPRK unsanctioned programme of uranium enrichment in October 2002. Consequently the USA suspended further delivery of the heavy fuel oil. Further on, a set of actions eventually led to the outbreak of a profound international crisis.

The Clinton administration came very close to normalization of relations with North Korea: the “Joint US-DPRK Statement on International Terrorism” and the “US-DPRK Joint Communiqué” was signed in October 2000. The official visit to Pyongyang by the US State secretary Madeleine Albright contributed to substantial improvement in bilateral relations by the end of the Clinton administration’s term.

The Bush administration approach to North Korea has not become a logical continuation of the policy line initiated by Clinton. The principal shift was from the policy of engagement (partial and hesitant) to following the hard line of pressure, abandon and antagonism. Actually,
with the presidential office taken by the Bush administration in January 2001, the policy towards the Korean peninsular made a shift starting from disregarding previous approach and its achievements. The Bush administration’s policy has been accused of being inconsistent by both liberals and conservatives (“doves” and “hawks”): for his policy towards Pyongyang being neither too hard, nor the policy aimed at engagement and cooperation with the North Korean regime. The US has been criticized for referring to the DPRK as one of the “axis of evil” countries and at the same time, for being inconsistent with its later tough policy line in contrasting the nuclear proliferation after the decision to release the frozen North Korean bank accounts form the Banco Delta Asia in 2007. President Bush’s late commitment to engagement has been criticized since it rewarded North Korea’s bad behavior. However, the policy of the late second term Bush administration was marked by a significant enhancement on the Korean track if compared to the earlier years. Many analysts believe that President Bush's flexibility regarding engagement with the DPRK is paying dividends.

In fact, the Bush administration has acquired an uncompromising approach of dealing with the North Korean issue in general. The Framework Agreement of 1994 concluded by the Clinton administration in this light was perceived as a concession to the regime in the North that incited further development of its weapons programme. At the same time, the South Korean policy of engagement towards the DPRK was regarded negatively as having contributed to the survival of the North Korean economy and the political regime there. The US policy was urged to

69 The “sunshine policy” was introduced by President Kim Dae Jung in 1999 and continued by President Roh Moo Hyun’s administration in 2003-2007.
favour containment strategy towards the DPRK, in spite of the fact that
the 1994 Agreement remained the only real working mechanism of
dealing with the problem. The terrorist attacks of September 2001 had
major impact on deteriorating North Korean-American relations. Labeling
the DPRK an “axis of evil” state in January 2002 by President Bush
caus ed serious concerns both in the North and in the South of the Korean
peninsular. Hesitations of the Bush administration that considered the
possibility to start preemptive attack on the DPRK with the use of nuclear
weapons contributed to agitating North Korea and the whole region of
East Asia. The National Security Strategy (2002) expanded on the
possibility to use preventive strikes against the rogue states with the
weapons of mass destruction.

The new administration claimed the DPRK’s complete, verifiable
and irreversible disarmament stressing that no concession could be made
until Pyongyang gave up its nuclear programme. The major policy shift
occurred refers to introducing a broader agenda for discussion with the
DPRK that was to include the nuclear problem, human rights issue,
ballistic missiles. Alongside with the hard stance, the Bush policy
towards North Korea has begun to make use of non-traditional security
issues in addressing North Korean problem more broadly: human rights,
undemocratic political regime, illegal activities, such as drug trafficking
and currency counterfeit, etc. Persistence on probably legitimate but
coincident demands to the DPRK in addition to the demand to dismantle
its nuclear program has been counterproductive.

70 Bleiker R. A Rogue is a Rogue is a Rogue: US Foreign Policy and the Korean Nuclear Crisis //
71 The National Security Strategy of the United States of America. Part V. Prevent Our Enemies from
Threatening Us, Our Allies, and Our Friends with Weapons of Mass Destruction – available at:
http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html
73 Kim Mi Kyung. Ethos and Contingencies. A comparative Analysis of the Clinton and Bush
Many analysts viewed the Bush administration’s policy towards North Korea as somewhat ignoring the threat from the DPRK and being inconsistent and indecisive with policy implementation\textsuperscript{74}. Hard-line advocates criticized the administration for having opted for a lengthy path of a multilateral diplomatic process instead of using military might and economic leverages, while the engagement supporters disapproved tough stance as counterproductive in the case of North Korea. The failure of the Bush administration during its first term to introduce a coherent policy towards North Korea is attributed to the inability to reconcile these two policy approaches. The decision whether the settlement of nuclear issue only is the matter of interest or whether to aim at collapse of the political regime in the DPRK is likely to have been one of discussion points in the USA administration.

President George W. Bush’s personal beliefs are argued to have contributed greatly to the approach of the administration towards North Korea in the beginning of his term. President Bush’s personal hatred and moral condemn of the North Korean regime has been observed by many of his counterparts\textsuperscript{75}. The idea that dictatorships are morally at fault and thus cannot be dealt with and trusted dominated his personal vision of the DPRK and its leadership\textsuperscript{76}. As a result the policy ended up in confusing long-term geopolitical interests of the USA and strategic importance of its alliances in the region (especially, with South Korea, whose engagement policy suffered form the Bush administration approach) and actually blocked the process of imposing international control over the DPRK’s nuclear programme and normalization of relationship.


\textsuperscript{75} Kim Mikyoung lists interview records with George W. Bush and other literature on the matter that testify personal negative approach of the President to the DPRK leadership.

The declared policy priorities by the Bush administration have made believe that the prime objective initially was to foster regime change in the DPRK. However, achieving such an objective appeared to be complicated both due to the challenges that presents any rivaled regime struggling for survival and international constrains, especially with a numerous and well-trained conventional forces and a suspected nuclear capabilities such as the DPRK. The maintenance of the political and military alliance with the ROK hindered further development of the regime collapse approach. South Korean leadership and public opinion were mainly against any coercive measures against the DPRK. President of the ROK even reported that North Korea’s nuclear weapons were aimed at the country’s defense and that there has been no perceptible connection between the Pyongyang regime and terrorism since 1987 (November, 14th 2004): “Some expect the North Korean regime to collapse. But this would be a disaster for Korea, because there is no assurance that North Korea will not make a dangerous choice when it faces a threat to its regime. In the end, there is no way except dialogue.”

As regarding North Korea, it could be claimed with a high probability that above all it has been seeking a long-term strategic relationship with the United States. This pragmatic calculation is based on geopolitical realities perceived in Pyongyang: North Korea generally feels the need to balance the impact their neighbors have on the situation development and the stability of the political regime in the DPRK. North Korean propaganda historically called for withdrawal of the US forces from the peninsula, but in fact, North Korea’s leadership understands that remaining permanent enemies of the United States would rather bring

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inconvenience than benefit and that the adversarial relationship should be changed.

North Korea’s relations with the United States started with the experience of the peninsula’s division and the Korean war. The United States in fact contributed to separation of the Korean nation, the responsibility which they share with other great powers. The Korean war prevented the effort of the North to unite the Korean peninsular with the use of military force: the USA took the part of the South and became its strategic ally, while the DPRK’s propaganda for decades encouraged anti-Americanism as part of national ideology and nationalism. Since the principle national goal both for the North and the South was the unification of the nation, the USA was considered in the DPRK as the main obstruction to it. With the mergence of the USA-ROK military alliance, the DPRK’s policy regarding the US was withdrawal of U.S. military forces deployed in the South. Thus, its population still could be mobilized against the threat of a possible USA military attack or invasion.

In the new strategic environment, the United States continue to play a critical role for the DPRK in its efforts to achieve national objectives. After the end of the Cold war the DPRK has repeatedly sought negative security assurance from the United States. However, President George W. Bush’s State of the Union Address of 2002 where he referred to North Korea as part of the “axis of evil” deepened bilateral incomprehension and gave to the DPRK affirmation of a hostile policy towards Pyongyang prevailing. The North Korean nuclear programme, whatever mighty the capabilities the DPRK has acquired are, is aimed at deterring the United States. The national security of the DPRK can never be assured until the United States agree to deliver guarantees of security.

It has been widely acknowledged that North Korea after the end of the Cold war has become interested in transforming adversarial relations
with the USA into cooperative and friendly, as the normalization of relationship would be essential in achieving both security and economic goals\textsuperscript{80}. However, the position of Washington, which has been refusal to maintain any rapport with the DPRK unless it assures a full denuclearization and complies with other conditions that the USA has set, creates the situation unfavourable to any constructive discussion of the matter.

In the economic realm the DPRK would like to improve bilateral relations in order to obtain the USA assistance and investment. In particular, Pyongyang requests to be removed from the State Department’s list of states that sponsor international terrorism, and have all the US sanctions eliminated, so that the DPRK can join international financial institutions in order to gain access to foreign capital and overseas markets. However, from the US point of view, especially of conservative circles, the idea of economically engaging North Korea appears inappropriate, though other parties involved retain it the road to resolving both the nuclear issue and ensuring Korean reunification (China, the ROK, Russia)\textsuperscript{81}.

Insistence on pre-conditions for a rapprochement with the DPRK – such as a complete and irreversible dismantling of North Korean nuclear program – has been counterproductive. The DPRK regularly demonstrates that it can not be pressed and through a series of nuclear tests it actually has managed to strengthen its bargaining position. By placing the nuclear issue as the top priority, but within the context of engagement and trust-building, the parties are likely to see a major progress because of the strategic need in North Korea to forge strong ties with the United States.


Until recently, the strategy of North Korea has achieved the principle goal of guaranteeing the survival of the state in the face of possibility of military actions by the USA: the deterrence with the declared nuclear capabilities succeeded; however, obtaining security assurances from the USA remains a remote perspective. The USA and North Korea failed to normalize bilateral relations. In this light it is essential to determine the ultimate policy goal of the USA as regarding the DPRK: to promote engagement with the DPRK or to push towards the regime’s collapse. Under the Bush administration the policy shifted from ignoring the possibility of dealing with the North Korean regime to concluding agreements with it in the framework of the Six-party talks. Some analysts believe that it was for the internal division within the administration about the best policy options towards North Korea that prevented the ultimate resolution of the North Korean issue.

In case of positive response from the USA to the idea of normalization with the DPRK, it would bring about changes in mind-set and new dynamics for the development of bilateral relations. North Korea might be eager to exchange the security deterrence of its nuclear weapons for the security guarantee of a strategic friendship with the United States.

The US policy towards North Korea during the Bush administration in power, especially during the first term, suffered from significant setbacks in achieving its main objective – put an end to the nuclear weapons programme. Actually, North Korea has got the opportunity to product nuclear materials for a possible nuclear weapons’ creation almost without any restraint. The USA together with other nuclear powers were not able to prevent expulsion of the IAEA inspectors from the DPRK facilities and its withdrawal form the Non-Proliferation Treaty, thus the


entire non-proliferation regime continued to be rivaled by the North Korean activities, which could not but have negative consequences at the American policy in the region and globally. Manifold policy goals related to North Korea and the situation on the Korean peninsular – the American role in the region of North-East Asia – has been determined by the North Korean nuclear deadlock and policy implications in the region that arose.

As has been mentioned above, some data that the DPRK was producing enriched uranium appeared during the Clinton administration term, but only in June of 2002 the American intelligence claimed that according to its information North Korea had acquired processing facilities for the enrichment of uranium. The reaction of the DPRK was a series of demonstrative and challenging actions: the nuclear reactor in Yongbyon (closed according with the Framework Agreement in 1994) was reactivated; the IAEA experts were expelled from the country and later on, in January 2003, the DPRK announced its withdrawal from the NPT. Responding to the North Korean actions, the USA adopted a hard posture, which included intimidation with preemptive strikes and the UN Security Council sanctions.

However, it should be noted that despite of declaring its intentions to pressure Pyongyang and, probably, of making it abide by the NPT regime principles through the use of force, the United States starting from 2003 maintained their preference to peaceful means of conflict resolution. The Bush administration adopted a multilateral approach towards the nuclear issue settlement, advocating the idea to involve all powers concerned into guaranteeing implementation of an agreement with the DPRK and financing the deal. The principle concern of the US since than has been to clarify the intentions of North Korea to really abandon and dismantle its nuclear facilities.

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84 Michael Mazarr mentions that adopting a multinational approach was not an immediate decision, but came after a long discussion within the administration and with key regional powers. Mazarr, Michael J. The Long Road to Pyongyang // Foreign Affairs, September-October 2007, Vol. 86. Issue 5.
The initial stage of the Bush administration’s policy versus North Korea uncovered the divisions within the administration regarding the continuation of the engagement policy towards the DPRK. The new administration apparently needed to highlight a different policy approach from that of the Clinton administration. At the same time, in the aftermath of the first North-South Korean summit in Pyongyang in June 2000 there was a considerable pressure from South Korea and international community for a more efficient engagement with the DPRK. The hard-line approach towards North Korea has been revealed by senior officials in the US Defense department. The term “rogue state” was reintroduced into the political discourse regarding the DPRK after years it has not been used: the Clinton administration abandoned the expression in the middle of the 1990s when referring to North Korea. The anti-terror campaign led by the USA created concerns that Washington had chosen to limit its diplomatic activities and give priority to military power logic and advantages it possesses in this sphere.

Though the issue of disarmament has been the core argument throughout all the period of the Bush administration in power, only in the second term the policy towards North Korea changed substantially against the earlier approach due to multiple factors, such as changes in the political context (military engagement in Iraq), stuff reshuffle (State Secretary D. Rumsfeld who advocated a hard-line approach was substituted by C. Rice, whose approach was more pragmatic). The multilateralism option prevailed and Bush’s foreign policy initiated to be effected through the mechanism of the Six-party talks. The new policy strategy is argued to have brought some visible progress, such as preventing escalation of tensions, concluding a deal with the DPRK in

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February 2007), although, the real outcome is still far from being evident\textsuperscript{87}.

2.2 US political and military unions with Japan and the ROK and their impact on the trilateral approaches towards North Korea

The region of North-East Asia has special regional dynamics in the Asia-Pacific region: the interests of several great powers are tightly intertwined there, including the interests of the three nuclear powers – China, the USA and the Russian Federation. The regional structure is determined by the absence of institutionalized regional mechanisms of confidence-building and cooperation and the relationships between the regional states are built mainly on bilateral basis. The regional environment carries the legacy of historic hostility – the Japanese colonial rule and the following Cold war antagonism, which at times contribute to shaping a negative political climate that prevent countries of the region from efficient cooperation\textsuperscript{88}. Significant obstacle for cooperation and mutual trust is continuously represented by the colonial memory and anti-Japanese sentiment in both Koreas and China towards Japan\textsuperscript{89}.

However, the level of regional stability is evaluated by many analysts as sufficient (the Korean issue not considered). The American


\textsuperscript{88} Major part of such conflicts is latent and include the Korean division (the war of 1950-1953), the Taiwan problem, territorial disputes between Russia and Japan over the south Sakhalin islands, between South Korea and Japan over the isle of Dokdo (Takishima), absence of a peace treaty between Japan and Russia, etc.

