

## KOREA CHAIR PLATFORM

### May 2016 JoongAng Ilbo-CSIS Forum Keynote Address: The Honorable Daniel R. Russel

May 3, 2016

*The CSIS Korea Chair will be featuring a series of Korea Platforms with remarks from the distinguished speakers at the annual JoongAng Ilbo-CSIS Forum that was held in Washington D.C. on May 3. The second in the series is the featured luncheon address by the Honorable Wendy R. Sherman, Senior Counselor, Albright Stonebridge Group, and Former Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, U.S. Department of State.*

The Honorable Daniel R. Russel is the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs and is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service. Prior to his appointment as assistant secretary in 2013, Mr. Russel served as special assistant to the president and senior director of East Asia affairs in the National Security Council (NSC). He was director of the State Department Office of Japanese Affairs until January 2009. Mr. Russel served as the U.S. consul general in Osaka-Kobe, Japan from 2005-2008, deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in The Hague, Netherlands from 2002-2005 and at the U.S. Embassy in Nicosia, Cyprus from 1999-2002. He is a minister-counselor in the U.S. Foreign Service. Mr. Russel held the position of political chief at the U.S. Embassy of Seoul, Korea, responsible for U.S.-South and North Korean affairs from 1992-95. During this time, he participated in the Geneva and Kuala Lumpur nuclear talks with the DPRK and helped negotiate the Agreed Framework in 1994. Mr. Russel received the State Department Director General's Award for Reporting. He is also the author of *America's Place in the World*. Mr. Russel studied at Sarah Lawrence College and University College, University of London, UK

Thank you, Victor, for the introduction. I'm delighted to be here at CSIS with so many great Korea hands and old friends.

Honored to be the warm-up act for Rich Armitage and Wendy Sherman later in the day!

There's always a lot to discuss when it comes to North Korea, but this conference is particularly timely given the Party Congress later this week and the tempo of DPRK provocations.

It's a great time to be a North Korea analyst or policy maker – it's also a lousy time to be a North Korean Musudan project manager!

Today you'll be wrestling with questions about the Korean paradigm – the framework for dealing with the challenges of the Korean Peninsula.

So what might be helpful is for me to lay out the elements of our Korea policy: what have been



the constants; what we're doing now; and what we're working towards.

I want to begin by stressing two points: first, dealing with North Korea is only a fraction of our important, flourishing relationship with the ROK. You will hear more about that from Ambassador Lippert, I'm sure.

And second, we are addressing the challenges posed by North Korea's bad choices in the context of important shifts in regional dynamics.

Beijing's trade and political relations have grown dramatically with Seoul, and just as dramatically have atrophied with Pyongyang. Clearly, China's frustration with North Korea has grown significantly.

And at the same time, security – and now political – cooperation between Seoul and Tokyo, and trilaterally with Washington, is expanding at a rapid clip.

Now, speaking from my own experience inside the U.S. government – from inside the NSC and State Department – I can attest that recent administrations, including this one, have all conducted thorough North Korea policy reviews.

We've unpacked America's strategic priorities and guiding principles, rigorously examined them, taken a close look at what our partners tell us, analyzed what we were getting from the North Koreans as well as our own assumptions about them, asked ourselves what we might be missing, and – having done all that – put together options and strategies for dealing with the Korean Peninsula.

And it's worth pointing out that this is a very pragmatic administration – President Obama clearly has not been hamstrung by ideological baggage in dealing with challenges.

You've seen this in his approach to Burma, to Iran, to Cuba... and it's equally true with respect to North Korea. There's been no lack of imagination or creativity on our part. There's been no lack of effort either.

So why hasn't U.S. policy shifted on North Korea? Two reasons.

One is simply that North Korea has not given us an opening – I'm not counting propaganda – this business about let's talk about getting US forces out of Korea and halting alliance exercises is not serious. I'm talking about credible engagement on the real problem areas.

And two, our policies haven't shifted because the bedrock principles that have shaped North Korea policy under this and previous presidents have proven to be solid.

What are they? First and foremost, we will protect America and our allies by seeking a nuclear weapons-free Korean Peninsula. We will not accept North Korea as a nuclear state or willingly weaken the global non-proliferation regime that has made all of humanity safer.

