

**Approaches to Denuclearization - Analysis on the Agreed Framework and the Six-Party
Talks**

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Introduction

As the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) continues to pursue a nuclear arsenal, a threat continues to remain among the international community. Averno calls DPRK's repeated coercive behaviours in meeting its desires a "Tantrum Diplomacy"¹. The DPRK joined as a member state to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1985, which is often recognized as the one of the key treaties to confine the spread of nuclear weapons. The DPRK has violated several international regulations on disarmament including the United National Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1718 along with the withdrawal from the NPT in 2003. In response, multiple state actors have taken various diplomatic approaches both bilaterally and multilaterally in confronting the DPRK and working towards a mutually desired outcome in the past several decades. The engagement with the DPRK can be characterized through its domestic politics, bilateral relations with respective states, and multilateral efforts. This paper examines the Agreed Framework in 1994 and the Six-Party Talks in the 2000s where state parties met to combat denuclearization through different but similar approaches. Neither of these two schemes ultimately generated successful outcomes, suggesting that the international community needs approaches that involve more friendly negotiations moving forward.

¹ Averno, Richard B, "North Korea: Unstable, Intractable and under New Management-Options for the US Military on the Korean Peninsula," *Seton Hall Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations* 15, no. 1 (September 1, 2014): 71. <https://search-ebSCOhost-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ijh&AN=64.6098&site=ehost-live>

The Agreed Framework in 1994

Overview

In 1994, the delegations from the US and the DPRK held discussions for a month in Geneva to negotiate on resolving nuclear issues in the Korean Peninsula. Prior to the Agreed Framework, the two parties were involved in little positive diplomatic relations.² Leading up to the talks, the agreed statement and joint statement were generated prior to the formal negotiations to ensure the objectives of the agreement.³ The provisions under the agreement addressed continuing the talks between high officials to ensure the process advanced onwards. The leading motivation that resulted in such negotiations stemmed from the DPRK's intention to withdraw from the NPT in 1993, which was followed by the discrepancies between the DPRK's claims and the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) conclusions on the violations under the safeguard, including higher levels of plutonium.⁴ The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) responded by issuing a non-binding appeal to the DPRK to accept continuing inspections, however, the inspectors were asked to leave thereafter. The issues have been apparent among the international community as there is concern about the continuous threat of nuclear development and the possible outbreak of war from the disputes between the DPRK and the state parties or international institutions such as the UN.⁵ The US successfully managed to

² Newnham, Randall E, "'Nukes for Sale Cheap?'. Purchasing Peace with North Korea," *International Studies Perspectives* 5, no. 2 (May 1, 2004): 167. <https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ijh&AN=54.7896&site=ehost-live>.

³ International Atomic Energy Agency, "AGREED FRAMEWORK OF 21 OCTOBER 1994 BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA," *Information Circular* (1994): 1. <https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/infcircs/1994/infcirc457.pdf>

⁴ Oh Kongdan, and Hassaig, Ralph C., "The North Korean Bomb and Nuclear Proliferation in Northeast Asia," *Asian Perspective* 19, no. 2 (September 1, 1995): 163. <https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ijh&AN=47.1045&site=ehost-live>.

⁵ Chittaranjan, Kalpana, "North Korea: Nuclear Issues," *Strategic Analysis* 23, no. 8 (November 1, 1999): 1306. <https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ijh&AN=51.1077&site=ehost-live>.

temporarily suspend its withdrawal as it promised to respect the sovereignty right, and not to interfere with internal affairs.

As part of the whole process, former President Jimmy Carter visited Pyongyang in June 1994 to promote both smoother negotiations on denuclearization and normalization of their political and economic relations.⁶ Despite the complexity of this issue, he successfully advised Kim Il Sung, supreme leader of the DPRK, to negotiate with the US.⁷ Under Bill Clinton's administration, this endeavour indicated a shift in their relationship as the DPRK showed a willingness to move forward with the US. Their relations were aimed to enhance communication through bilateral diplomatic dialogue involving "a series of expert-level talks and a round of high-level discussions to work out the modalities of an agreement."⁸ Snyder analyzes this bilateral approach as "broad and thorough" since they "identify objectives that were sufficiently important to induce parallel concessions while avoiding setting preconditions that could become obstacles to forward progress."⁹ Their agreement is often defined as a 'package deal' since both parties emphasized on proceeding through seeking reciprocal benefits by focusing on building a mutual trust.¹⁰ In fact, the DPRK indicated that it would oblige rightfully as long as the US also does reciprocally.¹¹

2000 was marked as an important year during this diplomatic process in which the US greatly relaxed its economic sanctions to promote trading, investment, and financial flow. The

⁶ Newnham, "Nukes for Sale Cheap?" 168.

