

Testimony before the
United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee
on
***Regional Implications of the Changing Nuclear Equation
on the Korean Peninsula***

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Thank you, Chairman Lugar, Senator Biden, and distinguished members of this committee, for the opportunity to speak with you today on the regional implications of the changing nuclear equation on the Korean Peninsula. It is highly important and commendable that the committee convene this series of hearings: a nuclear-armed North Korea undermines our national security interests, presents a serious threat to the global and regional nonproliferation goals of the United States, and would have negative repercussions for U.S. relationships with key players in Northeast Asia and beyond.

I was asked to place an emphasis in my remarks on the Chinese perspective with regard to the changing nuclear equation on the Korean Peninsula. In doing so, the testimony will proceed in three principal parts: (1) a brief background and overview on Chinese interests vis-à-vis North Korea and the changing nuclear equation on the Korean peninsula; (2) a discussion of China's reaction and policy response to the changing nuclear equation on the Korean peninsula; and (3) a focus on how the changing nuclear equation will affect U.S.-China relations.

Overview of Key Chinese Interests

Brief background: China has an enormous stake in the outcome of the evolving nuclear equation on the Korean peninsula. China and North Korea share a lengthy border (at 1,416 kilometers or about 870 miles, it is North Korea's longest border, as opposed to only 238 kilometers with South Korea and 19 kilometers with Russia). China is also North Korea's largest trading partner. Two-way trade amounted to approximately US\$728 million in 2002,

accounting for nearly one-third of North Korea's total trade volume of US\$2.23 billion. Approximately 35 to 40 percent of North Korean imports come from China, largely critical, basic commodities such as foodstuffs, fertilizers, and energy supplies.

Perhaps most importantly, the China-North Korea political-military relationship, while more troubled in recent years, has functioned much like a formal alliance for significant periods over the past 50-plus years. The China-North Korea alliance was established *de facto* in late 1950 when Chinese troops surged across the Yalu River to push U.S.-led United Nations forces back across the 38th parallel on the Korean Peninsula. Chinese forces remained on the peninsula until the latter half of the 1950s. In the early years of this military relationship, China provided generous support to North Korea, including significant transfers of military equipment in the late 1950s and early 1960s, as well as assistance to North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs as late as the 1970s and early 1980s.

In July 1961, as the Sino-Soviet relationship deteriorated, Beijing and Pyongyang signed a Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance. The treaty envisioned that the two sides would "adopt all measures to prevent aggression against either of the Contracting Parties" and that if either were subjected to aggression by any state or group of states, the other would "immediately render military and other assistance by all means at its disposal." The treaty also stipulated that "Neither Contracting Party shall conclude any alliance directed against the other Contracting Party or take part in any bloc or in any action or measure directed against the other Contracting Party."¹ Neither side has formally withdrawn this treaty, and the two sides continue to carry out official Party-to-Party and military-to-military exchanges.

Nevertheless, this alliance was constantly fraught with tension as Pyongyang sought advantage by playing Moscow and Beijing off one another. While professing eternal communist fealty with North Korea, the Chinese leadership steadily weaned itself away from an overtly supportive position toward Pyongyang, and, from the late-1980s, built a "two-Korea" policy. The culmination of this process was the August 1992 establishment of diplomatic relations between Beijing and Seoul, bringing a practical and peaceful end to decades of Cold War animosity between China and South Korea and effectively ending China's one-sided, pro-Pyongyang

approach to the Korean peninsula. It is true that China continued to provide considerable material and financial support to the economically faltering North throughout the 1990s and into the early 2000s, and portrayed itself as a useful political and economic model for Pyongyang to follow. But what had begun in the 1950s as an alliance hallowed in blood and joint sacrifice had, by the early 2000s, turned into a close relationship for many of the wrong reasons in Beijing: China's North Korean ally became a potentially disastrous burden, rather than a positive political-military relationship.

Recent irritants in the Beijing-Pyongyang relationship include North Korea's continued repudiation of Chinese-style economic and political reforms, enduring economic mismanagement, the resultant flow of North Korean refugees – including an embarrassing flurry of asylum-seekers seeking high-profile entry into foreign diplomatic compounds in the spring 2002 – and the effort to open the Sinuiju Special Economic Zone opposite the Chinese border town of Dandong, and have it run by an errant Chinese businessman, Yang Bin, all without consultation whatsoever with Beijing. The current and lengthening list of provocations related to the nuclear stand-off – the clandestine uranium enrichment program, withdrawal from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), missile tests – only add to Beijing's headaches as tensions rise in the region.

