

A Sharper Choice
on North Korea
Engaging China for a Stable Northeast Asia

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FOREIGN
RELATIONS

Independent Task Force Report No. 74

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on North Korea
Engaging China for a Stable Northeast Asia

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Task Force members are asked to join a consensus signifying that they endorse “the general policy thrust and judgments reached by the group, though not necessarily every finding and recommendation.” They participate in the Task Force in their individual, not institutional, capacities.

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*This report is dedicated to Ambassador Stephen Bosworth,
a respected diplomat and scholar who worked tirelessly
for a peaceful resolution of the North Korea nuclear issue
and inspired others to do the same.*

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Foreword

North Korea poses a grave and growing threat to the United States and its allies. The regime's development of new conventional, missile, and nuclear capabilities puts civilians of allied countries, U.S. military personnel, and the American people in real danger. North Korea has reached this point as a result of sustained Chinese support (or at least acquiescence), along with a series of decisions by U.S. policymakers over the decades not to take military action to prevent the regime from attaining or maintaining a nuclear capability.

The year 2016 has been turbulent on the Korean Peninsula, but the underlying trends remain unchanged. North Korea has carried out a series of nuclear and missile tests. The regime continues to pose a conventional military threat to the Republic of Korea while committing crimes against humanity against its own citizens. China for its part continues to shield the regime from international pressure and to provide it with support that enables its illegal and dangerous behavior. The United States has succeeded in winning new sanctions authority, but enforcement has been slow and is highly unlikely to change Pyongyang's behavior in meaningful ways. Without a shift in U.S. strategy toward North Korea, the next U.S. president will likely be sitting in the Oval Office when the regime finally acquires the ability to strike the continental United States with a nuclear weapon.

This growing threat has impelled the Council on Foreign Relations to again convene an Independent Task Force to assess the state of U.S. policy toward North Korea and to propose a new strategy. The report reaches the landmark conclusion that current trends will increasingly threaten the United States and its allies, in particular the Republic of Korea and Japan. It is therefore not enough to maintain the status quo on the peninsula or to wait for circumstances to evolve in a favorable way. The Task Force proposes new ideas to expand regional dialogue, restructure negotiations, protect the human rights of North Korea's

citizens, strictly enforce new sanctions authority, and deter and defend against a regime that poses a steadily increasing threat. This strategy would create or expand critical instruments for changing China's behavior, including a regional mechanism for enforcing new sanctions authority, a new effort to pressure North Korea on human rights through the United Nations system, and new military steps to bolster deterrence and offset North Korea's missile capabilities. The next administration should consider each recommendation carefully.

Recognizing that Chinese pressure could have a decisive effect on Pyongyang, the Task Force recommends that U.S. officials undertake a major diplomatic effort to elevate the issue to the top of the U.S.-China bilateral relationship and enlist China in bringing about a stable and nonnuclear Korean Peninsula. If the United States does so and the Chinese government declines to go along, it would raise serious questions as to China's willingness to be a responsible regional and global actor. It would also necessitate that the United States consult closely with both South Korea and Japan and consider adopting a new strategic posture, one that did not rule out military options against a nuclear-armed North Korea with global reach.

I thank the chairs of this Task Force, Mike Mullen and Sam Nunn, as well as its individual members and observers for lending their experience, judgment, and creativity to this urgent task. Their broad expertise inside and outside of government helped to create a practical and powerful document. My thanks extend also to CFR's Task Force Program Director Anya Schmemmann and her predecessor, Chris Tuttle, for shaping the endeavor and also to Project Director Adam Mount for ably guiding the group and drafting this important report. The determination of all involved to produce a substantive and consequential set of findings and recommendations speaks to the severity and urgency of the threat. They have provided ideas; the next administration should consider them carefully and modify U.S. policy accordingly.

Richard N. Haass

President

Council on Foreign Relations

September 2016

Acknowledgments

In many ways, North Korea is unique among nations. Its rejection of the international standards of stability, development, and justice threatens not only the people of Northeast Asia but also the moral structure on which global order is built. This Task Force on North Korea comes at a critical time for U.S. policy. The next administration will inherit a foreign policy that is pulled between competing crises that collectively conspire to unravel the U.S. rebalance to Asia. It will not be easy to devote scarce time and attention to an issue marked by inertia, frustration, and limited options. However, the security of U.S. allies and the future order of maritime Asia demand that the next president place North Korea at the top of the agenda. The proposals contained in this report are an attempt to catalyze new debate on North Korea and provide new options for the next presidential administration. They are the result of a great deal of effort from the distinguished participants of this Task Force as well as several external advisors.

The project's two chairs, Admiral Mike Mullen and Senator Sam Nunn, have guided and motivated this endeavor at every step. Their judgment, experience, and ardent conviction of the need to produce an innovative report have pushed the entire group to reconsider our preconceptions about this difficult issue. At the same time, their patience, generosity, and humor have made the process a pleasure. I am also grateful to their staffs, including Mack Alston at MGM Consulting, LLC, and Tempe Stephen at the Nuclear Threat Initiative, who helped to coordinate busy schedules and the frequent exchange of materials.

The Task Force is fortunate to have been composed of exceptionally experienced, diligent, and constructive members. It is customary at this point to recognize members who made an unusual contribution to a report, but, in fact, each member at various times made a decisive contribution to this report, and nearly all submitted multiple rounds of

detailed comments on drafts. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work with each of them.

Thanks are also due to a number of external experts who were gracious enough to share data and discuss their perspectives, including James Acton, Andrea Berger, Kurt Campbell, Darcie Draudt, Mark Fitzpatrick, Michael Fuchs, Van Jackson, Choi Kang, Andrei Lankov, Mira Rapp-Hooper, and a group of human rights experts organized by Task Force member Roberta Cohen. Several officials from both the U.S. and South Korean governments also shared their time and knowledge; I am convinced that the time and consideration they have invested in the alliance over the past decade has left it in a strong position to navigate the difficult years ahead. None of them bears responsibility for the content of the report.

The report also benefitted from two meetings of CFR members who met to discuss the rapidly evolving events in North Korea and provide input for the project. Task Force members Gary Samore and Victor Cha joined me at roundtables in New York and in Washington, respectively. I am grateful to them, the CFR members who attended to lend their advice, and to CFR's New York and Washington Meetings teams for facilitating the events.

My gratitude extends to CFR's Publications team for editing and readying the report for publication, as well as to Lisa Ortiz of CFR Digital and Josh Linden of GoodFolk, who helped produce the graphics within this report. My thanks to CFR's Communications, Corporate, Digital, National, Outreach, and Washington External Affairs teams for enabling the report to reach the widest possible audience.

Anya Schmemmann and Veronica Chiu of CFR's Independent Task Force Program were instrumental in managing the process and providing valuable advice on both the content and form of the report. I am also grateful to my research associate Theresa Lou, program associate Chelie Setzer, and interns Erin Sielaff and Adriana Guardans-Godo for exemplary research support and editorial advice. Chris Tuttle, former managing director of CFR's Task Force program, deserves special recognition for initiating this important study at a critical time and for assembling the group. My colleagues at CFR, Senior Fellows Janine Davidson (since departed from CFR), Sheila Smith, Paul Stares, and Stewart Patrick also provided valuable advice. In addition, Scott Snyder provided consistent guidance on the process from start to finish and involved me in several interesting CFR roundtables.

I am also grateful to several people and organizations who have supported my other work while I undertook this project and made allowances for my involvement: CFR Senior Vice President and Director of Studies James M. Lindsay and Director of Studies Administration Amy Baker, the National Security and International Policy Program at the Center for American Progress (CAP), led by CAP Vice President Vikram Singh and Managing Director Nathan Fenstermacher, and the Ploughshares Fund.

CFR President Richard Haass has supported, guided, and advised this endeavor from the beginning. Last, Ambassador Stephen Bosworth served as the initial co-chair of this Task Force and helped frame our effort and assemble our outstanding group. This report is dedicated to his memory.

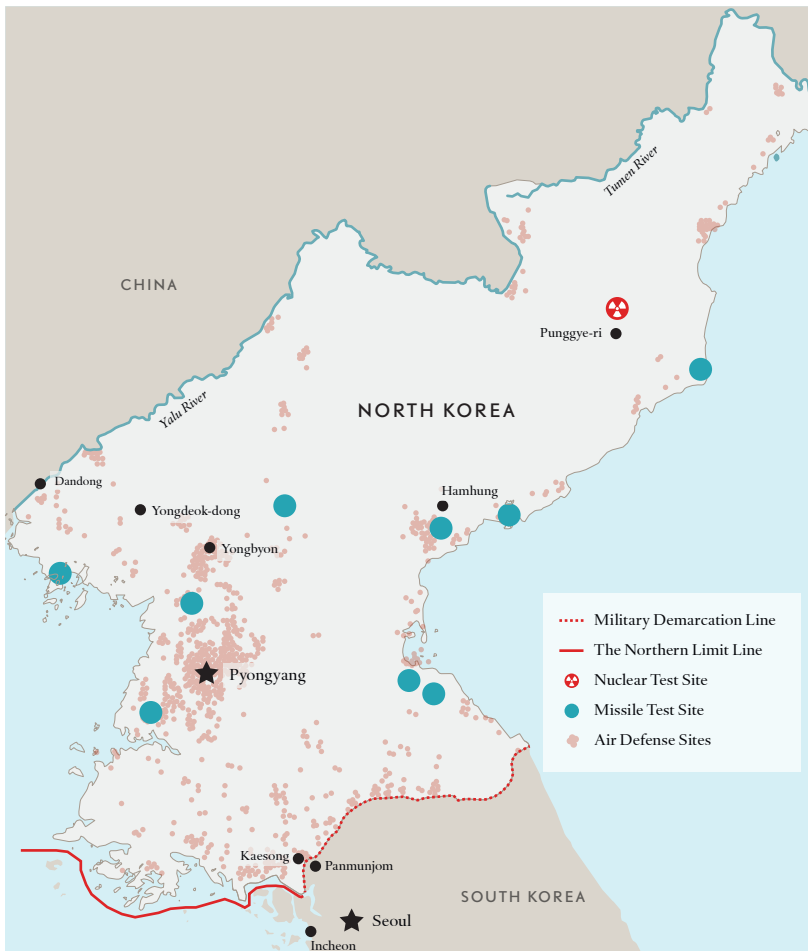
Adam Mount
Project Director

Acronyms

COI	commission of inquiry
CVID	complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization
DMZ	demilitarized zone
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICBM	intercontinental ballistic missile
MLRS	multiple launch rocket artillery system
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	nongovernmental organization
ROK	Republic of Korea
SOF	Special Operations forces
THAAD	Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense
UN	United Nations

Map

NORTH KOREA AND SELECT MISSILE TEST LOCATIONS*



*Air defense sites current as of June 25, 2009.

Source: North Korean Economy Watch, "North Korea Uncovered," 2009.

Independent Task Force Report

Executive Summary

Since 1953, when an armistice put an end to the major military operations of the Korean War, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the Republic of Korea (ROK), and the United States Forces Korea have been trapped in an increasingly dangerous cycle in which North Korea provokes a militarized crisis until minor concessions settle the situation at a new normal. The U.S.-ROK alliance has succeeded in preventing these recurrent crises from igniting a war, but this cycle of provocation hides perilous long-term trends. North Korea's accelerating nuclear and missile programs pose a grave and expanding threat to the territory of U.S. allies, to U.S. personnel stationed in the region, and to the continental United States. More generally, North Korea's behavior has endangered the emergence of a stable and prosperous Northeast Asia.

The United States and its allies have failed to meet their critical objectives: to roll back North Korea's expanding nuclear and ballistic missile programs and prevent it from spreading nuclear and missile technology to dangerous actors around the world. China's reluctance to pressure the DPRK has allowed the regime to further destabilize a region critical to U.S. national interests, to systematically perpetrate crimes against humanity, and to threaten the safety of U.S. allies. The countervailing diplomatic, economic, and military steps required to deter and contain the North Korean regime threaten to aggravate U.S. tensions with China just as the United States and its regional partners are attempting to encourage China's rise to remain consistent with a peaceful, prosperous, and just regional order.

Yet developments in the past year have altered the North Korea problem in important ways. In March 2016, the United Nations (UN) Security Council—with China's consent—unanimously passed Resolution 2270 to significantly strengthen the sanctions regime that restricts arms transfers and limits trade with North Korea. Pyongyang's actions and Beijing's reticence have also provided incentive for closer military

cooperation between the United States and its allies, including on missile defense. Additionally, South Korean President Park Geun-hye has made concerted efforts to improve the ROK's bilateral relations with both China and Japan, and a new round of regional diplomacy has improved coordination over the North Korean nuclear problem.¹ Yet North Korea is also accelerating the development of a capability to strike the continental United States, as well as U.S. allies, with a nuclear warhead delivered by an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).² These developments present the U.S. president with an exigent threat of a North Korea that can strike at the United States—but also with new opportunities to halt the cycle of provocation and prevent North Korea from achieving this capability.

China's policy toward the DPRK will critically affect the fate of the region. If China, the United States, and U.S. allies can work together to pressure North Korea to abandon its nuclear program and mitigate its threatening military posture, a stable, prosperous Northeast Asia led by China and U.S. allies can emerge; if they cannot, the DPRK's recklessness will further strain the U.S.-China relationship and destabilize a region vital to both countries' interests. For this reason, encouraging a transformation of China's policy toward North Korea should be the next administration's top priority in its relations with China. This transformation should be accomplished through a sequence of steps to gradually increase the pressure on China to support a cooperative approach, which could result in the peaceful resolution of the armistice, the elimination of nuclear capability, and the eventual reunification of the Korean Peninsula.

In this context, the Council on Foreign Relations convened an Independent Task Force on U.S. Policy Toward North Korea to assess the efficacy of existing policy and offer recommendations to U.S. policymakers on reducing the threat from North Korea for the remainder of President Barack Obama's presidency, as well as for the next administration. The Task Force assesses that the current policy of strategic patience will not halt the recurrent and dangerous cycle of provocation or ensure a stable regional security order into the future. If allowed to continue, current trends will predictably, progressively, and gravely threaten U.S. national security interests and those of its allies.