⁷ Lee Jung-Hoon, and Chung-In, Moon, "The North Korean Nuclear Crisis Revisited: The Case for a Negotiated Settlement," *Security Dialogue* 34, no. 2 (June 1, 2003): 141. <https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ijh&AN=54.1150&site=ehost-live>.

⁸ Chittaranjan, "North Korea: Nuclear Issues," 1309.

⁹ Snyder, Scott, "A Framework for Achieving Reconciliation in the Korean Peninsula: Beyond the [1994] Geneva Agreement," *Asian Survey* 35, no. 8 (August 1, 1995): 704. <https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ijh&AN=46.3657&site=ehost-live>.

¹⁰ Newnham, "Nukes for Sale Cheap?" 169.

¹¹ Snyder, "Beyond the [1994] Geneva Agreement," 705-706.

US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright visited Pyongyang to express her goodwill, and to clarify the DPRK's position on the missile program, in which the report on its considerations in giving up the nuclear program, and continuing relations with the US could be obtained.¹²

Policy of Incentives/Compromises

A policy of incentives upon seeking reciprocal benefits was implemented to expand such diplomatic relations, through economic support and promise to improve their relations. It intended to discourage nuclear development through incentives, including financial support and working towards normalized relations.¹³ The Clinton administration opted for the amiable negotiations and friendly approach rather than coercive sanctions. In fact, the United States Secretary of Defense William Perry suggested President Bill Clinton have friendly negotiations with the DPRK based on the policy review conducted.¹⁴ Such a policy of incentives adopted could successfully pose less threat, easing of negative sanctions, and aid the DPRK which was deeply in need of economic payoffs.¹⁵

The policy of incentives often involved compromising. Leading up to reaching an agreement, the two parties had compromised on several proposals to make the procedures possible. The Clinton administration responded to the DPRK's proposal on creating a package deal to the issues, but insisted that the DPRK permit the IAEA's inspections and be open to

¹² Arms Control Association, "Facts Sheets & Briefs," The U.S.-North Korean Agreed Framework at a Glance. July, 2018. <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/agreedframework>

¹³ Lee and Chung-In, "The North Korean Nuclear Crisis Revisited," 142.

¹⁴ Chittaranjan, "North Korea: Nuclear Issues," 1315.

¹⁵ Newnham, "Nukes for Sale Cheap?" 171.

building relations with the South. Upon acceptance, the two parties conducted discussions step by step to enhance the effectiveness of the results and improvement of their relations.¹⁶

The DPRK agreed to freeze its nuclear program and graphite-moderated reactors immediately, as well as to comply with various safeguard terms under the IAEA. In exchange, the implementation of two light-water reactors (LWR) and an annual provision of 500,000 tonnes of heavy fuel oil (HFO) were promised by the US to compensate the lost energy¹⁷. In fact, the DPRK insisted that the US “lift the economic embargo as early as possible to compensate for the losses to be caused by discontinued missile export.”¹⁸

Further, the US agreed to aid the DPRK in reforming and normalizing political/economic relations including the relaxation of trading barriers through the policy of engagement. In exchange, they both hoped for “full mutual diplomatic recognition.”¹⁹ The DPRK also actively participated in the enactment of a “Free Economic and Trade Zone in Rajin-Sonbong” to promote the free flow of economic exchange.²⁰

The DPRK agreed to work towards the implementation of “the 1992 North-South Declaration on the Denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula,”²¹ for a peaceful relationship with the Republic of Korea (ROK). The US encouraged the North-South dialogue since it recognized that such efforts were necessary to make progress on denuclearization more achievable. Through its peaceful stance, the US successfully managed to temporarily suspend the DPRK’s withdrawal

¹⁶ Aoki, Naoko, “KEDO: How multilateral cooperation helped an unprecedented North Korean project,” *Center for International & Security Studies* (2017): 3. https://drum.lib.umd.edu/bitstream/handle/1903/20647/AOKI%20Working%20Paper%20KEDO_multilateral_cooperation_101617.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

¹⁷ Chittaranjan, “North Korea: Nuclear Issues,” 1309.

