

# **Center for Strategic and International Studies**

## **“Global Security Forum 2016: Challenges from North Korea”**

### **Speakers:**

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Senior Adviser and Korea Chair,  
CSIS**

**Ambassador Robert Gallucci,  
Distinguished Professor in the Practice of Diplomacy,  
Georgetown University**

**General Walter L. “Skip” Sharp, USA (Ret.),  
Former Commander, United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command,  
United States Forces Korea**

**Christine Wormuth,  
Former Undersecretary of Defense for Policy**

**Chris Johnson,  
Senior Adviser and Freeman Chair in China Studies,  
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### **Moderator:**

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MICHAEL J. GREEN: (In progress) – uplifting and optimistic discussion of future scenarios for North Korea. I'm Mike Green, senior vice president here for Asia and professor at Georgetown University.

We've put together a distinguished panel of scholar-practitioners, none of whom in their previous incarnations were allowed to answer any of the hypothetical questions we're going to pose today. (Laughter.) But we're going to do all hypotheticals today because that's really one of the best ways to tease out, A, what we think might happen on the peninsula; but, even harder, B, what do we do about it.

To my immediate left is my colleague here at CSIS and at Georgetown, Dr. Victor Cha, one of the preeminent experts on this question in the country and the world. Served in the NSC and was the deputy chief for the six-party talks.

Ambassador Robert Gallucci was president of the MacArthur Foundation, assistant secretary, the lead negotiator with North Korea in the '90s in the Agreed Framework process. Dean at Georgetown. A stellar career marred by only one decision: hiring me at Georgetown. (Laughter.)

Chris Johnson, our Freeman Chair in China Studies, who's worked this problem in government and in constant dialogue with Chinese interlocutors.

General Walter "Skip" Sharp, the former commander of U.S. Forces Korea.

And Christine Wormuth, until recently the undersecretary of defense for policy.

So these are all people who were not allowed to say what they really think or what might happen in these hypothetical scenarios. We're going to – we're going to test them.

But first I'm going to ask Dr. Cha to give us a scene-setter, where we are on North Korea. And then we're going to test you. We're going to use the clickers in your seats. We're going to put up a series of scenarios and where you think things might go, and then use that key off discussions on the panel on where we think things might go and what we should do about it. But let me turn next to Victor to set the stage.

VICTOR CHA: Great. Thanks, Mike.

So every presidency is defined only partially by the issues that they campaigned on and the agenda they had coming into office. More often than not, however, we measure the mettle of presidencies by the unexpected crises that they must deal with. For President Bush, this was clearly the terrorist attacks of 9/11 – completely changed almost every element of his presidency. For President-elect Trump, this crisis could very well come from North Korea.

The normally aggressive regime has taken a – has taken an unusually violent path, even by their own extraordinary standards. In the past year, the regime, under Kim Jong-un, has conducted 25 ballistic missile tests and two nuclear tests. Since 2009, it has done 65 major provocations and ballistic missile tests, including four nuclear tests. By comparison, in the 14 years prior, Pyongyang had done only 16 missile tests and one nuclear test. The leader has stated unequivocally that he runs a nuclear

weapons state, and that he has no intention of disarming. Indeed, he had enshrined his nuclear weapons status in the North Korean constitution.

Our own data at CSIS indicates that North Korea will challenge the new administration almost immediately upon taking office. This would be for the purpose of establishing a position of strength.

Eight years of strategic patience – the outgoing administration’s policy of sanctions designed to cause the North Koreans to cry uncle and come back to the table – has done little to curb the threat. Over the past year, North Korea has crossed technical thresholds that were previously thought to be beyond their reach for years. They may have scores of nuclear weapons by the end of this decade, only four years away. And it is entirely plausible that during President Trump’s four years in office North Korea will demonstrate an ability to reach the West Coast of the United States with a nuclear-tipped ballistic missile, making it the only country outside of China and Russia to have such a capability. At the same time, North Korea, under the opaque Kim Jong-un regime, may try to engage – may try to engage the United States with proposals for peace treaty talks or the release of an American college student who has been detained since January.

The paths forward, given all of these uncertainties, are about as clear as a foggy day in London. We discern five paths for the purpose of this exercise.

A positive path would entail a North Korean decision – whether because of Chinese pressure or because of the aggregation of sanctions – to come back to the negotiating table with serious intent to negotiate over their nuclear weapons programs. This could be in a bilateral format with the United States or through a return to six-party talks hosted by China.

A second path is more ambiguous, though still related to diplomacy; that is, North Korea shows a willingness to return to diplomacy, but without a commitment to denuclearize, instead focusing on negotiating a peace treaty with the United States as setting the stage potentially for tension reduction.

A third path is negative. This is one in which Kim Jong-un accelerates his efforts to grow his nuclear capabilities, accompanied by more nuclear detonations, missile tests, fiery threats, and potentially even horizontal proliferation to Iran, Pakistan or other non-state actors.

A fourth path we call instability. This is characterized by discontinuities internal to the North Korean regime. The rate of high-level defections and purges in North Korea is unprecedented, which indicates a significant degree of churn inside the system. This internal instability can manifest itself in external spasms that generate outright conflict in the region.

The fifth and final path is status quo. North Korea in this scenario would not be characterized by an increased tempo of testing, nor an increased interest in diplomacy. Instead, it would work methodically, as it has done over the past few years, to build their programs, remain cool to negotiation, and provoke occasionally but not at a level that would generate U.S. or South Korean reactions.

As Yogi Berra once said, predictions are hard, especially about the future. Along with the experts on this panel, we will use our next hour together to work through the challenges of each scenario and to keep policy pivot points for the next administration.

MR. GREEN: Thank you.

So we want to test your predictions and put up on the screen the five scenarios that Victor just described. So you can take a minute and read them. Your clickers – Will, these have to be turned on, right? So make sure they're on. That's the first task. And take a second and read these through, and click. You only get one vote. You can change your vote for about 30 seconds, and then we'll lock it. So take a look. And we'd ask everyone in the audience what do you think will happen. Let me reassure you we have no way of reverse-engineering this and figuring out who voted for what, so it's completely anonymous. And are we on, Will? So click away.

(Audience voting.)

Oh, I can't see the responses.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: They're going off and on.

MR. GREEN: They're turning off and on? Oh, there we go. OK. All right.

(Audience voting.)

MR. : What's the difference between C and E?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: What's the difference between C and E?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah.

MR. GREEN: E is – E is a more incremental and cautious version of C. We've seen a rapid acceleration of testing of ballistic missiles and nuclear warheads in the last few years, and that's C. E, I think – Victor, correct me if I'm wrong – is continued but more incremental and somewhat more cautious development. Is that fair?