Mutual interests, but how mutual?: It is often said that the United States and China have a shared interest in seeing a non-nuclear North Korea. This is true. But, for a number of reasons, the difficult Beijing-Pyongyang relationship has complicated U.S.-China cooperation in assuring a non-nuclear North Korea. The committee should weigh these factors carefully in contemplating how and whether the United States can gain greater support from Beijing on the issue of a nuclear-armed North Korea.

First and foremost, China-North Korea bilateral relations have chilled considerably since the 1980s and the introduction of market reforms in China, and especially since China opened diplomatic relations with South Korea in 1992. China's more reform-minded, outward-looking, and growth-oriented leaders viewed its isolated and recalcitrant neighbor with disdain at best and alarm at worst, all the more so given the political cult style of leadership in North Korea,

reminiscent of the disastrous latter Maoist years in China. By the mid-1990s, China halted officially sanctioned barter trade, no longer accepted payment in non-convertible North Korean currency, cut off regularized direct subsidies, and required foreign currency for trade payments, though perhaps at “friendship prices.” Humanitarian aid has been made available – in 1997, for example, China provided some 262,000 tons of free food to North Korea – but on a more restricted and case-by-case basis.

In response, North Korea returned some snubs of its own, especially under the leadership of Kim Jong-il. Unlike his father who spent his formative years in China, spoke Chinese, studied in Chinese Dongbei (Manchuria), participated in pre-1945 Chinese communist political and guerilla movements, and was indebted to China for intervening in the Korean War, North Korea’s current leader, Kim Jong-il does not have the same personal, political, and security ties to China.

Second, even in the chillier climate for China-North Korea relations, Beijing places its highest priority on a stable North Korea, and the avoidance of measures which, in Beijing’s view, would escalate tensions, prompt even more reckless behavior from Pyongyang, and unnecessarily destabilize North Korea and the strategic “buffer” it provides for Chinese interests. In the near-term, China already faces a growing presence of illegal North Korean economic migrants who seek better life opportunities across the border in ethnic Korean parts of northeastern China. By some estimates, there may be as many as 300,000 North Koreans illegally resident in China. That number, and the challenges they pose to Chinese local and central authorities, would rise exponentially were North Korea to devolve further into economic, social, and political chaos. Beijing has thus far resisted efforts by the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees and other U.N. agencies to fully assess the refugee situation along the China-North Korea border or prepare for the possibility of larger inflows of persons on the move in a time of greater crisis.

Most importantly, over the long-term, Beijing will want to slow and avoid measures which could lead to further instabilities and uncertainties for this key neighbor. Military conflict in North Korea could be a major factor for instability and open all kinds of uncertainties for Beijing: potential refugee flows, political instability, and the possibility of U.S. and allied troops positioned at or near China’s border. A rapid alteration of the political situation in Pyongyang

and on the peninsula could also stimulate nationalistic responses among China's ethnic Korean population along the Jilin Province-North Korea border. Beijing wants to avoid a dramatic change in North Korea which could quickly result in less-than-positive outcomes for Chinese strategic interests. Beijing would much prefer a gradual change in North Korea, largely on Chinese terms, to include the introduction of China-style economic and political reforms, the stabilization of North-South relations, and the eventual reconciliation of a stable, non-nuclear, Korea within China's sphere of influence.

Third – and a point too often overlooked in U.S. assessments – Beijing will work hard to avoid outcomes which would set back its meticulously crafted two-Korea policy. Since the normalization of Beijing-Seoul relations in 1992, China has carefully – and largely successfully – balanced relations between both North and South, with the long-term aim of reasserting China's traditional sway over the Korean peninsula. Many near-term benefits have accrued as well, most notably the robust economic and trade relationship enjoyed between China and South Korea: China is South Korea's second largest export destination, and is South Korea's third largest source of imports; South Korea is China's third largest import source, and one of its largest export partners. Politically, too, Beijing and Seoul have come closer together on a range of regional issues. Most recently, their common interests have included similar approaches toward North Korea: downplaying tensions in favor of a more gradual and accommodating policy of political, economic, and diplomatic engagement. Thus, Beijing's interests weigh against policies toward North Korea which would be significantly at odds with those of South Korea. In many respects, Beijing and Seoul are closer in their approach toward North Korea than Washington and Seoul.