¹⁸ Newnham, “Nukes for Sale Cheap?” 172.

¹⁹ Cotton, James, “Mixed Signals on Korean Security,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 18, no. 4 (March 1, 1997): 402. <https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ijh&AN=48.2343&site=ehost-live>.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 404.

²¹ Chittaranjan, “North Korea: Nuclear Issues,” 1310.

from the NPT, as well as permitting several IAEA inspections.²² This presents a successful compromise since “the United States won a freeze on the North Korean nuclear program, while the North achieved economic aid and a measure of diplomatic respect.”²³

Establishment of the KEDO

To further proceed with what was negotiated, the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) was established as a multilateral organization to implement the Agreed Framework in practical and financial aspects. Its characteristics were unique in nature since the “founding members had historically hostile relations with North Korea.”²⁴ It was established between the US, Japan and the ROK to overcome the financial concerns of the US over the implementation of the LWRs.²⁵ The representatives from the state parties were involved in a series of discussions to provide the DPRK with alternative energy methods.²⁶ This resulted in smoother financial and domestic support from state members, as well as a deterrence in erupting disputes, which allowed the organization to be more involved when the DPRK had unreasonable demands.²⁷

Aside from the founding states, several other countries as well as the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) have joined since the KEDO was established.²⁸ Despite the growth in the number of member states, the DPRK’s lack of technical skills and other necessities were burdensome to proceed with the implementation of the LWRs.²⁹ It further encountered an

²² Cotton, “Mixed Signals on Korean Security,” 403.

²³ Newnham, “Nukes for Sale Cheap?” 169.

²⁴ Aoki, “KEDO,” 4.

²⁵ Ibid., 3.

²⁶ Chittaranjan, “North Korea: Nuclear Issues,” 1310.

²⁷ Aoki, “KEDO,” 7.

²⁸ Nuclear Threat Initiative, “Korean Peninsula Energy Development,” (October, 2011).

<https://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/korean-peninsula-energy-development-organization-kedo/>

²⁹ Aoki, “KEDO,” 9.

issue, when it rejected the ROK's contributions in providing the LWRs. As an immediate remedy, the American design was chosen as a replacement, and required to consult with the KEDO in the future.³⁰ The use of US technology strengthened the ties between the two, through more reliance on American plans.

Implementation/Verification

The IAEA is an agency to monitor the freeze of nuclear programmes in the DPRK upon a request from the UNSC.³¹ If the DPRK's threatening activities are detected, it works to create official reports. For example, its report in 2002 indicated the DPRK's unsafeguarded uranium enrichment programme.

The Agreed Framework was not a legally binding treaty, but its compliances were rather voluntary. It served as "a set of guidelines that helps to regulate and render more predictable the behaviour of the two state parties toward each other."³² Without a formal body that ensured compliance, the US and the DPRK had constructed their own groundworks over a series of negotiations. Using incentives, both parties had shown their willingness to commit to the agreements upon trusting each other. Such reciprocal commitments meant that the achievement of goals or attempts to violate could be apparently observed.³³ Continuous discussions facilitated

³⁰ Cotton, "Mixed Signals on Korean Security," 407.

³¹ International Atomic Energy Agency BOARD OF GOVERNORS, "REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NPT SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE AGENCY AND THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA," November 29, 2002. <https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/gov2002-60.pdf>

³² Hayes, Peter, Von Hippel, David, and Tean, "Modernizing the US-DPRK Agreed Framework: The Energy Imperative," *Asian Perspective* 26, no. 1 (January 1, 2002): 10. <https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ijh&AN=52.7521&site=ehost-live>

³³ Snyder, "Beyond the [1994] Geneva Agreement," 704.

several checkpoints on a timeline, which also allowed the parties to verify their level of commitment, and terminate the arrangements if a party breaches rules.

The Impact

As the bilateral negotiations under the Agreed Framework initially generated positive outcomes, there was hope for thorough denuclearization and peaceful relations upon the relaxation of sanctions. The DPRK successfully satisfied the terms under the supervision of the IAEA, including the freezing of plutonium-based nuclear programs from 1994 to 2002, and the removal of the 5-megawatt reactors' fuel rods from 1994 to 2002.³⁴ At first, many were optimistic about reaching a settlement under this framework.