Halting these alarming and negative trends requires a new strategy toward North Korea and the region, one guided by a broader organizing principle: to bring about a stable and prosperous Northeast Asia

that U.S. allies have a hand in leading. In the long run, achieving this vision requires that the Korean Peninsula be free of nuclear weapons and respectful of human rights, whether by genuine transformation of the North Korean regime or by unification. U.S. policy toward North Korea will have to be integrated with broader U.S. strategy for maritime Asia, or both are likely to fail.

The United States should present North Korea with a sharper choice: seek a negotiated settlement to return to compliance with UN resolutions on nuclear weapons or face severe and escalating costs. These steps should be carefully and deliberately sequenced to calibrate pressure on North Korea—to credibly signal to Pyongyang that the United States and its allies will continually increase pressure until serious talks resume, to ensure that the regime has an opportunity to respond to specific pressure tactics at designated junctures, and to maximize opportunities to work with China.

The United States should act immediately to secure its interests and those of its allies against the grave and growing North Korean nuclear and missile threats by expanding U.S.-ROK-Japan cooperation to actively and strictly enforce sanctions on North Korea and by strengthening its joint deterrence profile.

On a parallel course, the United States and its allies should offer restructured negotiations that provide genuine incentives for North Korea to participate in substantive talks while increasing pressure by strictly enforcing the new sanctions in UN Security Council Resolution 2270, targeting North Korean illicit activity, and encouraging other nations in the region—including China—to join this effort. If Pyongyang refuses this proposal, the United States should seek new multilateral sanctions to restrict the regime's funding sources and enact additional military measures to strengthen allied deterrence of military attacks. New nuclear tests or military attacks by North Korea should accelerate this timetable. North Korea should not be allowed to use talks as a way of detracting attention from bad behavior, as has been the case in the past. Abrogation of the testing ban, new attacks, or stalled talks should result in their termination.

The United States should also make a new approach to China. To enlist China in the effort to bring about a stable and nonnuclear Korean Peninsula, U.S. officials should propose a dialogue on the future of the Korean Peninsula to demonstrate that it is in both countries' security interests to find a comprehensive resolution to the problem. A unified

response to North Korea stands the greatest chance of finding a lasting solution on the peninsula and of forging a stable and prosperous Northeast Asia, and is by far the preferable course of action.

As long as North Korea retains a nuclear capability, the U.S.-China relationship will be strained. To the extent that Beijing declines to cooperate or this effort does not show results, the United States and its allies will have no choice but to greatly accelerate efforts with Japan and South Korea to bring about a Korean Peninsula without nuclear weapons.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force reached ten findings and six recommendations. These support five broad principles for U.S. policy: promote a stable and prosperous Northeast Asia, restructure negotiations, protect human rights, enforce sanctions and escalate financial pressure, and strengthen deterrence and defense.

Finding

1. In its assessment of the status of the North Korean regime, the Task Force finds that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has ruthlessly consolidated power and there is low probability of regime collapse in the near future. Over time, however, North Korean citizens' increasing access to information from the outside world, as well as growing internal markets, could form the basis for a gradual transformation of the totalitarian system.

PROMOTE A STABLE AND PROSPEROUS NORTHEAST ASIA

Findings

2. The Task Force finds that although China remains North Korea's primary patron, it is increasingly willing to exert pressure to curb the regime's erratic behavior.
3. The Task Force finds that South Korea's improving relations with Japan and China present new opportunities for cooperation on North Korea policy.
4. The Task Force finds that South Korea can be an effective representative of shared U.S.-ROK interests, including deterrence signaling to North Korea, coordination with China, and regional diplomacy to promote sanctions enforcement.

Recommendations

- I. To ensure that U.S. policy remains consistent with the long-term objective of a stable and prosperous Northeast Asia, the Task Force recommends that the United States and its allies engage China as soon as possible to plan for the future of the Korean Peninsula. These talks, both trilateral and in a five-party format, should plan for militarized crises, collapse scenarios, and the role of a unified Korea in Northeast Asian security.
 - Five-party talks consisting of China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, and the United States should begin as soon as possible to prepare a common proposal for the next round of multilateral negotiations and also to discuss other areas of regional concern. In this way, the parties can accomplish the intended regional stability functions of the Six Party Talks and help promote their resumption.
 - To convince China to participate, Washington and Seoul should jointly reassure Beijing that Korean unification will not damage its interests. These steps can include guarantees that Chinese investments on the peninsula will remain intact or be compensated, as well as a dialogue to de-conflict plans for border control, refugees, port access, and military operations during collapse scenarios. The United States and South Korea can also jointly present conditions under which the alliance would consider revising the number and disposition of U.S. forces on the peninsula. Although the alliance should continue in any event, attenuation of the threat may allow for a commensurate reduction of U.S. force posture on the peninsula.

RESTRUCTURE NEGOTIATIONS

Finding

5. Although a negotiated agreement on complete and verifiable denuclearization remains a preferable mechanism for resolving the nuclear issue, the Task Force finds that negotiations are unlikely to eliminate North Korea's nuclear or missile capabilities in the near future. Nonetheless, a new diplomatic approach could potentially freeze North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, establish conditions for increasing pressure if North Korea rejects the proposal, and lay the groundwork for eventual rollback of the regime's nuclear capabilities.

Recommendations

- II. The Task Force recommends that the United States move quickly to propose restructured negotiations to limit North Korea's nuclear and missile programs and work toward denuclearization and a comprehensive peace agreement.
- Under this model, the United States should undertake talks subject to the following conditions: first, reaffirmation of the principles of the 2005 Joint Statement, including a nonnuclear peninsula, by all parties; second, progressive steps on the nuclear issue at each stage in the negotiations; third, a moratorium on tests of nuclear weapons and missiles with a range-payload capability greater than existing Scud missiles. The United States and the other members of the talks should avow that they will never accept the DPRK as a nuclear state.
 - Early stages of the negotiations should focus on attaining a verified freeze on the DPRK's nuclear capabilities. Additionally, the parties may explore steps on conventional arms control (including limits to the deployment of and exercises with conventional forces), limitations on missile development, nonproliferation of nuclear material or technology, or site-specific inspection of North Korean nuclear facilities.
 - The eventual outcome of the talks is a comprehensive deal in which North Korea, South Korea, and the United States, supported by China, sign a peace agreement that will finally end the Korean War and gradually normalize relations in exchange for complete nuclear disarmament and progress on human rights.

PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS

Finding

6. The Task Force finds that the North Korean state continues to commit grave crimes against humanity, but may be sensitive to international pressure to live up to UN standards on human rights.

Recommendations

- III. The Task Force recommends that the United States work with allies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the United Nations system to escalate pressure on North Korea to respect the human rights of its citizens.

- As a first step, U.S. diplomats should work with global partners to signal that they will move to suspend North Korea's credentials at the United Nations if it does not demonstrate real progress on human rights. To avert this action, North Korea would have to accept visits from UN human rights officials to demonstrate progress. When it meets at the start of each General Assembly session, the UN Credentials Committee can assess whether North Korea has met the requirements.
- U.S. policymakers should facilitate governmental and nongovernmental efforts to allow information about the outside world to reach the North Korean people.
- The United States should support international efforts to seek accountability for North Korean individuals and entities responsible for crimes against humanity while expanding U.S. sanctions against them.

ENFORCE SANCTIONS AND ESCALATE FINANCIAL PRESSURE

Finding

7. The Task Force finds that the recent expansion of the sanctions regime is a necessary step in exerting pressure on North Korea. However, expanded and sustained efforts are required to ensure that they are rigorously implemented and have the desired effects, including measures to provide amenable states with material assistance and to pressure those that illegally trade with or finance North Korea.

Recommendations

- IV. The Task Force recommends that the United States invest in rigorous enforcement of the sanctions regime and apply escalating pressure on North Korea's illicit activities.
 - The United States should act quickly to support East and Southeast Asian states in creating a standing multilateral mechanism to coordinate implementation of Resolution 2270. This group should facilitate the sharing of intelligence, coordinate enforcement operations, and distribute resources donated by partners from outside the region, including the United States. Given its sophistication in circumventing previous sanctions, regional states should prioritize interdiction and inspection of North Korean shipping.

- Should North Korea fail to reenter negotiations, the United States should work with its allies to prepare future financial sanctions and other measures that target the full range of the regime's illicit activity, including steps to punish corruption, exporters of slave labor, as well as foreign firms and banks that support these activities, wherever they reside. The United States should allow U.S. companies to bring legal action against sanctions violators and facilitators.

STRENGTHEN DETERRENCE AND DEFENSE

Findings

8. The Task Force finds that North Korea's development of the capability to deliver a nuclear warhead on a long-range ballistic missile would dramatically increase its ability to threaten the United States and its allies.
9. The Task Force finds that although U.S.-ROK deterrence policy may have succeeded in preventing major military attacks since 2010, the frequency and severity of North Korea's aggressive behavior will likely increase as its nuclear and sub-conventional capabilities continue to develop.

Recommendations

- V. The Task Force recommends that the United States, South Korea, and Japan move expeditiously to tighten collaboration and strengthen their deterrence and defense posture.
 - To reduce North Korea's incentives to divide the three partners with selective military strikes, they should issue a collective security commitment declaring that an attack by North Korea against any one of them is an attack against all.
 - The United States, South Korea, and Japan should, through joint exercises and coordinated deployment, expand allied capacity in defensive and offensive cyber operations, antisubmarine capabilities, missile defense, special forces, and air and naval forces to enforce new UN sanctions.
- VI. The Task Force recommends that the United States, South Korea, and Japan build capacity to intercept all missile launches with a range-payload capability greater than existing Scud missiles

originating from North Korea, whether they are declared to be ballistic missile tests or civil space launch vehicles. In the event that Pyongyang fails to reenter negotiations, or the negotiations fail, the three partners should be prepared to declare and then implement this policy.

Finding

10. The Task Force finds that current trends, if allowed to continue, will predictably, progressively, and gravely threaten U.S. national interests and those of its allies.

This overall strategy seeks to prevent North Korea from attaining the capability to carry out a nuclear strike on the continental United States, but also hedges against the possibility that it does cross this threshold. The proposed enhancements of allied deterrence and defense posture will help ensure that the United States and its allies can meet their national security needs in the years immediately following a successful North Korean test of an ICBM capability. Although it does propose increasing pressure on North Korea to return to the negotiating table, this strategy does not seek to cause the North Korean regime to collapse, an event that is most likely to occur as a result of the regime's continued gross economic mismanagement and cruel and inhumane treatment of its citizens.

However, if North Korea continues to develop its nuclear and long-range missile capabilities and achieves the capability to strike the United States, Washington will have to work with allies to reassess overall strategy toward the regime. That policy review would consider more assertive diplomatic and military steps, including some that directly threaten the regime's nuclear and missile programs and, therefore, the regime itself. At that juncture, these measures may be necessary to protect the United States and its allies and to meet their immutable objective of a stable, free, and nonnuclear Korean Peninsula.

Findings

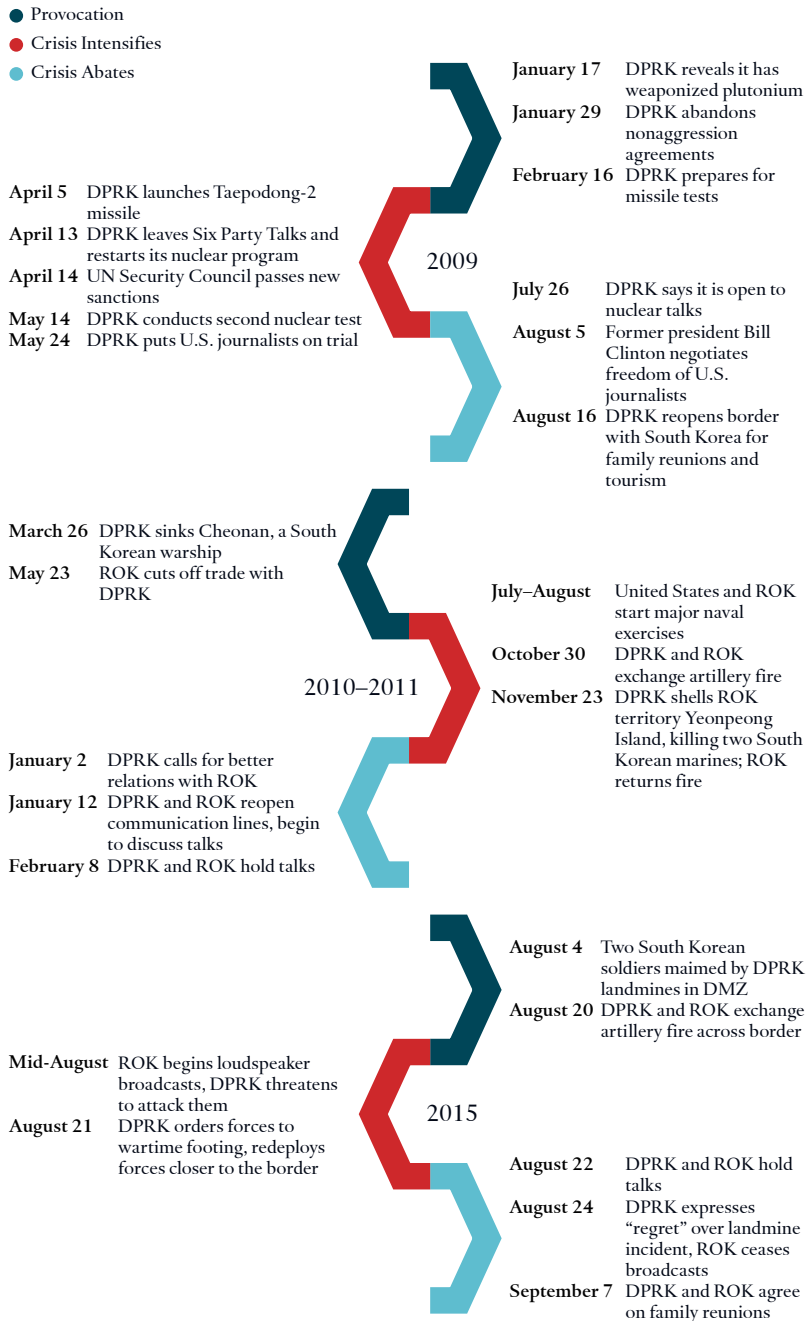
A CHANGING REGION

Since the end of the Korean War, North Korea has perpetuated a brutal and familiar pattern: the regime carries out a dangerous and often fatal provocation and escalates tensions near to the point of war, following which both sides deescalate the crisis and often agree to talks (figure 1). In August 2015, for example, two South Korean soldiers were maimed by land mines, resulting in a militarized standoff. The Park administration succeeded in extracting a pro forma expression of regret, which led to a brief *détente* and a reunion of families separated for decades by the Korean War. In late 2015, the Obama administration reportedly made a new attempt to restart negotiations with North Korea but was rebuffed.³ Six days into the new year, North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test, which initiated a new round of international condemnation, threats, and sanctions. Tensions remained high through the first half of 2016 as North Korean leader Kim Jong-un threatened military action in response to regular U.S.-ROK spring military exercises and carried out an aggressive program of missile tests.⁴

This 2015 cycle of provocation is the latest iteration of a pattern that has persisted for decades.⁵ During this time, the DPRK's diplomatic and economic isolation from the rest of the world has deepened, and only limited information about the outside world reaches North Korean citizens, who continue to struggle with starvation, torture, internment, and execution.