\textsuperscript{89} The first official apology form Japan to Korea was delivered only after 50 years form the liberation: on August 15 1995 the Japanese prime-minister T. Murayama acknowledged that Japan led the policy of aggression on the Korean peninsular. See Apology by Japan’s Prime Minister // Korea Focus, 1995, July-August, Vol.3, No. 4. p.120.
researcher of East Asian affairs Thomas Christensen believes that in the XXI century the regional stability is more likely in North-East Asia than in Europe.\textsuperscript{90} Actually, the majority of the US analysts are inclined to consider the US military presence in Asia the key factor of conflict prevention in the region\textsuperscript{91}. The USA continues to play the dominant role in regional affairs and their allies remain committed to their obligations and are reluctant to any important changes. Among Russian political analysts the US military alliances’ role in the region is regarded as an obstacle to independent policies by other regional powers. Such assessments were shaped in the Soviet period and began to be partly revised in the middle of the 1990s; however, negative estimations can be found in relatively recent works. This perception is particularly negative in the light of the North Korean nuclear problem, when policy choices of the USA have proved to be able to challenge regional stability: “The region of North-East Asia, more than other sub-regions of the Asia-Pacific is challenged by instability. Military alliances of the USA with Japan and South Korea that remained from the cold war period are not mere historical documents, but real military alliances. Since such alliances exist, the targets against which they are maintained continue to exist as well\textsuperscript{92}.”

However, the system of the US political and military alliances in the North-East Asia has undergone through changes due to new international environment after the end of the Cold war, domestic and international factors that followed. The USA took a considerable effort to create a network of alliances in the Asia-Pacific region, to which the alliances with Japan and the Republic of Korea are parts. Strengthening

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these alliances is believed to promote confidence-building and is constantly evolving in the direction of broadening the operation ability horizons and coercive measures against hostile countries to be taken by the allies.

A nuclear threat from North Korea poses a menace to the security of US troops deployed in the region on its regional allies’ national territories – in Japan and South Korea. Another concern is that the North Korean nuclear hazard can foster regional powers to pursue nuclear weapons on order to deter the DPRK, which would destabilize the current regional structure and rival more than half a century long dominance of the USA in East Asia.

As regarding South Korean and Japan’s approach towards Pyongyang, for both the nuclear issue enters in the sphere of potential direct security threats. The unpredictability of the North Korean policies has challenged the stability in the region for decades, with the perspective of the regime’s collapse becoming the main threat in the first half of the 1990s. Neither South Korea, nor Japan favoured a potential spontaneous collapse of the DPRK: the paradoxical situation stands from the fact that sponsoring the survival of Pyongyang while it challenges regional security with nuclear weapons has been the only feasible policy option. By the end of the 1990s the tendency both in Tokyo and Seoul was acquiring more independency in exercising their diplomatic activities, even if it sometimes implied disagreement with Washington. South Korea and Japan were moving towards improving their bilateral relationships with North Korea. The official visit of the Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi to Pyongyang in September 2002 was a significant autonomous


\textit{Japan}

In the 1990s the Japanese diplomacy (equally as South Korean) had to face the situation of the bilateral US-DPRK Agreed Framework’s conclusion without detailed consent from the allies, that, however, presumed that Japan would contribute $1 billion dollars for the construction of two light water nuclear reactors in the North. Japan’s position over the means of control over the North Korean nuclear developments has been supportive of the USA policy line aimed at restraining the DPRK’s activities that might be related to the North Korean nuclear programme. Launches of missiles over the Japanese territory contributed to taking a hard stance and coercive measures towards the nuclear issue in Japan. Currently, Japan links the normalization process to the resolution of the nuclear issue and thus the negotiations came to a deadlock.

Japan and the DPRK have never established official diplomatic relations since the end of the Japanese colonial rule on the Korean peninsula. After the Cold war ended there have been several attempts to normalize the relations: Prime Minister Koizumi and Kim Jong Il hold the first in the history summit in September 2000 in Pyongyang, but the normalization process later hindered.\footnote{In January 1991 Japan started the first official normalization negotiation with North Korea. 12 sessions of negotiations were held from 1991 to 2002. Last sessions were held in 2002 in Kuala Lumpur on October 29 and in Pyongyang in May 2004.} The normalization was to bring significant economic assistance to North Korea as a compensation for the Japanese exploitation of Korea during the annexation period. The 2000 summit was an engagement-oriented approach, which in the situation of
the Bush administration’s tough policy line could mean a completely diverse strategy and could bring discrepancies within the USA-Japan alliance.

The position of Japan regarding the DPRK after 2002 has become largely coordinated with that of the United States: Japan has adopted a transformative approach in resolving the North Korean nuclear problem because its strategic interests are best served by fundamentally transforming and, if possible, changing the North Korean regime. Although stressing the importance of negotiations, Japan has in effect followed the path of pressuring Pyongyang in order to eliminate its nuclear program and make Korea commit itself to inspections. Japan has also warned that if negotiations fail to bring any progress it would not hesitate to impose sanctions. Like the USA, the Japanese authorities claim verifiable abandon of the nuclear problem by the DPRK. Prime Minister Koizumi sustained that the prime objective of Japan’s policy towards North Korea was not to promote collapse of the regime, but to persuade the DPRK to stop taking provocative actions and to adopt the path of gradual reform of its political and economic system. Economic leverage has been left apart until normalization process develops substantially to permit Japan deliver economic assistance to the DPRK. The Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration plainly states that Japan’s economic cooperation to the North would be provided only after the normalization of relationship.

In fact, Japan remains directly threatened by the North Korean nuclear weapons – ballistic missiles have been repeatedly launched in the

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96 Mark E. Manyin. Japan-North Korea Relations: Selected Issues, CRS Report RL32161, Congressional Research Service, November 26, 2003, p. 1. The author states that Japan has been the strongest supporter of regime change in the DPRK.


direction of its territory\textsuperscript{99} – and thus acquiring a hard-line approach is aimed at effectively eliminating the overall threat posed by the North Korean regime and its policies to its security interests due to geographic proximity of the DPRK. Therefore, the national security of Japan is exceptionally vulnerable to nuclear weapons and missiles that might be launched by North Korea. On the other hand, acquisition of the nuclear status by a member of the region would create incentives for commencing a nuclear arms race in North-East Asia, which is not favourable for Japan.

Concerns that North Korea’s nuclear weapons programme might lead to nuclear proliferation in North-East Asia were expressed during the first crisis in 1993-1994 and afterwards by the United States and other regional powers. After the nuclear test conducted by the DPRK in October 2006 there have been numerous concerns that it might encourage Japan to search for its own nuclear weapons capabilities. However, the traditionally less than 1% of the gross domestic product military budget of Japan has not been increased since then and, on the contrary, the Self-Defense Forces of Japan were to cut their personnel\textsuperscript{100}.

Japan is acknowledged to possess adequate technical capabilities to develop nuclear weapons. However, initiating such a programme would violate Japan’s commitment to bilateral and international agreements to which Japan is part. Japan’s strategy is rather based on respect to the legitimacy of international treaties, including the Non-proliferation regime and the country is trying to enhance its position through respect to the rule of international law and universal values rather than through challenging the surrounding international community with its military capabilities. In this light, the political-military alliance with the USA remains one of its foreign policy pillars and deterrence towards the DPRK

\textsuperscript{99} North Korea’s tested the Taepodong ballistic missile which fell into the sea over Japan in August 1998.

\textsuperscript{100} Hajime Izumi, Katsuhisa Furukawa. Not Going Nuclear: Japan’s Response to North Korea’s Nuclear Test // Arms Control Today, June 2007, Volume 37 Number 5. p. 7.
continues to be built on security cooperation provided by this alliance: in fact, Japan has delivered support for the US operation in Afghanistan and Iraq. A widely shared opinion is that one of the main reasons for Japan lending support has been evidently Japan’s dependence on the USA defense capabilities needed in case of a possible missile attack by North Korea\textsuperscript{101}. According to the national constitution cooperative military actions, except those to defend Japan, violate the county’s legislation that prohibits settling international disputes with the use of force and the country is not able to engage in collective operations under the auspices of the United Nations\textsuperscript{102}. Japan can also be expected to continue to rely on the US nuclear umbrella.

The Japan’s policy towards North Korea has adopted a line in the middle between containment and engagement towards the DPRK. The rapprochement efforts have largely failed despite some political success such as the Pyongyang Declaration of 2002. For Japan the threat posed by North Korea arises from the nuclear program as well as from the very nature of the political regime in the DPRK\textsuperscript{103}. Giving importance to the abduction issue has made Japan’ reconciliation effort limited. Japanese public opinion is reported to be more concerned with a possible nuclear contamination as a result of the DPRK nuclear activities. Cases of abduction of Japanese citizens by the North Korean special services remain one of the policy main concerns. The Japanese government insists on resolving abduction issue and the nuclear issue together. By having taking a motionless attitude towards the resolution of the nuclear issue Japan demonstrates its preferences to the current status quo and its


\textsuperscript{103} Missile launches, abduction of Japanese citizens, intrusion of North Korean ships into the Japanese waters, etc.
strategic approach towards North Korea is formulated in coordination with the US policy line.

*The Republic of Korea–US alliance*

The US-ROK military alliance has been created in order to deter a possible North Korea aggression and in course of the years has been highly vulnerable to changes in the geopolitical situation over the Korean peninsular, developments in the bilateral relationship between the two Korean states. With the beginning of the Bush administration first term that coincided with the start of the South Korean engagement policy towards the North, the allies seem to have developed diverse vision over the key issues of policy choices towards North Korea and the nuclear problem.

The alliance has been maintained for more than half a century and disagreements between the Republic of Korea and the United States did not lack in that period. However, recent discrepancies that appeared due to numerous factors, domestic and international, are different from the previous ones. Obviously, both allies are going through identity crises and need to review the common target and the mean of achieving it. The Republic of Korea has considerably revised its approach towards the DPRK in the end of the 1990s and the evaluation of the threat it poses, while the United States has had to adjust its security vision in the light of global anti-terrorist campaign it currently leads.

The “sunshine policy” that was introduced after Kim Dae Jung became President in 1999 was aimed at fostering gradual change of the North Korea regime through economic engagement, cooperation and assistance by the South. Since then the South Korean leadership has restrained form confronting the DPRK, accusing the regime of its hostility

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or human rights violations, etc. The policy of engagement sought to provide North Korea with survival guarantees and further concessions that were also to reduce the nuclear threat, since an economically stable and reassured in the security realm regime would be less eager to trigger its status through pursuing nuclear weapons. The first historic meeting of the leaders of the two Korean states was held in Pyongyang in June 2000 and created a powerful momentum of broad international support for the engagement initiative of the Republic of Korea and normalization of relationship with the DPRK.

President Roh Moo Hyun’s administration (2003-2007) mainly continued the line of the engagement policy with the DPRK with its “Peace and prosperity policy”. The second nuclear crisis and the North Korean nuclear capabilities have become incompliant with the effort taken by the ROK to create a trustful partnership with North Korea. However, South Korea has never considered the option of a military strike at the DPRK, since it might have dramatic consequences on its own national security and economic stability. In this light, provocative actions or even verbal accusations towards the DPRK by the USA have been perceived as needless and avoidable steps. Primary differences between the allies are in practical policy measures to achieve common goals of security on the Korean peninsular. The ROK has repeatedly emphasized the feasibility of the peaceful resolution and definitely considers coercive options as unacceptable.

Democratic transition in the Republic of Korea after decades of authoritarian rule has brought changes to its identity and self-perception in regional and world politics. Actually, as one of the main American allies in Asia, it has been part of many US-led campaigns starting form

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105 "It is true that an option to North Korea’s nuclear problem is the possibility of a U.S. military attack against North Korea. However, striking North Korea is a grave problem that can cause a war on the Korean peninsula and I object to even reviewing such a possibility.” President Roh Moo Hyun’s remarks. Dong-a Ilbo, February 20, 2003. – cited in Cheon Seongwhun, p. 11.
the war in Vietnam, where it made a significant contribution, to the Iraqi campaign, where it has been the third largest contingent after the USA and Great Britain. However, its real commitment has never been recognized as such, which creates resentment and collaterally makes South Korea to search to act on its own. The presence of the United States’ military forces deployed in the ROK to deter North Korean aggression has also caused a sense of discrimination – like in the case of Japan, local legal system can not exercise its jurisdiction over the crimes committed by American soldiers on its territory.

In the middle of the 1990s the question of equality in the alliance arose after the settlement of the first North Korean nuclear crisis, when the USA took alone the initiative and negotiated a deal with the DPRK that later was to be paid by its North-East Asian allies. The USA acted in the frames of settling the proliferation crisis, not within the North-South relations vision. As a result, the position of the ROK (Japan as well) as an independent policy-maker able to decide at least upon the North Korean matters was seriously undermined.

As Victor Cha, a prominent American expert on North-East Asian affairs points out, despite of the common ally and common security threats that come up from the former USSR, China and North Korea, bilateral relations between Japan and South Korea are marked by constant discrepancies. A vague interest of the first-term Bush administration to the engagement policy of the ROK received a pronounced criticism from Seoul. President Roh Moo Hyun warned the US that a tough stance regarding the DPRK might cause resistance and disagreement between in the US-ROK alliance. The South Korean government prefers to deal with the North Korean nuclear problem outside the UN Security Council since it believes that such a discussion would only contribute to

convincing Pyongyang in hostile intentions (following the case of Iraqi WMD and the military operation). The ROK government has adopted a non-provocative policy line in order to minimize tensions on the peninsula. In this sense, South Korea favours the multilateral format of dialogue with the DPRK.

A consolidated vision in the framework of alliances with Japan and South Korea would be helpful in convincing North Korea about the unanimity of international opinion over its nuclear programme. The ROK during the presidential terms of Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyun introduced the engagement policy – the “sunshine policy” and the expended version of the “peace and prosperity policy”. Japan has accepted a position rather close to that of the USA as it preconditions any real normalization process to the resolution of the nuclear matter and the particular issue of the abducted Japanese citizens. The policy of the ROK and Japan towards North Korea can be described as double-sided or dual diplomacy: they are engaged both in multilateral work together with the United States and other six-party talks participants and also in bilateral dialogue with the North.

However, the principle position difference between the USA and its North-East Asian allies is that they stand against any solution through military confrontation. Being neighboring countries to the DPRK the ROK and Japan would bear the consequences of an enforced solution. The USA policy under the Bush administration has been irregular: giving importance to the military might and lacking (or absent) usage of economic leverages and normative power. By disregard to the interests of its allies the USA in effect has lost the regional consensus, which prevented form coordinating its vision with the allies and acting together in order to dissolve the North Korean nuclear issue. The late Bush administration seemed to have reconsidered its previous policy line and
made an attempt to strengthen the temporarily confused alliances in the region and at the same time tried to include them in the framework of the multilateral regional mechanism (the Six-party talks), which includes also China and Russia. Francis Fukuyama and other analysts state that creating a set of multilateral organizations in parallel with the existing bilateral organizations would be important for the regional stability in the region: “With the end of the Cold War and the continuing economic development of eastern Asia, power relationships are changing in ways that have unlocked nationalist passions and rivalries. The potential for misunderstanding and conflict among South Korea, Japan, and China will be significant in the coming years – but it can be mitigated if multiple avenues of discussion exist between the states.”