Since the progress under the Agreed Framework and the KEDO were slow without an effective binding mechanism, what was expected to be achieved in the future was unclear as the established timeline was merely a target date. The DPRK felt that their built trust on commitment was weakened from the multiple delays of what was promised in exchange. Subsequently, the tensions had increased as the Bush administration terminated all the diplomatic exchanges, including the implementation of the LWRs and the HFO shipments, as well as did not fulfill the alternative measures.³⁵ As President Bush was skeptical in building positive relations with the DPRK, he had taken a more hostile attitude to what he called an "Axis of Evil."³⁶ He endorsed the "hard-line rejectionist approach that calls for North Korea to dismantle first, with negotiations coming later" through imposing negative sanctions.³⁷

³⁴ Newnham, "Nukes for Sale Cheap?" 170.

³⁵ Aoki, "KEDO," 8.

³⁶ Hayes Hippel and Tean, "Modernizing the US-DPRK Agreed Framework," 13.

³⁷ Lee and Chung-In, "The North Korean Nuclear Crisis Revisited," 145.

Aside from the termination of projects under the Bush administration, their relations were further exacerbated as James Kelly, the US Assistant Secretary of State, accused the DPRK of starting its uranium-enrichment program in 2002, which resulted in the breakdown of the Agreed Framework in the following year.³⁸ Despite President Clinton's initiatives, "the abandonment of the 1994 pact by both sides was complete" by 2003 as both parties blamed each other on failures in commitment.³⁹ The impact of the breakdown was catastrophic as the DPRK had reinstated its coercive attitude towards the other states and international institutions, by indicating the use of military force in response to sanctions.⁴⁰ Not only did North Korea expel the IAEA inspectors but also withdrew from the NPT in a subsequent year.⁴¹ In short, the Agreed Framework missed an opportunity to contain the DPRK's nuclear development.

Six-Party Talks

Overview

Following the establishment of the Agreed Framework, the DPRK's willingness to comply with the terms made the continuous positive relations possible. In addition, the DPRK's Foreign Minister Paek Nam Sun attended the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum in 2000 to promote diplomatic relations with several other states. In 2000, the political leaders from the DPRK and the ROK undertook a historic three-day summit in Pyongyang for the first time since the Korean War to work towards reunification.

³⁸ Newnham, "Nukes for Sale Cheap?" 174.

³⁹ Ibid., 174.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 174.

⁴¹ Lee and Chung-In, "The North Korean Nuclear Crisis Revisited," 137.

As the breakdown of the Agreed Framework had generated unintended consequences of continuing nuclear threat, a multilateral approach was arranged by several states to resume diplomatic processes on nuclear issues. To reaffirm the DPRK, that had feared the attack from the US, the officials under the Bush administration responded in a writing on the 2003 Joint Statement that it had no intentions in doing so.⁴²

The Six-Party talks refer to a series of negotiations in the 2000s through cooperation between the US, the DPRK, the ROK, the People's Republic of China (PRC), Japan and Russia.⁴³ This involved six rounds of meetings for several years to negotiate with the DPRK starting in 2003 as the DPRK showed its willingness in proceeding with the Six-Party Talks to be held in Beijing. The leading motivation in arranging this meeting was the DPRK's withdrawal from the NPT following the failure of the Agreed Framework and the US's hostile policy. Not only did the DPRK undermine the potency of the international non-proliferation regime, but it also debilitated the ability of the IAEA.⁴⁴ The Six-Party Talks had intended to seek greater efficacy in persuading the DPRK through recognizing the importance of engagement and collaborative attempts. In a broader view, the parties gathered to consider goal-directed arrangements on regional security concerning nuclear development and made various efforts in mitigating the situations.⁴⁵

The Six-Party Talks covered wider fields in diplomacy than those of the Agreed Framework, yet the negotiation processes are similar in nature, since the former also involved negotiation tactics that are step by step and "accompanied by specific conditions and

⁴² The White House, "Joint Statement."

⁴³ Arms Control Association, "Facts Sheets & Briefs."

⁴⁴ Kim, Ji-Hyun, "Toward a Comprehensive Understanding of North Korea's Nuclear Conundrum: The Six Parties in Complex Interdependence from 2002 to 2008," *Asian Politics and Policy* 3, no. 2 (April 1, 2011): 258.