MR. : I'd like to have a word with the professor who put that C and E together. (Laughter.)

MR. CHA: Yeah, C would be a much higher tempo of testing. We included horizontal proliferation in C, as well as more provocations.

MR. GREEN: We had five letters on the clicker. (Laughter.)

All right, I won't ask the person who voted for A to identify themselves. (Laughter.) But I have some real estate in Florida if you're interested afterward. No.

All right, so largely pessimistic and negative on the whole.

Now, we'll come back to this, but let's go to the second clicker question, that looks at the scenario voted for by one person, which is the, you know, diplomatic track starts to open again. So this is an A/B yes-or-no question: Should the U.S. agree to return to talks if North Korea expresses readiness? And we'll talk about the conditions or how that would work with the panel, but what do you think?

(Audience voting.)

MR. GREEN: So no one expects a positive scenario, but there seems to be an openness with the audience to testing diplomacy again.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: It keeps us employed. (Laughter.)

MR. GREEN: So, Ambassador, how would this work if we went back to the table? What would the conditions be? What would we need to do or see? Or is it just worth it no matter what?

ROBERT GALLUCCI: I would like C, none of the above. (Laughter.)

So it seems to me that when you – we haven't done this yet, but if you explore the options – policy options, none of them are good. So, under those circumstances, negotiations look good to me as a nonviolent way of proceeding, possibly – small chance – towards the best outcome.

The only question in my mind, really, or the principal question, is what's the downside of doing that? What trouble could we get into by engaging in the talks? Why not say yes, in other words?

The answer is I think that if you're not careful, and you get into a protracted and serious negotiation with the DPRK and do not have as an understood possibility of a successful outcome the denuclearization not only of North Korea but of the Korean Peninsula, to make them feel good, then I don't see how you avoid legitimizing the nuclear weapons program in the DPRK and, thus, putting at risk our extended – the credibility of our extended deterrent in – for the Japanese and for the Republic of Korea.

So I'm kind of caught on this one. This could be a poison pill, given what the North has said. But my own inclination would be that – not that they have to say we'll give up our weapons as a precondition, but that a negotiation would have to include the nuclear issue, their nuclear status, and the possibility – if it is acceptable and a political relationship evolves from it, including a peace treaty – that the North would become a non-nuclear-weapons state again.

MR. GREEN: Let me ask Christine and then General Sharp: Is there a way to have some kind of dialogue or negotiation and maintain the credibility of our extended deterrent and hold together our allies, who may actually want some negotiation? It depends, I guess. We'll start with Christine.

CHRISTINE WORMUTH: I think there is. I mean, I think – something I observed over the years as undersecretary, and also working at the National Security Council, is you need to avoid getting trapped in options, you know, A, B and C because they are rarely sort of – they are rarely sort of single stovepipes that give you all the answers. And you want to sort of try to, I think, step back and think out of the box a little bit. And often there is, I think, options that can be combinations of some of these choices, and that's what I found myself thinking as I looked at some of these slides.

You know, I'm very much, I think, with Ambassador Gallucci in terms of thinking there is potential in diplomacy. But I would want to cast it as a very comprehensive conversation that would potentially talk about a peace treaty at some point down the road, but as part of that conversation it would be understood that we would also talk about denuclearization. And I think it's very important, you know, to maintain that extended deterrence with Japan and with the South Koreans. Having them be very closely involved in that dialogue with us and feel like they understand what is happening and what our intentions are is critical.

I think something that will undoubtedly come up later in the discussion is the importance of China to this problem set. And I do think that China is a critical piece, but I think it's very dangerous for us to potentially get in a situation where the United States and China are working together to try to solve this problem in sort of a condominium kind of way. I think that would be very unsettling for the South Koreans in particular.

So, to me, part of the key of maintaining the integrity of our extended deterrence is making sure that we are consulting very closely with the Japanese and the South Koreans in any kind of a comprehensive approach that we might try to pursue.

MR. GREEN: Skip, same question, but if you could also anticipate where you think our allies in Seoul would be on this. And I know it depends a lot on the election result in Korea, but –

GENERAL WALTER L. "SKIP" SHARP (RET.): I guess I'd come from this at a little bit different angle: I put little to no hope in diplomacy, given this regime, period. I do not think that we should go into talks within – under the – under conditions that are short of them coming to say, OK, we can work through, and if we can come to agreement we will get rid of our nuclear weapons. That, I think, has to be a going-in position. I think to talk basically – even if that goes in, I do worry about both the credibility that we are giving North Korea and then, secondly, the additional time to continue to develop their capabilities as we go through.

So –

MR. GREEN: Chris, is – oh, sorry.

GEN. SHARP: So, to answer your question about South Korea, I think that – you know, I can't speak for the next administration within South Korea, but I think with the people and the concern that is in South Korea about the capabilities of North Korea, to be able to go in and start talking to North Korea along these lines, especially if we get into peace treaties and things like that, would send real shocks and real concerns within our South Korea ally.

MR. GREEN: So, Chris, would this – if we took this path, caveat and condition – the things you heard – would we find that Beijing is a much more helpful partner on North Korea, or would it make them complacent?

CHRIS JOHNSON: Well, I think both options are possible, but my sense is, you know, China has been seeking dialogue – a return to dialogue for a long time. Certainly with its recent behavior in the U.N. action, I think it is a(n) absolute certainty that the next thing will follow, will be now it's time to go back to talks.

I think one of the challenges that we face, or a couple things – I want to just pick up on something Christine said because I think it's so important – you know, it's never a good idea to sort of sublet U.S. policy on North Korea to China, you know, and suggest that they have all of the leverage, and would they please use it, and so on. It has to be a mixed package. You can't do it without the Chinese, but they have to also occasionally feel like they're being left out of the discussion because sometimes that's what motivates them to sort of get involved.

I think the other challenge we're facing is that there's an emerging disconnect, I think, between a China that is in some ways stuck in its own internal monologue about things like regime collapse and buffer zone, you know, from U.S. forces and things like this, and the U.S. emerging perception – as Victor said – of an existential threat to the United States. And those positions don't align very well, and so it will be interesting to see in a new administration how we work to bridge that gap.

MR. GREEN: I assume all of you are speaking on the premise that North Korea is not conducting nuclear and major missile tests as they're offering to come back to the talks? This is assuming there's a fairly calm – relatively calm standard of behavior for North Korea.

MR. GALLUCCI: May I?

MR. GREEN: Yeah.

MR. GALLUCCI: Skip, on your – on your point, because I think that among the things you would want to get clear in getting into a negotiation is that they cannot be making progress on their weapons programs while we're talking, lest they, and we on our side, be accused of allowing them to stall. So you have – I mean, it was the standard way back in 1993-94: while we're talking, you can't build, right? You can't test either extended-range ballistic missiles or nuclear explosive devices. You'd essentially like that period to be one in which there's a timeout and we're going to have these discussions. And I think –

GEN. SHARP: But would you say a verifiable timeout?