North Korea itself seems inclined to negotiate the nuclear issue with the United States on a bilateral basis. However, any negotiations would be more efficient if a consolidated multilateral pressure in the form of a common position is exercised over it. The parties involved have already recognized the multilateral format as the most appropriate for resolving the North Korean nuclear issue – the price for any initiative and in case of any policy failure is to be paid by all regional powers, so they pretend to be considered.

2.3 China’s increasing role

Historically, the relationship of Korea with China evolved in the context of the regional impact of the Chinese civilization, when the

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neighbouring countries had to choose between paying tribute to China or
invasion. Korea was influenced by the Chinese culture and political
system; the relationship reflected the Confucian principle of hierarchy.
When Japan made Korea its colony (Korea was annexed in 1910), the
organized guerilla was held by both Korean and Chinese people in the
North-East part of China. Among them were both Kim Il Song and Mao
Zedong. During the Korean war of 1950-1953 the Chinese troops
supported North Koreans, suffering approximately 1 mln casualties. Later
on, China advocated North Korean independence and for decades
regarded it as the only legitimate Korean state on the peninsular.

The present relationship between China and North Korea is based
on long historical experience, close cultural and geographical roots. As a
state that shares a common border with China (1400 km), the DPRK is
important for the Chinese security. China is sensitive to the developments
on the Korean peninsular in general, since a hostile or socially troubled
state on its border would present a direct threat to the Chinese national
security. The ability to influence progress on the whole Korea peninsular
and enhance its influence thus is crucial for China.

During the cold war era the DPRK concluded two bilateral security
treaties – with the USSR and with China. The treaty between the DPRK
and the latter is still in force. It should be reminded, however, that the
bilateral relationship was rather complicated during the Cold war decades.
Actually, neither Soviet Union nor China had overall influence on the
DPRK, though both supported Pyongyang economically and provided
security guarantees. The end of the Cold war brought dramatic changes
both to the Soviet-Korean and Sino-Korean relationship: diplomatic

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110 Russell Ong. North Korea’s Enduring Importance to China’s Security Interests in the Post-Cold War
111 The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between the People’s Republic of
China and the democratic People’s Republic of Korea., July 11, 1961 (effective since September 10,
1986).
recognition of the Republic of Korea put the end to the policy exclusively oriented at North Korea\textsuperscript{112}. Currently China maintains official relations with both North and South Korea – the priority that only Russia shares out of other parties concerned.

Close ties and special trust created between the Chinese and North Korean leadership contributes to enabling China with special leverages over Pyongyang. While the economic support from the Soviet Union came to the end with its dissolution, commercial trade between China and North Korea has been maintained and has steadily grown, especially after the economic policy changes in the DPRK, which are sometimes regarded as an attempt of reform (2002)\textsuperscript{113}. Currently, China occupies 40\% in the North Korea trade balance.

The rise of China as an economic and security power is one of the most widely discussed topics that dominate global agenda. After the end of the Cold war China has extended its bilateral relationships with many regional and non-regional powers, actively participates in multilateral organizations, addressing global economic and security issues as well. China has currently become more involved in efforts to contest global security threats, where the active role in resolution of the second North Korean nuclear crisis can be listed as an example\textsuperscript{114}. The policy towards North Korea combines various factors, starting from domestic situation and economic development priorities to ambitions to exercise power, especially in the North Easter Asia. The sensible Taiwan issue is also concerned. Obviously, the Chinese foreign policy is determined by its national interests – a pragmatic vision. First, perspective of collapse of North Korea or any dramatic political changes there would inevitably damage China’s internal economic development and stability. China has a

\textsuperscript{112} China recognized South Korea in 1992.
\textsuperscript{113} July 12 Measures.
1.400 km border with North Korea, which in case of perturbations would be easily crossed by refugees. Uncontrollable processes in the DPRK in case of the present regime’s collapse pose threat to China’s internal stability and to its international positions as well, since a future united Korean state might be not friendly to Beijing. Perceiving instability on the peninsula as a threat to national security gives China no other policy option that advocating peaceful process and continued dialogue even if unproductive in order to prevent military conflict on the peninsula. China seeks to promote a stable regional environment that would allow it to accomplish economic modernization and receive a global power status\textsuperscript{115}. Pragmatic calculations of the consequences of political change in the DPRK on the development of the Chinese economy make China remain devoted to the status quo and peaceful settlement of the nuclear issue. Another immediate consequence of a sudden collapse in the North would be struggle for influence there among different fraction, which could be pro-American, pro-Chinese, pro-South Korean – the perplexing environment on the Korean peninsula would not contribute to the national security of China.

Second, North Korean nuclear programme poses threats to regional stability, since it may cause a chain reaction – acquisition of nuclear weapons by Japan and South Korea that are capable of constructing them in a short term due to elevated technologies available.

Strategically, China viewed North Korea as a buffer zone which separated the Chinese territory from the presence of the US troops\textsuperscript{116}. For decades China maintained official relations only with North Korea, but after the end of the cold war managed to normalize of relations with the Republic of Korea. After the recognition in 1992 the relationship with the


\textsuperscript{116} China intervened in the Korean war to safeguard the Korean buffer zone form the US troops presence in the region. China and the USA signed the 1953 Armistice Agreement.
ROK has developing rapidly and while South Korea has shifted towards a more independent approach in its foreign politics, China and South Korea should be rather seen as partners, not the former rivals of the Cold war period. Both China and South Korea, as neighbour countries are equally interested in maintaining stability in North Korea.

The primary aim is to prevent any upheavals and social unrest in the country, since it would directly harm stability of both China and the Republic of Korea. North Korea realizes the importance of relationship with China, but it is hardly inclined to trust China completely, since China first of all defends its own national interests and when they may not correspond to the North Korean interests, Beijing would act for achieving its own benefits. The Taiwan issue is particularly sensitive in this sense and if concerned, China would inevitably give priority to the Taiwan issue rather than defend North Korea\(^\text{117}\). Chinese political choice after the end of the cold war has also contributed to the fact that the DPRK realized that the relationship was no longer the one of the past.

Mistrust achieved the highest levels after China recognized South Korea in 1992. Ideologically, China and North Korea, though each with its own national type of a communist-like ideologies, for decades were considered close partners. Since the policy of market reforms in China and its further opening to international exchanges, the mistrust in the North steadily grew. Significant changes that took place in the Chinese ideology and economy have probably made Pyongyang feel “betrayed”.

The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between China and the DPRK was signed in 1961. According to the Treaty's provisions, each part has to help another in case of military invasion\(^\text{118}\). Actually, though the international context has changed significantly after the Treaty came into

\(^{117}\) Moreover, North Korea possesses its leverage to challenge China – the Taiwan issue. Pyongyang has used several times in the 1990s to threaten to establish ties with Taiwan (especially, after China established relations with the ROK).

\(^{118}\) The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between the People’s Republic of China and the democratic People’s Republic of Korea.
force, the parts remained officially committed to it: during the first nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsular when the possibility of the US attack seemed plausible, China seemed to be ready to provide assistance with its troops. However, by the end of the 1990s China announced that it would not automatically interfere in case of military conflict and that its assistance to the DPRK would not automatically mean deployment of Chinese troops\textsuperscript{119}.

China abides by its principle of respect for national sovereignty of every state and non-interference into internal policies. However, it would definitely not tolerate North Korea’s provocative behaviour to the extent it would pose risks of a military conflict or the state's collapse. Such developments are contrary to the logic of Chinese development, based on regional stability and economic prosperity.

During the first nuclear crisis, in 1993 China took initiative to mediate between North Korea and the USA and supported bilateral negotiations between them to settle the issue acting as an intermediary between the parties. When the second nuclear crisis broke up on the Korean peninsular and North Korea announced its withdrawal form the NPT China again accepted the role of a mediator and strongly advocated bilateral talks as it happened in 1993-1994\textsuperscript{120}. Later on, China got itself actively involved in the preparation of the starting multilateral negotiation process together with the USA, Japan, Russia and the Republic of Korea. The Six-party talks since the beginning of the process were held in Beijing, with China hosting the meetings and drafting statements, etc.

In course of the second nuclear crisis China called upon North Korea to dismantle the nuclear programme and to comply with the NPT and the IAEA safeguards. However, the influence leverage of China was evidently not powerful enough to make North Korea to comply with the

\textsuperscript{119} Tuva Kahrs. Regional Security Complex Theory and Chinese Policy towards North Korea // East Asia, Winter 2004, Vol. 21, No. 4, p. 73.

\textsuperscript{120} The challenge of a preemptive strike by the USA made China particularly sensitive to the issue.
NPT principles. At the same time, China played a determining role in convincing North Korea and the USA to negotiate (the Bush administration refused any agreement with the NPT violator while the DPRK perceived as real the possibility of a pre-emptive attack by the USA in the light of the Iraqi war started in 2003). Eventually, the Six-party talks opened in Beijing in August 2003. The Chinese position was far from being coercive with the DPRK: it has traditionally opposed any sanctions to North Korea, considering such measures only harmful for the population, but not efficient in convincing the North Korea regime to make certain concessions.

For the same reasons China expresses itself against any coercive measures – it may lead to instability\textsuperscript{121}. The China’s active commitment to the Six-party talks process as a multilateral channel of communication and peaceful settlement of North Korean nuclear issue reflected its strategic choice. China tries to prevent provocative actions form both North Korea and the USA. As regarding the later, China refused to participate in the Proliferation Security Initiative of the Bush administration. Concerning North Korea, China is reluctant to support any resolutions by the UN Security Council that introduce sanctions against it: China follows the doctrine of non-conditionality of its relationship with North Korea and has not cut aids or economic relationship to impose to the DPRK a certain position on the nuclear issue.

It should be noted, that China has decided not to interfere even considering the negative consequences of the regime collapse. One reason for it could be the position that sanctions would hardly seriously undermine the legitimacy of the North Korea regime, but rather block the marketization processes in the country and cause difficulties for the population. In the long term, China advocates economic reforms in North

\textsuperscript{121} During the first nuclear crisis in 1993-1994 China supported the UN resolution urging the DPRK to abide by the NPT, but it expressed its position to oppose sanctions against the DPRK.
Korea, its opening to economic cooperation and foreign investment. China favours North Korea’s economic reforms and escaping form diplomatic isolation\textsuperscript{122}. China’s economic engagement would in the long term reduce costs of the North Korea regime’s “soft landing”, which are to be paid primarily by South Korea and the neighbours. There is evidence that China tries to engage and encourage North Korea’s elite, drawing their attention to the success of Chinese economic development. There have been numerous visits of the top government representatives to the Chinese most developed economic zones, including the visit by Kim Jong Il in 2001 to Shanghai and to Beijing in 2006, when the North Korean representatives showed interest in economic management of the Chinese enterprises\textsuperscript{123}.

However, there are numerous difficulties of North Korea’s embarking the same reforms, combined with the deepening mistrust that China might interfere within the North Korean affairs, China believes that its valuable contribution would be to convince North Korea to create more business opportunities for foreign investors and introduce adequate institutional changes. China itself has invested into building infrastructure in the bordering region, including construction of several new bridges across the Yalu river on the border with the DPRK. Besides other enterprises, Chinese companies leased piers at the port of Rajin (in the Rajin-Sonbong free trade zone) to transport goods directly.

The Chinese policies toward North Korea have long history and have undergone through changes in course of the last decade, also due to transformations inside China. China remains interested in keeping the status quo in the Korean peninsular and providing survival of the North Korea regime. Its primary goal is to avoid destabilization and collapse in


the DPRK. A unified Korea may pose serious threats to the Chinese national interests through the increase of the US role in the region that may impact the Taiwan issue. Formally China still supports peaceful reunification of Korea, but since it has become hesitant about its consequences and anxious about potential negative impact on its national security, the Chinese leadership rather advocates maintaining the status quo on the Korean peninsula.

Meanwhile, the North Korea’s attitude towards China has been changing. The DPRK has never, even in the past, fully relied on China as a strategic partner and ally. Currently, the North Korean authorities prefer not to depend greatly on any country. China in this sense has discredited itself after the recognition of the Republic of Korea. North Korea could not rely on the Chinese security guarantees at the moment – and China itself has repeatedly stressed that the responsibility under the 1961 security treaty is not automatic – even if cooperation with China is essential for sustaining the North Korean economy.

China is interested in ensuring the continued survival of the North Korean regime, and on its it would likely remain eager to deliver political support and security guarantees (though not direct as according to the 1961) Treaty and material assistance. However, at least maintenance of the status quo and a partnership with China provides North Korea with a kind of security assurance. In this sense, the DPRK continues to rely on China: thus in the foreseeable future China and North Korea seem destined to remain close to, but uncomfortable with, each other.

China has played a crucial role in organizing the negotiating process of the Six-party talks in Beijing. It has used its unrivaled economic and political ties with the DPRK to convince it to negotiate the denuclearization issue in a multilateral format. At the same time China

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has avoided using coercive methods towards North Korea. In principle, the six-party talks have become an appropriate format for resolving not only the nuclear issue, but matters related to creating a permanent peninsular peace regime. Each of the four major powers is responsible for Korea’s division and is interested in maintaining stability. However, North Korea fears that the six-party talks may become an arena of the strategic battle between the great powers and that Pyongyang may be pressured. The responsibility to host the six-party talks has been given to China since it is considered the nation with significant influence over the North. It has definitely granted considerable prestige to China.

The situation on the Korean peninsular remains important, since without the status quo in the region it would be difficult for China to focus on its modernization. Thus, China is highly unfavourable to any armed conflict or abrupt changes on the peninsular. During the second nuclear crisis China has become increasingly concerned about the possibility of a military conflict on the peninsular. The Chinese authorities have taken an active stance in ensuring a peaceful outcome of the crisis and initiated a series of diplomatic steps in order to resolve the crisis. China’s perception is generally shared by other major powers involved, allowing it to play a rescuing role in crisis prevention. China has adopted the strategy of both bilateral and multilateral negotiations to address the North Korean nuclear issue and has even successfully managed to take the leading role in facilitating multilateral process. The Chinese initiative of the six-party talks has been crucial for the nuclear issue management and at the same time reflects the growing role of the Chinese diplomacy in determining the regional balance of power.

China stands for the denuclearization of the DPRK, but it has been reluctant to exert pressure on North Korea on the matter. Obviously, China alone does not possess an adequate influence leverage to persuade
North Korea neither to dismantle its nuclear programme nor to engage in economic reforms and open itself to the outside world. The Chinese self-perception in the current world order, where many security and economic challenges are common and the task of a continued economic development is crucial, is argued to identify its strategic diplomatic task of improving its soft power and upgrade its moral image within the international community. In the resolution of the North Korean nuclear crisis China has demonstrated itself committed to the principles of the international law, promoting dialogue on the nonproliferation and the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. Though China is not inclined to press North Korea on the nuclear issue or to impose and support any sanctions against the DPRK, it is far from supporting the violations of the non-proliferation regime, thus it has adopted the policy of continues engagement of North Korea that allows to negotiate the matter. China would remain committed to the peaceful settlement of the nuclear problem and to reforming the North Korea economy in the long term perspective.