1. *The Task Force finds that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has ruthlessly consolidated power and there is low probability of regime collapse in the near future. Over time, however, North Korean citizens' increasing access to information from the outside world, as well as growing internal markets, could form the basis for a gradual transformation of the totalitarian system.*

FIGURE 1: NORTH KOREA'S CYCLES OF PROVOCATION



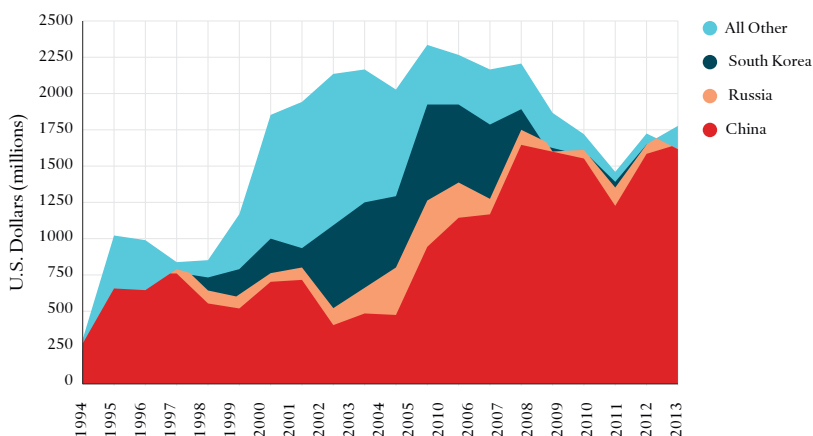
During North Korea's leadership transitions of 1997 and 2011, when Kim Jong-il assumed power from his father and was then succeeded by his son Kim Jong-un, some in the West predicted that the regime would collapse, scattering refugees and fissile material across the region.⁶ In both cases, the regime has endured and succeeded in maintaining centralized authority in Pyongyang. Yet all is not business as usual in North Korea; in 2016, the regime is still struggling to return to normalcy after its new supreme leader initiated a series of gruesome purges that destabilized the ruling elite.⁷ The young leader is attempting to revitalize the state's party apparatus as a way of reasserting his control over its leadership. North Korea's economy has largely failed to develop over the last several decades. Pyongyang's centralized control has produced chronic malnutrition, prevailed over a steady decline in imports and exports, and prevented the emergence of a modern industrial or service economy.⁸

At the same time, some facets of daily life in North Korea have seen gradual changes. Under Kim Jong-un, the regime has proved willing to tolerate the emergence of unofficial markets, which, coupled with a brisk cross-border trade with China, has allowed the North Korean economy to grow at marginal rates of 1 to 2 percent, according to some estimates (figure 2).⁹ Meanwhile, the regime has become permeable to personal information technology, allowing ordinary citizens access to outside information through foreign DVDs and radio broadcasts and elites to also own USB drives and mobile phones. A recent survey of defectors found that "nearly half the study's sample reported having watched a foreign DVD while in North Korea."¹⁰ Others note the explosion of active mobile phones in the country, which have climbed past two million in a population of twenty-five million (though many of these phones cannot make international calls).¹¹ Gradual marketization presents opportunities and challenges for U.S. policy. On the one hand, it could widen North Korea's thin middle class and lead to gradual evolution of the regime; on the other, the increasing complexity of its economy affords North Korea greater ability to resist and circumvent the international sanctions regime.

2. *The Task Force finds that although China remains North Korea's primary patron, it is increasingly willing to exert pressure to curb the regime's erratic behavior.*

Even as North Korea continues to revolve through its cycle of provocation and conciliation, changes in the global context and in regional

FIGURE 2: PROPORTION OF NORTH KOREAN BALANCE OF TRADE BY COUNTRY, 1994–2013*



Source: Nicholas Eberstadt, "North Korea's 'Epic Economic Fail' in International Perspective," Asan Institute for Policy Studies, November 2015.

*Unit: 2013 producer-price-index-adjusted illustrative U.S. dollars (millions)

politics present new opportunities to pressure the regime. Despite a long and troubled history, China has continued to serve as a patron of the North Korean regime—as a main trading partner and a defender in the UN Security Council.¹² China's primary interest with respect to North Korea is the maintenance of regional stability: Beijing worries that collapse of the regime could open the door to millions of refugees streaming over the Tumen River border into China and deprive Beijing of a geographical buffer against U.S. forces in the region.

In the last year, however, China has shown signs that it is willing to apply pressure to prevent North Korea's most dangerous behavior.¹³ Chinese diplomats have repeatedly called for the resumption of Six Party Talks, its commerce ministry has moved to enforce some of the new sanctions, and Chinese state media have included pointed indications of the party's displeasure with the Kim regime's intransigence.¹⁴ There are other signs as well: in the volatile days of August 2015, Chinese social networking sites showed evidence that China's People's Liberation Army deployed light armored formations to their border with North Korea, and in December, a North Korean pop group abruptly departed Beijing ahead of a prominent scheduled concert.¹⁵

In this context, North Korea's January 2016 nuclear test could be seen as a public defiance of Chinese President Xi Jinping, just as China had been extending its hand in an attempt to mend poor relations.¹⁶ North Korea's disruptive behavior over the past year underscores the threat that North Korean policies pose to China's national security interests and its standing in the region. It is in this context that President Xi in April 2016 told a group of foreign diplomats that his country "will never allow war or chaos on the peninsula," a warning that seemed to apply to all parties.¹⁷ Further provocations will only strengthen the hand of those in Beijing who support taking a firmer line with Pyongyang.

However, there have also been troubling trends in China-DPRK relations. Beijing's strategy for sanctions and diplomatic contacts evidently intends to maximize its leverage over Pyongyang. U.S. officials should not be surprised if China selectively implements Resolution 2270, modulating the volume of cross-border trade in response to diplomatic developments.¹⁸ Despite the new sanctions, there is little hard evidence that China has placed serious limits on the volume of trade, in part because a great deal of it can pass through loopholes in Resolution 2270 for freight that is "exclusively for livelihood purposes."¹⁹ There are other indications that China continues to look for ways to improve ties. Although North Korean politburo member Ri Su-Yong told Chinese officials that North Korea's policy of expanding its nuclear capabilities is "permanent," his invitation to Beijing to meet with President Xi was probably meant to repair relations.²⁰ China reportedly continues to allow North Korean hackers to operate from its territory.²¹

China's assessment of its interests in North Korea will critically influence the fate of the Kim Jong-un regime and the efficacy of U.S. policy toward it. U.S. officials cannot depend on China to fully implement Resolution 2270 or to share their views. However, there are indications that factions in China increasingly perceive North Korea as a threat to stability rather than a requirement for it. If so, Beijing may gradually become more willing to discipline Pyongyang for aggressive behavior and its nuclear program. For this reason, encouraging this shift in Beijing's calculus should be a primary objective of U.S. policy toward the region. The United States and its allies should approach this by laying out a sequence of steps, including diplomatic, political, economic, and military, that gradually increase the pressure to resolve the major issues with respect to the Korean Peninsula.

3. *The Task Force finds that South Korea's improving relations with Japan and China present new opportunities for cooperation on North Korea policy.*

In the last year, Japan-ROK relations have made significant steps toward recovery. A November 2015 summit between President Park Geun-hye and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe succeeded in breaking an almost four-year impasse between the two countries. This brief meeting set the stage for a late December agreement in which Prime Minister Abe apologized to South Korea for Japanese soldiers' forcing Korean women into sexual slavery during World War II, and the Japanese government pledged to fund a foundation administered by the Korean government that would pay reparations to survivors.²² The historic agreement has now paved the way for broader Japan-ROK coordination on a range of issues, including defense.²³ Although South Korea and Japan, along with the United States, already cooperate on some defense issues—including the 2014 Trilateral Information Sharing Arrangement on North Korea's nuclear and missile threats, which led to a plan to conduct joint missile defense exercises in June 2016—there is ample room to deepen the relationship, which should be done under any future circumstances.²⁴

For their part, China and South Korea have jointly committed to urgent steps to limit North Korea's nuclear program.²⁵ In September 2015, while Kim Jong-un remained ensconced in Pyongyang, President Park attended a military parade in Beijing to commemorate the end of World War II and met with President Xi. In a joint appearance, Park thanked Xi for his country's role in defusing the August crisis; looking forward, both leaders warned the DPRK against new military aggression and called for resumption of the Six Party Talks.²⁶ Despite concerns over U.S. missile defense assets in South Korea, China and the ROK have maintained frequent and high-level coordination over the North Korean nuclear issue in 2016.²⁷

4. *The Task Force finds that South Korea can be an effective representative of shared U.S.-ROK interests, including deterrence signaling to North Korea, coordination with China, and regional diplomacy to promote sanctions enforcement.*

China continues to see the United States as a geostrategic adversary attempting to encircle and isolate it, and North Korea justifies

its own vast military as necessary to defend against a U.S. invasion. As a result, U.S. involvement in the region can sometimes provoke strongly negative responses from China and the DPRK. As South Korea improves its relations with Japan and China, it can increasingly play a leadership role in regional deliberations over the North Korean issue. In direct discussions with its northern neighbor, South Korea continues to possess a greater range of policy options than the United States, including the economic, informational, and cultural levers it has used to favorable effect in the recent past. Furthermore, because South Korea is more vulnerable to a North Korean attack, threats that come from Seoul may have greater credibility and be less inflammatory than those from U.S. officials. The alliance's successful management of the August 2015 crisis may prove a useful model: South Korea took the lead on deterrent threats, and the Park administration was able to patiently negotiate a favorable resolution. Last, some potentially valuable forms of regional cooperation will be impossible if they are seen to be imposed by states outside the region; South Korea is well positioned to lead efforts of this kind. Direct U.S.-DPRK negotiations may sometimes be necessary to serve allied interests, but U.S. officials should not automatically assume that they are the best representatives of allied policy.

A DETERIORATING POSITION

- 5. Although a negotiated agreement on complete and verifiable denuclearization remains a preferable mechanism for resolving the nuclear issue, the Task Force finds that negotiations are unlikely to eliminate North Korea's nuclear or missile capabilities in the near future. Nonetheless, a new diplomatic approach could potentially freeze North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, establish conditions for increasing pressure if North Korea rejects the proposal, and lay the groundwork for eventual rollback of the regime's nuclear capabilities.*

As North Korea's nuclear capabilities have grown, multilateral negotiations aimed at securing a denuclearized peninsula have ground to a halt. Since the collapse of the 1994 Agreed Framework, international negotiators have focused their attention on the Six Party Talks, a group that includes representatives from China, Japan, North Korea, Russia, South Korea, and the United States. The group's best chance at resuming

negotiations on a denuclearization agreement was announced on February 29, 2012, when North Korea agreed to suspend nuclear and missile tests, halt the production of fissile material, and allow International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors back into the country.²⁸ In exchange, the United States offered security assurances and nutritional assistance that would be delivered to malnourished women and children in North Korea. Just over a month after this Leap Day Agreement, North Korea carried out a failed attempt to launch a satellite into orbit, an effort widely seen as a test of ballistic missile technology. As a result, the agreement collapsed; the United States suspended its aid efforts and wider talks did not take place.²⁹

In the years since the failed agreement, the possibility of resuming the Six Party Talks has receded further. North Korean diplomats have reneged on previous willingness to negotiate a denuclearization agreement and have instead begun to insist that the DPRK is a legitimate nuclear power that will not consider restrictions to its nuclear program.³⁰ In June 2016, North Korea's deputy nuclear envoy reportedly told a forum in Beijing that the Six Party Talks are "dead."³¹ North Korean diplomats insist that Washington and Pyongyang should negotiate a peace agreement prior to discussion of the nuclear issue, an approach that U.S. officials have rejected. A peace agreement has been a top priority for the Kim Jong-un regime, which sees it as a way of loosening the country's isolation, improving its security environment, and winning international acceptance of its nuclear, missile, and conventional military capabilities. At the beginning of January 2016, in response to an offer from the North Korean delegation to the United Nations, U.S. diplomats agreed to participate in negotiations that would formally end the Korean War, provided that denuclearization was "part of any such discussion."³² North Korea rejected this proposal, insisting that the two sides first negotiate a peace treaty. The United States has also repeatedly refused to suspend U.S.-ROK military exercises in return for a DPRK nuclear test freeze.³³

The United States has offered to discuss resumption of formal negotiations with North Korea at any time, but maintains that comprehensive negotiations can only take place if the regime demonstrates it is willing to work toward complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization (CVID).³⁴ For its part, China has repeatedly called for the resumption of the Six Party Talks and reportedly increased pressure on its North Korean ally to return to the negotiating table and abandon

its nuclear program. However, the United States has rejected China's suggestion to separate peace talks and negotiations on the nuclear issue due to fears that North Korea could stagnate on the latter and seek to progress solely on the former.³⁵

Many believe that though denuclearization should remain a primary goal of U.S. policy and the eventual objective of any negotiations, an attempt to condition Six Party Talks on a complete freeze of the program would, in practice, prevent resumption of talks.³⁶ Moreover, some observers now believe that an exclusive focus on denuclearization impedes negotiations on other measures that could improve stability on the peninsula and contain the spread of nuclear materials and technology.³⁷ However, it seems clear that recent exchanges over the agenda of multilateral talks have uncovered new issues that could potentially be leveraged to restart them, including the possibility of a freeze on nuclear tests, the scale of U.S.-ROK exercises, and the possibility of an eventual peace agreement.