# KOREA CHAIR PLATFORM

Next, we're committed to preventing war and defending our allies. Our extended deterrence and our commitments to the Republic of Korea and Japan are ironclad.

Third, we support the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula and, in the meantime, seek a better life for all the Korean people. That's why we have tried to reduce the suffering of the North Korean people where we can, and expose the horrible violations of human rights we can't prevent.

Fourth, we will always work with our partners. Although we never refuse to communicate directly with the DPRK, we recognize that its actions are a regional and a global problem, not simply a bilateral matter. We will always keep faith with the ROK, consult closely with our Six-Party Talks partners, and work through the United Nations and its specialized Agencies.

And fifth, we won't repeat mistakes. Or as Bob Gates famously said, we won't buy the same horse twice. (or maybe it's three times!) All of the commitments we've made and concessions we've offered through the Six-Party process remain on the table, but neither we nor our partners are now willing to take North Korea's promises at face value. We need to see meaningful action to comply with its obligations before North Korea can get the relief and the benefits that it wants.

The consistency of our approach, and the continuity of policy from administration to administration, reflects the constancy of these principles and judgments.

Our current policy is built on and reflects the hard work and experience of our predecessors: the Agreed Framework reached by Bob Gallucci in 1994 that froze North Korea's plutonium program for eight years; the work that Bob Einhorn and Wendy Sherman did at the end of the Clinton Administration; the tireless work by my predecessor Chris Hill and my colleague Sung Kim in the Bush Administration.

In the landmark Six-Party Joint Statement of 2005, North Korea committed to abandon its nuclear programs. But three years later, it declared the Six-Party talks "dead" and walked out.

And when the next President, Barack Obama, offered to extend a hand to those who would unclench their fist, North Korea conducted a ballistic missile test under the guise of a "satellite launch," and then set off their second nuclear detonation.

Even since then, our response has not lacked imagination or flexibility. But despite the best efforts by the U.S. and our partners, today we face a new leader in North Korea who seems unwilling even to utter the word "denuclearization."

So, what are those best efforts?

I've told you that in addressing North Korea's provocations, we've been true to our principles, but at the same time, we've been active and creative in the many different ways we've tried to twist this Rubik's cube.

We have pursued, and continue to pursue, engagement with the North. When he took office, the President recruited a top-flight diplomat, well known to all of you – the late, great Ambassador

# KOREA CHAIR PLATFORM

Stephen Bosworth – to serve as Special Representative.

Sung Kim and I accompanied him to Pyongyang in 2009 to meet with Kang Suk-ju, a very senior official, and other leaders.

We did all that we could on that trip to open the door – to encourage and test Pyongyang’s willingness to engage and to start back down the path of denuclearization. What was the response? To be blunt, as they say in Korean, “bupkis”. But we’ve kept that door open, engaging with different DPRK officials in different places.

We’ve conducted face-to-face talks – in full view of the media, and in private. We’ve supported Track II efforts and exchanges. We’ve tried bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral efforts. We’ve spelled out the assistance and support we could offer on the road to denuclearization. We’ve reaffirmed that the commitments we made in the 2005 Joint Statement remain solid.

And no matter how we’ve twisted the Rubik’s cube, Pyongyang has held stubbornly to dogma. America’s alliance with the ROK constitutes a “hostile policy” that justifies Pyongyang’s nuclear and missile programs. Q.E.D.

Part of our answer has been to strengthen coordination with the Republic of Korea. We’ve sent two great Ambassadors, Sung Kim, the first Korean-American to represent the President in Seoul, and Mark Lippert, the President’s long-trusted advisor.

Part of our answer has been to send some of America’s best war-fighting generals to U.S. Forces Korea. We’ve updated key components of the alliance (for you wonks, the Special Measures Agreement and OPCON transfer timeline).

We completed the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement and Seoul has expressed interest in the TPP. We’ve opened new frontiers of cooperation on areas from climate change and disaster relief to cyberspace and outer space policy.

The Korean people’s support for the alliance is at historic highs. And the North has found no daylight between us.

But there is much more to our strategy. Our ability to share information and coordinate trilaterally with Seoul and Tokyo has been transformed by the landmark agreement reached at the end of last year by President Park and Prime Minister Abe.