2.4 Russia’s position on maintaining security on the North Korean peninsular

The history of bilateral relations between Russia and Korea dates back as far as 120 years. The relations started in the end of the XIX century, when the Russian empire became close to the Kingdom of Korea, since the instability there could have posed challenges to Russian security. Since then Russia has been directly involved in the developments over the

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Korean peninsula: the Russian-Japanese war broke out as a result of contradictions of the two powers over Korea and Manchuria\textsuperscript{126}. After having been defeated in the war, Russia had to recognize Korea as part of the Japanese sphere of influence\textsuperscript{127}.

In the end of the Second World War the Soviet troops in accordance with the decisions taken at the Yalta conference in February 1945, entered in war with Japan and fought to liberate the Korean peninsular from the Japanese troops. Later on, the USSR together with other great powers was participant of determining the future of the Korean nation and the Korean war of 1950-1953 and afterwards, in course of the system’ confrontation on the peninsular.

After the end of the Cold war a new system of relations over the Korean peninsula was gradually formed, with Russia giving no appropriate significance to North Korea due to its own domestic confusing situation in the beginning of the 1990s and a strong ideological shift towards the pro-Western policy and integration in the international economy that had not permitted it for almost a decade to comprehend and assure its national interests\textsuperscript{128}. In the 1990s, due to DPRK’s isolated position and deep economic crisis, serious shortcomings of food and energy and, eventually, after the death of the charismatic leader – Kim Il Song in 1994 – the collapse of the North Korean state seemed to be the matter of several years, which also had its impact on a passive stance of Russia on the matter. The decrease of Russian influence over North Korea, especially after the USSR had recognized the Republic of Korea in 1990, the growing mistrust of the North Korea towards Moscow contributed to creating a situation, when the first nuclear crisis of

\textsuperscript{126} February 10, 1904-September 5, 1905.

\textsuperscript{127} The Treaty of Portsmouth was signed on September 5, 1905. The text is available at http://net.lib.byu.edu/~rdh7/wwi/1914m/portsmouth.html.

\textsuperscript{128} Dealing with a totalitarian state was considered out of necessity: political, economic assistance and trade between Russia and the DPRK were cut.
1993-1994 was actually settled without any Russia’s engagement. The role of Russia was, in fact, limited to that of an observer.

In course of the first North Korean nuclear crisis Russia mainly supported the position of the USA, for instance – by sustaining the American initiative of adopting the UN Security Council resolution on sanctions against the DPRK, which was later vetoed by China. Numerous attempts taken by the Russian diplomacy to convince North Korea to cooperate with the IAEA were perceived in Pyongyang as a common with the USA pressure in order to foster the DPRK to make unilateral concessions\textsuperscript{129}. Russia failed to implement other initiatives, such as getting the contract on supply of the light-water reactors of the Russian (Soviet) type, which were to be constructed in North Korea under the Framework Agreement of 1994. The DPRK advocated the Russian reactors, since its nuclear programme was developed with the Soviet Union’s assistance and its scientists were trained in the USSR. However, Russia had lost the opportunity and was actually excluded from the KEDO consortium’s activities on implementing the Framework Agreement of 1994.

While having reduced defense, industrial, food, and energy support to North Korea dramatically by the beginning of the 1990s, at the same time, the Russian leadership favoured a fast rapprochement with South Korea to accelerate bilateral economic partnership in order to facilitate Russian economy’s recovery. Throughout the first decade after the collapse of the USSR Russia continued a pro-South Korean policy line, hampering any ties with Pyongyang. Russia’s support to the UN sanctions against the DPRK during the first nuclear crisis also contributed to aggravating its relations with North Korea. The security agreement with

Pyongyang of 1961 was claimed obsolete, since Russia was no more eager to lend support to the DPRK in case of a direct attack.\footnote{The DPRK-Soviet Union Agreement on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, July 11, 1961.}

Since Russian interests were actually neglected in the Agreed Framework of 1994 and, later on, Russia was excluded from the four-party talks – all these was perceived as an alarming factor of the demise of Russian influence. In the beginning of the 1990s the Russian position on the Korean peninsula and the possibility to influence the DPRK was very favorable and presumed Russia’s ability to be an efficient mediator in the settlement in order both to provide for its national interest and to facilitate the dialogue between all the parties engaged. However, as a result of an unbalanced pro-South policy and the lack of clear political priorities Russia lost considerably in its political and economic leverages over the North. By the late 1990s, therefore, Moscow began to reassess its pro-South policy and to call for a more balanced policy towards the Korean peninsula.

Significant changes occurred in Russia’s national security strategy through the reassessment of various factors after President Vladimir Putin came to the Presidential office. Stating that fundamental changes took place in the strategic environment of the country the government had to introduce a series of foreign policies in order to strengthen its positions and gain possible benefits.

A stimulating momentum arrived from South Korea, where the policy of “sunshine warm” – or engagement – was started by President Kim Dae Jung together with an attempt by North Korea to improve relations with international community. The rapprochement with the DPRK started in the end of the 1990s and the appeal by the South Korean president to engage North Korea created encouraging precondition for a shift in Russian policy towards Pyongyang. On the other hand, the North
Korean leadership was keen on improving relationship with foreign countries, which also created a favourable opportunity to reestablish relations on a new level.

Russia took a course towards a more balanced relationship with the two Koreas and hastened to normalize relations with the DPRK that seriously deteriorated in the first half of the 1990s. At the same time Russia continued to sustain its partnership with the Republic of Korea. By the time Russia was no longer considered a key player in resolving the Korean problem mainly as a result of its neglect of relations with a non-democratic regime.\textsuperscript{131}

The renovated Treaty on Friendship, Good-Neighborly Relations and Cooperation between the DPRK and the Russian Federation was signed on February 9, 2000. The previous treaty of 1961 concluded between the DPRK and the USSR presumed that a party to the Treaty was obliged to lend military support in case of war expired on June 10, 1996. The treaty of 1961 was replaced with a new DPRK-Russia Agreement on Friendship, Good-Neighborliness and Cooperation signed on February 9, 2000.\textsuperscript{132}

The first summit between the leaders of Russia and the DPRK that was held in Pyongyang soon afterwards – in July 2000 – for the first time that a Russian leader visited North Korea. The summit is considered one of the most successful steps the Russian diplomacy has made. The meeting between the Russian and North Korean leaders has provided evidence of the inaccuracy of previously stated arguments that it was not possible to deal and negotiate with the DPRK. Another surprising point was the revelation that the role of the Russian Federation on the Korean peninsular that had been largely disregarded in the 1990s turned out to be


\textsuperscript{132} The Russian Federation and the DPRK had agreed that the Treaty (2000) should not include a clause about mutual military assistance in case of an outside aggression.
still considerable. The summit has become precious in the sense that it demonstrated that international isolation of North Korea could be overcome through engagement policy.\textsuperscript{133}

Kim Jong Il made a return visit to Moscow and met President Putin in August 2001 (he made a remarkable journey by train that lasted more than a month) during which the leaders expressed common position on strengthening peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region and their will to expand bilateral relationship. The summit concluded with signing of the Moscow Declaration, which was signed on August, 4\textsuperscript{th} 2001.\textsuperscript{134} The Declaration became a basis for the development of bilateral relations and contributed to the international efforts over the security issue on the peninsular.

The Moscow summit created momentum for progress in political and economic cooperation. The Declaration underline mutual intention to “… give concrete shape to agreements already reached between them on cooperation in trade and economy”, with a priority of reconstruction of the enterprises built with the USSR’s assistance and the railways linking. One of the projects currently in course is the common railway system that would include the DPRK and the Republic of Korea and further the Russian Trans-Siberian railway, which besides of producing a positive economic effect would contribute to engaging North Korea in international cooperation.\textsuperscript{135}

Contemporarily, Russia has signed a long-term agreement with the Republic of Korea on supply of natural gas. The delivery is scheduled to be effected through a pipeline on the sea shelf or through the territory of the DPRK.\textsuperscript{136} This project is also aimed at further engaging North Korea

\textsuperscript{134} The Moscow Declaration of the DPRK and the Russian Federation // The People’s Korea. 11 August 2001.
\textsuperscript{135} The Moscow Declaration of the DPRK and the Russian Federation, points 5, 6.
\textsuperscript{136} Another common project is the first South Korean cosmonaut to be trained and fly into space on a Russian spacecraft in 2008.
in cooperation instead of advocating the regime’s collapse. In fact Russian
is advancing in strengthening its ties with the ROK – the increased
technical, scientific and military cooperation testifies this new level of
relationship. President Roh Moo Hyun visited Moscow in September
2004 for consultations, during which the parties stressed common views
they share on the main international politics issues\textsuperscript{137}. The leaders signed a
Russian-Korean Joint Declaration, which covers numerous areas of
bilateral and international cooperation\textsuperscript{138}. Strengthening political
cooperation with the ROK can be attributed to the Republic of Korea’s
effort to conduct a more independent from the USA foreign policy, but
the rapprochement between Seoul and Moscow definitely contributes to
increasing Russia’s impact on the peninsular and its engagement in the
region.

Currently, the new relationship with the Korean states is based on
the new policy of pragmatism: the key Russian political and economic
objectives in the Far East are to reduce tensions, re-establish Russia’s
presence and foster development of the Russian Far East, which cannot be
achieved without re-engagement with the DPRK. For North Korea it is
important that Russia is against liquidation of the political regime in the
North and that it avoids imposing any solution or dictating conditions\textsuperscript{139}.

For Russia it is important, first of all, to ensure stability and
development in the region of North East Asia. Obviously, this goal
includes non-proliferation of the WMD, particularly acute in the North
Korea case. In this light, Russia favours transformation of the DPRK into
a nuclear free, friendly and economically stable state. International
community, especially the involved states should promote these changes,

\textsuperscript{137} The International Herald Tribune, September 22, 2004.
\textsuperscript{138} Intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the study and use of space for peaceful purposes,
abolishing visas for diplomatic passport holders. Agreement between Tatneft and LG Engineering and
Construction on construction of an oil refinery and petrochemical plant. Credit agreements between
Vneshtorgbank and the Export-Import Bank of Korea, etc.
\textsuperscript{139} See Bulychev Georgy, Vorontsov Aleksander. Korean Peninsula: Russia’s Priorities / \textit{Russian
assuring North Korea their support in modifying its economy and gradual ideological liberalization: only in this case the DPRK may follow this path without counting on nuclear deterrence.

With the end of the cold war the system of traditional alliances collapsed and to ensure its national security and provide for national interests Russia had to adhere to the changing geopolitical environment in the region. Being overwhelmed with domestic problems Russia has considerably lost its weight in the Korean affairs, which, however, can not be attributed to the fact that it has abandoned its interests in the region. Russia will remain concerned over developments in Korea since it has directs impact on sustainable development of the Russian vast region of the Far East\textsuperscript{140}. The possibility of direct military threat for the Russian Federation in the region can rather be estimated as low. However, a potential military threat in the region remains due to local conflicts that could evolve into a regional conflict political, economic and ideological disagreements, which can be the international divergences over the North Korean nuclear programme and the future of the DPRK in general. The dominant role of the USA in the region and growing weight of China make the diminished impact of Russian on regional affairs particularly evident. The rising economic potential of China and South Korea also present a challenge for Russian economy in the Far East.

The role of the USA in Korean affairs increased after it almost unaided managed to settle the nuclear crisis of 1993-1994 when the Agreed framework between the USA and the DPRK was concluded\textsuperscript{141}. Russia protested against the nuclear agreement for not having been consulted about it. China determined its impact through acting as the only ally of North Korea that remained. The KEDO consortium framework also excluded Russia from promoting its interests on the peninsular.


\textsuperscript{141} At the time Russian supported the US proposal of imposing UN sanctions against the DPRK.
Actually, the role of Russian Federation by the end of the 1990s was limited to that of an observer whose interests were mainly ignored.

Russia advocates that it should be directly involved directly in any decision over the Korean Peninsula, thus emphasizing the importance of a multilateral approach as the USA recently does. Russia called upon the necessity of an international format of resolving the first nuclear crisis in the middle of the 1990s\(^{142}\). In fact, later on it has become clear that the bilateral framework could not be applied efficiently to resolving the nuclear issue, since the parties engages are at least six. A common shared position can better strain the DPRK to terminate its nuclear weapons programme.

Russia has been rather coherent in advocating gradual reduction in tensions over the nuclear issue and negotiation strategy as the only plausible mean of resolution. However, after the nuclear tests and the announcement of withdrawal from the NPT by the DPRK the position of Russia hardened. Russia supported the UN Security Council resolution on North Korea that imposed sanctions on it\(^{143}\). The Russia’s motivation of lending support to the Resolution was to prevent further escalation of tensions. At the same time, Russia insisted on including on the Resolution’s text a preposition underlining that “further decisions will be required, should additional measures be necessary”\(^{144}\) in order to ensure only non-aggressive measures towards the DPRK. The final aim of adopting sanctions against North Korea for Russia was to facilitate negotiation process and make the DPRK to resolve the issue through the six party talks\(^{145}\). Officially it was sustained that negotiations were still

\(^{142}\) In 1994 Russia proposed an eight-party talks initiative – North Korea, South Korea, Russia, the USA, Japan, IAEA and the UN Secretary General.


\(^{145}\) Pismennoe intervju s meksikanskim izdatelem Mario Vesces Ragna (Written interview to Mexican editor Mario Vesces Ragna). December, 7\(^{th}\) 2006. – available at the President of Russia official site http://www.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2006/12/115090.shtml.
possible and a peaceful resolution had to be reached. The Russian Federation’s diplomatic advance was based on contacts with other involved parties, the United Nations, the UN Security Council and the IAEA. Russia continues to advocate a possibility to conclude a pact with the DPRK by providing it with security guaranties and non-interference within its domestic affairs on the condition that it abandons its weapons of mass destruction programme. The reliability of any deal could be sustained, however, only through international guarantees and the interests of other parties considered.

Special interests of the Russian Federation on the Korean peninsular are connected to safeguarding its national economic and strategic interests, stability of the Far East Russian region. In case of a military stand-up massive investment effected in projects on oil, natural gas and transport projects in the Far East can be blocked bringing economic decay in the region. The threat might cause migration form the region and damage demographic situation there. Thus, maintaining the status quo is the policy’s priority and in the perspective – emergence of a united and neutral Korean state.

In this light, the approach of Russia towards the North Korean problem can not be considered out of relationship with the Republic of Korea. In the long term Russia seeks strengthening ties with the South Korea, which would eventually lead also to a broader autonomy of the ROK in regional relations. Obviously, since the North Korean question and the future of the DPRK remains one of the central issues for the ROK, the common position with Russia, that shares its engagement approach towards Pyongyang, remains essential. Russia and the Republic of Korea have close positions both on the issue of the nuclear programme – in the sense that they believe that the matter should be negotiated peacefully.

even in case of further nuclear tests – and on the issue of human rights in the DPRK, which they prefer to leave behind discussion.