6. The Task Force finds that the North Korean state continues to commit grave crimes against humanity, but may be sensitive to international pressure to live up to UN standards on human rights.

The growing quantity of information now escaping North Korea has revealed the extent of the regime's unconscionable crimes against humanity and the fundamental human rights of its citizens.³⁸ In March 2013, the UN Human Rights Council established a commission of inquiry (COI) on human rights in North Korea. After interviewing more than three hundred victims, witnesses, and experts, the group reported "systematic, widespread, and gross human rights violations," which "in many instances . . . entailed crimes against humanity."³⁹ The commission found that North Korea's atrocities include "extermination, murder, enslavement, torture, imprisonment, rape, forced abortions and other sexual violence, persecution on political, religious, racial and gender grounds, the forcible transfer of populations, the enforced disappearance of persons and the inhumane act of knowingly causing prolonged starvation."⁴⁰ It found that citizens are also subject to an "almost complete denial of the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion"; deprivation of information; constant surveillance; economic and gender discrimination; and deliberate geographic segregation for the purposes of control, among other abuses.⁴¹ Using overhead

imagery, the commission estimated that “between 80,000 and 120,000 [people] are currently detained in four large political prison camps.”⁴²

Despite these violations, the DPRK inexplicably remains a member of the United Nations and is party to four international human rights treaties, as well as the Genocide Convention and the Geneva Conventions.⁴³ In this regard, North Korea has enjoyed the protection of Russia and China, which often deny the authority of international legal bodies to investigate, sanction, and prosecute crimes against humanity. South Korea and others have questioned why the regime is allowed to retain its status as a member of the United Nations.⁴⁴

Surprisingly, after years of ignoring UN resolutions and reports, North Korea actively engaged with UN bodies following the issuance of the COI findings. North Korean diplomats worked to have provisions on crimes against humanity and accountability excised from General Assembly resolutions. When this failed, North Korea again turned away. In advance of a Human Rights Council meeting in September 2015, a foreign ministry spokesman claimed that the meeting was a “political maneuver aimed at overthrowing our regime,” claiming that the “evidence is nothing more than lies from North Korean defectors.”⁴⁵ In the same period, North Korea extended an invitation to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, but then failed to make the visit possible.⁴⁶ The foreign minister later announced that North Korea would not cooperate with the council. This newfound sensitivity may be tied to repeated attempts by the Kim Jong-un regime to convince other nations to improve economic and political relations with his country and to treat it as a responsible member of the international community.⁴⁷

7. The Task Force finds that the recent expansion of the sanctions regime is a necessary step in exerting pressure on North Korea. However, expanded and sustained efforts are required to ensure that they are rigorously implemented and have the desired effects, including measures to provide amenable states with material assistance and to pressure those that illegally trade with or finance North Korea.

North Korea continues to resist a range of international sanctions over its nuclear and missile programs. Previous UN Security Council resolutions prohibited member states from buying or selling heavy weapons, including armored vehicles and aircraft, as well as conducting financial

transactions that could assist North Korea in developing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. Under these resolutions, member states are required to inspect and seize cargo entering the DPRK if it may relate to prohibited military activities.⁴⁸ The sanctions regime, which developed over the course of a decade in response to repeated North Korean violations, is calibrated to restrain North Korea's military advancement by denying it access to foreign technology and financing necessary to undertake research, development, and procurement of advanced systems. The sanctions have largely succeeded in shrinking North Korea's customer base for conventional arms export, yet they have failed to shift the regime's calculus on its nuclear and missile programs, which continue to develop through mostly indigenous resources.

Since 2006, North Korea has developed an extensive clandestine network of diplomats and foreign nationals to circumvent the sanctions regime.⁴⁹ There are indications that a range of countries and terrorist organizations continue to deal with North Korea for aircraft maintenance (Ethiopia), ammunition (Tanzania), personnel training (Uganda), rockets (Hamas and Hezbollah via Iran), and others.⁵⁰ In addition, there is evidence that North Korea has recently cooperated with Iran and Syria in the development and transfer of a wide variety of ballistic missiles, as well as nuclear technology.⁵¹

Immediately following North Korea's nuclear test in January 2016, the U.S. government moved to tighten unilateral sanctions on North Korea. The extensive sanctions that helped keep Iran at the negotiation table and resulted in the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action convinced many that U.S. sanctions toward North Korea were comparatively lenient.⁵² In response, the president issued a new Executive Order that markedly expanded the government's authority to designate North Korean officials for sanctions.⁵³ Soon after, the U.S. Congress overwhelmingly passed HR 757, the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016, which imposes mandatory sanctions on individuals and entities who aid North Korea in a variety of illicit activities, including trade in "significant arms or related materiel," censorship, money laundering, cyberattacks, and—for the first time—human rights abuses.⁵⁴ On June 1, 2016, the U.S. Department of the Treasury designated North Korea as a primary money laundering concern under Section 311 of the USA Patriot Act, further restricting the regime's access to the international financial system.⁵⁵

On March 2, 2016, two months after North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test, the UN Security Council unanimously voted to adopt Resolution 2270, which is a significant expansion of the international sanctions regime. The resolution expands the current prohibition on arms trade to cover all items that would enable North Korea to improve its conventional forces and extends lists of proliferation-sensitive items, individuals and entities subject to asset freezes and travel bans, and prohibited luxury goods sought by the regime's elite. Furthermore, the resolution imposes several new measures, including legally obligating UN member states to "inspect the cargo within or transiting through their territory, including their airports, seaports, and free trade zones, that has originated in the DPRK, or that is destined for the DPRK."⁵⁶ Additionally, member states are prohibited from importing North Korean coal, iron, gold, rare earth minerals, and other metals if the proceeds might benefit the regime's nuclear or missile programs. The resolution also includes major new restrictions on diplomats, trade assistance, and financial services suspected of aiding North Korean weapons programs.⁵⁷

Resolution 2270 is an encouraging step, but its potential to affect the North Korean regime's behavior is contingent on strict implementation of the new requirements. Cargo inspections are a significant barrier not only to nuclear proliferation and illicit arms sales, but also to North Korea's few remaining legitimate exports. This step, combined with financial and export restrictions, could make an appreciable dent in North Korea's economy, impeding the regime's ability to fund nuclear and missile development and continue operating its conventional armed forces. However, these measures require significant attention and funding to implement fully. They will tax the navies, ports, intelligence services, diplomatic corps, and political will of a large group of states, including critical transit hubs in Southeast Asia.

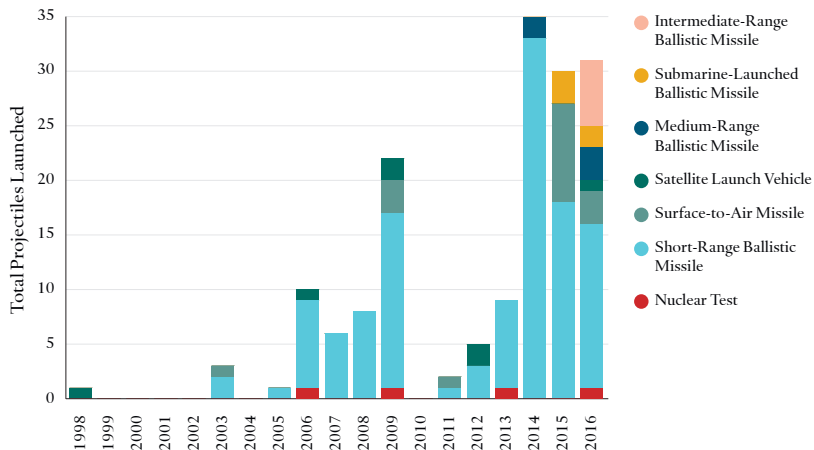
8. *The Task Force finds that North Korea's development of the capability to deliver a nuclear warhead on a long-range ballistic missile would dramatically increase its ability to threaten the United States and its allies.*

After North Korea abandoned the February 2012 Leap Day Agreement, the Obama administration adopted a policy of "strategic patience" toward the DPRK.⁵⁸ This policy has meant strengthening the U.S.-ROK alliance against a range of military aggression while affirming a willingness to resume negotiations with North Korea.

Yet North Korea’s nuclear program continues to advance steadily.⁵⁹ In January 2016, North Korea claimed to have tested a hydrogen bomb, though experts believe it was more likely a boosted fission device, a type of weapon that increases yield by including some fusion fuel in a normal fission explosive package. Two months later, the regime claimed to have successfully developed a miniaturized nuclear warhead that could be fitted to a ballistic missile.⁶⁰ It then threatened to test this warhead along with a vehicle that would allow the warhead to survive reentry into the earth’s atmosphere.⁶¹ Should this occur, the test would cause North Korea to edge dangerously close to the critical threshold in which it could credibly threaten to deliver a nuclear weapon on a ballistic missile.⁶² However, the regime has yet to test a ballistic missile that would be an effective delivery system (presumed to be the KN-o8 missile) or a reentry vehicle.⁶³ The volatile spring also saw two test fires of a new submarine-launched ballistic missile, a new engine configuration for an ICBM, a test of a new multiple launch rocket artillery system (MLRS), a satellite launch, and five failed tests of the Musudan intermediate-range missile, as well as one partial success in June 2016 (figure 3).⁶⁴

Based on publicly available information about North Korean fissile material production, estimates suggest that North Korea could have

FIGURE 3: NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR AND MISSILE TESTS (1998–2016*)



*Current as of July 20, 2016

between thirteen and twenty-one nuclear weapons as of June 2016 and still more fissile material under pessimistic assumptions about the program.⁶⁵ The five-megawatt electric (MW_e) reactor at Yongbyon, which was shut down in the mid-2000s during Six Party Talks, has resumed operation since 2013.⁶⁶ In June, observers in Seoul and Washington detected signs that North Korea had begun another round of plutonium reprocessing, increasing its stock available for warhead production and expanding the DPRK arsenal by an estimated four to six weapons since the beginning of 2015.⁶⁷ Meanwhile, unclassified estimates assume that the North Korean uranium enrichment program continues to develop, though sources are uncertain about the existence or location of a second enrichment facility beyond the centrifuge plant at Yongbyon, which widens the confidence bounds of fissile material estimates.⁶⁸ Alarming, North Korea has demonstrated a willingness to proliferate nuclear equipment, expertise, and fissile material when it assisted with construction of the Deir ez-Zor reactor in Syria.⁶⁹ These advancements in its nuclear and missile capabilities have brought North Korea to a critical moment for U.S. defense planning.

9. *The Task Force finds that although U.S.-ROK deterrence policy may have succeeded in preventing major military attacks since 2010, the frequency and severity of North Korea's aggressive behavior will likely increase as its nuclear and sub-conventional capabilities continue to develop.*

As its nuclear weapons and missile programs continue to advance, North Korea's leadership may believe that it has new options to coerce and aggress against the U.S.-ROK alliance.⁷⁰ For example, Pyongyang may presume that it can employ a nuclear weapon in a limited way to force the U.S.-ROK alliance to back down from a militarized dispute or a limited armed conflict.⁷¹ If the DPRK leadership thinks that it can prevail at the nuclear level, it may also believe that the alliance will lack resolve to respond decisively to military provocations at the sub-conventional level, including limited attacks with indirect fire, or special forces, maritime, or cyber operations like the November 2014 attack against Sony. This, in turn, may lead the regime to attempt to blackmail the United States and South Korea into conceding militarized disputes on favorable terms.⁷² In some cases, such as the Sony hack, the United States has lacked a coherent and resolute response, but new legal authority can enable U.S. agencies to work with allies in developing a ready plan of action for future intrusions.⁷³

Although North Korea's vast conventional forces remain a grave threat to South Korea, the quality and readiness of these forces have declined in recent years as the regime invests larger portions of its limited available funding into its nuclear program.⁷⁴ The Pentagon assesses that the DPRK's Korean People's Army "retains the capability to inflict serious damage on the ROK, despite significant resource shortfalls and aging hardware."⁷⁵ Imports of heavy weapons, including mechanized and armored vehicles, fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft, and modern ships have halted as a result of UN sanctions and funding constraints. To compensate, the regime has made significant investments in conventional short-range surface-to-surface missiles, cyber capabilities, and its sizable Special Operations forces (SOF). North Korea's new MLRS system, which Pyongyang has reportedly deployed widely along the demilitarized zone (DMZ), increases its ability to threaten Seoul with artillery fires.⁷⁶

These developments suggest that North Korea has developed an increasingly sophisticated but risky operational concept, in which it may attempt to carry out limited attacks in multiple sub-conventional domains and potentially deter an allied response by threatening civilians in Japan and South Korea with nuclear and conventional attacks. If so, Pyongyang may feel increasingly empowered to launch more frequent and more damaging provocations and to escalate the resulting crisis.