<https://search-ebshost-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ijh&AN=61.6876&site=ehost-live>

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 255.

corresponding incentives that may affect the target state's calculations about cost and benefits."⁴⁶ Kim indicates that "this logic drew the regional powers and the United States, though unwillingly, into a compromising position in their dealings with Pyongyang's brinkmanship."⁴⁷ However, the negotiations under the Six-Party Talks were far more complicated due to the intertwined linkages between state parties on various issues, which generated divergent objectives in this matter. To overcome difficulties in reaching a consensus beyond the core objective of denuclearization, the parties conducted several other bilateral negotiations in parallel to ensure their commitment and willingness to work towards regional peace.

The initial negotiations precluded friendly provisions or agreements as the US kept its coercive stance which was what the DPRK resented. Despite that, the PRC's Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wang Yi, kindly indicated a synopsis on consensus including further commitments and avoidance of any actions that could deteriorate the situation. After the initial session, the US, Japan and the ROK met to "discuss joint strategies for the next round and possibilities for a verifiable inspection system."⁴⁸ Despite the Bush administration's coercive stance on the issue, they showed a willingness to loosen up their strategies to work through a more peaceful path. Even though the official statements were not generated during the second and third round of talks in 2004, they showed some sort of progress where the DPRK offered to dismantle its nuclear program, but continue other peaceful nuclear activities such as for economic use.⁴⁹ The progress was slowed down as five parties had divergent views on its intention in continuing such "peaceful" nuclear activities. For example, the US, Japan and the

⁴⁶ Tan, Ming Hui, "Multilateral Engagement of North Korea: An Assessment of the Six-Party Talks and the ASE an Regional Forum," *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 5, no. 2 (November 1, 2017): 310. <https://search-ebsohost-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ijh&AN=68.4093&site=ehost-live>

⁴⁷ Kim, "Toward a Comprehensive Understanding of North Korea's Nuclear Conundrum," 269.

⁴⁸ Arms Control Association, "Facts Sheets & Briefs."

⁴⁹ Ibid.

ROK insisted on the complete dismantling of all nuclear facilities, unlike the specified reactors under the Agreed Framework. The US proposed step by step programs that provided the DPRK a three-month period to gradually dismantle nuclear development during the third round of the negotiations and offered the DPRK compensation so that they would agree. Even though the DPRK was unwilling to join the fourth round of the Six-Party Talks, the US brought its interests back by clarifying its peaceful stance and efforts in bilateral negotiations.

The parties were able to generate a Joint Statement in 2005 to work towards a mutually desired outcome through numerous compromises.⁵⁰ The US, for example, ensured that it would respect the DPRK's sovereignty rights, not to invade, and to strengthen economic ties for the DPRK to rejoin the NPT in exchange. However, the terms under the Joint Statement still included broad terms that were merely stating their goals, but nothing further. Moreover, once the parties undertook establishing a verification body, the DPRK government officials showed less support.⁵¹

As the involved parties had divergent domestic interests, opinions, and priorities, they lacked a uniformity to manage the issue effectively. The intransigent US and Japan sought to adopt a more coercive approach since they “prefer to avoid rewarding the DPRK's bad behaviour with positive incentives.”⁵² In contrast, Russia, the PRC and the ROK valued the softer approach through engagement to avoid regional instability. Not only was there a misalignment among the five parties, but some of them also had competitive views on who should take a leadership role in the region. For example, the PRC regarded the efforts as an opportunity to assert its diplomatic

⁵⁰ Council on Foreign Relations, “North Korean Nuclear Negotiation”. 2020. <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/north-korean-nuclear-negotiations>

⁵¹ Cossa, Ralph A, “Six-Party Talks [with North Korea]: Will/Should They Resume?” *American Foreign Policy Interests* 34, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 30. <https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ijh&AN=62.5290&site=ehost-live>

⁵² Tan, “Multilateral Engagement of North Korea,” 317.

power as a new emerging state in the region. To better understand the diplomatic processes in the Six-Party Talks, differences in state parties' strategies are analyzed as each actor plays its role differently.