MR. GALLUCCI: Yeah. (Laughs.)

GEN. SHARP: I mean, are we just going to trust them that they aren't spinning centrifuges and doing experiments underground?

MR. GALLUCCI: Well, there's a – you can start parsing this. I said no tests of ballistic missiles or nuclear weapons. You can go further and say you may not – you may not run centrifuges. The problem with that is, if you make that a – I'm suggesting this is a precondition, a very bad word to use for it – (laughter) – if you really want negotiations. But if you want to have – we're talking about the precondition, and you say you can't run centrifuge(s) when we are not certain of the location of the other centrifuge facility, then they have to make a huge concession to get it verifiable. I don't like phrases that we know we can't verify and we put out and say we're doing, because it exposes our right flank to the – and the administration. It's not a smart thing to do. So that's why I worry about saying they may not operate centrifuges, unless you really can answer the question how would you know, right? Their assurance wouldn't quite be good enough.

MR. GREEN: So there's disagreement – I think there is consensus that the odds are very long, even if we go into this. Shake your head no if you disagree. There's some consensus that if we do go into this, we have to be extremely careful to avoid a condominium with China or to put our allies into a position where they have even greater anxiety about our commitment, our extended deterrence. But, you know, this is going to – we're going to have some pressure from China for dialogue. We may have that from the next South Korean government. I don't think Park Geun-hye is going to go soft, even though she goes down politically.

So, Victor, mechanically, you know, if the next administration feels at some point as part of a – as part of a portfolio of policies, as Christine described, including deterrence and active defense and so forth, but not – certainly not the most important and not the one we're hanging our bets on, if it's – if it's part of that portfolio and the president's under some pressure, feels we need to find some way to show we are talking, how would that work mechanically? How would you make sure the allies are on side? How would you structure the talks? What would your proposal be, if we – if we get to that point? And assuming the North Koreans are not actively testing and doing things.

MR. CHA: Right. I mean, so just one data point on the whole testing issue is, so again, our research at CSIS shows that when we are actually in talks – we, meaning the United States – are in talks with the North Koreans, whether it's bilateral or in a multilateral format, they do not test. There's been only two occasions in the last, I don't know, 30 years. One was in 1998 and the other was in the aftermath of the Leap Day Deal, the Obama administration, two exceptions that really prove the rule.

But the question of going beyond simply, you know, testing, verifying centrifuge activity and freeze there, that's a whole different ballgame. I mean, I think the – I mean, there are three things here. The first is, as Christine said, coordination with the allies. North Korea's preference probably is always to do this bilaterally, rather than in a multilateral format. When you created the whole six-party format, you know, the North Koreans were very resistant to that. They had to be dragged into it. So coordination with Japan and South Korea becomes incredibly important, especially if we're going into this explicitly without, as the question says, any reference to nuclear or missile issues.

The second thing, I think, is we have to be very realistic about what – you know, even if we're not talking about nuclear missiles issues, I think, you know, going into any negotiation we have to be pretty clear about, and modest about, what our ambitions are going to be. You know, I think, at least based on my experience doing this and, perhaps, Bob, based on his, is that we sort of hit a wall. I mean, we can get in some format IAEA inspectors back in Yongbyon, back on the ground. We hit a wall where we get to the verifiable declaration, right? That is where you sort of hit a wall because they're only interested in showing – in explaining what's at Yongbyon, or the plutonium that they've gotten. And so I think for a president, they have to decide whether that is worth going for or whether it's not – it's just not worth the candle.

And the third thing I would say is, as Chris said, we have to moderate our expectations when it comes to China. You know, we would like China to make a strategic decision, but all they make are tactical decisions on North Korea. So we have to, through timing, through a variety of different pressures, use their interest in doing tactical things as a way to try to push the North Koreans past the declaration part of any negotiation. So I mean, it seems to me those three things are the three things we need to – the boxes we need to check, if we were to go into something like that.

MR. GREEN: I'm going to abuse my position as chair and add two more caveats that I think you'll agree with. One is, there's coordination with allies and there's coordination with allies. Informing them what we're doing in this scenario, in my view, is not coordination with allies. I think you need a trilateral process where you go in, if you're going to talk, with agreement how far you're going to go and how far you're not going to go, and not just inform them how the negotiations are going, in my view.

The second caveat I would say is you do nothing to – in addition to doing nothing to legitimize their nuclear program – you do nothing to relax in any way the sanctions and interdiction and other actions that we have in place, which are not just – originally they were conceived of as ways to push

North Korea to the table. I think they're now primarily ways to limit their program and demonstrate, for other proliferators, the consequences. And you don't want to trade away any of that for what would be process.

But I do think there is a real chance, despite the pessimism of the audience – which I agree with – that we'll come under some pressure from Seoul and China in the coming years to dialogue. And so these are really helpful things to think about.

All right, let's get back to the – this was the optimistic scenario, which one of you thought was possible. (Laughter.) Well, let's get back to the pessimistic scenarios, which the audience expected, and ask the next clicker question, which is basically what we do at the – at the last stage before North Korea crosses its threshold? In other words, if North Korea stacks a long-range ballistic missile, a TD-2, probably capable of reaching the West Coast, and they've got it ready to launch, and we don't know what's in the payload, should we – what should we do? Reserve the right to take out the missile with kinetic action; or, B, intercept it with missile defenses, if you think that's possible; or, C, you know, standby and be alert? So let's get the audience to vote on this, and then we'll go through the practicalities of these options.

(Audience voting.)

MR. : D? (Laughs.)

MR. GREEN: There is no D. (Laughter.) Unless it's the one person who wanted dialogue, and is stubbornly –

MS. WORMUTH: A think-out-of-the-box person. (Laughs.)

MR. GREEN: All right. Well –

MR. : I think A, B and C. (Laughter.)

MR. GREEN: So reserve the right is not the same as saying take out the missile. Let me turn to Skip first, because all of these have immediate implications for the command, for Americans in Korea and Japan, for our alliances, immediate implications. Why don't you start us off on the practicality or the consequences of each option?

GEN. SHARP: OK. To begin with, are you probably inferred from my last talk, I don't think any talking, any diplomacy is going to convince Kim Jong-un that he should change. I think he needs to be forced to change, or change. And in order to do that, I think both internal and external pressure has to be put on the regime. And I think one of the key elements of external pressure that needs to come is to be able to, as best we can, halt, slow down his ballistic missile development. Every launch that he launches, he learns more, he gets more capability.