10. *The Task Force finds that current trends, if allowed to continue, will predictably, progressively, and gravely threaten U.S. national interests and those of its allies.*

With each passing year, North Korea develops its nuclear and missile programs, continues to perpetrate its crimes against humanity, and steadily destabilizes a region critical to U.S. national interests.⁷⁷ As North Korea advances its nuclear capabilities, each successive crisis has greater potential for catastrophe. The regime in Pyongyang is developing the capability to order a nuclear strike on an American city, forcing a future U.S. president into an even more difficult position. North Korea's ability to evade sanctions increases by the year; Resolution 2270's expanded legal authority will do little to help if new sanctions are not strictly enforced and adapted in future years.⁷⁸ In short, the options available to the United States are narrowing and North Korea's are expanding. Reversing these trends will require an urgent shift in U.S. policy.

Recommendations

A SHARPER CHOICE

The Task Force's finding that current trends will predictably, progressively, and gravely threaten U.S. national interests requires a change in U.S. policy toward North Korea. The strengthened sanctions passed in early 2016 represent a significant shift in policy toward North Korea, but will not be sufficient to compel the North Korean regime to abandon its nuclear and missile programs, observe a stabilizing military posture, and respect the human rights of its citizens. Barring a major change on the peninsula, achieving these goals will require a broad negotiated agreement. Cognizant that this agreement may not come soon, the United States and its allies should prepare to deter and defend against a hostile North Korea, including by expanding U.S.-ROK-Japan cooperation on enhanced deterrent measures and actively enforcing strict sanctions against North Korea.

To get North Korea back to the bargaining table, the United States should commit itself to a sequence of steps that not only imposes escalating costs on continued defiance, but also provides incentives for cooperation. This sequence should be calibrated to credibly signal to North Korea that the United States and its allies will continually increase pressure until substantive talks resume on acceptable terms. Collectively, these measures will sharpen North Korea's choice, outlining clear expectations and consequences that will result from defiance. Careful sequencing maximizes opportunities to coordinate with China and is important both to present opportunity and to demonstrate that delay will become increasingly costly.

As an initial step, U.S. officials should propose restructured negotiations that provide genuine incentives for Pyongyang to negotiate on a series of expanding issues, culminating in complete and verifiable denuclearization and a treaty that will end the Korean War. If Pyongyang

refuses to comply with this proposal, the United States should authorize new military measures to deny North Korea the benefits of its actions and to strengthen deterrence of military attacks, as well as to impose new sanctions that more severely restrict the regime's funding sources. Escalating costs will not be easy; the United States and its allies will likely pay a price for some of these measures, including possible violent retribution from Pyongyang. Because it is not the policy of the U.S. government to induce a collapse of the North Korean regime, these policies will have to be calibrated carefully.

China's policy toward North Korea will critically affect this effort and the fate of Northeast Asia. A transformed China policy toward North Korea should be the central objective of U.S. policy toward maritime Asia and of the U.S.-China relationship, which will shape the region well into the twenty-first century. North Korea's continued development of nuclear weapons and destabilizing military actions will suppress efforts to improve this relationship and prevent the emergence of a stable and prosperous regional order. For these reasons, improved U.S.-China relations require progress on the North Korean issue.

To convince China of its shared interest with the United States in finding a comprehensive and lasting resolution to the North Korean problem, U.S. officials should approach China with a new proposal that outlines a sharper choice: work with the United States and its allies to realize a stable, just, and nuclear-free Korean Peninsula, or the United States and its allies will be forced to take additional steps to achieve these results over time. This should be done through carefully sequenced and calibrated steps designed to gradually but discernibly increase the pressure toward successful resolution of the peace treaty, denuclearization, and peaceful and gradual reunification of the Korean Peninsula. Although Beijing is not likely to pressure Pyongyang over human rights, China can help get North Korea back to the negotiating table by withdrawing material support, enforcing sanctions, and applying diplomatic pressure. For example, Beijing could act to curtail the trade of energy resources and consumer goods from maritime shipping and across the Tumen River, clamp down on criminal activity in China that raises revenue for the regime, prevent North Korea's cyber division from using Chinese networks and territory to launch attacks around the world, and signal continued willingness to cooperate with the United States on North Korean issues at the United Nations.

To encourage China to participate and assuage its concern that a moderate North Korea would hasten China's encirclement by U.S. forces, the United States should offer a new dialogue on the future of the peninsula that includes discussions about the future disposition of U.S. forces. This dialogue should attempt to coordinate planning in the event of a collapse, crisis, or major attack and convey that it is not U.S. policy to cause a collapse of the DPRK regime. As part of these talks, U.S. officials can also assure China that its coercive diplomatic, economic, and military policies are exceptional responses to the unique, rapid, and explosive threat posed by North Korea.

Simultaneously, the United States should support President Park's call for five-party talks. This format—consisting of China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, and the United States—allows the parties to share information about North Korea, to plan negotiating strategy for the next round of multilateral talks, and to discuss the future security order of Northeast Asia.

However, for practical and unavoidable reasons, major improvement of the U.S.-China relationship will prove impossible without progress on North Korea. U.S. officials should demonstrate to China that North Korea's failure to respond to this new approach will require the United States to invest more heavily in the region—tighten its alliances, enhance its military presence, and sanction entities that assist North Korea—all steps that will strain the U.S.-China relationship.

To ensure that U.S. policy on North Korea supports broader national interests, each component of this policy—long-range planning, negotiations strategy, support for human rights, sanctions, and deterrence and defense—needs to remain consistent with a vision for a stable and prosperous Northeast Asia that U.S. allies have a role in leading. If North Korea policy becomes detached from regional policy, both are likely to fail.

PROMOTE A STABLE AND PROSPEROUS NORTHEAST ASIA

- I. *The Task Force recommends that the United States and its allies engage China as soon as possible to plan for the future of the Korean Peninsula. These talks, both trilateral and in a five-party format, should plan for militarized crises, collapse scenarios, and the role of a unified Korea in Northeast Asian security.*

To ensure that its North Korea strategy is consistent with a vision for a stable and peaceful Northeast Asia, the United States should engage regional states in joint planning for a stable Asia.⁷⁹

Collapse of the Six Party process has also meant the loss of an important consultative mechanism for regional stability. To recover some of these functions and establish a venue to coordinate the resumption of multilateral negotiations to denuclearize the peninsula, President Park in January 2016 suggested convening the five parties that negotiate with North Korea. Five-party talks on this model could help the parties share their assessments of Pyongyang's likely negotiating strategy and perhaps draw up a proposal to convince North Korea to return to talks.⁸⁰ Moreover, the talks could allow the parties to share information on and coordinate their responses to the possibility of an infectious pandemic in North Korea, a nuclear accident, a humanitarian crisis, and other scenarios that could yield instability and conflict on the peninsula.⁸¹ They might also agree to coordinate in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to new states, which is critical to the long-term stability of Northeast Asia because proliferation would raise the risk of conflict both with the nuclear aspirant and with North Korea. In this way, the parties might decrease the likelihood that operations on and around the peninsula could result in miscalculation or contact between their forces.

Although the likelihood of a collapse of the North Korean regime has decreased in recent years, it remains a possibility under several scenarios and would have large and unintended consequences for North Korea's neighbors. A vast outflow of impoverished North Korean refugees; unsecured nuclear, chemical, and biological material along with substantial caches of conventional weaponry; and the potential need to conduct operations against a large, armed insurgency in difficult terrain are just some of the potential challenges of a collapse scenario. U.S. officials report that China has repeatedly declined to discuss its planning for these scenarios with them, raising the likelihood that U.S. and Chinese forces could find themselves working at cross-purposes at a time of elevated tensions with their forces in close proximity. The Task Force recommends that U.S. policymakers continue working with China on this issue at each stage of U.S. policy and conduct detailed planning on possible collapse scenarios in the context of the U.S.-ROK-Japan alliance.⁸²

The United States and South Korea can seek to break the impasse with China over long-range planning by embedding collapse planning in a broader dialogue about the future of the Korean Peninsula. Together,

the allies should develop a set of reassurances that unification will not damage China's interests. For example, South Korea can work to assure China that its economic interests in North Korea will be respected during unification. It can guarantee that Chinese investments will either remain in place or be compensated by the central government. Further dialogues can de-conflict plans for border control, management of refugees, port access, and other issues of concern. Combined Forces Command officials can develop briefings about their plans for operations on the peninsula to encourage Chinese officials in the People's Liberation Army to share their own planning. De-conflicting U.S.-ROK-China military planning is critical to avoiding a wider conflict in the event that UN forces have to operate in and around North Korea and therefore to the vital national security interests of all three countries.

The United States has and will maintain a steadfast commitment to ensure that South Korea remains free and secure. For the foreseeable future, a sizable U.S. presence on the peninsula is necessary to defend South Korea against the threat from its northern neighbor, and the United States will not abrogate its alliance commitment in any event. However, the United States and South Korea should jointly develop and present to China conditions under which the alliance would consider revising the number and disposition of U.S. forces on the peninsula. They should make clear that force levels are and will be calibrated to the severity of the threat from North Korea; if and when the threat abates due to reform or replacement of the DPRK regime, the alliance will consider a commensurate adjustment to U.S. force posture on the peninsula. U.S. military presence on the peninsula is a guarantee of the safety, freedom, and prosperity of South Korea and is not intended to encircle or contain China. The imperative to defend against North Korea does not entail an inherent interest in sustaining a certain force level on the peninsula permanently. In any event, the U.S.-ROK military alliance should remain and retain the right to deploy U.S. forces as circumstances require.

This proposal aims to alleviate one of the primary obstacles to the resolution of the North Korean problem. Beijing worries that the fall of Pyongyang would lead to a unified peninsula under U.S. control, deepening China's encirclement and bringing the most powerful military in the world to its border. However, if U.S. forces on the peninsula are indexed to the threat level, it may encourage China to see North Korea as more of an impediment to its long-term national security interests

and less of a necessary buffer against U.S. hegemony. This could incentivize China to restrict North Korea's ability to threaten its neighbors. In this way, U.S.-ROK policy would encourage China to take a more assertive role, rather than, from its perspective, punish it for doing so. Although the United States will likely remain the guarantor of South Korean security far into the twenty-first century, initiating this discussion may help promote a stable Northeast Asia over the long run and redound to the benefit of South Korea and Japan, as well as China.

The importance of South Korea and Japan in a stable and prosperous Northeast Asia cannot be overstated. Developments in North Korea critically affect the security of both countries and their standing in the region. For this reason, U.S. policy on North Korea needs to promote a regional order in which both states play a leading role in safeguarding the rule of law, human rights, and strategic stability in a region critical to U.S. interests. By jointly conducting military operations to deter North Korea, planning for major scenarios on the peninsula, and engaging in coordinated diplomacy with China on the North Korea issue, the United States, South Korea, and Japan can promote a brighter future for the region than they could in isolation.

RESTRUCTURE NEGOTIATIONS

- II. *The Task Force recommends that the United States move quickly to propose restructured negotiations to limit North Korea's nuclear and missile programs and work toward denuclearization and a comprehensive peace agreement.*

Although a negotiated agreement to free the peninsula of nuclear weapons will remain the primary objective of U.S. policy, the Task Force finds that this goal has become improbable in the near future. Both to pursue this goal and to promote national security interests, the Task Force recommends that the United States propose restructuring negotiations with North Korea on the expectation that intermediate agreements on other issues can demonstrate the benefits of cooperation and establish an incentive to achieve a wider agreement further down the line.

The first step in this model will be to find agreement on the enabling conditions for talks. The next administration should review U.S. policy on negotiations and communicate clear preconditions for the resumption of formal multilateral negotiations. It should formally dispel the mistaken perception that it places preconditions on informal talks with

North Korea and that it demands unilateral steps prior to the start of formal negotiations. Instead, the United States should insist on three conditions for resumption of talks. First, all parties should agree to reaffirm the principles of the Joint Statement of 2005, including its commitment to a nonnuclear peninsula and a stable and lawful regional order.⁸³ Second, negotiations need to make consistent progress on the nuclear issue at each stage in the negotiations to ensure that North Korea cannot benefit by stalling on denuclearization. Third, because it will be impossible to negotiate while the DPRK carries out nuclear and long-range missile tests, the United States should insist on a moratorium on all tests of nuclear explosives and missiles with a range-payload capability greater than existing Scud missiles, whether declared to be ballistic missiles or civil space launch vehicles. Because North Korea still has not tested a long-range ballistic missile with a reentry vehicle, a test moratorium will constitute a meaningful restraint on the program while negotiators seek a verified freeze on its other aspects. In exchange and if requested by Pyongyang, the U.S. and South Korean governments may, for as long as negotiations are progressing, consent to supply nutritional assistance to the North Korean civilian population, provided that NGOs can certify that these supplies are not being diverted to the military; U.S. and South Korean officials may also consider modifications to the scale and content of U.S.-ROK joint military exercises.

Initial negotiations should focus on attaining a verified freeze in North Korea's nuclear capabilities. A complete verified freeze of the nuclear program would require six restrictions: no nuclear tests; no missile launches, whether declared to be ballistic missiles or civil space launch vehicles with a range-payload capability greater than the DPRK's existing Scud missiles; no plutonium reprocessing; no uranium enrichment; suspension of reactor operations at Yongbyon; and readmission of the IAEA to North Korea to monitor the nuclear elements of the freeze, both at declared facilities and with the approval of the five parties (China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, United States). Additionally, the parties can explore conventional arms control measures; limitations on missile development; steps to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, technology, and materials beyond North Korea's borders; early access for IAEA inspectors to specific North Korean nuclear facilities that Pyongyang has declared to be for civilian purposes; and measures to promote the welfare of North Korea's citizens, starting with allowing the International Committee of the Red Cross to access political prison

camps. In the initial phase, U.S., South Korean, and North Korean negotiators can also begin to discuss the terms of a peace treaty that will end the Korean War.