Fourth, Beijing's interests vis-à-vis North Korea's nuclear weapons program are likewise complicated and contradictory. To begin, China itself is partially responsible for North Korea's nuclear pursuits, having provided some assistance to North Korea's nuclear development program beginning in the late 1950s. China and North Korea signed a cooperation agreement in September 1959 for the peaceful development of nuclear energy, and in 1964 China assisted its neighbor to conduct a uranium mining survey. Reports indicate that China continued providing training and exchange visits for North Korean nuclear engineers and scientists into the late

1970s. By 1987, China apparently halted such official nuclear-related training and assistance for North Korea, but reports persisted of other forms of cooperation, mostly involving Chinese enterprises exporting various technologies and components to North Korea which could have applications for Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programs. For example, as recently as December 17, 2002, the *Washington Times*, citing leaked intelligence information, reported China exported some 20 tons of tributyl phosphate to North Korea, a chemical substance which has commercial applications, but which could also be used in the extraction of fissile material from spent nuclear fuel.² Moreover, China should be considered at least indirectly responsible for the recently revealed enriched uranium bomb program: this pathway to nuclear weapons is similar to the program Pakistan pursued with Chinese assistance; Pakistan in turn is believed to have assisted Pyongyang in the development and design of a uranium-triggered weapon beginning in the late 1990s.

While the precise extent of China's role is unclear and may not in the end have been critical for the North Korean nuclear weapons development program, nevertheless North Korea is or soon could be the fourth nuclear-armed state on China's border, joining Russia, India, and Pakistan. Today, this is a situation Beijing would obviously prefer to avoid, but it must be carefully analyzed and weighed in the balance with the other interests discussed here. On the one hand, many Chinese strategists and scientists discount the nuclear threat from North Korea, either expressing skepticism that Pyongyang's program could advance to weaponization and operational deployment, *or* noting that even if North Korea can successfully deploy nuclear weapons, China would probably not be a target.

On the other hand, Chinese strategists and scientists also recognize that North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile development helps drive military modernization programs elsewhere in the region, most notably in Japan. Japan's steps toward the development and deployment of missile defenses in cooperation with the United States, are not viewed favorably in Beijing, especially to the degree those systems might someday strengthen Japanese and U.S.-Japan allied postures during a Taiwan-related confrontation with China. More broadly, threatening North Korean nuclear- and ballistic missile-related provocations strengthen the case for a more robust and ready Japanese defense and military modernization program, including the a stronger U.S.-Japan

alliance relationship – and, in some circles, a discussion of a more offensive conventional and even nuclear capability – again, moves which are not in Beijing’s interests. Similarly, provocative North Korean steps with regard to its nuclear program also sparks an escalated American military response, with “all options on the table”, according to the White House. Some Chinese analysts are prepared to concede that a nuclear North Korea could conceivably provide weapons or weapons-grade material to others, but this concerns is not given anywhere near the same degree of importance as in the United States.

Consider this: even in the face of Indian nuclear weapons development and deployment, where China is obviously a factor in New Delhi’s planning, Chinese reaction, beyond an initial flurry of rhetoric and continuing low-level diplomacy, has not been forceful. Indeed, China and India continue to have generally favorable and mutually beneficial political, economic and security relations in spite of India’s nuclear weapons and ballistic missile development and deployment. By Chinese comparative reckoning, North Korea poses a relatively minor nuclear threat at this stage and in the near-term.

Finally, China’s interests regarding the changing nuclear equation on the Korean peninsula are further complicated by Beijing’s genuine desire to maintain positive and friendly relations with the United States. The United States continues to hold a number of critical keys for China’s overarching national goals of continuing socioeconomic modernization and development at home. On the one hand, the United States is a major source of markets, capital investment, technology, and know-how, all of which helps drive the Chinese modernization process forward. On the other hand, China needs a stable international environment to pursue these goals, especially in East Asia, and will go to great lengths to deflect a crisis in the region involving the United States, and will try most of all to avoid a direct confrontation with the United States, if possible. Again, with regard to the North Korea nuclear issue, Beijing is faced with a delicate and increasingly challenging balancing act.

In sum, Beijing’s interests and priorities with regard to North Korea and its nuclear weapons program are a mixture of constraints, frustrations, and difficult choices. Beijing may wield the most influence in Pyongyang of the major powers concerned, but it is an influence China is

constrained from exercising fully. Placing Chinese interests within a strategic context, we see that with a direct border on Korea, stability and peaceful solutions are given highest priority in China, with the longer-term expectation of expanding China's traditional geostrategic influence over the peninsula. With that broad aim in mind, Beijing must balance a host of difficult to bad choices in its relationship with North Korea.