And I don't restrict – I don't just solely mean long-range intercontinental ballistic missiles. It's all missiles. It's submarine launch that's the shorter-range missiles. He gets more and more capability. U.N. Security Council resolutions have been numerous that have told him he cannot do this. I personally think it's time to start enforcing this. We've got to do it selectively. But I do think that we need to demonstrate we have the capability, you know, both before launch and after launch to be able to do it.

So what do we need to do, to your question, from a military perspective? We need to make sure we got the capabilities in place to execute the options, which is very doable, in my mind. We got to make sure that we have the strong defenses and the strong will, and that he knows that if he responds after we take one of his missiles out that there is a lot more coming his way, with something that he holds dear. Try to deter him, but be prepared in case he plays the card, nope, I'm willing to risk this to be able to do that.

I think we're to that point that we need to have that capability and we need to do that. Otherwise, we're – every launch, as I said, gives him more capability to be able to do this, and thumbs his – you know, thumbs his nose at what the rest of the world has told him that we're not going to stand for. He says, you've been standing this for years and years and years. And so I am to the point now that he has got – he's getting close enough to the capability that we need to stop him from actually having a credible capability.

MR. GREEN: Let me ask you, Victor – you can come back to this – but just a quick fact check. Is it correct to say that since the Korean War, when there's a credible threat of U.S. use of force, the DPRK has always backed away? And is it also correct to say we've never gone kinetic before? What in the history of this can we learn from?

MR. CHA: Right. So, I mean, I guess – I mean, I would say that there have been several points in history in which we've come to a crisis where there was the potential for some escalation. And in most of those cases, the United States had the strong deterrent message, but it was also restrained in terms of its response, whether you're talking about the Blue House raid in 1968, the Pueblo seizure, the EC-121 shootdown, the axe murder, you know, there have been a series of these things in which – I think, you know, it's had a firm response, but it's always been one that's looked a bit restrained. And I think that's the way we see it.

I think the way the North Koreans may see it is they may see a paper tiger. You know, it's entirely plausible that that's the case. I mean just as we said, the tempo of testing over the past year, and over the – and since January of 2009 is just unprecedented, even by North Korean standards.

MR. GREEN: So let's talk about risk. I'm sure you'd agree, Skip, there's risk in this approach. And your assessment, I think, would be we're at the point where we, you know, are going to have to assume more risk in dealing with this problem, to prevent it from becoming a serious threat to the homeland. Let me open it up to Christine and Chris and to Bob. Can we manage the risk? Is it just too big? What are your thoughts? Christine?

MS. WORMUTH: I'm quite concerned about the risks, because, I mean, I think in particular the concern I have about actually taking preemptive, if you will, kinetic action against a missile that's on the launching pad is what does Kim Jong-un do in response? And given our concerns about road-mobile launchers, given the challenge of sort of the find-fix-finish equation, I worry quite a bit about our ability to sort of manage a potential retaliation. And I would like that the South Koreans and the Japanese would be quite worried about it as well.

MR. GREEN: Can I ask, Christine – sorry – are you talking about option A and B, or primarily A?

MS. WORMUTH: Primarily A. I mean, I'm talking about the idea of – I mean, I personally – while I absolutely share General Sharp's concerns about the pace and scope of the missile program – and this was something we definitely, you know, wrestled – the current administration wrestled with – the idea of actually, you know, doing something before a missile is launched, again, I worry about sort of the what happens next, and are we prepared to manage the second round of that engagement?

I am a big proponent of trying to, A, get the Koreans and the Japanese to do more with us collectively in terms of missile defense, and then also doing everything we can to boost our own national missile defense system. You know, the Department of Defense has been in the process of making some investments to try to improve the system overall, but that – frankly, the money for that is always under threat. There are tradeoffs. So making sure that we're doing everything we can to invest in that program, I think is something that I'm focused on. But I – but I definitely admit, it's a challenge, because I agree that we've sort of reached a threshold of how much more are we going to let this go on? But at the same time, the risks are very significant.

MR. GREEN: Chris?

MR. JOHNSON: I would just say that adding another dimension to the risk profile is what appears to be an increasing sense that, you know, China itself – its ability to understand what's happening in North Korea from a decision-making point of view is diminished, you know, compared to where it was perhaps in the past. A lot of China's sort of best antennae, if you will, into the regime have been lopped off rather systematically. And so, you know, to Christine's point, when you're in round two, obviously China becomes a very big player at that point. If they're flying blind in terms of how to understand the North Korean piece, it could make them much more belligerent with us. So I think that adds to the risk profile.

MR. GREEN: Bob and then Victor.

MR. GALLUCCI: So I want to establish some credibility here. (Laughter.) I believe that after the Syrian case, when we has the North Koreans build a plutonium production reactor in Syria secretly, that we should have not only – I mean, the Israelis executed their nonproliferation policy – (laughter) – and flattened that reactor. I believe we should have done something kinetic then. I believe now we should not miss an opportunity to tell them that another such activity, of transfer of nuclear weapons-related material, technology, would result in a very violent response from the United States of America. OK.

I'm trying to establish my credibility for you folks – (laughter) – because when I look at that I – C, I don't understand it again. I mean, does that if the trajectory looks like they're aiming for L.A., what the hell, let it go. But if it's San Francisco – (laughter) – I don't know what C really means.

MR. GREEN: It means you don't do much about it.

MR. GALLUCCI: OK. So I am then looking at A and B – or B is what I really meant. I don't know what the path means – like it's a bad path, good path. I'm really looking at A. And I'm not in favor of the United States of America bluffing virtually ever in these kinds of things. And I believe if you are doing A – and, Skip, if you're going to be the national security advisor and say, Mr. President, A, that means I'm ready to go to war, right, on the Korean Peninsula, because you cannot guarantee the president they won't do anything. They may do something. And then the worst thing for us to do would be nothing in response to what they did.

So, Mr. President, if I am going to recommend A. I'm going to recommend that we should be prepared to go to war the next time they want to test a missile of any kind. South Korea, are you ready for that? Even a new administration, you know, I think that would be very important on a consultation which should not be for information, right? (Laughter.) So they should be aboard for having their country at war, right? So this is a really big deal, A. And I – and we're also now deciding what countries are allowed to have what kinds of missiles, right? And it's going to be our choice, because that country, we know, is aimed for nuclear weapons to be able to deliver on the United States of America. And they put up little videos of blowing up New York City, where my daughter lives. I mean, I'm upset about this.