The eventual objective of these staged negotiations is to achieve North Korea's complete denuclearization and reentry into the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. In exchange, the regional powers would commit to sign a comprehensive peace treaty, normalize relations, lift the appropriate sanctions, and allow North Korea's integration into the global financial system. Full normalization of relations and sanctions relief will require major progress on North Korea's human rights position, including the release of all political prisoners and their families, a full accounting and voluntary repatriation of all persons abducted from foreign countries, nondiscriminatory food aid distribution monitored by aid workers who are guaranteed full nationwide access, freedom to leave the country and return without punishment, and ending the information blockade imposed on North Korea's citizens by the government.⁸⁴

The main negotiations can take place under the Six Party Talks format, but certain issues can be resolved in smaller talks among North and South Korea, the United States, and China. This format, in which Korean representatives could be the primary negotiators, can be used to negotiate preconditions prior to the start of talks as well as the terms of an armistice that will be signed at the end of the process. Limiting the membership of the negotiations on difficult issues may encourage China to apply pressure on North Korea. The Task Force recommends that U.S. negotiators remain open to other formats for talks that could potentially be productive.

PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS

III. *The Task Force recommends that the United States work with allies, NGOs, and the United Nations system to escalate pressure on North Korea to respect the human rights of its citizens.*

Support for human rights is an integral component of U.S. foreign policy, which holds that human rights must be inviolate and that support for them is neither a bargaining chip nor a weapon. The United States should not consent to normalize relations so long as North Korea continues to perpetrate crimes against humanity. Exceptional steps are necessary to reverse North Korea's egregious, consistent, and willful noncompliance with UN human rights resolutions and preserve the integrity of the United Nations.

To this end, the Task Force recommends that as part of the initial announcement of the new strategy, the United States should work with its allies and partners to jointly signal their intention to execute a campaign of continually escalating pressure on North Korea on human rights issues as long as the DPRK remains noncompliant with UN human rights resolutions.⁸⁵ They should make it known that the DPRK's continued defiance of UN human rights resolutions puts into question the regime's standing in that organization. In addition to designating North Korean officials for sanctions under U.S. law, the United States should work with its allies to present North Korea with a choice: make rapid improvements to its human rights record or these countries will support suspension of North Korea's credentials at the United Nations.

Suspension of a state's credentials is not the same as expulsion from the organization: without credentials, a state may officially retain its membership, but it is prohibited from attending or participating in UN General Assembly proceedings. There is precedent for this step. In 1974, the General Assembly passed Resolution 3206, which endorsed the recommendation of the Credentials Committee to suspend South Africa's participation over its continued disregard for Security Council resolutions condemning apartheid.⁸⁶ The General Assembly also called on the Security Council to consider full expulsion of South Africa from the organization, but the measure was vetoed by France, the United Kingdom, and the United States.⁸⁷ South Africa retained this status until 1994, when the country's credentials were restored following its transition to democracy.⁸⁸

In the last two years, the commission of inquiry and increasing information from within the regime have helped raise international awareness about North Korean crimes against humanity. In 2014 and again in 2015, the General Assembly recommended that the Security Council refer the case of North Korea to the International Criminal Court for prosecution of crimes against humanity, which diplomats expect would be blocked by Russia and China.⁸⁹ This flood of international concern may permit action in the United Nations. As a first step, the United States should work with its global allies to signal to North Korea that they will support suspension of its credentials without rapid progress on human rights. To prevent this suspension, North Korea will be required to, within two years, receive a visit from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and a mission from the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the DPRK, and show substantial progress in implementing its human rights obligations under UN treaties. These

steps may be agreed through the UN system or as part of multilateral negotiations with China, South Korea, and the United States.

Each year, when the UN Credentials Committee meets at the start of each General Assembly session, it can consult with UN human rights officials to determine whether North Korea has met the above conditions and should have its credentials reinstated.

Second, the United States should support enhanced information operations carried out by South Korea and nongovernmental organizations, which aim to inform North Korea's population about the outside world and, in so doing, could lay the groundwork for voluntary evolution of the state. To do this, the U.S. Congress should appropriate funding to support expanded Voice of America programming and NGOs that are working to penetrate an increasingly porous censorship regime. Priorities for funding include increased power for medium-wave radio transmissions, more radio broadcasts, and cultivation of North Korean defectors to serve as journalists for these stations. These broadcasts should not focus on antigovernment political propaganda, but rather should consist mainly of business and economic information, agricultural instruction, weather forecasts, and information about daily life outside of North Korea, including housing, food, and medicines, as well as Korean pop music, talk radio, and gossip.

In addition, support should be provided to NGOs that require additional funding for their efforts to deliver information to North Koreans on USB drives. These USB drives can contain diverse sources from agriculture and economics textbooks to novels and literature that convey a portrait of everyday life free from the Kim regime. Over time, these efforts could gradually undermine the regime's monopoly on information, strengthen emerging market forces, and cultivate the foundation for a different system of government for the people of North Korea in the future.

Last, the United States should materially support and join efforts to gather information about the regime's human rights violations to prepare for the day when its worst offenders are brought to justice. In recent years, this issue has received increased attention.⁹⁰ In 2015, the United Nations opened an office in Seoul to document human rights abuses "with a view to accountability."⁹¹ South Korea's new human rights act provides for the establishment of a documentation center, which will compile testimony and data in addition to that already uncovered by the COI and various NGOs.⁹² In March 2016, the UN Human Rights

Council established a panel of experts “to focus on issues of accountability.”⁹³ These efforts to prepare for accountability, including by continuing to apply sanctions to North Korean officials who perpetrate human rights abuses, could have a powerful deterrent effect today and may also help undermine the regime’s internal legitimacy. The United States should provide information to these organizations, along with material, technical, and rhetorical support when possible.

ENFORCE SANCTIONS AND ESCALATE FINANCIAL PRESSURE

IV. The Task Force recommends that the United States invest in rigorous enforcement of the sanctions regime and apply escalating pressure on North Korea’s illicit activities.

Severe economic pressure on the North Korean regime is a necessary way to compel compliance with its nuclear, military, and human rights obligations to the United Nations and a central instrument of U.S. and international coercive power. However, sanctions alone are unlikely to be enough. The Task Force recommends that the next administration work with allies, countries in the region, and the U.S. Congress to mount a more assertive and consistent campaign to sanction the full range of North Korea’s illicit behavior. The sanctions authority granted by Resolution 2270 is a good start, but the resolution’s effective impact will depend on the extent to which the sanctions are enforced by states in the region. Strictly enforcing Resolution 2270, including the mandate to inspect all cargo entering or exiting North Korea, can not only apply economic pressure to the regime, but also help limit corruption and criminal activity that emanates from the regime and prevent the spread of nuclear material and technology. New provocations should prompt the Security Council to close loopholes in Resolution 2270, especially the unenforceable provision that allows trade for the “livelihood purposes” but not for military purposes.⁹⁴ Implementation of multilateral sanctions should be accompanied by new rounds of U.S. financial sanctions to apply escalating pressure to the regime’s source of funding.

To ensure that regional states have the resources necessary to enforce the new sanctions, the United States should act quickly to assist its partners in setting up a standing multilateral mechanism to coordinate implementation of UN sanctions, including inspection of North Korean cargo and, if necessary, interdiction at sea of ships suspected of

transporting it, beginning with the most suspect shipments. This group should be specifically dedicated to the enforcement of the DPRK sanctions and would ideally include all states in the region, including China. For this mechanism to succeed, it must be perceived as a regional initiative, not as an extension of UN or U.S. authority. For this reason, interested outside parties like the United States and the European Union could provide assistance to the effort in an advisory capacity. China should be encouraged to take a prominent and constructive role in this process, commensurate with its claims to regional responsibility. If it demurs, the participating states can coordinate sanctions enforcement and maritime interdiction on their own, including, if necessary, in the Yellow Sea. Enforcement of the shipping restrictions may require the United States to expand its naval capacity assigned to the mission and the region.

The process can serve as a clearinghouse for resources necessary for sanctions enforcement, including shipping information and intelligence, as well as financial, material, legal, technical, and military assistance to states that request it.⁹⁵ This process could also promote strict sanctions enforcement by serving as a mechanism to discipline reticent or distracted countries that might otherwise allow implementation to slip.⁹⁶ The new organization should seek to reform openly noncompliant states, such as Vietnam and Myanmar; motivate states with mixed records, such as Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Taiwan; and reinforce states such as Singapore and the Philippines that are actively working to meet their obligations. This new mechanism will build on the experience of existing multilateral instruments such as the Proliferation Security Initiative to specifically enforce the multifaceted UN Security Council sanctions on North Korea.⁹⁷

To ensure that the United States and its allies can continue to escalate economic pressure on the regime, they should initiate a consistent campaign to sanction and restrict the full range of North Korea's criminal activities. Financial crimes, money laundering, corruption, human rights abuses, and malicious cyber activity have all received too little attention from the international community and should be subject to strict sanctions, financial pressure, and law enforcement. Efforts to use financial measures such as Section 311 of the Patriot Act, as against Banco Delta Asia in 2005, have been important but inconsistent. The U.S. Treasury's recent designation of North Korea as a "primary money laundering concern" under Section 311 is a good starting point, as is

its June 2016 designation of senior North Korean officials for human rights abuses, including Kim Jong-un.⁹⁸ As long as North Korea continues to refuse negotiations or conduct destabilizing provocations, the United States should continue to designate new individuals and entities for criminal activity as new information becomes available. The U.S. government should also work with foreign partners to levy parallel sanctions against these entities; a consistent and expanding multilateral sanctions regime would be a powerful complement to efforts to improve North Korea's human rights and criminal practices through the United Nations.⁹⁹ In the United States, the next steps should be to establish private rights of action so that private companies can bring legal suits against the countries and companies doing business with North Korea, and to work with China to identify, designate, and sanction entities that conduct corrupt and criminal activities under Chinese and international law.¹⁰⁰

This is an area where the interests of the United States, its allies, and China substantially overlap. North Korea is a source of corruption and criminal activity for the entire region. In May 2016, reports emerged of North Korean cyberattacks on Asian banks that made off with more than \$100 million.¹⁰¹ All states have an interest in restricting this kind of illegal activity within their borders. The exchange of information through a regional sanctions enforcement mechanism should provide tools for law enforcement to crack down on Pyongyang's criminal exports.

Last, the United States should signal to other governments that it will actively designate and sanction foreign companies and individuals that facilitate North Korea's illegal activities, which foster crime and corruption across the region.

STRENGTHEN DETERRENCE AND DEFENSE

V. The Task Force recommends that the United States, South Korea, and Japan move expeditiously to tighten collaboration and strengthen their deterrence and defense posture.

Currently, the United States maintains strong alliances with both Japan and South Korea. The Obama administration has pressed both allies to participate in closer trilateral cooperation, which in 2010 led to a trilateral statement that "the DPRK's provocative and belligerent behavior threatens all three countries and will be met with solidarity from all three countries."¹⁰² In light of North Korea's increasing capability to threaten

the three partners in diverse ways, the attendant benefits of coordination, and improved Japan-ROK relations, the Task Force recommends expanding this declaration.

Specifically, the United States, South Korea, and Japan should issue a collective security commitment declaring that a North Korean attack against any one of these states is an attack against all.¹⁰³ The three countries should aspire to formalize this relationship as a trilateral alliance vis-à-vis North Korea as fast as political conditions allow. Both steps will help facilitate cooperation on issues of joint concern and make it clear that North Korea cannot hope to prevent a collective reaction to attacks.¹⁰⁴ For example, strategists have long worried that Pyongyang may attempt to cover a limited attack by striking U.S. forces on Okinawa. This strike could create tensions between South Korea and Japan that would inhibit a unified response and allow the regime to deescalate the crisis. A resolute collective security declaration would disabuse Pyongyang of this notion. The three partners should immediately expand their defense cooperation to explore an expanded intelligence-sharing arrangement, joint maritime operations (including antisubmarine operations and counter-SOF missions), and regular joint exercises. The three partners should also coordinate to build capacity of naval operations to interdict and inspect North Korean cargo and then to implement the mandate. In addition, they should pursue a regional joint missile defense architecture to improve tracking and interception of North Korean missiles (though it need not be integrated with the entire U.S. National Missile Defense system). The collective security declaration should also extend to a cyberattack against critical infrastructure in all three countries, as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has done.¹⁰⁵ Including this provision in the collective security agreement would help the countries jointly assess threats and provide for a commonality of doctrine for cyber operations, thereby increasing the capability and credibility of a joint response. In issuing their declaration, leaders of the three countries should be clear that the declaration and increased trilateral cooperation is specifically directed at the North Korean threat.

Coincident with their collective security declaration, the three partners should clarify and declare their deterrent posture toward North Korea. To deter Pyongyang from initiating dangerous new provocation cycles, U.S., South Korean, and Japanese officials should jointly signal that future aggression will be met with an active and proportionate response, which may include strikes against military targets inside

North Korea. Although the U.S.-ROK alliance has never ruled out this option, it has also never carried out such an operation. Halting the cycle of provocation will require holding at risk North Korean units and positions that believe they can strike at South Korean territory with impunity. The joint statement should also reiterate that the DPRK has not attained and will never be permitted to attain a condition of mutual assured destruction with the three partners. Allied officials should declare that although they do not intend to topple the North Korean regime, widespread civilian casualties from invasion, indirect fire, or the use of nuclear weapons could make this unavoidable.

While trilateral cooperation is under way, the United States and South Korea should continue to strengthen their deterrence posture toward North Korea to dissuade it from even more destabilizing behavior in three ways.

First, although the United States will continue to extend nuclear deterrence to South Korea, Seoul should not rely on this commitment to deter aggression at low levels of conflict, nor on overflights by nuclear-capable aircraft to reliably affect the regime's behavior. The U.S.-ROK alliance should maintain the capabilities necessary to conduct robust counter-SOF and antisubmarine operations at high readiness, as well as an enhanced network of sensors and intelligence assets to track North Korean assets in the littorals and airspace around North Korea and deep within the country itself. The Task Force strongly supports the deployment of Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) to supplement existing ballistic missile defense capabilities, and recommends that both countries be prepared to assist each other in mitigating the negative effects of potential reprisals for the deployment.