With specific reference to Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions, while Washington and Beijing wish to see a non-nuclear North Korea, questions arise over where each side places that priority on their respective list of interests vis-à-vis North Korea. Whereas a non-nuclear North Korea would rank at or near the top of such a list for Washington, other priorities and constraints may have greater weight for China. Given these other contending priorities and constraints, and until the possibility of an openly nuclear North Korea becomes more evident, Beijing will be reluctant to strong-arm North Korea and expend what political and economic leverage it may have in Pyongyang.

China's Policy Response

Consistent policy approach: Beijing's policy toward the changing nuclear equation on the Korean peninsula has been relatively clear and consistent: faced with a complex and often contradictory situation, Beijing supports a fundamentally cautious walk-back to the *status quo ante*, with a strong emphasis on a diplomatic solution, fearful that any precipitous action would only make a bad situation even worse. China's preferred solution stresses three elements: (1) restart diplomacy and dialogue; (2) avoid escalatory and provocative actions; (3) assure the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

This approach has been consistently reaffirmed at the highest levels in China over the past five months. During their summit in Crawford, Texas – a mere two weeks after North Korea acknowledged its clandestine uranium enrichment program – Presidents Bush and Jiang agreed that both Washington and Beijing oppose nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula and that they would pursue peaceful methods to bring about a solution to the impasse with Pyongyang.

During their summit in December 2002, Jiang Zemin and Vladimir Putin issued a joint statement

urging the United States and North Korea to enter into a dialogue and underscoring their view that the Korean peninsula should be nuclear weapons-free. On January 10, 2003, Presidents Bush and Jiang addressed the North Korea nuclear issue in a telephone conversation following Pyongyang's announced intention to withdraw from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Both leaders shared the view that the peninsula should be nuclear weapons-free and that a solution on this issue should be reached peacefully. Shortly after that conversation, in mid-January, during the visit to Beijing of Undersecretary of State John Bolton and Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly, China went so far as to make a good-intentioned but ill-defined offer to provide a venue for talks between Pyongyang and Washington

Most recently, on March 10, 2003, the two presidents spoke again by telephone, including a discussion about the North Korea situation. According to the official Chinese report on the conversation, President Jiang expressed China's hope that "various sides should keep calm and avoid actions which may make the situation tense" and that China supports addressing outstanding issues through dialogue. Jiang added, "The form of dialogue is not the most important, the key is that whether both sides have sincerity, whether the dialogue has substantial content and result, whether it is favorable to the denuclearization in the peninsula, to solving the matters which the United States and the DPRK care about and to safeguarding the peace and stability of the peninsula."³ As recently as last week, the Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan called on the United States and North Korea to hold direct, bilateral talks, and added that pressures or sanctions on Pyongyang, "Rather than solving the problem ... can only lead to the complication of the situation."⁴

Reading between the lines: Reading between the lines of official Chinese policy, we can glean other important, but less prominent elements to China's approach. First, Beijing continues to emphasize the importance of bilateral, face-to-face dialogue between Washington and Pyongyang. Beijing recognizes this as a core interest for North Korea, and also sees merits in acting as an outside supporter of such dialogue and negotiation, but not a direct participant. China may expect that any such face-to-face dialogue would go a long way to stabilize relations on the peninsula, curb or rollback North Korea's nuclear weapons (and possibly ballistic missile) program, and result in some reassurances from the United States about North Korean security, all

of which are very much in Beijing's interests, but without having to do the heavy lifting or be forced to "take sides" in a multilateral setting.

Second, in advocating dialogue and the eschewal of provocative steps, Beijing expresses its opposition to applying coercive means such as sanctions or force against North Korea. That language is also Beijing's diplomatic reminder to the United States to rein in its threatening posture toward North Korea which, in the Chinese view, is in part responsible for Pyongyang's belligerence. At the moment, the threat or use of force by the United States is Beijing's primary concern, but the question of sanctions may arise in the weeks ahead should the Bush administration choose that route within the United Nations framework. Should it arise, it seems very unlikely Beijing would support a sharp-edged Security Council resolution favoring tough sanctions, forced inspections, or authorizing the use of force when other means to gain North Korean compliance are exhausted.