So I don't like what they're doing, but I find A – the trigger for war to be a testing of a missile of any kind – to be just too aggressive and unnecessarily so. If that was a missile after they had the capability to reach the United States, we were uncertain about the payload, and the DNI came in and said: That could be a nuclear weapon aimed at the United States of America – then I don't have any reservations, right? And I don't know that then even Seoul could decide we couldn't preempt, right? But that –

MR. GREEN: Skip, I'm going to – before I turn to Victor to pull us out of this abyss – this is an NSC meeting. You heard from the secretary of state, secretary of defense, chairman of the Joint Chiefs – are you talking about us being ready to go to war and accepting that level of risk too?

GEN. SHARP: Again, I was talking – if you look at the question, ballistic missile, TD-2, not sure what's on the warhead. On the – on the – with all that Kim Jong-un has said about testing and all of that, I don't want to wait. And that's the argument I'm making. I don't want to wait and count on ballistic missile defense to be able to take this thing out. They're doing it in violation and this – to me, him shooting off missiles like this could be viewed as an act of war.

MR. GALLUCCI: If you – can I just do – if you really believe there is a non-trivial, serious possibility that there is a payload above that I'd flip that question around entirely and say: How could a president not preempt? Wouldn't we want to impeach him if the next thing that happened is he was told that that could be Los Angeles, and he didn't do anything? I mean, you could create a situation here where the obligation of the president, that first one when he raises his hand, is to make sure that doesn't happen.

MR. GREEN: So the premise here is that we don't know, which is why this is actually, I think, the hardest of the questions. Because the next question is about once they have that capability, where your options are actually far more limited. I want to get to that. Let's ask Victor to try to pull this together for us.

MR. CHA: I'm not going to be able to pull it together. I think – I mean, the – I mean, I think in many ways we're already here today. I mean, this is where we are because the North Koreans have said very clearly that they have standardized the design for a miniaturized nuclear warhead. And they have been rocket testing – testing rocket engines, right, consistently. So it seems to me that we can't – if there is – if they stack something, and they say it's a satellite, we can believe it and say, well, there's a 5 percent chance it might not be a satellite, OK? And so if there's a 5 percent chance that it might not be a satellite and you're the president of the United States, are you willing to take that 5 percent chance? And I don't – I think the answer is probably not.

So I think it does raise serious questions about declaratory policy, what U.S. declaratory policy should be going forward. But it puts I think an equal burden on the Chinese and others to say that now that we are in this situation, people need to communicate to the North Koreans that they should not be stacking any missiles anytime soon, because of the threshold that they have crossed, simply by saying that they now have a standardized warhead design.

MR. JOHNSON: Can I just amplify that point, because I think it's really important, and that is you don't just look at the stackable capability. You have to look at the whole suite of what they're building, you know? And to Christine's point about mobility – road mobility, dispersal, SLBM, you know, yeah, the SLBM is a terror weapon, but you have to take into account that it's a capability. And so when you look at that configuration in toto, I think it changes the dynamic in thinking about this scenario.

MR. GREEN: So this is a pretty consequential discussion. And our earlier voting and discussion to me suggests that most of you, if not all of you, think we will probably face this in the coming years. And let me just quickly ask for a nod of the head –

GEN. SHARP: Maybe months.

MR. GREEN: Or months. And you all think we will – are likely to – not a prediction we will – but likely to face this dilemma?

MR. GALLUCCI: Plausibly.

MS. WORMUTH: It's possible.

MR. CHA: Yeah, April/May is missile-testing season in North Korea. (Laughter.)

MS. WORMUTH: That's right. July 4th weekend in my experience.

MR. CHA: July 4th weekend.

MR. JOHNSON: (Laughs.) Yeah.

MS. WORMUTH: They like holidays.

MR. GREEN: That's right. That's right. There goes golf at Mar-a-Lago. (Laughter.) OK, let's turn to a in some ways worse but in terms of –

Q: (Off mic) – ask a question.

MR. GREEN: We're going to get to questions. We'll get to questions if you'll be patient and let me go through this. Thank you. I'll remember you to go first. Let's get to the breakout scenario where we're past this. Let's assume they develop capability and ask two questions before we go back to the panel. This is for the audience, asking what should we do, assuming North Korea has now tested, demonstrated and has a deliverable nuclear weapons capability.

And the question doesn't specify whether it's Guam, Japan, Korea or West Coast. Should we try to or – we can come back to that. We'll leave it vague about the range.

Q: Can you explain D, please?

MR. GREEN: So D would be an option where we deployed tactical nuclear weapons but Japan and Korea would have some joint dual-keyed ability to decide when and how to launch.

MR. : Easy question.

MR. GREEN: And C is just it's U.S. has full operational control. OK. Interesting. There's a lot of debate about C and D in Korea and Japan. All right. So primarily focusing on active defenses, missile defense exercises and –

MR. GALLUCCI: What's E?

MR. GREEN: Sorry?

MR. CHA: There is none.

MR. GALLUCCI: What's E?

MR. CHA: There is no –

MR. GALLUCCI: Why do people keep voting for –

MR. GREEN: E is – E is the person who's –

MR. : Protest vote.

MR. GREEN: – believes North Korea will do the right thing and probably the person sitting next to them now.

All right. Let's do the next question, and it'll queue up our discussion on the podium, which is, you know, if – when we're in that world where they have that capability and continue amassing weapons, what are our options in terms of policy and strategy. Turn to China, A; B, shift to a regime-change strategy; C, try to cap it by not making a deal, which would legitimize North Korean nuclear weapons, but they don't export – I think that's Pyongyang's preferred path; and D, continue with alliance-strengthening.

All right. I'm going to start with you, Chris, on the – leveraging U.S.-China relationship, because what does that mean?

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, and –

MR. GREEN: What does “leveraging” mean in the case of China and North Korea?

MR. JOHNSON: Exactly. And I think that's the challenge. I mean, to my comment earlier, you know, we are developing this increasing, it seems, disconnect, where sort of China is stuck in this, what I would consider perhaps now antiquated narrative about issues such as buffer zones and refugees.

And I mean, these are real issues. Don't get me wrong. I mean, you know, this is – this is a serious challenge for China in a security context.

When we say “leverage the relationship,” I think it depends on how we choose to leverage it. So in other words, if we go to them and say, you have all the leverage, please use it, that's not proven to be a winning strategy. If we create leverage for us to leverage in the relationship, that could be far more effective.

And I also want to state very strongly, I don't think we can or should count out the possibility that China would be willing to be more helpful than it's been under this kind of a scenario. Yeah.

MR. GREEN: You know, these are not mutually exclusive. Strengthening with allies would go – should go with any one of these, of course.

But Christine, how do you see the basket of the strategies?

MS. WORMUTH: Yeah, I definitely see them as not mutually exclusive. I mean, I think I would try to draw from, you know, A – sorry, I don't have my glasses on –

MR. GREEN: China.