Second, the U.S. and South Korean armed forces should jointly cultivate resilience to cyberattacks, prepare to operate in an environment of degraded information awareness, and prepare to assist South Korean civilians who may be affected by these attacks.¹⁰⁶ Civilian officials should build on existing efforts to jointly develop plans to respond to different types of cyberattacks, readying differential responses to attacks against private industry, public utilities, government, and armed forces.¹⁰⁷

Third, although it is not their intention to employ these capabilities preventively, the United States, in close coordination with its allies, is obliged to develop the ability to forcibly secure stocks of North Korean fissile material in the event of a war or regime collapse and to strike at the North Korean leadership in an emergency.¹⁰⁸

VI. *The Task Force recommends that the United States, South Korea, and Japan build capacity to intercept all missile launches with a range-payload capability greater than existing Scud missiles originating from North Korea, whether they are declared to be ballistic missile tests or civil space launch vehicles. In the event that Pyongyang fails to reenter negotiations, or the negotiations fail, the three partners should be prepared to declare and then implement this policy.*

To delay or prevent North Korea from achieving confidence in its ability to strike the U.S. homeland, the United States should publicly initiate trilateral cooperation to prepare to intercept all missile launches with a range-payload capability greater than existing Scuds, whether the launch is declared to be a ballistic missile test or a civil space launch vehicle.¹⁰⁹ The United States and its allies should justify this action as a way of enforcing UN Security Council Resolution 1718 and subsequent resolutions, which North Korea has repeatedly violated by carrying out illegal tests of ballistic missiles.¹¹⁰ Without a protracted and successful program to test the KN-08 or another ICBM and its associated reentry vehicle, Pyongyang will lack the capability to deliver a nuclear warhead with any confidence. Preventing this threshold from being crossed would both strengthen the hand of the U.S.-ROK-Japan partnership in controlling escalation on the peninsula and forestall a threat to the U.S. homeland. In announcing the policy, the partners should clearly specify that it applies only to North Korea's illegal missile program and should be accompanied by the described measures to deter and defend against any and all violent reprisals. If North Korea fails to accept the new offer for negotiations and abide by its associated preconditions, the three partners should implement this policy. The United States and its allies should explicitly reserve the right in any case to intercept any projectile that they consider an immediate kinetic threat to allied personnel, territory, or civilians.

Collectively, these recommendations aim to delay and deny North Korea's ability to carry out a nuclear strike on the continental United States with confidence and hedge against the possibility that it does attain this capability. The United States and its allies need to prepare to meet their national security requirements under any eventuality, including continued expansion of the North Korean missile and nuclear arsenal, to deter and defend against aggression at the nuclear level and at lower levels of escalation.

It is not currently the policy of the U.S. government to induce a collapse of the North Korean regime. However, if North Korea's nuclear capabilities continue to expand and it continues to refuse to negotiate, the U.S. administration will have to work with allies to reassess overall strategy toward the regime and consider more assertive military and political actions, including those that directly threaten the existence of the regime and its nuclear and missile capabilities.

Conclusion

A comprehensive agreement that creates a nuclear-free and morally tolerable North Korea has grown less likely each year. Yet a narrow margin remains. To achieve an agreement will require protracted, costly, and risky efforts to sharpen the choice North Korea faces—to offer greater inducements for cooperation and impose heightened costs for continued defiance. If the United States and its allies can convince China that cooperation over North Korea is in its best interests, it may be possible that China will help enforce new UN sanctions, compel North Korea back to the negotiating table, force it to remain until an acceptable solution is found, and then ensure that the terms are implemented. However, the United States cannot trust that this outcome will come to pass or wait for the situation to evolve of its own accord, particularly as the nuclear threat grows; it needs to be ready to defend its national security interests and those of its allies in the face of continued Chinese reticence and North Korean intransigence.

Either route requires that the United States prioritize North Korea as a critical national security issue. For too long, the difficulty of the problem has inhibited creative thinking and concerted attention, and the United States is currently paying a steep price measured in the safety of the U.S. homeland, the security of U.S. allies, and an aggravated relationship with a rising China. Prioritizing North Korea may mean incurring costs to other U.S. objectives, but the rising threat to regional stability and U.S. national security means that it cannot be overlooked. The impending nuclear threshold where the DPRK can strike the U.S. homeland with nuclear weapons, and evolving regional dynamics, may mean that the next U.S. president might have the last chance to end the North Korean threat and secure a stable, prosperous maritime Asia.

Additional and Dissenting Views

Of the many CFR Task Force reports on North Korea released over the past two decades, this one in my view is the most reasoned and realistic, and I am happy to endorse its general thrust.

I would also like to make four additional points:

1. Although there is obvious appeal to achieving a negotiated settlement with the DPRK to the many threats it poses to the United States, its allies, and the world, U.S. policymakers should recognize how exceedingly unlikely such an outcome is today—or ever can be, given the nature of the real, existing North Korean government. U.S. objectives are regarded in Pyongyang as existential threats to survival—and governments simply do not trade away their survival. It therefore verges on magical thinking to imagine that the United States’ record of near-total failure in nuclear diplomacy with North Korea over the past generation can somehow be dramatically changed absent a change of negotiating partners in the DPRK.
2. The notion that we might achieve dramatically better negotiation outcomes with North Korea through “carefully and deliberately sequenced [steps] to calibrate pressure” and “credibly signal[ling]” is—let us speak plainly—a fanciful conceit. Our North Korean interlocutors did not take that game-theory course, and they do not respond like one’s partners from that graduate school seminar on bargaining. Instead of straining to devise a perfectly calibrated menu of incentives and disincentives for bringing North Korea “back to the table,” the United States should instead be concentrating on something tangible and manifestly in its interest: namely, threat reduction. Reducing North Korea’s capacity to harm the United States and its allies does not require North Korean assent—Washington can do this unilaterally, irrespective of Pyongyang’s inclination to parley with us. This indeed should be our top priority in North Korea policy.

3. U.S. policymakers should be very careful in discussing any possible “peace treaty” with North Korea. Do we actually understand why such a treaty has been a top priority of North Korean policy for over half a century? Pyongyang holds that the U.S.-ROK military alliance must end, and U.S. troops in the peninsula must leave, once such a document is signed. North Korea is not the only state longing for a reduced U.S. military presence in Northeast Asia. Russia is another. So is China. Incidentally, Americans ought to think long and hard about the potential unintended consequences of confiding to Beijing that “attenuation of the [North Korean] threat may allow for a commensurate reduction of U.S. force posture on the peninsula.” We might be better served instead by explaining to Beijing that our alliance with the ROK is intended to deal with threats in the post-DPRK world, too.
4. Finally, let us be clear about the essence of the North Korean nuclear threat: that threat is the North Korean government itself. So long as the real existing North Korean government holds power, that threat will continue. It is therefore incumbent upon the United States and its allies to plan for a successful Korean reunification that does not include the DPRK.

Nicholas Eberstadt

joined by Mary Beth Long and Walter L. Sharp

We agree with the report’s general recommendation that the United States and South Korea should make efforts to reassure China that Korean unification will not damage China’s interests. However, we take issue with some of the specific proposals in this regard. Specifically, we do not believe that it is necessary and is instead potentially harmful to U.S. and alliance interests to “jointly develop and present to China conditions under which the alliance would consider revising the number and disposition of U.S. forces on the peninsula.”

It is our view that providing such detailed reassurances to China right now would not incentivize Beijing to restrict North Korea’s ability to threaten its neighbors, as the report maintains. More important, we believe that discussions about potential readjustments in force posture would undermine U.S. and South Korean interests. Any mention of possible troop reductions could create doubts among South Korean

elites and the public about the U.S. commitment to their security and, thus, undermine domestic support in Korea for the U.S.-ROK alliance, while gaining little from China for doing so.

First and foremost, discussion about the future U.S. force posture, including U.S. troop reductions, should be conducted within the alliance and based on prevailing circumstances, not uncertain future projections. It would be unwise and counterproductive to speculate about how conditions on the Korean Peninsula might change and posit different postures based on different scenarios for the purpose of influencing Chinese policy. China is well aware that the U.S.-ROK alliance is intended to deter and respond to threats from North Korea. As part of a strategy of providing reassurances to China to assuage its concerns about unification, it would be sufficient to convey to Beijing that, should the North Korean threat disappear, the alliance would consider how to respond, and future U.S. force posture would be a part of that process—in close coordination and consultation with South Korea.

Bonnie S. Glaser and Evan S. Medeiros

joined by Victor D. Cha, Mary Beth Long, and Walter L. Sharp

I was honored to participate in this Task Force, and I hope this effort sparks debate about what steps our nation must soon take to change Pyongyang's policy of provocation and a rapidly advancing nuclear program, lest the United States face North Korea as an unpredictable nuclear power.

There is much to applaud in this report. Significantly, the Task Force acknowledges that for decades the United States has been trapped in an increasingly dangerous and unproductive cycle in which North Korea provokes a crisis to which the United States responds with demands for discussions and, ultimately, with concessions. To break this cycle, the Task Force endorses, among other things, a collective security commitment declaring that an attack against South Korea or Japan is an attack against all. It also suggests the United States and its allies adopt a policy to intercept North Korea's long-range missile launches, including tests. In addition, the report rightly recommends that Kim Jong-un's ruthless regime lose its United Nations credentials unless it demonstrates progress in respecting human rights.

Regrettably, some elements of this report undermine these recommendations. Although few would argue that a policy rejecting diplomacy is a wise one, fewer still can claim that years of diplomatic efforts have resulted in any indication that Kim Jong-un is less intent on acquiring nuclear weapons. On the contrary, after decades of talks, North Korea's tests have accelerated to an unprecedented pace. The failure of the talks to change North Korean behavior should raise questions about the effectiveness of negotiations as a precursor to other policy options, particularly those designed to unequivocally raise the costs of North Korean aggression.

Without understanding why we might expect different results from renewed negotiations, policymakers might consider a more creative approach to sequencing that entails long-overdue responses to North Korean provocations, including powerful sanctions and intercepts. At a minimum, talks should resume only if and when North Korea indicates an interest in negotiation and China is willing to apply meaningful pressure for change. Moreover, restructuring talks on peripheral issues while avoiding an unequivocal demand for a halt to nuclear testing should be viewed as a dangerous return to the status quo. Even as a threshold state only, North Korea still would be an impermissible threat to our allies. And Iran and other nuclear aspirants are watching.

The report also lacks an appropriate sense of urgency. According to the Director of National Intelligence, Pyongyang now "tops the list" of nuclear and proliferation threats. Soon after Kim Jung-un took power, hard-to-find, Chinese-designed mobile missile launchers were discovered with weaponry that could reach U.S. bases in Japan. The DPRK also is developing a submarine-launched ballistic missile capable of reaching the continental United States. In addition, North Korea is reportedly expanding its uranium enrichment facility at Yongbyon, and has successfully launched a satellite with a three-stage rocket that, if reconfigured, could reach the West Coast. The question now is whether a new U.S. president must set limits beyond which the North Korean nuclear program may not go.

Mary Beth Long
joined by Walter L. Sharp

I strongly agree with the policy thrusts and sequenced strategy recommendations reached by the group. However, in Recommendations II

and VI, I believe the conditions for ending talks with North Korea are not comprehensive enough and the concessions suggested during talks are offered prematurely.

Recommendation II states, “The United States should undertake talks subject to the following conditions . . . a moratorium on tests of nuclear weapons and missiles with a range-payload capability greater than existing Scud missiles.” I believe the condition should include all ballistic missile tests governed by current UN Security Council resolutions. Short and intermediate tests threaten South Korea, Japan, and Guam. They also increase the knowledge needed to obtain a long-range missile capability. I also believe this condition needs to include a moratorium of all kinetic and cyberattacks on South Korea, Japan, and the United States. Additionally, Recommendation VI states, “The United States, South Korea, and Japan [should] build capacity to intercept all missile launches with a range-payload capability greater than existing Scud missiles originating from North Korea.” Again, I do not believe this intercept capability should be limited to long-range missiles. The ROK and Japan need to develop a capability to defeat *all* missiles and rockets launched from North Korea in order to protect both military and population centers. Bottom line is the United States should cut off talks if North Korea attacks with any means, and the U.S.-ROK alliance needs an airtight capability to defeat all North Korea missiles and rockets.

Recommendation II also states, “Parties may explore steps on conventional arms control (including limits to the deployment of and exercises with [U.S. and ROK] conventional forces).” I do not believe we should consider this concession until we have verified that North Korea has completely eliminated its nuclear and missile capability and that this elimination is irreversible. ROK and U.S. deployments and exercises are designed to deter North Korea and prepare to defend if deterrence fails. Until the threat is eliminated, we should not reduce our preparedness. Further, until North Korea becomes a nation that abides by international norms and has granted its citizens the human rights they deserve, a collapse and regime change is possible. We should increase, not decrease, deployment and exercises that prepare the alliance for instability in North Korea.

In summary, we should agree to talks with North Korea, but only if it stops all provocations and agrees to and rapidly moves toward a nuclear-free peninsula. Unfortunately, history shows that North Korea has never lived up to these conditions. Therefore, we must maintain the

U.S.-ROK alliance's ability to deter and defend against North Korean actions and attacks.

Walter L. Sharp
joined by Mary Beth Long

While I concur with and fully endorse the findings and recommendations of the report, I do not believe that the Task Force's final recommendation to "strengthen deterrence and defense" goes far enough with respect to the actual consequences of further North Korean nuclear weapons and long-range missile development. The Kim Jong-un regime is continuing its aggressive effort to develop and deploy a long-range, nuclear-capable missile, which will eventually enable the DPRK to hold at risk the western continental United States. While this does not, in itself, constitute an existential threat, it does represent a sufficiently grave danger to U.S. interests and to the population of the western United States that it cannot go unchallenged, much less be tolerated.