Russian policy on the Korean peninsular from the end of the 1990s can generally be evaluated as successful. However, it remains a point of discussion, whether Russia has managed to undermine the influence of the USA and China on Korean affairs. Russian experts mainly estimate the recent policy course as pragmatic and positive, being hesitant on further perspectives of Russian influence due both to the place that Korea keeps in the scale of policy preferences (not the top priority) and structural restraints in the regional policy Russia has to adhere to\textsuperscript{147}. Official Russian policy towards the Korean peninsula is expressed in a series of documents and speeches made by the President, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other officials, and in the Foreign Policy Concept (2000). In the latter the Korean issue is given little space, stating the “efforts would be concentrated on ensuring Russia with rightful participation in settlement of the Korean problem, on maintaining balanced relations with both Korean states”\textsuperscript{148}. The Concept thus states that the policy towards Korea would focus on guaranteeing Russia’s equal participation in the Korean issues and relations with both North and South Korea. This policy is mainly deliberated to concentrate on economic cooperation with South Korea and on political and security cooperation with the DPRK.

Russian analysts share common opinion that the actual policy on the Korean peninsular does not correspond to the resources that Russia really possesses and that could be implied. In fact, both the DPRK and the Republic of Korea at the moment maintain stable relationship with the Russian Federation – a friendly neighbor’s relationship\textsuperscript{149}. Moreover,


engaging more deeply with Russia is considered to be beneficial for the
Korean states that try to promote their more independent foreign policy
courses (in case of the ROK – from the USA). In this light, a closer
relationship with Russia may act as a counterbalance of the other great
powers’ politics in the region. Maintaining close ties with the DPRK and
the ROK and a more active stance in the negotiation process could
enhance Russia’s strategic position in the region and enable it with further
influential leverages in other regional disputes it is engaged in. In it
acknowledged, however, that there is a lack of political will to give more
attention to the Korean issue recently. Up to the middle of the 1990s it
was generally agreed that Russia was not able to engage in Korea due to
the lack of economic resources and difficult path of economic
transformation it had embraced after the dissolution of the USSR. 

However, recently it is recognized that Russia possesses enough resources
to be fully participant of the changes that occur on the Korean peninsular.
Experts widely agree that there are no obstacles for a Russian leadership
both on the Korean peninsular and in developing a concept of security and
cooperation in the region of North East Asia.

Concerning the second North Korean nuclear crisis, Russia
proposed the idea to hold the Six-party talks (2002), which contributed to
creating an adequate international environment for the resolution of the
issue. Thus, Russia has once again shown interest in promoting a
multilateral structure in the North East Asia, possibly encouraging a
multilateral security system in the region. Currently, the North-East Asia
lacks any regional security system or an institutionalized system of
regional cooperation: the relationships are mainly bilateral. Geopolitical
changes that occurred after the end of the cold war at first decreased

150 See Bolyatko A.V. Dalnii vostok: v poiskah strategicheskoi stabilnosti (Far East: in Search of
151 Georgy Toloraya. Vostochnoaziatskaya strategiya Rossii: koreiskii vizov (Russia’s East-Asian
strategy: the Korean challenge) // Rossija v globalnoi politike (Russia in global politics), Volume 5, №
Russian influence in the region, but from the beginning of the 21st century Russia has been constantly trying to increase its weight in the North-East Asia. The changes in the regional balance of power due to the rising potential of China have created a transitive situation, where other regional players have to acquire a flexible approach to be adjusted in line with the China’s development and ambitions. Close relationship with China and strategic partnership with the USA make Russia coordinate its position with other parts on the Korean issue as well. As a nuclear power Russia’s position on the North Korean nuclear programme is essential and its cooperation for safeguarding of the NPT regime can not be ignored. However, the impact of Russia has recently increased also through the use of “soft” power: negotiating agreements and joint economic projects with both DPRK and the ROK.

Definitely, a military conflict on the Korean peninsula would be injurious for Russia’s national interest. The maintenance of domestic stability and stability of the surrounding international environment is crucial for the country’s development. Russian approach to the North Korean nuclear programme consists in advocating observance of the NPT and settling any disputes through negotiations. There is also the understanding that North Korea’s energy problems should be resolved in order to provide an adequate solution to the matter. In this light, Russia is eager to foster negotiations, advocate a multilateral approach and to act as a mediator if needed to prevent possible preemptive military strike on North Korea. On the other hand, Russia pursues a goal to promote the development the Russian Far East and the Siberian region with projects of transportation (a joint Korean railway connected to the Trans-Siberian railway) and joint energy projects pretending both economic benefits and an enhanced position among other regional powers. Such soft-powers policies dominate the Russian vision towards the Korean peninsula. It can
be summarized that the Russian political agenda towards the Korean peninsular is shaped by the consideration of security issues and economic factors that are interrelated.

Part 3 Dealing with North Korea

3.1 The nature of conflict and resolution methods: asymmetric potential of a minor state vs. major powers

The core element of a conflict study is determining its content – the difficult interaction of social-political events and the conflict participants’ activities. The nature of political conflict has changed after the Cold war. Currently, the conflicts prevailing are those inside the states for control over resources and the asymmetric international conflicts between major states and the so called rogue states. The asymmetric potentials refer to relationship between incomparable adversaries, where the paradox consists in the fact that even the weaker can course serious damage and impose its conditions to the stronger\textsuperscript{152}. Obviously, success of a weaker can not be determined by the logic of dominance of power, but rather attributed to efficient strategy and tactics it chooses.

The absence of a peer competitor for the USA has created a situation of the only superpower in world politics. However, if no state can rival the USA directly, there is still the possibility of asymmetric conflicts, when the threat may arise from the possession of mass destruction technologies by the competitor. The conflict can be perceived as blackmailing against the major power (in this case – the USA and/or its allies) with the WMD. In this case, major powers become unable or have difficulties in defending themselves in the face of a potential threat and damage that result unbearable. In an armed conflict a minor state is unable to defeat a major state; however, it has become evident that minor states might succeed in managing the conflict and imposing conditions on major adversary.

Power disparity conflict presumes that not only power factor, but various political, strategic, ideological and tactical factors matter in the outcome of a conflict. One of the essential conditions for a minor power victory is the broad domestic support and legitimating of its goals in the conflict inside the country. In this light, democratic power have major difficulties in finding national consent for a war, since they need to present important justifications and actually, every difficulty might lead to public dissent and turn public opinion against the war. On the contrary, if a minor power with high mobilization potential consolidate the society under the idea of a conflict necessary for providing its vital interests (of survival), may give it serious priorities in the conflict.

In the latter type of contemporary international conflicts the economic factor plays important role. It has been widely argued that since during the Cold war period ethnic, religious and racial conflicts had been temporarily freezed, with the changing international environment these disputes broke out. However, it should not be neglected that currently the

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issue of control over natural resources, especially – the strategically important energy resources – has emerged as one of the central premises for the rise of international and domestic conflicts. In this light, minor powers, which do not possess adequate natural resources, are particularly challenged.

The issues of development, international economic cooperation and the probability of conflict have been the point of discussion between the advocates of liberal approach and the realism in the international relations. Liberals believe that highly developed economic interchanges prevent trade partners from initiating an armed conflict, while the realism supporters claim that states prefer to seize territories and resources especially if the opponent is weak, in order to maximize profits. Following this logic, in case of an asymmetric potential, economic contacts between asymmetric powers contribute to increasing argument between the parties.

The “normative” factor contributed to initiating conflicts: democracies never fight with each other, but against minor states with authoritarian political regimes. In the XXI century the USA seem to have taken the leading role in global democratization and combating non-democratic regimes. Democracies are rather eager to engage in international conflicts in case of humanitarian interventions, safeguarding their security from terrorism-sponsoring states and in case of spread of weapons of mass destruction.

The humanitarian intervention argument and protection of human rights have apparently become a justifiable pretense for an armed


intervention within the sovereignty of a State\textsuperscript{156}. However, after the terrorist attacks in the USA the most appealing pretense has become that of counter fighting international terrorism\textsuperscript{157}. The USA tested the new conflict concept over Afghanistan and Iraq, conducting preventive war against terrorists and terror-supporting states. However, the USA, though the leader of combating international terrorism, has sought for a broad international approval and engagement.

North Korea has been referred to as one of such states. In case of the DPRK the issue of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has become decisive together with the non-democratic type of the political regime for the crisis breaking out.

An armed conflict involving the DPRK is agreed to present a serious challenge. A direct comparison of military potential of North Korea and the USA, for instance, presumes that the DPRK would be defeated in a direct armed collision. However, the public, almost unconditional support, for the political regime and for the idea of conflict with the outside powers, would present a powerful structural and stable characteristic, which would almost certainly lead to a sustainable and protracted confrontation.

The conflict on the Korean peninsula has evolved different stages and can be characterized as multifaceted. Geographically, the conflict can be referred to as regional, since in its origin lay disagreement between the two Korean states. At the same time, the Korean conflict has its global dimension, since from the very origin and for decades it has been influenced by the interplay of the major powers – initially, the USSR and the USA, which landed support to the corresponding allies on the peninsula. The Korean peninsula has for decades been reflecting both

\textsuperscript{156} Gareth Evans, Mohamed Sahnoun. The Responsibility to Protect \textit{// Foreign Affairs}, 2002. No 81 (6). p. 100.

regional dynamics of its direct parties and the transformation of the global political system\textsuperscript{158}. Moreover, the routs of the Korean division in general lay in the systemic confrontation of the cold war period, when the Korean peninsula became one of the regional theaters of the global social-political conflict.

The period after the end of the Cold war was marked by significant changes in the geopolitical situation over the Korean peninsula. On the one hand, despite of pessimistic prognoses of the near collapse of the North Korean state, it has managed to survive and the Korean problem has formally remained what it previously was – the main interested parties are the DPRK and the Republic of Korea, which struggle over the legitimacy of the national division and claim their rights of authority over the whole national territory. The two Korean states announced the national unification as their primary goal and rivaled each other with economic development and increasing military capacities. However, the bilateral confrontation during the Cold war era was highly dependent on the international context.

The Korean peninsula due to its specific position in the region between China, Japan and on the border with Russia has been highly attractive as a sphere of influence for each of the major powers, since exclusive dominating positions of one of them on the Korean peninsula could directly challenge security of the others. The powers involved have tried to exercise their own approaches to the resolution of the Korean problem in accordance with their interests, resources and risks they might bear. Thus, in the light of inevitable presence of major powers in the conflict, the Korean states take maneuver to gain international backing.

\textsuperscript{158} Like in case of other regional conflicts of the Cold war, periods of détente in tensions between the two superpowers were marked by decrease of tensions and controversy between the two Korean states – such as the North-South Joint Declaration of July 4\textsuperscript{th}, 1972. On the wake of the new geopolitical situation right after the Cold war had ended, North and South Korea signed the bilateral Agreement on reconciliation, non-aggression, cooperation and the Joint declaration on the nuclear-free Korean peninsula (1991).
and assure support or, on the contrary, diminish dependence on great powers.

However, despite of the continued existence of the two rivaling stated on the Korean peninsula, the focus of international attention has been gradually shifting after the end of the Cold war towards a new international political situation and regional balance of power. The collapse of the Soviet Union has had a major impact on the situation in East-Asia – with the USA becoming the most influential actor in the region.

The first nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula occurred in 1993-1994 in the framework of a changing international environment after the end of the Cold war. The latent phase of the conflict dates back to the beginning of the North Korean nuclear programme development, but especially – to the end of the 1980s, when the DPRK joined the NPT (1985) and the question of the IAEA inspections to the country’s nuclear facilities emerged. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union international environment has changed unfavourably for North Korea – it has lost its main ally and economic partner. In the new circumstances the nuclear programme possibly acquired particular significance as it was seemingly able to provide additional guarantees for the political regime’s survival in the North. At the same time, the revelations of unauthorized nuclear developments in the DPRK challenged the effectiveness of the nonproliferation regime and the security of regional powers and thus could not be tolerated by the international community. Formally, the first crisis broke out as a result of discrepancies between North Korea and the IAEA regarding the correspondence of the nuclear programme to the norms of the Treaty and data evidence provided for the IAEA.\textsuperscript{159}

The crisis was characterized by escalation of tensions, when the DPRK announced its intention to withdraw from the NPT in 1993 and the USA challenged North Korea with imposing sanctions and conducting a military operation. In the first nuclear crisis the United States deliberately took the role of the international nonproliferation regime guard and later on, due to domestic institutional constraints and international responsibilities (including those before their allies in the region) could not refuse the mission of defending security on the peninsula.

At the same time, the crisis of 1993-1994 escaped from bringing in open hostilities as a result of other parties involved advocating a peaceful resolution. The crisis was resolved with signing of the Geneva Framework Agreement of 1994 between the DPRK and the USA, which set up the basis for the future regulation of the North Korean nuclear activities and prevented its unilateral withdrawal from the NPT. However, the Agreement presumed a temporarily deal aimed at preventing North Korea from further advance in its nuclear weapons programme, but did not provide for the overall control of the nuclear capabilities of the DPRK – in fact, it was permitted to preserve the nuclear materials already processed until the two light-water reactors (LWR) were constructed.\textsuperscript{160}

The resolution of the 1993-1994 nuclear crisis demonstrated that bargaining tactics of a minor state such as North Korea could be efficient and the country actually gained benefits from the resolution of the issue – through entering in a direct dialogue with the USA, creating a positive momentum, attracting international attention and receiving foreign assistance and aid – fostering contacts with South Korea (economic aid). Meanwhile, the settlement of 1994 has not introduced a permanent mechanism of addressing the issue being in its core an exchange bargain. The DPRK agreed to stop its programme in exchange of economic

benefits – heavy oil supply and the two LWR’s construction and thus led to further exploitation of the nuclear factor as a political leverage: after the USA revealed their intelligence data of a secret uranium enrichment by the DPRK the heavy oil deliveries were terminated and North Korea announced intention to re-launch the programme of constructing its nuclear facilities\textsuperscript{161}.

The second nuclear crisis was marked by implying significant multilateral effort to settle the North Korean nuclear issue in the framework of the Six-party talks. After a series of talks’ rounds, when a solution or even a partial agreement were deemed unreachable, in October of 2005 the parties signed a Joint statement, which introduced a path (though very extensive and sketchy) for the settlement. In February 2007 the Joint statement received further progress, when tangible measures to arrive at a final resolution were elaborated. However, the deal to resolve the second nuclear crisis is based on the same premises as the Framework Agreement of 1994 – the DPRK assures closing its suspected nuclear facilities and abandoning its nuclear weapons programme, in exchange receiving energy assistance and further normalization of relations with the USA\textsuperscript{162}.

During the second nuclear crisis the USA were capable of conducting a military operation targeted at terminating (or seriously destructing) the North Korean programme, since the main nuclear object have been traced and are known. However, the response from the DPRK might have been attacking both the American military bases stationed in the region and the territory of its regional allies – Japan and the Republic of Korea – with nuclear and/or conversional weapons in its possession. In this case, the casualties – both military and civil – could have been

\textsuperscript{162} The major difference from the 1994 Agreement is that it has been elaborated with the participation of the six parties and thus is guaranteed by them.
estimated as too numerous to make such an advance. In this light, a preventive action may be considered necessary in case of a concrete and imminent military threat (the North Korea, even if armed with nuclear weapons, does not pose such a threat to the USA)\textsuperscript{163}. However, the threat posed by the possession of the WMD by the “rogue states” can foster and sponsor terrorist group, which as referred to as a threat to the US national security\textsuperscript{164}. The negative experience of pre-emptive strikes’ policy in Iraq has made the Bush administration in the second term change approach towards a more cautious one and reconsiders diplomacy as a preferable option of the rogue states’ nuclear potential settlement. Evidently, when applied to Korean peninsula, the option of military prevention is less appropriate and a diplomatic engagement with emphases primarily on political instruments combined with deterrence results more favourable\textsuperscript{165}.