MS. WORMUTH: – A and D in particular in terms of – you know, I thought in reference to, I think, the previous question as well, I think the Council on Foreign Relations had a task force recently that looked at this. A number of you, I think, were involved. And one of the things I thought was an interesting idea was the idea of a collective security arrangement, where we go to something formal that says an attack on one is an attack on all. And I think that is something worth exploring.

In terms of –

MR. GREEN: And just quickly to clarify, that's with our existing allies, or you're talking about China as part of that?

MS. WORMUTH: I thought it was just ROK, Japan and us.

MR. GREEN: That's the CFR –

MS. WORMUTH: Yes, exactly. I mean, I thought that idea was an interesting idea and worth exploring. I think – in my experience with China, you know, I think it's interesting – I completely agree with Chris that we don't want to give all of the leverage. And I think, you know, we consistently communicated with China over the last couple of years, saying, look, we're extremely concerned about what's going on in the DPRK and if you all are not able or not willing to do more to bring them to the table, to restrain them, then we are going to have to take steps to protect our own national interests, and you may not like some of those – i.e., THAAD in Korea, for example.

And I think, you know, we were very serious about that, and I think that – I think China took notice of that. So I think we need to think about it – we need to continue that message and make that message even stronger by, you know, giving them the stacked DD2 example of, look, you know, this is incredibly serious for us and more than just, you know, your concerns about refugees, and here are the kinds of things we might have to do if this happens.

So I think we need to be doing that. And I'm a huge – we haven't talked very much about it, but any, I think, comprehensive approach towards the problem set on the Korean Peninsula that entertains some sort of diplomatic element, I think, has to be accompanied consistently with a pressure track. And clearly China can do more. I mean, the 2270 was very significant, but there are – there's more that can be done. We need to have a multilateral mechanism. And I think that sanctions piece is incredibly important.

MR. GREEN: Can you speak to this, Skip? I'll get to everyone, but could you also talk about what, you know, the job of our commander on the ground in Korea looks like in a world where North Korea has a demonstrated nuclear weapons capability in terms of deterrence, provocations and – you know, how do you – how do you (approach ?) that world if you're – if you're in Yongsan?

GEN. SHARP: Well, you've got to make sure that you've got the capabilities ready to hopefully find any potential use and the capabilities to either proactively take them out ideally before they would use them or be prepared to react once they – once they do use it. I mean, it would require – and I think we're getting to this point – a lot more intrusive type of ISR capabilities, a lot more ballistic missile defense, a lot more strike-type of capabilities that we and our allies – and I agree, I think that should include Japan also and working together from a trilateral perspective.

But you know, I think I would agree on this question that A, B, and D – I'm still to the point where the regime either has to change itself or the regime needs to be changed. And I think that, you know, if you look at this from a larger perspective – we've talked about sanctions, we've talked about striking things and all – I think the two missing components that need to be part of a regime-changing strategy is number one, getting more internal pressure. You know, Victor talked about it with the amount of, you know, folks that are – that are leaving, defecting and all of that. But we, and South Korea for that matter, really have not pushed very hard at all just to try to get information in to the people and to the regime of North Korea about what freedom and human rights is all about, try to push into them much more knowledge. And that can be done.

The second part of it, I think, is clearly – more clearly defining what does a reunified peninsula really look like. I mean much more than just, you know, free and open and not violating any human rights, but what is in it for North Korea. What is in it for property rights? What is in it for people of the regime that have not committed crimes against humanity type of thing? Get some hope and some pressure and some knowledge into the people, and I think that will combine – that internal pressure, combined with all of the external pressure, could potentially cause a real regime change, either taking Kim out or forcing him to change how he's been doing things.

MR. GREEN: So, Bob, A, B and D, give us your take. But also, what do you think about C?

MR. GALLUCCI: It occurs to me listening to this that we have all moved pretty much to a position in which we may be now – by the vote a little bit ago – or we may be within months or years of advising or rooting for the use of force to deal with a ballistic missile test by North Korea. If this were the policy of the administration – if this was the thinking of the administration, I would go back to a word Victor – phrase Victor used early on, I think, if I roll back the tape. And it – and it was our declaratory policy.

If we are really – (chuckles) – thinking or even planning to take out a North Korean ballistic missile, which they claim has a satellite above it – we're going to use kinetic means – we should tell

them, and we should tell everybody, that this is what – this is a declaratory policy. I said before we don't bluff, so that means we do it if – but they should know that. They shouldn't be in the position, after we slap them, of slamming their palm in their forehead, saying, oh, I didn't think you'd do that, it was only a singing satellite for pity's sake. So let's tell everybody.

And what brings me to this is not only might that discourage them from doing it in the first place – that's what deterrence is about – the second thing is it might help focus the minds in Beijing that we are actually going to do this. We are going to be in a military situation, and maybe a conflict, on their border. They are going to see U.S. military and naval forces in ways they most want not to see them – in combat very close to them.

So I'm very focused on where we have kind of moved, or you have moved us. I'd like to blame you, but probably – (laughter) –

GEN. SHARP: You can blame the North Koreans.

MR. GREEN: All right, let's do the last scenario, which in some ways is the most hopeful but it's incredibly complex and dangerous as well, and that's instability and regime collapse. And this is a what-do-we-do-about-it question, so I hope you can all see that. What is the – we've stacked it so you have to prioritize on what's the highest priority: securing the nuclear weapons; stabilizing the peninsula; controlling refugee flows; exploiting the instability to make sure the regime really goes down, D; or all of the above.

(Audience voting.)

MR. GREEN: Refugees. As my six-year-old daughter says about C, not my “probwem.” (Laughter.) It is China's problem, so you can be sure that China would have something to say about that. Let's do this one quickly so we can get questions. I'm not going to get to everybody.

Start with Victor. You've done a lot of work on this.

MR. CHA: Yeah.

MR. GREEN: I'll ask you about China and then Skip about planning.

MR. CHA: So just two points.

The first is that, so we have actually been doing surveying through our, you know, parallel website of how people think about a unification scenario or instability scenario, and what issues are important. And maybe some of you have taken the survey that we sent out, but we basically asked people to give us – to scale it. So, basically, how important is the issue to U.S. interests? And how much do we know about the issue, right? And so, of course, what we were looking for was, what were the issues where this was – this was done with U.S. officials and experts – what were the issues where we consider it to be very important to U.S. interests and we had very little information on it?

And what we found actually, surprisingly, was that the number one priority across those two metrics was not securing the nuclear weapons and missile. The number one priority was actually B, stabilizing the domestic situation in North Korea, in terms of an issue that mattered greatly for U.S. security interests but about which we knew very little, all right. And perhaps maybe – I mean, securing

the nuclear weapons came in second, maybe because we feel like we know a little bit more about that. But what came across clearly was that in a scenario like this, domestic stabilization was the real blind spot.