The US

After President Bush came into the office, he implemented a coercive strategy that included both offensive measures to pressure Kim Jong-il's authority, and defensive measures to mitigate nuclear threats domestically.⁵³ As the commitment problem between the US and the DPRK was evident under the 1994 Agreed Framework, a more coercive approach had become the US's viable blueprint. The US viewed the nuclear threat, the creation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and terrorism jointly, and had little hopes that the DPRK would comply with the agreement.⁵⁴ The US considered this multilateral approach to weaken the DPRK's regime and its bargaining power in negotiations.

The Bush administration's non-tolerant approach, so-called 'hawk engagement' was based on the conservative and pessimistic view that there is little feasibility in negotiations with the DPRK.⁵⁵ It is clearly shown during the first round of the discussions in 2003, when it called for "complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement (CVID) towards the DPRK."⁵⁶ After the Joint Statement, the more offensive measure was taken to weaken the DPRK's regime by creating "sufficient utility losses" through \$25 million of financial sanctions targeted at businesses as well as political officials, pushing forward the punitive measures with the UNSC to

⁵³ Strohmaier, James, "Strategic Coercion and US-DPRK [North Korea] Stalemate: The End of the Six-Party Talks?" *Journal of East Asian Affairs* 20, no. 2 (September 1, 2006): 2. <https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ijh&AN=57.5426&site=ehost-live>

⁵⁴ Kim, "Toward a Comprehensive Understanding of North Korea's Nuclear Conundrum," 270.

⁵⁵ Strohmaier, "Strategic Coercion and US-DPRK [North Korea] Stalemate," 8.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

compel its actions.⁵⁷ It resulted in provoking reciprocal threatening actions as the DPRK was responding by firing more missiles.

The US' defensive strategy was aimed to contain the DPRK's efforts in undermining the US's ability through refurbishing its defence mechanisms.⁵⁸ In 2003, the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) was established with other several member states aiming to prevent the trafficking of WMD.⁵⁹ Moreover, the US made efforts in strengthening bilateral security ties with Japan and the ROK to expand its defensive capability. Japan and the US collaborated to tighten their sanction measures and "develop a \$3 billion missile interceptor to destroy incoming ballistic missiles."⁶⁰ The US increased its flexibility in the military at the United States Forces Korea (USFK) to combine its force with that of the ROK to reinforce its security measures.⁶¹

The ROK

The ROK's strategy under President Roh Moo-hyun was referred to as 'Peace and Prosperity Policy' or 'Sunshine Policy' as he believed that engagement and peaceful cooperation with the DPRK would be the most effective scheme.⁶² In fact, the ROK greatly feared it would bear the burden of the collapse of the DPRK's regime as the US and other Western states intended to proceed.⁶³ The Roh administration highlighted that the Cold War mindset should be abandoned to be optimistic in approaching the DPRK peacefully. The ROK continued to provide financial and humanitarian aid, hoping that it would lead to rapprochement in the Korean

⁵⁷ Ibid., 9.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 6.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 22.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 21.

⁶¹ Ibid., 20.

⁶² Ibid., 10.

⁶³ Kim, "Toward a Comprehensive Understanding of North Korea's Nuclear Conundrum," 265.

Peninsula over time. Such a liberal approach also included assisting with several extensive economic projects such as the ‘Kaesong Industrial Complex Project,’ hoping to build mutual trust towards restoring relations.⁶⁴ Through the friendly compromising, the ROK “sought to raise its leverage in the North Korean nuclear bargaining within the six-party framework.”⁶⁵

The PRC

Likewise, the PRC had resisted the ideas of coercive strategies, and opted for neighbourly engagement and building stronger diplomatic, economic, and political ties under the Six-Party Talks.⁶⁶ As the PRC regarded its role as a player “mediating between the US and the DPRK,” its objectives were to maintain regional stability, economic prosperity, and empowerment of its reign.⁶⁷ It had assisted greatly in the DPRK’s economy through trading and financial aid to maintain friendly relations. In fact, the PRC as a member of the UNSC, who holds veto power, pressured the institution to avoid the use of armed sanctions even if the DPRK fails to comply.⁶⁸

Japan and Russia

As Japan greatly fears the nuclear programs due to its geographical proximities to the DPRK, it wishes for denuclearization and regional security. Further, the ongoing issues of abducted Japanese citizens imply Japan’s willingness to resolve the matter with the DPRK.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 264.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 265.