It appears, at this point, inevitable that North Korea will soon achieve (if it has not already) sufficient miniaturization and hardening of its nuclear warhead design to facilitate successful launch and reentry atop an intercontinental missile. Thus, it is my personal view that if the DPRK continues to test and moves to deploy a missile system capable of ranging the continental United States, the U.S. government should respond by stating unequivocally that *any* evidence of preparations to make such a system operational would constitute a serious and unacceptable threat to U.S. national security and would immediately make all such missile launch sites a legitimate target for U.S. military force.

Given the apparent North Korean determination to move ahead with deploying a long-range missile—and, quite possibly, with additional nuclear tests intended, in part, to confirm successful miniaturization—I think it is essential for the United States to be *explicit* about its intentions in the event that DPRK were to move ahead with efforts to induct a nuclear-capable ICBM system.

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joined by Mary Beth Long and Walter L. Sharp

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Task Force Members

Task Force members are asked to join a consensus signifying that they endorse “the general policy thrust and judgments reached by the group, though not necessarily every finding and recommendation.” They participate in the Task Force in their individual, not their institutional, capacities.

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Mike Mullen is a retired U.S. Navy admiral who served as the seventeenth chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Mullen, who spent four years as chairman—the top military advisor to Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama—brought bold and original thinking to the work of strengthening the U.S. military and advocating for those who serve. Mullen oversaw the end of the combat mission in Iraq and the development of a new military strategy for Afghanistan, while promoting international partnerships, new technologies, and new counterterrorism tactics culminating in the killing of Osama bin Laden. A 1968 graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Mullen sought high-risk positions to develop his leadership skills. He served as chief of naval operations prior to assuming duties as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Now retired from the U.S. Navy, Mullen serves on the boards of General Motors, Sprint, and the Bloomberg Family Foundation, and teaches at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School.

He is known for his honesty and candor, and for his efforts on behalf of service members, veterans, and their families.

Sam Nunn is co-chairman and chief executive officer of the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI). He served as a U.S. senator from Georgia for twenty-four years (1972–96). In addition to his work with NTI, Nunn has continued his service in the public policy arena as a distinguished professor in the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs at Georgia Tech and as chairman of the board of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC. Nunn attended Georgia Tech, Emory University, and Emory Law School, where he graduated with honors in 1962. After active duty service in the U.S. Coast Guard, he served six years in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve. He first entered politics as a member of the Georgia House of Representatives in 1968. During his tenure in the U.S. Senate, Nunn served as chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and the permanent subcommittee on investigations. He also served on the intelligence and small business committees. His legislative achievements include the landmark Department of Defense Reorganization Act, drafted with the late Senator Barry Goldwater, and the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program, which provided assistance for more than twenty years to Russia and the former Soviet republics for securing and destroying their excess nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons.

Gary Samore is the executive director for research at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at the Harvard Kennedy School. In December 2015, he was appointed as a member of the Secretary of Energy advisory board under Secretary Ernest Moniz. He is also a non-resident senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and member of the advisory board for United Against Nuclear Iran, a nonprofit organization that seeks to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. He served for four years as President Obama's White House coordinator for arms control and weapons of mass destruction (WMD), including as U.S. sherpa for the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, DC, and the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, South Korea. As WMD coordinator, he served as the principal advisor to the president on all matters relating to arms control and the prevention of WMD proliferation and terrorism, and coordinated U.S. government activities, initiatives, and programs to promote international arms control efforts.

Samore was a National Science Foundation fellow at Harvard University, where he received his MA and PhD in government in 1984. While at Harvard, he was a predoctoral fellow at what was then the Harvard Center for Science and International Affairs, later to become the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs.

Walter L. Sharp graduated from West Point in 1974 and was commissioned an armor officer. He has earned a master of science degree in operations research and system analysis from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Sharp commanded the United Nations Command, Republic of Korea – United States Combined Forces Command, and United States Forces Korea from June 3, 2008, to July 14, 2011. Earlier in his career, Sharp's command positions included: squadron commander, 1st Squadron, 7th U.S. Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood Texas; regimental commander, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, Fort Polk, Louisiana; assistant division commander for maneuver 2nd Infantry Division, Camp Red Cloud, South Korea; and division commander, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Georgia. He commanded troops in Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti, and SFOR's Multinational Division (North) in Bosnia. Sharp had four assignments at the Pentagon on the Joint Staff. He was the deputy director, J5 for Western Hemisphere/global transnational issues; vice director, J8 for force structure, resources, and assessment; director for strategic plans and policy, J5; and director of the Joint Staff. He is consulting for several U.S. and Korean companies; serves on the board of directors for NEXEO Solutions, ARTIS, and the Korea Society; and is involved in strategy and policy discussions at several DC-area think tanks concerning strategy and policy for Northeast Asia and especially Korea.

Mitchel B. Wallerstein was appointed as president of Baruch College of the City University of New York in August 2010. Baruch College is home to the nation's largest collegiate business school, the Zicklin School of Business, as well as prominent schools of arts and sciences and public affairs. From 2003 to 2010, he served as the dean of Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, which is the nation's number-one ranked graduate school of public and international affairs. Prior to leading the Maxwell School, Wallerstein was vice president of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

from 1998 to 2003, where he directed the foundation's international programs. Before that, he served from 1993 to 1998 as deputy assistant secretary of defense for counterproliferation policy and senior defense representative for trade security policy. During his five-year tenure, he dealt with nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons proliferation, as well as national security export controls; he also helped to found and subsequently co-chaired the senior defense group on proliferation at NATO. In January 1997, Secretary of Defense William J. Perry awarded Wallerstein the Secretary of Defense Medal for Outstanding Public Service, and he subsequently received the Bronze Palm to that award in April 1998. Wallerstein is a long-time member of the Council on Foreign Relations. In 2006, he was elected a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration, and in 2015, he was similarly elected a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Robert F. Willard is president and chief executive officer of the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations. In May 2012, Willard completed a distinguished U.S. Navy career as the commander, U.S. Pacific Command, Camp H. M. Smith, Hawaii. Willard is a Los Angeles native and a 1973 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy. He has a master's degree in engineering management from Old Dominion University and is an Massachusetts Institute of Technology Seminar XXI alumnus. An F-14 aviator, Willard served in a variety of West Coast fighter squadrons: VF-24, VF 124, VF-2, and VF-51 aboard the aircraft carriers USS *Constellation*, USS *Ranger*, USS *Kitty Hawk* and USS *Carl Vinson*. He was operations officer and executive officer of Navy Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN). He later commanded the "Screaming Eagles" of Fighter Squadron 51. Following nuclear-power training, Willard served as executive officer of USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70), commanded the amphibious flagship USS *Tripoli* (LPH 10) in the Persian Gulf during "Operation Vigilant Warrior," for which Tripoli received a Navy Unit Commendation, and commanded the aircraft carrier USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72). As a flag officer, Willard twice served on the Joint Staff, was deputy and chief of staff for the U.S. Pacific Fleet, commanded Carrier Group Five aboard USS *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63), and commanded the U.S. Seventh Fleet. Willard became the thirty-fourth vice chief of naval operations in March 2005, assumed command of the U.S. Pacific Fleet in May 2007, and became the commander of U.S. Pacific Command in October 2009. His decorations include the Defense

Distinguished Service Medal, Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, and various other awards.

Juan Carlos Zarate is the chairman and cofounder of the Financial Integrity Network, the chairman and senior counselor for the Foundation for Defense of Democracies' Center on Sanctions and Illicit Finance, a visiting lecturer of law at the Harvard Law School, and the senior national security analyst for CBS News. He served as the deputy assistant to the U.S. president and deputy national security advisor for combating terrorism from 2005 to 2009, and was responsible for developing and implementing the U.S. government's counterterrorism strategy and policies related to transnational security threats. Zarate was the first assistant secretary of the Treasury for terrorist financing and financial crimes; he led domestic and international efforts to attack terrorist financing as well as the innovative use of the U.S. Treasury's national security-related powers. Zarate sits on several boards, including HSBC's financial system vulnerabilities committee, the Vatican's Financial Information Authority, and the board of advisors to the director of the National Counterterrorism Center. He is the author of *Treasury's War: The Unleashing of a New Era of Financial Warfare, Forging Democracy*, and a variety of articles.

Task Force Observers

Observers participate in Task Force discussions, but are not asked to join the consensus. They participate in their individual, not institutional, capacities.

Nate Adler is a professional staff member on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. He was formerly the defense and foreign policy advisor to Senator John D. Rockefeller IV and a Rosenthal fellow on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, where he focused on U.S. foreign policy in East Asia. Adler received an MPA in international relations at Princeton University and an AM in East Asian studies at Harvard University. A San Francisco native, Adler is a term member at the Council on Foreign Relations and was a Fulbright Scholar to South Korea in 2005.

Patrick Costello is the director of Washington External Affairs at the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, DC. In this capacity, he leads the Congress and U.S. Foreign Policy Program, CFR's diplomatic program and executive branch initiative, and regularly works with the policymaking community and the foreign diplomatic corps on a wide range of foreign policy and economic issues. Costello worked in Congress as an aide to former Representative Jon Porter, serving as the primary foreign policy and economic policy advisor. After leaving Capitol Hill, Costello was a government relations counselor with International Business-Government Counsellors where he directed congressional relations, and provided strategic advice, analysis, and direct representation. Prior to joining CFR's Washington office, he was a senior associate at the Whitaker Group, a consultancy and project development firm specializing in Africa. Originally from Boston, Massachusetts, Costello earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Massachusetts. He also earned a postgraduate certificate from Exeter College, University

of Oxford, and a master's degree from King's College London. Costello has also done graduate study at the National Defense University. He was a 2011 Future Leader with the Foreign Policy Initiative, named an Atlantik-Brücke Young Leader in 2014, and is currently a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Anya Schmemann (observer, ex officio) is Washington director of Global Communications and Media Relations and director of the Independent Task Force Program at the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, DC. She recently returned to CFR after serving as assistant dean of communications and outreach at American University's School of International Service. Previously, Schmemann managed communications at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at the Harvard Kennedy School and administered the Caspian studies program there. She coordinated a research project on Russian security issues at the EastWest Institute in New York and was assistant director of CFR's Center for Preventive Action in New York, focusing on the Balkans and Central Asia. She received a BA in government and an MA in Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies, both from Harvard University. She was a Truman national security fellow and a nonresident senior fellow at the Center for the National Interest, and was a term member and is now a life member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Sydney Seiler is the senior advisor on North Korea to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. Prior to this position he served as the State Department special envoy for the Six Party Talks, where he coordinated U.S. efforts on denuclearization of North Korea through the Six Party Talks framework and led day-to-day negotiations with Six Party partners. Seiler served as the director for Korea on the National Security Council staff from April 2011 to August 2014. In that position, Seiler advised the president and senior White House officials on South and North Korea issues, and planned, directed, and coordinated policy on Korea. A member of the senior national intelligence service who has worked on Korean Peninsula issues for thirty-four years, Seiler served previously as the acting and deputy DNI national intelligence manager for North Korea, and had a variety of assignments across the intelligence community to include the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Agency. He participated in numerous rounds of Six Party Talks and bilateral U.S.-DPRK talks, and has served over

twelve years in the Republic of Korea. Seiler received his MA degree in Korean studies from Yonsei University's Graduate School of International Studies and is a graduate of the Korean language programs of the Defense Language Institute and Yonsei University. He is the author of the book *Kim Il-Song 1941–1948: The Creation of a Legend, the Building of a Regime*, and is a recipient of the National Intelligence Superior Service Medal.

Sheila A. Smith, an expert on Japanese politics and foreign policy, is senior fellow for Japan studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. She is the author of *Intimate Rivals: Japanese Domestic Politics and a Rising China* and *Japan's New Politics and the U.S.-Japan Alliance*. Her current research focuses on how geostrategic change in Asia is shaping Japan's strategic choices. She joined CFR from the East-West Center in 2007 and was a visiting scholar at Keio University in 2007–2008, where she researched Japan's foreign policy toward China, supported by the Abe fellowship. Smith has been a visiting researcher at leading Japanese foreign and security policy think tanks and universities, including the Japan Institute of International Affairs, the Research Institute for Peace and Security, the University of Tokyo, and the University of the Ryukyus. Smith is vice chair of the U.S. advisors to the U.S.-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange and serves on the advisory committee for the U.S.-Japan Network for the Future program run by the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation. She teaches as an adjunct professor at Georgetown University and serves on the board of its *Journal of Asian Affairs*. She earned her MA and PhD degrees from the department of political science at Columbia University.

Scott Snyder is senior fellow for Korea studies and director of the program on U.S.-Korea policy at the Council on Foreign Relations, where he had served as an adjunct fellow from 2008 to 2011. Snyder's latest books include the coauthored volume *The Japan-South Korea Identity Clash: East Asian Security and the United States* and *Middle-Power Korea: Contributions to the Global Agenda*. Snyder is also the coeditor of *North Korea in Transition: Politics, Economy, and Society* and the editor of *Global Korea: South Korea's Contributions to International Security*. He served as the project director for CFR's Independent Task Force No. 64 on policy toward the Korean Peninsula. He currently writes for the CFR blog *Asia Unbound*. Prior to joining CFR, Snyder was a senior associate

in the international relations program of the Asia Foundation, where he founded and directed the Center for U.S.-Korea Policy and served as the Asia Foundation's representative in Korea (2000–2004). He was also a senior associate at Pacific Forum CSIS. Snyder has worked as an Asia specialist in the research and studies program of the U.S. Institute of Peace and as acting director of Asia Society's contemporary affairs program. He was a Pantech visiting fellow at Stanford University's Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center (2005–2006), and received an Abe fellowship, administered by the Social Sciences Research Council, from 1998 to 1999. Snyder received a BA from Rice University and an MA from the regional studies East Asia program at Harvard University, and was a Thomas G. Watson fellow at Yonsei University in South Korea.

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