MR. GREEN: You're not surveying who live in Washington, New York and Tel Aviv.  
(Laughter.)

MR. CHA: No, these were people here. This was – so that's –

MR. GREEN: I would certainly say A.

MR. CHA: No, so that's the first point.

The second point I would say is that I think D is very interesting because in every sort of scenario or game that we've done on this, it's always an issue that comes up. If there's instability in North Korea, people start – they're like little kids at a soccer game; they all start going for the nuclear weapons or for the refugees. (Laughter.) But –

MR. : Present company excluded. (Laughter.)

MR. CHA: Yeah. It all comes to a screeching halt because people have to step back and say, well, what do we actually want at the end of this? Do we want – like, as D said – to actually exploit the instability and end the regime, or do we just want to contain the problem? It's like the big prior question that, in almost every game that we played, people don't get to until we're halfway through the scenario.

MR. GREEN: Boy, I'd be worried about A. We know the North Koreans have connections to Hamas and the real IRA, and I'd be very worried about that one. But what – Skip, how – obviously, we do them all. How do you stack them?

GEN. SHARP: Obviously, you do them all, yeah. Yeah.

I think from a – from a U.S. perspective, A is – and I am surprised by the outcome of your – A is the most critical. I think from a South Korean perspective B and D, because I think – I think instability does lead towards – to the end of the regime – is the highest priority, to be able to do that. And I think that – I mean, there is – obviously I can't go in to the secret plans and everything, but there is definite plans that we have worked with the South Koreans on how to deal with different scenarios with instability in North Korea, and they accomplish all A through D. I'll just leave it at that.

MR. GREEN: Good.

Chris, play Xi Jinping for a minute. What is his response to this?

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, I mean, to be honest – I'm going to pick up on something that Bob said, too, which I thought was very important – but I'm surprised there's not an F, which is declaring policy with China. I mean, in this scenario –

MR. GREEN: Is what? I'm sorry?

MR. JOHNSON: Some sort of discussion. I don't think it's a declaratory policy. It's a quiet discussion with the Chinese about what we will do in that kind of a scenario. I mean, one of the things that worries me is that in the sort of 2009-10 period, I think we had some pretty good quiet dialogue with them about these kind of scenarios, you know. And so I – you know, they're going to think about nuclear weapons quickly, they're going to think about refugees quickly, and they're going to think about what does this look like after it's all over. That's going to be a big one for them, especially as this sort of buffer zone mentality is still in effect. So my sense is, I'm just surprised there's not more emphasis, because it's really about us and them at this point – and the allies, of course. But, you know, that's a major, major factor, and we would want to reach out to them, hopefully before something like this would happen.

MR. GREEN: Yeah. I think our experience – probably everyone on the podium has been in nonofficial settings. I'll speak for myself anyway. Dialogues with Chinese counterparts on these scenarios have become increasingly specific and realistic over the last five years. But for the government, I would imagine that Beijing – this is a problem they don't want to have to confront right now. It just brings up too many hard issues.

All right. Let's turn to the audience. I'm going to try to get two, three questions, let everybody respond, and hopefully, do a second round. So if you could briefly identify yourself and keep the question short, I'd appreciate it. Sir, you're going to get the first word up here, in the front. And I apologize to this side of the room. If I turn my chair, it will fall off the podium, so –

Q: Norm Dicks, former congressman from Washington state. I was going to make the point that the ambassador made. If that is what we're going to do, we should have let them know about it in advance. And now having said that, I'll quickly pivot to: What are our antiballistic missile capabilities – again, THAD; Aegis, is Aegis in play in this; and then the missile defense on the coast. Those are – is that what we have in terms of our capability?

MR. : Basically.

MR. GREEN: Let's – hold onto that one. We'll return to you for that. Thank you, Washington state. Yeah.

MR. : And you said California. I was getting –

MR. GREEN: My apologies. (Laughter.)

Q: Does anybody know General Michael Flynn's opinion on this issue? (Laughter.)

MR. GREEN: Okay. That will be a short one, I think, so we might have four questions. Let me turn to the right, over – yes, sir, over here.

Q: Greg Thielmann, board member of the Arms Control Association.

The panel has discussed a scenario that is a nuclear-tipped TD2 launched. That seems widely improbable, next to 0 percent chance. Does anyone on the panel think that Kim Jong-un would have any doubts in his mind about what would happen to him and his regime next after such a scenario?

MR. GREEN: Just to clarify, you're saying that technically a nuclear-tipped TD2 is –

Q: No.

MR. GREEN: You're saying that he would do that.

MR. : Deterrence, deterrence.

Q: That the North Koreans would consider a single nuclear warhead being delivered to the United States seems to be completely implausible.

MR. GREEN: (Inaudible.) Let's do one more. Let's – right here in the middle. We'll probably get a second round.

Q: Bob Holly (ph), retired Foreign Service officer. Where are the Australians and New Zealanders on this? Anywhere? And what about the Russians?

MR. GREEN: Yeah, not out of range anymore, probably. (Laughter.)

Okay, let's go down the line and pick up whatever one you like. We'll start with Christine.

MS. WORMUTH: I guess I would pick up on the what does General Flynn think about this. And I don't know, but I am struck in listening to the conversation at how this problem set needs to be something that the next administration addresses very early and very systematically and strategically, as opposed to waiting until it comes up as a crisis, which often is kind of what – you know, the new administration's going to have a ton on its plate, Syria, all sorts of challenges. But I think this conversation underscores the need to look at this as one of the sort of top strategic problem sets we face so that we can think through what our options might be, what the implications are for declaratory policy, and if need be, to get that declaratory policy and things out early, as opposed to again waiting, which I think might be a possibility, given all the other things on the plate. (Inaudible.)

GEN. SHARP: On the missile defense, all the things that you named, sir, but I also include in missile defense – as I think most would also – ISR and offensive things, not waiting to the thin line – so, you know, all the strike capabilities that are part of that. You have to make the decision that you're going to use that as part of a defensive mechanism, but they're definitely capabilities that we have to be able to do that.

Q: Would the B-2 be a part of that?

GEN. SHARP: I'm sorry, say again?

Q: The B-2?

GEN. SHARP: The B-2. Of course. Well, and, sir – and, sir, I don't know the answer. I mean, that takes it to a higher realm, I think. I think on the Mike Flynn question, I don't know specifically also what he thinks, but I am – I guess I am confident that the importance of alliances aren't all the same, and they aren't just from an alliance perspective of, you know, what have we given to other countries. We're in alliances for our own good, too. And if you look at the history of the alliance that we have had with Korea, what Korea has done helping us around the world when we have gone to do things, what we've been able to develop economically and all, I guess I'm fairly confident that our

alliance with Korea and with Japan is going to be viewed as very important by this administration and it will be continued and I hope strengthened.