⁶⁶ Delury, John, “Triple-Pronged Engagement: China’s Approach to North Korea,” *American Foreign Policy Interests* 34, no. 2 (March 1, 2012): 72. <https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ijh&AN=62.6570&site=ehost-live>

⁶⁷ Ibid., 72.

⁶⁸ Kim, “Toward a Comprehensive Understanding of North Korea’s Nuclear Conundrum,” 267.

However, complicated political relations make Japan's diplomatic ability limited.⁶⁹ For example, Japan's political will is fairly influenced by that of the US.⁷⁰

Russia's stance is that it opposes imposing sanctions, threats, as well as making efforts in bringing a regime change within the DPRK.⁷¹ As Russia advocates for building mutual trust and security for all members, maintaining to aid the DPRK in developing peaceful nuclear activities, the DPRK generally approved Russia's propositions. Although the Bush administration disliked Russia's approach at first, officials from both the US and Russia believed at the time that cooperation would be important onwards.⁷²

The Impact

Over the course of its negotiations, the initiatives under the Six-Party Talks were initially successful. The DPRK agreed to end its nuclear development, rejoin the NPT, and grant the IAEA's inspections in 2005⁷³. The tensions were greatly relieved as sanctions were eased between the DPRK and other states, creating more hopes for a bigger step towards peaceful coexistence in the Northeast Asian region.

Despite the initial success following the negotiations, a lack of uniformity and diverse strategies among the five states limited their influence over the DPRK. Consequently, an increased hostility resulted in the termination of negotiations in 2008.⁷⁴ The negative consequences have impacted the five state members differently. There has been a great fear in

⁶⁹ Okano-Hejimans, Maaike, "Japan as Spoiler in the Six-Party Talks: Single-Issue Politics and Economic Diplomacy Towards North Korea." *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 6, no 10 (October, 2018): 2.

⁷⁰ Okano-Hejimans, "Japan as Spoiler in the Six-Party Talks," 8.

⁷¹ Toloraya, Georgy, "THE SIX PARTY TALKS: A RUSSIAN PERSPECTIVE," *Asian Perspective* 32, no 4 (2018): 51. <https://muse-jhu-edu.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/article/784337/pdf>

⁷² Toloraya, "A RUSSIAN PERSPECTIVE," 53.

⁷³ Arms Control Association, "Facts Sheets & Briefs."

⁷⁴ Kim, "Toward a Comprehensive Understanding of North Korea's Nuclear Conundrum," 267.

Japan and the ROK that their national securities were still in danger from the historical and political frictions with the DPRK. The US further developed its apprehensions for global terrorism and negative effects on its global superpower, whereas China and Russia held much fewer concerns.⁷⁵ The UNSC showed its intentions in imposing punitive measures in response to the DPRK's two missile tests in violation of the UNSC Resolution in 2009. In this instance, it seemed that the more efforts in enacting sanctions, the more tensions there were. Several states, particularly the PRC, had stressed the importance of resuming the negotiations after the DPRK's position in halting involvement.⁷⁶

In subsequent years, supplementary discussions both bilaterally and multilaterally were made in the meantime as the “two forums provide government officials with an opportunity to talk with one another in their private capacities, along with selected scholars who are well-versed in official positions.”⁷⁷ The officials between the US and the DPRK continued discussions through the National Committee on American Foreign Policy (NCAFP), which endeavoured to keep the latter involved in this matter.⁷⁸ Further, the representatives met multilaterally to discuss security issues through the Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD) and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific where “DPRK colleagues, other Six-Party Talks participants, and the broader East Asia security community” meet to discuss on the prevention of WMD.⁷⁹ Those efforts are significant in taking the next step forward.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 273.

⁷⁶ Arms Control Association, “Facts Sheets & Briefs.”

⁷⁷ Cossa, “Six-Party Talks [with North Korea],” 33.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 33.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 33.

Conclusion

This paper analyzed the Agreed Framework as a bilateral approach, and Six-Party Talks as a multilateral approach in combating the issue of nuclear development and the increased tensions among the international community. Despite their series of careful negotiations, and the processes among the high government officials, they both ultimately faced difficulties in generating positive outcomes. To overcome this issue, it is necessary to cooperatively work and negotiate with the DPRK, which would require continuing efforts in step-by-step friendly talks both bilaterally and multilaterally. We need to avoid a disruption within the international community incurred by practices of nuclear weapons, before it becomes too late, and think of effective ways to move forward.

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