It is worth noting the degree of consistency versus flexibility in Chinese policy toward North Korea's nuclear programs over the past 10 years. For example, with the brief exception of the now-moribund Four Party Talks, Beijing has consistently declined active participation in multilateral mechanisms to resolve security problems on the Korean peninsula, preferring instead to support more direct U.S.-North Korea dialogue. China did not take part in the multilateral Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), though it supported its aims as well as the bilateral U.S.-North Korea Agreed Framework which set up the KEDO mechanism. China has also consistently opposed or deflected the application of sanctions against North Korea, dating back to the 1993-94 North Korean nuclear crisis. Since the early 1990s and China's accession to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in 1992, China has also consistently sought the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, beginning with its pressure on Pyongyang in 1992-93 to accept full IAEA safeguards and inspections.

However, in contemplating future policy approaches with China, Washington should consider two important exceptions to an otherwise consistent policy. The first point involves the threat of sanctions. During the 1993-94 crisis, China initially voiced its outright opposition to the imposition of United Nations sanctions and open-ended language of "further Security Council

action” in the event of North Korean non-compliance, and threatened to exercise a veto if such a resolution came to a vote. However, as a crisis loomed, the United States readied for military action, the evidence of North Korean non-compliance mounted, and a Security Council sanctions vote became more likely, Beijing modified its position from opposing sanctions to “not supporting” sanctions (meaning Beijing would not exercise its veto to quash a possible sanctions resolution). Shortly after Beijing made this known to North Korea, Pyongyang moved forward to avoid looming sanctions and negotiate what would become the Agreed Framework.

Second, while China declined multilateral participation in the KEDO process, Beijing did agree to participate in the Four Party Talks, first proposed in April 1996 by the United States and South Korea and lasting, fitfully, over six rounds, until August 1999. Beijing may view such a framework more favorably for a number of reasons. First, the make up and smaller number of parties helped Beijing to appear “on North Korea’s side”, while also avoiding the appearance that the region was “ganging up” on North Korea. The smaller framework also allowed Pyongyang to meet its goal of dealing more directly with the United States, which a larger mechanism might not allow. Of course, in the smaller framework, China’s role was also comparatively more weighty than it would be in a larger multilateral setting, such as the proposed “Six Party Talks.” Finally, the Four Party Talks were intended to address larger strategic issues of replacing the 1953 Korean War armistice agreement (to which China was a direct party) and fostering reconciliation on the Korean peninsula, arenas where China can more comfortably operate than dealing with the stickier questions of North Korean disarmament, which Beijing prefers to view as a U.S.-North Korea problem.

U.S.-China Relations and the North Korea nuclear challenge

U.S.-China relations: Given Beijing’s interests and responses thus far regarding the changing nuclear equation on the Korean peninsula, a mixed picture emerges for U.S.-China relations on this issue. On the one hand, the two sides can fairly say they share common interests in a denuclearized Korean peninsula and a peaceful resolution to the issue. But under the surface, a number of differences are apparent, and, under certain conditions, these differences could increase in the months ahead.

First, Beijing, like others in the region – particularly South Korea and Russia – will likely oppose coercive steps to force North Korean compliance. In the absence of overtly hostile acts aimed at the home islands, Japan too would prefer a diplomatic, as opposed to a coerced, solution. In this context, Washington should avoid driving South Korea too far into Beijing’s camp, a process already underway in some respects. But depending on how far North Korea takes its gambit and the forcefulness of response deemed necessary in Washington and elsewhere in the region, a more serious split between Beijing and Washington could emerge over the means to bring about North Korean compliance.

Second, beneath the surface of common interests toward the North Korea situation, Beijing does not hold Washington blameless. Many strategists in China point out that the Bush Administration’s tougher approach toward North Korea – including Pyongyang in the “axis of evil, leaking nuclear preemption contingencies aimed at North Korea as part of the nuclear posture review, and personalizing attacks against Kim Jong-il – only force North Korea’s back to the wall. In Beijing’s view, further tough rhetoric and escalatory actions by Washington would only lead to more provocative and potentially destabilizing responses by Pyongyang. If escalating confrontation leads to conflict – by design or miscalculation – Beijing will resent American insensitivity to its interests and its inability, as the world’s sole superpower, to chart and lead a negotiated solution.