Actually, during the second nuclear crisis the USA demonstrated preference for a diplomatic solution. Opting for peaceful solution might, however, imply some coercive measures, such as referring the matter to the UN Security Council and imposing sanctions on the DPRK. The non-coercive path presents its difficulties, limitations and structural constraints. For instance, China, South Korea and Russia have expressed themselves against economic sanctions and without their full participation the efficiency of sanctions would be restricted. Another important constraint is that the neighbour states – China, the Republic of Korea, Russia and Japan claim denuclearization of the DPRK, but do not support of the settlement of the problem by military means.

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The hegemonic stability and power-transition theories have set out the issue of non-military basis for major powers’ dominating in world politics. A hegemonic dominance could rather be accepted as far as it provides certain advantage for the weaker, such as security and favourable economic conditions for development, possible – an economic assistance\textsuperscript{166}. These are the conditions which the DPRK actually has put before the USA as a precondition for a final and ultimate dismantlement of its nuclear weapons programme.

3.2 Efforts to resolve North Korean nuclear issue through the Six-party negotiations

The first nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula was resolved with signing of the Geneva Agreed Framework between North Korea and the United States in 1994. However, the issue became acute again in October 2002, when the DPRK disclosed its programme of uranium enrichment. In order to settle the second North Korea’s nuclear crisis that emerged in 2002, previous agreements are to be considered. The Agreed Framework of 1994 between the USA and the DPRK provided North Korea’s return in the Non-Proliferation Treaty membership, but no the return to a full membership in the sense that the actual status of its nuclear programme had not been verified. Controls were to be made after the two light water reactors were constructed by KEDO – the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization. In fact, these shortages of the Agreed framework contributed to the outbreak of the second crisis on the Korean peninsula. North Korea reconsidered the economic assistance (energy supply) as insufficient, while the USA introduced a new requirement – a complete, verifiable and irreversible, dismantlement\textsuperscript{167}.

The DPRK first threatened to withdraw from the NPT in 1993. However, when it declared its withdrawal in 2003, the international context had changed. At the same time the limitations a partial settlement agreement – such as the agreed Framework of 1994 – were to be reconsidered and a new plan of action introduces to arrange the problem. The American policy shifted to counter-proliferation and combating terrorism and pre-emptive measures.

In spite of the USA advocating hard line approach towards North Korea, the negotiation strategy prevailed as a peaceful option for settling the problem\textsuperscript{168}.

The first round of the Six-party talks was held in Beijing on August 27-29, 200, the second and the third rounds - on February 25-28 and on June 23-26, 2004 respectively. The first three rounds of the Six-party talks did not result in any concrete decisions\textsuperscript{169}. The talks demonstrated a deep comprehension gap and mutual distrust between North Korea and the United States. The USA from the very beginning demanded a complete, verifiable, irreversible dismantling of the North Korean nuclear programme (CVID), naming it as a necessary pre-condition for further negotiation and a possible economic assistance and normalization with the North, while the DPRK pretended corresponding incentives in the form of a simultaneous exchange for freezing its nuclear facilities and allowing inspections.

Conditions under which any new agreement on the nuclear issue was to be achieved implied providing an internationally controlled verification of the effective nuclear status of the DPRK, with the IAEA’s role essential. The IAEA possesses mechanism of control and expertise and is a fundamental part of the NPT regime. A multilateral mechanism formula had to be found for managing both nuclear issue (peaceful

\textsuperscript{169} On April 23-25, 2003 North Korea admitted possessing nuclear weapons.
development of nuclear facilities) and providing security assurances for Pyongyang.

At the starting point, there were numerous obstacles for providing a comprehensive compliance of North Korea with the NPT regime. First, a broad and supported by all the negotiating parties’ international agreement was to be achieved. The issue of sanctions and/or incentives to North Korea, as well as the issue of economic assistance, should be agreed between the parties involved in order to avoid uncoordinated policy steps which lead to counterproductive measures. In fact North Korea agreed to participate in the international negotiation mechanism, comprehending that the United States would not accept a bilateral nonaggression pact (neither they accepted a proposal of bilateral negotiations in 2003) and a multilateral framework was necessary to guarantee the regime’s survival through mutual cooperation.

The nations concerned expressed themselves in favour of institutionalization of the Six-party talks. The security issues that are involved present direct challenges for the stability in the region and in this light the nations involved would face economic and political consequences that can be avoided only through cooperation. There is an understanding that North Korea would not renounce nuclear capabilities on an unconditioned basis (unless it would be an abrupt collapse, which is highly undesirable). Obviously, the lack of mutual confidence presents political challenges, which might repeatedly lead to delays in implementing any agreement or solution on the matter and result in a stalemate.

The Six-party talks were also expected to become a regional multilateral confidence-building instrument. However, for several years

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170 The Republic of Korea is engaged with the DPRK and submits valuable economic assistance to it, so the first-term Bush administration’s approach to Seoul as a marginal party to any deal or agreement on North Korea resulted in complicating South Korean activities there and a critical situation in the USA-ROK bilateral relations.
the disillusions about the efficiency of the negotiation mechanism were growing, since in 2 years of talks no progress was made and the regional security so far was continuously challenged with the unresolved nuclear issue. Especially, with the North Korean declaration of having manufactured additional nuclear weapons and suspending its participation in the talks on 10 February 2005 it seemed that the mechanism had failed.

Discontinuity of positions of the five parties on the matter and the means of settlement, which did not fully correspond with each other on essential issues, such as the issue of sanctions – China, the Republic of Korea and Russia advocate economic assistance to North Korea, while the United States and Japan stand for the opposing – also contributed to hampering the negotiation process.

Finally, the fourth round of the six-party talks resulted in signing of the Joint Declaration\textsuperscript{171}, which described a broad plan of settling the North Korea nuclear problem. However, the agreement introduced only a set of goals to be specified and implemented in the future. Evidently, the declaration represented important concessions and agreement reached by the negotiations’ parties, especially – by the USA and the DPRK.

It has been acknowledged that the Joint Declaration of 2005 was achieved due to the active pressure from China\textsuperscript{172}. The role of China in the Six-party talks process has been constructive and consistent. From the very emergency of the new nuclear crisis in 2002 China became an active mediator between Washington and Pyongyang supporting the idea of direct contact between them. The first attempt to hold trilateral talks (DPRK- USA-China) ended without any progress. Further on, the idea of a broader multinational format found support both in Washington and Pyongyang. China acted as an active facilitator and hosted all the rounds.

\textsuperscript{172} Zhebin A. Peregovory po jadernoi probleme na Koreiskom poluostrove: promezhutochnye itogi (Negotiations Regarding the Nuclear Problem on the Korean Peninsula: Interim Results) // Problemi Dalnego Vostoka (Far Eastern Affairs), №1, 2006. p.54.
in Beijing and its effort has been invariably acknowledged by the other parties. However, the Six-party talks process and the Chinese mediating role have demonstrated various constraints of the Chinese potential to influence North Korea.

The USA on their part agreed not to attack the DPRK with conventional weapons (the Agreed Framework of 1994 contained non-attack with nuclear weapons). The DPRK promised to abandon its nuclear weapons, but to maintain the right of peaceful use of atomic energy. However, the elusive character of the declaration’s provisions and the absence of any time references on when the declaration would be implemented made the results of the fourth round of talks rather preliminary than conclusive.

After the Joint Declaration was signed the general atmosphere over the problem deteriorated: the USA approach remained that of implementing the declaration with the previous condition of the “complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantling” of the nuclear programmes and concessions (such as normalization of relations) were to be made only after the abandon.

Soon afterwards the negotiations seemed to have come to a standstill, since North Korea refused to participate in the talks until the USA maintained their accusations of the DPRK’s participation in currency counterfeiting – the North Korean accounts in Banco Delta Asia in Macau were freezezed.

When consenting to participate in the talks, North Korea demonstrated that it did not intend to give up its nuclear programme without any adequate retribution in turn. At least, the demand was the construction of light-water reactors and abandon of a hostile policy toward the regime on behalf of the United States. The USA, on their part, stressed the importance of the human rights issue and the counterfeit
currency problem as well as stopping production of missiles and their exports, eliminating chemical and bacteriological weapons, renouncing to terrorism and exports of drugs\textsuperscript{173}.

However, the American negative position on the character of political regime in Pyongyang is believed to have represented the most difficult stumbling block to be overcome in course of the settlement. To reach any stable and protractive solution of the nuclear problem the North Korean authorities should have been first of all reassured that there were no intention on behalf of the USA and its allies to overthrow the political regime in the country. The outcome of the insensitive labeling of the North Korean regime would obviously lead to a stalemate in any negotiating process – mutual insulations are not desirable in any negotiations.

The breakthrough in the Six-party talks process occurred on the 13\textsuperscript{th} February 2007: in line with the previously agreed Joint Declaration of 2005 the “Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement” were signed, under which Pyongyang agreed to shut down the Yongbyon nuclear facility and admit inspectors for verification within 60 days\textsuperscript{174}.

The retribution was energy aid and security assurances. In the first phase North Korea was to obtain a million tons of heavy fuel oil in exchange of freezing its plutonium production in Yongbyon. The first 50,000 tones of heavy fuel oil were delivered by the Republic of Korea shortly after the deal had been reached. North Korea allowed the IAEA inspectors to return on its nuclear facilities to verify them frozeed.

The second phase began with the October 3, 2007 agreement on the second phase actions – “Second-Phase Actions for the Implementation of the September 2005 Joint Statement”\textsuperscript{175}, when the DPRK agreed to

\textsuperscript{173} Zhebin, p.55.
disable all existing nuclear facilities, starting with disabling the three core facilities at Yongbyon by the end of 2007 and to provide a complete declaration of its nuclear programs. The latter had not been submitted in a due form until recently (February 2008) according to the evaluation of Christopher Hill, the USA Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs\textsuperscript{176}. However, since the DPRK remains committed to the process (providing assistance in disabling the nuclear facilities and verification of the results) the issue has been given time to develop positively.

In change the delivery of 950,000 tons of fuel oil was agreed. The delivery was agreed to be provided by the end of 2007, but was not completed. Until recently North Korea has received about 200,000 tons of heavy fuel oil, provided by China, Russia, the ROK and the United States (Japan rejected assistance on this stage). The strategy chosen has been a gradual exchange of mutual concessions – as the DPRK fulfills its part of commitments, the Six-party states fulfill their obligations.

The 2007 deal is argued to have been reached due to reciprocal necessities both in North Korea and the USA. The former needed its accounts in Macao unfrozen, while the latter found itself in a difficult situation in Iraq and Afghanistan, which influenced the ruling Republican Party losses in the national midterm elections in November 2006\textsuperscript{177}.

Specifics in positions of other Six-party talks parties have also implied additional difficulties for negotiations’ progress. For example, the Japanese claim of including the issue of abduction of the Japanese citizens by the DPRK secret services in the 1970s caused criticism from other participants as unproductive for the negotiations process (with the exception of the USA). The criticism aroused form the fact that Japan that


\textsuperscript{177} See Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°62, 30 April 2007, After the North Korean Nuclear Breakthrough: Compliance or Confrontation? p. 2.
actually would be directly rivaled in case of further uncontrolled development of the North Korean weapons programme, had put the abduction issue as a pre-condition for the normalization of relationship with the DPRK thus stalling the peaceful process. Such an approach may be attributed to the very contingent position of Japan of being a party concerned, but not a primary negotiator from the North Korea’s point of view. At the same time, since the resolution of the abductions issue has been claimed a prerequisite to the Japanese further economic contribution in a general agreement of the nuclear settlement, it can not be avoided.

In contrast, the Republic of Korea advocates engagement policy towards the North and employed the February 2007 agreement as justification for recommencing aid to the DPRK not in a full compliance with the progress of the implementation of the deal.

The new deal has been disapproved of adopting the same strategy as that of the failed Agreed Framework of 1994, when North Korea had been rewarded with concessions without prior verification of the status of its nuclear programme. However, the significance of the agreement that has set up a new arrangement towards resolving the North Korean nuclear problem in a peaceful way should not be put into doubt. The major difference from the 1994 agreement is its multilateral character – the agreement has been reached in the frame of the Six-party talks negotiations. Another significant distinction of the 2007 deal is that it presumes not a one-time exchange of actions (dismantling nuclear facilities in exchange of economic aid), but a gradual set of actions targeted at any further actions in exchange of adequate concessions.

The issue of verification presents most apparent challenges. Inspections might require several years. The USA pretends an extensive verification of the North Korea’s abandonment of the nuclear weapons

program. In controlling the 1994 Agreement implementation the IAEA faces numerous difficulties in monitoring and verifying the process of denuclearization of North Korea. The IAEA is likely to meet the same obstacles from the Korean part gain, such as restricting access to some facilities and concealing information, which would prevent form obtaining a clear evidence of the actual status of the nuclear program. What is more important the demand has been of initial actions to be taken by the DPRK, which would come prior to all further economic and political concessions from the other side. The DPRK links progress to lifting sanctions against them and insists on its right to maintain nuclear facilities for energy purposes.

North Korea, on the one hand, and the United States and Japan, on the other, have stated their intentions to take steps toward normalizing relations. However, as it has become evident the USA consider concession form Pyongyang in other realms – such as that of human rights, counterfeit of the U.S. dollars, cigarettes and pharmaceuticals, drug production and trafficking, etc. – as a precondition to normalization despite of the nuclear problem. Pyongyang refutes all accuses, but it might make the normalization process even more complicating.

The DPRK has estimated the removal from the US list of states sponsoring terrorism and the termination of the application to it of the Trading with the Enemy Act (TWEA) as well as lifting sanctions as a necessary precondition for such normalization. However, institutional procedure for such a removal in the USA Congress is lengthy and requires a lot of scrutiny in order to approve de-listing of a nation; in case of North Korea it can rather occur after denuclearization. The February 13 agreement contains the plan to remove the DPRK from the terrorism list

and later on it has been agreed that the removal would occur with the completion of the second phase of the agreement’s implementation – when the North would have disabled its plutonium facilities at Yongbyon. However, the deadline has been missed and the conclusion of haltering North Korea facilities at Yongbyon delayed and the DPRK has not yet presented a full report on its current nuclear programs. Since, the issue of removal has been postponed until the process under the second phase is not completed. Meanwhile, analysts suggest that the USA should abide by their agreement to remove the DPRK from the list, since fulfilling this obligation would allow successful implementation of the whole agreement with the DPRK and would not bring it to a stalemate.