MR. JOHNSON: I would just say quickly to that point and to Christine's comment as well, you know, we should look at actually what he chose to say with President-Elect Trump. When he was interviewed by "60 Minutes," the two things he mentioned with North Korea and the terrible situation in the Middle East. So one presumes this is very much front of mind for him.

MR. GALLUCCI: So a key issue this morning has been what do you do about the North Korean nuclear capability to reach the United States of America with a ballistic missile that we maybe can't intercept with high confidence, right? And the suggestion was made that you do – don't do anything because you're very confident deterrence works. I mean, we don't know when deterrence works, we only know when it fails. And it hasn't failed with the Chinese and the Soviet Union and now the Russians. So why would you leap to go to war with North Korea thinking it doesn't work with the North Koreans? Because they have a leader, perhaps, who is different? All right. I get that. But I think the question is on point and I – so that – so much on point, I try to go back to the other issue. If we are going to say that we do believe deterrence works in this world – except for North Korea – then we ought to have a good argument about why that's true. This is a fairly important thing. And we want to make sure the North Koreans understand that, because North Koreans right now, because we're really saying is that the significant thing that changes when they have the capability to reach the United States with some degree of confidence with a ballistic missile and a nuclear weapon, that we will not allow them to launch, right? We will strike them. And if that's really true, they need to know what this capacity has done for them. It made them eligible for preemption when they were not before. That's the significant difference for them.

MR. CHA: Yeah, and the only thing I would add to that is not only has it made them eligible for preemption, it also can create very destabilizing dynamics on their side. So for example, if they – you know, they might not launch a nuclear-tipped ballistic missile at the United States. But if they feel that they can deter the United States, then that will open up in their own minds all sorts of other strategic options at lower levels of escalation in the conventional – on the conventional ladder to try to push Japan or South Korea or extort funds from them, sue for peace, these sorts of things. So the fact that they have – they will have that capability opens up all sorts of new strategic options on both sides, all of which I think are quite destabilizing.

MR. GREEN: Let me quickly do the Australia question. It is not irrelevant at all. When CFR and the taskforce proposed something we've also talked about and others – a collective security agreement with Japan, Korea and the United States, an attack on one is an attack on all – the reality is, for intents and purposes, Australia is already in that. They're in the U.N. Command. There are senior Australian officers integrated in our command. And they're in this, because this is the United Nations still, if there's an attack, but also because we are such tight allies in so many ways that they're integrated into our command structure at PACOM and USFK. Australia has had a kind of cautiously forward-moving view on missile defense for budgetary and political reasons. If we had an Australian panel, I think one of the questions would be should Australia be far more forward-leaning on missile defenses and integration (ph) exercises with Japan and Korea, and I think the answer's yes. That would be my Australia answer.

I think we can do one or two more. Let me get the gentleman with the beard in the back here. Always call on the guys with the beards.

Q: Thank you, sir. Ben Lowson (ph), U.S. Navy.

My question, primarily for Ms. Wormuth: It seems like several of the speakers said we need to have a credible deterrent or a threat against North Korea's regime. Given the overall world situation, how do we generate the funds or even the administration interest in doing that?

MR. GREEN: And maybe one more. Yes, sir, right back here in the – do we have a microphone on this side?

Q: Barry Jacobs. I'm a retired Foreign Service officer. Ambassador Gallucci and I were at the War College together – because we're old.

No one seems to ask the simple question, or at least they've skirted around it: What does Kim Jong-un want, and what would satisfy him? Obviously he wants to stay in power, and I suspect he wants the free flow of goods that he doesn't have to pay for to help with his own people. But beyond that, I don't know.

MR. GREEN: Okay, speed round to finish up here. Thirty-seconds to a minute each going this way.

MR. CHA: What does Kim Jong-un want? I think he wants to be – he wants a peace treaty with the United States as a nuclear weapons state. I think that's what he wants.

MR. GALLUCCI: I would add to that, Barry, that the North Koreans clearly would like to loosen, if not fracture U.S. alliances with Seoul and Tokyo – beginning with Seoul, certainly. And they will do a lot to achieve that, and including, perhaps, enter negotiations.

MR. JOHNSON: Similar to what Bob said, he also wants China to continue to treat North Korea as a special relationship, not a normal state-to-state relationship.

GEN. SHARP: And I would add to it also that he wants to be able to maintain total control, a type of government that he has with him as the pure dictator.

MS. WORMUTH: So to the question on the defense budget and resources, I think, you know, perhaps there's a greater possibility under a Trump administration and a Republican-controlled Congress to see a solution to the Budget Control Act and to lift sequestration at least for the Department of Defense. And I think, you know, that would obviously, strictly from a defense national security perspective, be a good thing and might mean more resources for things like national missile defenses or ISR that could be part of the find-fix-finish kind of solution. You know, that said, there are – certainly I'm not an expert on Congress. Former Congressman Dicks probably knows more about this than I do, but I think there still is a significant cadre in the Republican Party in Congress who are deficit hawks. And it may not be quite as easy to lift the BCA as some think, but we'll see.

MR. GREEN : So I would end by –

GEN. SHARP: One quick –

MR. GREEN: Yeah.

GEN. SHARP: Fifteen seconds. You know, we've done a lot of talking about capabilities of North Korea, what they have and what they're doing and all. But we should never forget the 150(,000) to 200,000 people who are in concentration camps, in labor camps in North Korea, the folks that are dying up there.

MR. GREEN: Yeah.

GEN. SHARP: I mean, yes, this is about capabilities and nuclear and all that, but what's right for people and what we should be standing for as a nation is critically important.

MR. GREEN: Thank you. That's absolutely right.

Briefly to what we want, to wrap this up, you can hear how hard the problem is – I think – number one, I think everyone would agree is defense of our homeland and of our allies. Absolutely number one. I would say we want out of this whole – however we get through this, we want a good relationship with China. But I would view that as a nice-to-have. In my view, the must-have, because of all the uncertainties about the future of Asia, is we've got to have strong alliances, through this problem and coming out of it. I think it's possible to get both, the China piece and the alliance piece. And I think as Chris suggested, they're actually two sides of the same coin. When Beijing knows our alliances are non-negotiable and strong, our work with China on this I think is going to be more fruitful.

It's been not entirely uplifting, but certainly intense and interesting and sobering panel. We couldn't get a better group. The questions were great.

Final announcement: Thank you to Lisa Collins and the Korea chair staff for pulling this together. And I've been told to tell you there are sandwiches and lunch items here and downstairs. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

(END)