Third, if the current North Korea nuclear situation continues to fester and worsen, pressure will build even further on China to exert greater pressure on Pyongyang. If matters go badly – the emergence of an openly nuclear-armed North Korea, a damaging and costly conflict on the peninsula, or the proliferation of nuclear materials from North Korea to American adversaries – China will likely be seen as part of the problem. Depending on such outcomes, U.S.-China relations could suffer considerably.

Policy approaches: To avoid these kinds of challenges, Washington should continue to engage with China in order to gain steadily more cooperative responses from Beijing. In particular, Washington should consistently and persistently convey to Beijing the risks it takes in not

recognizing and acting on the challenges posed by a nuclear North Korea, and the benefits that would accrue for China and U.S.-China relations by doing so.

- At a global level, the further weakening and breakdown of international nonproliferation regime inherent in North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons will only encourage others to more seriously consider the nuclear option, such as Iran, or to more vigorously pursue their extant nuclear programs, such as Pakistan and India. These countries are in China's neighborhood for the most part, holding out the prospect for further *nuclearization*, rather than denuclearization, around China's periphery.
- North Korea has demonstrated its willingness to link with other proliferating states in the spread of nuclear and ballistic missile technologies. Given this record, North Korea must appear very attractive to states and sub-state actors who seek nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, and who might use them for terrorist purposes, further destabilizing the international system.
- China's own security interests are at stake. North Korea would become the fourth nuclear-armed nation on China's borders, joining Russia, India, and Pakistan. Not only will this even further complicate China's relations with its neighbor and ostensible ally, and leave Beijing open to potential nuclear blackmail and coercion at a future date, but further lowers the threshold for possible nuclear weapons use in China's backyard.
- North Korea would perhaps represent the most unstable and "weakest" regime yet to openly brandish nuclear weapons, raising enormous concerns over command and control, reliability, materials protection, control, and accountability, and potential for misuse, theft, and export, especially in times of crisis or the collapse of political, social, and economic order.
- Chinese security and economic interests will not benefit from a more disruptive and unstable regional security environment, especially one brought on by the potential emergence of a new nuclear power in the region.
- As North Korea's most important supporter and bordering major power, and as a country which aided North Korea militarily in the past, including the provision of nuclear technology and assistance for the North Korean missile development program, China bears an enormous responsibility in assuring a peaceful resolution of the nuclear stand-off and a rollback of the North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

- Unlike the current Iraq situation, the North Korea crisis should be of immediate strategic concern to Beijing, and the world will look to China to take a more proactive and responsible position in assuring a peaceful outcome and the rollback of Pyongyang's nuclear weapon programs. China's reputation as an aspiring great power is at stake.
- As the principal regional player best positioned to work with both the United States and North Korea, China should be strongly encouraged to do more as a "go-between", clearly conveying messages, constraints, and red lines from both sides, while facilitating a bilateral dialogue embedded within a regional set of consultations which includes North Korea and others such as South Korea, Japan and Russia.
- For these words of cautionary diplomatic advice to work and gain greater cooperation from Beijing in dealing with North Korea, the United States will also need to demonstrate its seriousness in advocating a multilateral approach to this issue, and one in which China (and others) have a stake in the process. In pursuing a multilateral approach, Washington must engage in an even more intensive set of diplomatic consultations to bring the United States, South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia closer together on how to address the challenges North Korea poses to the international nonproliferation regime and regional security. This process has to begin first with a serious reconstruction of U.S.-South Korea ties and from there coordinating within and across our Northeast Asian alliances so the trilateral U.S.-Japan-South Korea relationship can speak in a more effective and unified way. This not only strengthens the U.S. hand vis-à-vis Pyongyang, but also discourages others such as China from exploiting intra- and inter-alliance differences which have emerged. With Japan, South Korea, and the United States working more closely together, the step toward a more region-wide mechanism will be easier to accomplish.

ENDNOTES

¹ "Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance between the People's Republic of China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Peking, 11 July 1961", in D. C. Watt, ed., *Documents on International Affairs 1961* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 258-59.

² Information on China-North Korea nuclear related cooperation drawn from the Monterey Institute Center for Nonproliferation Studies database available from the Nuclear Threat Initiative website, www.nti.org.

³ From "Jiang, Bush Talk over Phone on DPRK, Iraq Issues", accessed from the website of the Chinese Embassy in the United States, <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/44284.html>.

⁴ From “China opposes pressure, sanctions on North Korea”, *Reuters*, March 6, 2003, and condensed in *NAPSNet Newsletter*, March 6, 2003.

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