We have also intensified our cooperation with China on North Korea. Beijing’s frustration with Pyongyang’s behavior is palpable – and can you blame them? North Korea’s wanton disregard for China’s legitimate interests has enabled us to find important common ground. We worked closely with Chinese diplomats at the U.N. to pass Security Council Resolution 2270.

Now I see two thought bubbles forming over you as I look from the podium. One asks – “but will China enforce it this time”? The other says, “another UNSCR...big deal.”

# KOREA CHAIR PLATFORM

OK, it's too early to assess Chinese enforcement, but Chinese leaders say that they intend to fully implement 2270. We are seeing some important signs of follow-through, including announcements of new trade restrictions and inspections—but time will tell how real how and how sustained this is.

And is 2270 just more of the same? I don't think so. My contention is that we've never tried this level of pressure before. 2270 is a major tightening of the international web of sanctions facing the DPRK.

The global adherence to these sanctions is unprecedented. Nobody is cutting North Korea any slack.

The sanctions don't only target the North's prohibited nuclear and ballistic missile activities, they shut down the commercial and diplomatic activities Pyongyang uses to fund, supply, and conceal them.

Global sanctions now deny them rocket parts, jet fuel, and hard currency, making it much more difficult to build missiles or nuclear weapons. Exclusion from the international banking and transport system makes it harder and harder to fund their programs.

The lack of hard currency drives the growth of domestic black markets, independent of state control. And the shortfall of cash means there is less money to spend on the army, on the secret police, on bribing the elites with Mercedeses and Rolaxes, and of course on missiles and nuclear warheads.

Yes, in a sense this is a policy of attrition, but the sanctions are designed to bring the North to its senses, not to its knees.

What about the “cornered rat” theory? Will North Korea lash out? There are two important elements of our policy that address that risk.

The first is deterrence. Our alliance with the ROK has never been stronger. And in response to the growing ballistic missile threat, we've begun formal discussions on potentially deploying a top missile defense system, THAAD. Despite all the saber-rattling, I don't think the North is under any illusions about the consequences of attack.

The second element is diplomacy. We continue to make clear, privately and publicly, that the pathway is open to North Korea to achieve lasting security through credible and authentic negotiations. And that's not just a catch-phrase.

North Korea is surrounded by three of world's largest and most successful economies. Those countries, with the United States, will continue to grow richer, grow stronger and grow together. North Korea is living on borrowed time.

We have made clear to Pyongyang the pathway to a prosperous future and to the security it seeks is also open, but the gateway remains denuclearization. However, North Korea won't reaffirm its

# KOREA CHAIR PLATFORM

commitment to complete denuclearization as they agreed in 2005. If the North Koreans won't even do that, then how serious could they be?

Before I end, let me mention one serious concern that was taken up in a separate program yesterday here at CSIS – North Korea's systemic human rights abuses. The groundbreaking findings of the U.N. Commission of Inquiry have shown us what many have suspected, but most have been reluctant to address.

In response, the U.N. General Assembly and Human Rights Council have passed resolutions. And the U.S., for our part, has established sanctions authorities to hold the human rights abusers within the regime accountable.

The systematic oppression of the North Korean people, appalling in its own right, only serves to widen the gap between North and South and complicate the already formidable challenge of reintegration. We have both a moral obligation and a strategic interest in shining the spotlight on oppression and working for accountability.

John, Ambassador Hong – you have an extraordinary lineup of talented panelists today and the sooner I wrap up, the sooner they can get started. I very much look forward to the results of your conference today, and in the time remaining would be happy to take any questions.

Thank you.

CSIS OFFICE OF THE KOREA CHAIR PUBLICATION SERIES  
FEATURED IN

**TIME**



REUTERS

**Bloomberg**

**THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.**

**The Washington Post**

The *Korea Chair Platform* is published by the Office of the Korea Chair (<http://www.csis.org/program/korea-chair>) at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a private, tax-exempt institution focusing on international public policy issues. Its research is nonpartisan and nonproprietary. CSIS does not take specific policy positions. Accordingly, all views, positions, and conclusions expressed in this publication should be understood to be solely those of the author(s). The Office of the Korea Chair invites essays for consideration for the *Platform*. For inquiries, please email [KoreaChair@CSIS.org](mailto:KoreaChair@CSIS.org).