The most challenging doubt is, however, if the DPRK seriously intends to abandon its nuclear weapons programme. It has become evident that a strategy of a simultaneous abandon in change of economic incentives has failed (1994 Agreed Framework). A gradual progress is believed to be more efficient – accompanied by rigorous monitoring and verification followed.

To be committed to the negotiation process North Korea should be offered satisfactory guarantees of regime survival together with economic assistance. Russian and South Korean experts for long have stressed the importance of separating such issues as human rights and other form the most important argument – the denuclearization of North Korea – as impeding the progress on the matter. The USA and Japan with its abduction issue maintained another strategy.

3.3 Scenarios for the North Korean regime

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181 In the view of the DPRK it has already submitted a complete report on its nuclear programmes.
182 Christopher R. Hill. “...the U.S. action …will depend on the DPRK’s fulfillment of its Second-Phase commitments on providing a complete and correct declaration and disabling its nuclear facilities, as well as on satisfaction of legal requirements”.
Notwithstanding the progress of the Six-party talks and a gradual settlement of the nuclear problem that lasted for almost a year without any significant deadlocks, the matter of reliability of the DPRK as a partner and its desire to cooperate remain under suspicion.

The fact is that North Korea continued to be an exceptionally closed political regime and seeks to control every sphere of outside interference with its policies and related issues. Much has been spoken about unpredictability of the DPRK’s policies and about the most adequate strategy to be implied towards the North to assure that it remains committed to its obligations. There are still concerns that North Korea would persist on maintaining nuclear potential as a guarantee of its security. The first obvious measure to control the DPRK is supervising its access to double-use technologies, which is being in part implemented under the provisions of the UN Security Council Resolution 1718\(^\text{184}\).

The strategy of dealing with North Korea is strictly connected to the overall vision of applying an adequate and efficient strategy towards the states that proliferate weapons of mass destruction. The Korean issue is even more complicated – the DPRK has been included in the list of the states sponsoring terrorism, violating human rights and proliferating nuclear weapons. The resolution of the problem of nuclear proliferation could be based at applying principles of international law, corresponding arms control agreements, regimes and international control.

Preventing further production of nuclear-relative materials such as plutonium or enriched uranium is the prior goal in controlling proliferation. This could be potentially done both by diplomatic and/or coercive measures.

The international Non-proliferation regime has been criticized for its inconsistence with modern realities and inadequate instruments it

possesses to control horizontal proliferation\textsuperscript{185}. However, the experience of successful abandon of nuclear weapons by the ex-Soviet states, Argentina, Brazil, South Africa and others occurred in compliance with the NPT and the factor of being accepted and integrated in the international community served as an important motivation\textsuperscript{186}. 

The Six-party talks have demonstrated differences in approaches to the resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue and the strategies of dealing with the DPRK by the parties except for the common goal of denuclearization and preventing a sudden collapse of North Korea (especially, the neighbouring states). The issue of discussion remains the question whether it is necessary to transform the regime in the DPRK and if it is possible. Different interests dictate various approaches, however, the North Korean state by itself is a unique entity and an able international player that has come close to possessing nuclear weapons and managed to bargain economic benefits and security assurances in exchange of its decision to stop the nuclear weapons programme.

The strategies of addressing the nuclear issue and the whole problem of North Korea can be summarized in two main streamlines – military settlement and peaceful resolution – with particular policy options chosen for each of them.

\textit{Military settlement} was seriously considered by the USA in the period of the first nuclear crisis and reconsidered in the variant of pre-emptive attack during the second. Thus, it could not be neglected, since in spite of obviously devastating consequences it may cause, this type of solution might be potentially applied in case of a deadlock of a peaceful process. The experience of military campaigns lead by the USA in Iraq


and Afghanistan demonstrated limitation of target strikes, but they are able to seriously destruct, if not destroy the nuclear facilities of the North.

However, the challenges of implementing a military solution are reciprocal measures that might be undertaken by the North Korean forces and rival the territories of the neighbouring states as well as the US military bases there. In this light it would be difficult to get consent for any military operation against the DPRK from the Republic of Korea and Japan (as well as China and Russia, which expressed against any coercive military measures).

In course of both nuclear crises on the Korean peninsular non-military approaches prevailed. However, these approaches also imply serious difficulties for the parties involved as the matter has been in fact the actual acquisition of the DPRK of nuclear weapons and positioning itself as a de facto a nuclear power.

The peaceful approach of dealing with the DPRK presumes two main policy lines – engaging North Korea or containing it.

The engagement policy has been conducted by the South Korean government since 2000 under the name of the “Sunshine policy” and “Peace and prosperity policy”. The strategic calculation bases on the premise that it is necessary to reassure the North Korean regime, since it lacks security guarantees and thus has adapted a hostile policy and produces nuclear weapons. Once engaged and included in the international community and international economic exchanges (that have been considerably undercut after the collapse of the Soviet Union), the DPRK might return to the path of a peaceful coexistence with the outside world and the nuclear threat would be diminished.

Many American experts have examined the option of engagement combined with deterrence activities as the most adaptable to the North

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Korean case\textsuperscript{188}. The “hawk engagement” implies a pragmatic engagement strategy targeted at rewarding a regime in order to have leverages of influence over it, simultaneously having the process under control and being able to react in another way if necessary. Victor D. Cha has pointed out at certain advantages of such strategy: first, “carrots” may become “sticks” and used against the regime (cutting economic incentives might be convincing): second, it is believed that foreign aid contributes to the process of the ruling political regime’s loosing public support; third, in case of policy failure it would be easier to create a coalition and take punitive measures\textsuperscript{189}.

The hawk engagement approach gained support in the second term of the Bush administration\textsuperscript{190}. This was a more balanced and moderated approach, which concerned also the interests of the USA allies in the region and sought for a broader international support. In fact, applying this strategy proved to be successful and the process of gradual settlement of the North Korean nuclear problem was launched with the Joint Declaration of 2005 and the following “Initial steps” in February 2007. The tolerance that the USA demonstrated towards the DPRK throughout the year 2007 demonstrates a significant shift in policy approach in favour of a conditional engagement\textsuperscript{191}.

Another strategic option is the policy of containment, aimed at isolating and containing North Korea and the nuclear threat it poses until it either changes its policy or the political regime in the DPRK is collapsed (changes). The instrument of this strategy is sanctions to be

\textsuperscript{190} Among those who advocated of the more pragmatic approach were Colin Powell, Richard Armitage, and Condoleezza Rice.
imposed on the military related activities of the North, controlling its external logistic flows. However, such strategic approach to be efficient would need to rest upon broad international consent to make sanctions irresistible. South Korea, China and Russia would hardly support this course, targeted at dramatic transformations inside the DPRK, worsening its economic conditions and causing flows of migrants in the neighbouring countries. In fact, the first term Bush administration conducted a policy course very close to the strategy of isolation and containing Pyongyang, while the Republic of Korea put significant effort in engaging with the North. This policy contradiction resulted in surge of anti-American feelings in the South and overcoming the discrepancies among allies was a challenge for the future of the alliance.\(^{192}\)

A hard-line approach towards North Korea dominated the USA policy in the period of the Bush administration’s first term in power. There were numerous supporters of the strategy, including Vice President D. Cheney and the Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.\(^{193}\) The scope of applying a hard-line policy is exercising pressure over a political regime in order to make it agree to a settlement. The hard-line approach, as it was perceived by the early Bush administration, excluded any engagement, but had to pressure the North Korean regime with sanctions in order to contribute to its collapse. With the negotiation process in course and the gradual progress it has achieved, the advocates of a hard-line approach still maintain their logic of the non-productivity of engagement with the DPRK, since they have actually provided only an incomplete disabling of the nuclear facilities and Pyongyang has had the possibility to continue its weapons programme all over the negotiations,

while the issue of its past nuclear activities had not been verified before making a deal\textsuperscript{194}.

Whatever strategy towards the DPRK chosen, there is a broad agreement that to become an integrative part of the international community North Korea has to go through important transformation and change (considering that a collapse is an unfavourable option).

Another existing option is the regime change, which would seemingly lead to a definite resolution of the nuclear question. A regime change is immediate and presumes a use of force; while the regime’s transformation is its evolution, which is indirect and gradual without direct use of military force. Denying any contacts with the regime to be changed and the lack of diplomatic actions characterizes policy of the states – advocates of regime change\textsuperscript{195}.

However, this alternative also entails trouble, since the character of relationship between the regime change and proliferation control is complicated. The study conducted by Robert Litwak has demonstrated that intentions to acquire weapons of mass destruction by a political regime do not depend on the regime’s type: democratization might lead to a greater transparence, but is not able to guarantee from proliferating WMD\textsuperscript{196}. The regime change does not lead to abandoning nuclear ambitions, unless the causations of proliferation (goals to be achieved through it) are satisfied. In case of North Korea the main requirements are security guarantees and economic assistance. At the same time, the Iraqi experience has demonstrated that anticipating a regime change implies high degree of uncertainty and various domestic and international factors should be taken into account: the prognoses of a soon collapse of the DPRK in the first half of the 1990 proved to be inconsistent. North

\textsuperscript{194} A diplomatic charade (by Nicholas Eberstadt). USA Today, January 03, 2008.  
Korean population still maintains an extremely high degree of loyalty towards the authorities even in the face of serious economic hardships and any forceful regime change might lead to protests and social unrest.

The ambiguity over the consequences of an enforced regime change makes rather prefer opting for a regime’s evolution (transformation). In fact, in the 1990s many analysts believed that North Korea was about to collapse considering its international isolation, marginal politics and disastrous economic conditions, but the regime managed to survive and currently continues to.

Evolutionary (transformative) approach seems more stable and predictable, but being gradual might imply a lot of time. The main instrument of fostering a regime’s change is promoting freedom of press, supporting economic reforms, assisting nongovernmental organizations – all activities aimed at encouraging reform and openness, increasing transparency.

Examining current developments inside the DPRK has made anticipating a certain transformation of the North Korean society, which should not be underestimated. Andrei Lankov has suggested several policy initiatives that might promote a deeper change in the DPRK and overcome the current status quo through the regime’s character change: realizing that important changes in the DPRK have already occurred, delivering alternative information inside the DPRK, leveraging the North Korean refugees lobby in the South Korea, promoting cultural, educational exchanges of the DPRK people with the outside. He argues

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197 “On a separate track, to address humanitarian assistance needs … We assisted U.S. NGOs in providing aid to fight the outbreak of infectious diseases following floods in North Korea last summer. The United States is also working with U.S. NGOs to carry out a plan to improve the supply of electricity at provincial hospitals in North Korea. We have also made clear to the DPRK how much we value the advancement of human rights in all societies and that discussion of important outstanding issues of concern, including the DPRK’s human rights record, would be part of the normalization process”. – the statement by Christopher Hill enlightened a transformative approach of the USA towards the DPRK.

that such measures, as it occurred in the Soviet Union, where the collapse came from within, may eventually bring down the North Korean political system.

In could be claimed that promoting regime transformation in North Korea is complementary to diplomatic activities and deterrence. As Richard Haass notes “a foreign policy that chooses to integrate, not isolate, despotic regimes can be the Trojan horse that moderates their behavior in the short run and their nature in the long run”199.

With the Six-party process and the settlement of the North Korean nuclear problem based on the 2005 Joint Declaration the issue of the DPRK’s denuclearization is being international monitored. North Korea and the USA maintain their commitment to the process; however, some inconsistency with the previously settled terms of implementing the agreement and presenting a complete declaration of its nuclear related activities have emerged. However, in case of a failure of the diplomatic settlement – for instance, in case of a new North Korean nuclear test or other provocative actions – the USA might increase pressure on the DPRK and imply coercive measures for resolving the problem.

The diplomatic solution of the matter seems more constructive and advantageous, if combined with fostering gradual evolution of the North Korean regime, when it would eventually give up its nuclear ambitions and receive in change assistance for the country’s development. Alternative options might include adopting an UN Security Council resolution, imposing economic sanctions on the DPRK, enforcing international control over North Korean proliferation activities, a military action by the USA and a coalition of states.

Other states engaged in the nuclear settlement stay for a peaceful resolution of North Korean nuclear issue, since a military option would

199 Richard N. Haass, p. 78.
cause unpredictability over the future of the North Korean state, question its independence, foreign policy priorities, and might have destructive consequences on the neighbouring states.

Conclusion

The dissertation has dwelled upon the North Korea nuclear problem in regional and global context, introducing a framework for analysis of the developments on the Korean peninsula. The inevitability of examining
the nuclearization of the DPRK with a multilevel approach is determined by the fact that the problem is complex in nature and to be adequately explained requires a broad analysis. First of all, the subject of study should be the North Korean state with a focus on the geopolitical position it had found itself after the end of the Cold war.

The particular situation over the problem of analyzing the actual state and developments of the North Korean situation is, first of all, the lack of verifiable information, caused by the regime’s strict control over the informational flows. In these circumstances a qualitative analysis of the impact of its policies on domestic and international situation has been preferred to the quantitative.

The period after the end of the Cold war was marked by significant changes in the geopolitical situation over the Korean peninsula. The collapse of the Soviet Union has had a major impact on the situation in East Asia – with the USA becoming the most influential actor in the region. With the dissolution of the Communist bloc the DPRK found itself in diplomatic, political isolation, while its economy experienced deep crisis, but despite of pessimistic prognoses it managed to survive.

The State of the North East Asia, similar to other countries, are seriously influenced by the globalization processes, which foster them to a constant “adjustment” to the global development level and generally accepted standards, increasing their competitiveness and through this – their own sustainable development. The imperative of globalization inevitably requires openness of political systems, thus regulative functions of the State have to be reassessed. In case of North Korea, such challenges actually mean a kind of enforced and hardly controlled adaptation. Indeed, almost complete isolation from global processes and global economy obviously has negative consequences for the development of the North Korean State. However, no political organism is static – it exists
and develops under the influence of various factors. This statement can be applied to the DPRK as well, though it is seemingly immune to reforms, both external and internal.

Each system tends to reproduce itself constantly, on the basis of many interlocking structures that guarantee self-preservation. After the end of the Cold war North Korea had to employ policy resources available to meet the goal of regime’s survival and defending itself as a unique political entity. The goals of the DPRK were similar to those of all political regimes – primarily, sovereignty, national security and economic prosperity – with a variety of strategies depending on the greater context in which their regimes operate. A practical long-term goal of North Korea is the maintenance of the existing status-quo, since it permits to save the foundations for the existence of the dominating regime.

With the loss of the main trade partners the DPRK had to look for alternative ways of survival. A series of natural disasters contributed to the fact, that the government could no longer guarantee a level of subsistence for the people. The end of the Cold war has posed the problem of new security allies and security guarantees: the new leadership had to take measures to assure both international and domestic security. After the death of Kim Il Sung, whose authority in the national army was strong, the new leader had to consolidate the government, the party and the army around himself to guarantee the preservation of the North Korean system. The amendments made to the Constitution of the DPRK of 1972 reflect noticeable changes in the leadership structure and government organization.

- the DPRK has shifted from being a presidential republic to parliamentary republic;
- The Party’s leading role has been taken over by the military;
The Constitution (1998) stipulates that the DPRK economy is self-sustaining; however, a new provision that guarantees private property has been added. The private property regards the property for individual possession and consumption of the citizens.

In the defense realm North Korea continued to sustain the strategy against external threats on the self-defense basis. Self-reliance plays a double role – it strengthens national pride and contributes to the regime’s legitimization. Considerable effort to develop the national defence and especially, the costly nuclear programme, presume that the DPRK intends at least to have an adequate compensation of considerable resources implied in developing nuclear weapons. Security deterrence with the use of nuclear weapons becomes highly attractive.

Obviously, any security deterrence based on conventional weapons against stronger adversarial forces for North Korea was definitely unfeasible. The possibility that North Korea has acquired nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons makes the prospect of a military attack more difficult to contemplate. Recent developments in Afghanistan and Iraq might have contributed to convincing the DPRK’s government that its policies of nuclear weapons’ development could be optimal. In the new circumstances the nuclear programme possibly acquired particular significance as it was seemingly able to provide additional guarantees for the political regime’s survival. At the same time, the revelations of unauthorized nuclear developments in the DPRK challenged the effectiveness of the nonproliferation regime and the security of regional powers and thus could not be tolerated by the international community.

The North Korean nuclear problem has not arisen, as it often claimed by the media, exclusively as a result of personal interests of the country’s elite, whose power subjectivity, which is the foundation of
legitimacy of the existing regime, is defined by the acting totalitarian leader. North Korea lacks significant economic and political leverages and resources, and thus, can not project an adequate influence on the unsatisfactory external conditions. So, it is likely to initiate a local conflict (with the direct or indirect involvement of great powers) in order to attract international attention, which may catalyze foreign investment. The initiated conflict helps to create a “negative publicity” by drawing a formally negative image of a country at war, which in future may cause the positive change of attitude of the great powers. Another thing is that the role of the military factor is still very high in the DPRK. Actually, with the come to power of Kim Jong Il, the role of the army has been emphasized on the contrary to the party, whose power has seriously diminished.

The absence of genuine intention of North Korea to engage in world politics can possibly be attributed to the result of existence of totalitarian regime. However, we sustain that in case of North Korea, the situation of isolation is largely dependent on the strength and efficacy of the state and its political regime: the State acts as a managing lever of the conflict potential, and in case of its weakening or failure the internal political processes become uncontrollable. Settling of political conflicts where minor powers are involved is determined by the absence of comparable power resources between the conflicting parts. Thus, minor states in this case seek to establish communication channels to announce their position. A practical long-term goal of DPRK is the maintenance of the existing status-quo, since it permits to save the foundations for the existence of the regime in power. The situation is preconditioned by the fact that sustaining the functional capacity of the existing regime in North
Korea in the situation of non-transparency appears to be advantageous for its international counteragents.

Another important conclusion made in the dissertation is the alteration of the main causation of crisis on the Korean peninsula. Despite of the continued existence of the two rivaling Korean states the issue of nuclearization has substituted the former problem of inter-Korea rivalry and potential unification.

Comparative analysis of the two nuclear crises in historical prospective permitted to outline the strategies of the main parties involved and examine the agreements concluded, evaluating their limitations and strong points.

The first nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula occurred in 1993-1994 in the framework of a changing international environment after the end of the Cold war. The latent phase of the conflict dates back to the beginning of the North Korean nuclear programme development, but especially – to the end of the 1980s, when the DPRK joined the NPT (1985) and the question of the IAEA inspections emerged. Formally, the first crisis broke out as a result of discrepancies between North Korea and the IAEA regarding the correspondence of the nuclear programme to the norms of the Treaty and data evidence provided for the IAEA.

Another pillar of the regional normative base for nuclear proliferation control in the 1990s was the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula (20 January 1992), signed by the two Korean states. The parts reached agreement on mutual inspections to verify the denuclearization of the peninsula. However, it has never been put into practice.

The crisis of 1993-1994 was characterized by escalation of tensions, when the DPRK announced its intention to withdraw from the
NPT in 1993 and the USA challenged North Korea with imposing sanctions and conducting a military operation. In course of the first nuclear crisis the United States deliberately took the role of the international nonproliferation regime guard and later on, due to domestic institutional constraints and international responsibilities could not refuse the mission of defending security on the peninsula. The crisis was resolved with signing of the bilateral Geneva Framework Agreement of 1994 between the DPRK and the USA, which set up the basis for the future regulation of the North Korean nuclear activities and prevented its unilateral withdrawal from the NPT.

However, the 1994 Agreement presumed a temporarily deal aimed at preventing North Korea from further advance in its nuclear weapons programme, but did not provide for the overall control of the nuclear capabilities of the DPRK and had not introduced a permanent mechanism of addressing the issue being in its core an exchange bargain. The Agreed Framework was not a treaty in any binding sense but rather a set of guidelines to regulate the behavior of the parties.

The second nuclear crisis (2002) was marked by implying significant multilateral effort to settle the North Korean nuclear issue in the framework of the Six-party talks (DPRK, ROK, USA, China, Japan, Russia). The Joint statement (2005) introduced a path for the settlement and in February 2007 tangible measures to arrive at a final resolution were elaborated. However, the new deal is based on the same premises as the Framework Agreement of 1994 – the DPRK assures closing its suspected nuclear facilities and abandoning its nuclear weapons programme, in exchange receiving energy assistance and further normalization of relations with the USA.
The resolution of the 1993-1994 nuclear crisis demonstrated that bargaining tactics of a minor state such as North Korea could be efficient and the country actually gained benefits from the resolution of the issue – through entering in a direct dialogue with the USA, creating a positive momentum, attracting international attention and receiving foreign assistance and aid – fostering contacts with South Korea (economic aid). In the second deal the DPRK again used the nuclear weapons program as a bargaining leverage to pressure the United States to involve in direct bilateral negotiations over security assurances and end of economic sanctions that were obstacle to the country’s economic development.

The North Korean nuclear problem has been argued to be better placed in the regional and global contest. In this light, it has been highly relevant to examine the policies of main powers involved and to outdraw their consent and /or divergence on settling the North Korean nuclear problem.

Throughout the Bush administration in term the policy line versus North Korea uncovered divisions within the administration. The hard-line isolationist approach towards North Korea has been revealed by senior officials in the US Defense department with the term “rogue state” was reintroduced into the political discourse regarding the DPRK after years it has not been used: the Clinton administration abandoned the expression in the middle of the 1990s. The anti-terror campaign led by the USA created concerns that Washington had chosen to limit its diplomatic activities and give priority to military power logic and advantages it possesses in this sphere.

In the second term the policy towards North Korea changed substantially due to multiple factors, such as changes in the political context (military engagement in Iraq) and the administration’s stuff
reshuffle. The new policy strategy has brought some visible progress, such as preventing escalation of tensions, concluding the deal with the DPRK in February 2007, although, the final outcome is still to be attended.

Despite of hesitations of the earlier period, the USA demonstrated preference for a multilateral diplomatic solution that had, however, presented its difficulties and structural constraints. The disagreement of the contracting parties over the means of settling the nuclear problem hampered the negotiation process.

The Japan’s policy towards North Korea has adopted a line in the middle between containment and engagement towards the DPRK. For Japan the threat posed by North Korea arises from the nuclear program as well as from the very nature of the political regime in the DPRK. Giving importance to the abduction issue of the Japanese citizens in the 1970s has made Japan’ reconciliation effort limited. The Japanese government insists on resolving abduction issue prior to any political normalization with the DPRK.

The Republic of Korea conducted the policy of engagement towards the DPRK from 2000. South Korea has never considered the option of a military strike at the DPRK, since it might have dramatic consequences on its own national security and economic stability. In this light, provocative actions or even verbal accusations towards the DPRK by the USA have been perceived as needless and avoidable steps. The ROK has repeatedly emphasized the feasibility of the peaceful resolution and considers coercive options as unacceptable.

Strategic political-military alliances with the USA have had impact on the policies of South Korea and Japan in regard of addressing the North Korean problem. However, being neighboring countries to the
DPRK, the ROK and Japan realize the consequences of an enforced solution. By disregard to the interests of its allies the USA in effect had temporarily lost the regional consensus, which prevented from coordinating its vision with the allies and acting together in order to dissolve the North Korean nuclear issue. The late Bush administration seemed to have reconsidered its previous policy line and made an attempt to strengthen the confused alliances and address the resolution of the issue to the multilateral regional mechanism of the Six-party talks, which includes also China and Russia.

China, as another major power involved, stands for the denuclearization of the DPRK, but has been reluctant to exert pressure on North Korea on the matter or to impose and support any sanctions against the DPRK adopting the policy of continues engagement of North Korea. China’s role in settlement of the second nuclear crisis has been that of an active mediator and host of the Six-party talks in Beijing. The Chinese self-perception in the current world order makes it improving its soft power and upgrading its moral image within the international community. Obviously, China alone does not possess an adequate influence leverage to persuade North Korea neither to dismantle its nuclear programme nor to engage in economic reforms and open itself to the outside world. China would remain committed to the peaceful settlement of the nuclear problem and to reforming the North Korea economy in the long term perspective.

A military conflict on the Korean peninsula would be definitely injurious for Russia’s national interests. The maintenance of domestic stability and stability of the surrounding international environment is crucial for the country’s development. Russian approach to settling the North Korean nuclear programme issue consists in advocating observance
of the NPT and resolving any disputes through negotiations. There is also an understanding that North Korea’s energy problems should be resolved. In this sense Russia is eager to foster negotiations, advocate a multilateral approach and to act as a mediator if needed to prevent possible preemptive military strike on North Korea. On the other hand, Russia pursues a goal to promote the development the Russian Far East and the Siberian region with projects of transportation (a joint Korean railway connected to the Trans-Siberian railway) and joint energy projects pretending both economic benefits and an enhanced position among other regional powers. Such soft-power policies dominate the Russian vision towards the Korean peninsula.

Another research question set in the dissertation has been analysis of possible strategies of dealing with the DPRK nuclear issue – both already implied and hypothetically plausible. The relevance of this task is determined by the fact that the strategy of dealing with North Korea is strictly connected to the overall vision of applying an adequate and efficient strategy towards the states that proliferate weapons of mass destruction. The Korean issue is even more complicated – the DPRK has been included in the list of the states sponsoring terrorism, violating human rights and proliferating nuclear weapons. The strategies of addressing the nuclear issue and the whole problem of North Korea can be summarized in two main streamlines – military settlement and peaceful resolution – with particular policy options chosen for each of them. The resolution of the problem of nuclear proliferation could be based at applying principles of international law, corresponding arms control agreements, regimes and international control.

Military settlement was seriously considered by the USA in the period of the first nuclear crisis and reconsidered in the variant of pre-
emptive attack during the second. Thus, it could not be entirely neglected in spite of obviously devastating consequences, and might be potentially applied in case of a deadlock of a peaceful process. The experience of military campaigns lead by the USA in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrated limitation of target strikes, but they are able to seriously destruct, if not destroy the nuclear facilities of the North. The challenges of implementing a military solution are reciprocal measures that might be undertaken by the North Korean forces and rival the territories of the neighbouring states as well as the US military bases there. In this light it would be difficult to get consent for any military operation against the DPRK from the Republic of Korea and Japan (as well as China and Russia, which expressed against any coercive military measures).

In course of both nuclear crises on the Korean peninsular non-military approaches prevailed. The peaceful approach of dealing with the DPRK presumes two main policy lines – engaging North Korea or containing it.

With the Six-party process and the settlement of the North Korean nuclear problem based on the 2005 Joint Declaration the issue of the DPRK’s denuclearization has been internationally monitored. North Korea and the USA maintain their commitment to the process; however, some inconsistence with the previously settled terms of implementing the agreement and presenting a complete declaration of its nuclear related activities have emerged.

The diplomatic solution of the matter seems more constructive and advantageous, if combined with fostering gradual evolution of the North Korean regime, when it would eventually give up its nuclear ambitions and receive in change assistance for the country’s development. Alternative non-military options might include adopting an UN Security
Council resolution, imposing economic sanctions on the DPRK, enforcing international control over North Korean proliferation activities, a military action by the USA and a coalition of states.

Other states engaged in the nuclear settlement stay for a peaceful resolution of North Korean nuclear issue, since a military option would cause unpredictability over the future of the North Korean state, question its independence, foreign policy priorities, and might have destructive consequences on the neighbouring states.

The most challenging doubt is, however, if the DPRK seriously intends to abandon its nuclear weapons programme. It has become evident that a strategy of a simultaneous abandon in change of economic incentives has failed (1994 Agreed Framework). A gradual progress is believed to be more efficient – accompanied by rigorous monitoring and verification followed.

To be committed to the negotiation process North Korea should be offered satisfactory guarantees of regime survival together with economic assistance.

Whatever strategy towards the DPRK chosen, to become an integrative part of the international community North Korea has to go through important transformation or change. A regime change is immediate and presumes a use of force; while the regime’s transformation is its evolution, which is indirect and gradual without direct use of military force.

However, this alternative also entails trouble, since the character of relationship between the regime change and proliferation control is complicated. The study conducted by Robert Litwak has demonstrated the regime change does not lead to abandoning nuclear ambitions, unless the causations of proliferation are satisfied. In case of North Korea the main
requirements are security guarantees and economic assistance. Anticipating a regime change implies high degree of uncertainty and various domestic and international factors should be taken into account: the prognoses of a soon collapse of the DPRK in the first half of the 1990 proved to be inconsistent. North Korean population still maintains an extremely high degree of loyalty towards the authorities even in the face of serious economic hardships and any forceful regime change might lead to protests and social unrest.

The ambiguity over the consequences of an enforced regime change makes rather prefer opting for a regime’s evolution (transformation). This approach seems more stable and predictable, but being gradual might imply a lot of time. The main instrument of fostering a regime’s change is promoting freedom of press, supporting economic reforms, assisting nongovernmental organizations – all activities aimed at encouraging reform and openness, increasing transparency.

The international experience of settling the North Korean nuclear problem demonstrated that the mechanisms of the cold war nuclear proliferation control turned out to be ineffective nowadays in the light of the challenges the NPT currently faces. However, international efforts have contributed to accumulate an experience of working out means of dealing with the NPT regime violators. In this light, the multilateral experience of dealing with the North Korean case has been positive.

For conceptualizing foundations and causes of the nuclear crises on the Korean peninsular, it is necessary to consider the dynamics of domestic situation and international position changes in the DPRK. The refusal of the DPRK to reform its economy and to engage into wild scale international economic interactions dramatizes its position. Pyongyang is interested in receiving security guarantees and normalizing its relations,
first of all, with the USA. However, the matters of denuclearization of the Korean peninsular and of any shifts in the regional security balance are in the realm of international agreements, not in the bilateral DPRK-US dialogue.

International powers concerned have to solve the dilemma of strategic approaches of dealing with North Korea. In the history of dealing with North Korea have been suggested (and approbated) methods of force (form ultimatums to economic sanctions), together with peaceful means of conflict resolution through dialogue, signing agreements, establishing cooperation. The most rational way of goal achieving in controlling the North Korean nuclear programme appears to be cooperation with the regime – the “engagement policy”.

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