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**NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION AND MULTILATERALISM ON
THE KOREAN PENINSULA**

Master's Thesis

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Tallinn 2017

I declare I have written the master's thesis independently.

All works and major viewpoints of the other authors, data from other sources of literature and elsewhere used for writing this paper have been referenced.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CFC	United States Combined Forces Command
DPRK	Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
HFO	Heavy Fuel Oil
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
KEDO	Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization
KIZ	Kaesong Industrial Zone
KPA	Korean People’s Army
LWR	Light Water Reactor
MAC	Military Armistice Commission
NLL	Northern Limit Line
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
ROK	Republic of Korea
THAAD	Terminal High Altitude Area Defense
TWEA	Trading with the Enemy Act
UNC	United Nations Command
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNTCOK	United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea
USAMGIK	United States Army Military Government in Korea
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

ABSTRACT

North Korea's nuclear and ballistic weapons programs have continued to pose a concern to regional stability in East Asia for more than two decades. Following their announced withdrawal from the NPT and subsequent crisis in the 1990s, North Korean efforts at obtaining nuclear capabilities have kept the attention of governments and scholars alike. The US military presence in South Korea gives special significance to this issue.

With regards to the implications that a nuclear escalation on the Korean Peninsula would have for the region, this paper will assess two major aspects connected to the issue. Namely the emergence of a nuclear crisis in the 1990s and its continuation in the early 2000s, and the Six-Party Talks as a multilateral attempt to ease tensions. Particular importance will be devoted to the respective states' conduct within multilateral talks and their subsequent actions.

The theoretical framework consists of neorealism, neoliberalism and constructivism, which are then combined in an effort reach more accurate and realistic conclusions through analytic eclecticism. Thus, the research will show that North Korea never intended to fully abandon its nuclear program, that it will continue to develop its capabilities and that this doesn't necessarily have to lead to a pessimistic outlook.

Keywords: North Korean Nuclear Program, Six-Party Talks, Non-Proliferation Treaty, Analytic Eclecticism

INTRODUCTION

On September 9 2016, marking the 68th anniversary of the founding of the DPRK, the country conducted its fifth and latest in a series of nuclear tests starting a decade ago. It is not only one of many recent reminders of the threat posed by a relatively small country in East Asia, which might have escaped one's attention in times of growing tensions in Europe and ongoing bloodshed in the middle east. It is however arguably the most pressing concern for the international community among the many relics the Cold War has left behind. While one country after another has forsaken its socialist past, and embraced capitalism, some turning into full democracies, North Korea has managed to survive to this day as a state based solidly on Kim Il-Sung's Juche Ideology and the Army's iron grip. Even the hereditary succession of power by family members of the Kim-Clan, which is unique among socialist states, continues to this day with its third member and grandson of the state's founder, Kim Jong-Un. This is all the more remarkable as the other Korean state, South Korea, has transformed from one of the poorest countries after the Korean War to an economic powerhouse known for its shipbuilding and high-tech products around the world. The differences between the two countries in almost all respects could hardly be any greater.

The conflict on the Korean Peninsula is one of the major unresolved conflicts of our time. It is not only of special importance to the Korean people who have lived in unity for more than a millennium, defying numerous invasions by Tungusic tribes, Mongols, the Japanese and centuries of hegemonic rule by China. It is also of special significance for East Asia and beyond, as it has the potential to destabilize the whole region. It involves Japan, which colonized large swathes of Asia and is still distrusted by many for its past intrusions. China as the new economic world power, acting more and more assertive in its various territorial disputes and zealously protecting what it sees as its national interest and prerogative. And, of course the US, with its Korean and Japanese allies, trying to find a balance between trade with China on the one hand and securing its political and military sway in the Asia-Pacific region on the other. Following years of concerns about the DPRK's nuclear and ballistic missile programs and many promising but ultimately failed attempts to ease tensions, the country has obviously managed to significantly increase its capabilities in both fields. The far-reaching implications of this situation make it clear that a thorough understanding of its many facets and correlations is needed. Especially the ongoing

tensions and rising proliferation of recent years pose a challenge to scholars who attempted to give explanations and apply theories. State actions and behavioral patterns, particularly of the DPRK are often puzzling to some observers. This leads us to the core questions that this thesis will try to answer:

Why have multilateral efforts so far failed to stop proliferation on the Korean Peninsula?
How can international relations theories be used to explain the evolution of the crisis?

To answer these questions, this research will explore three theoretical frameworks and test their feasibility in connection with the crisis on the Korean Peninsula, namely Neorealism, Neoliberalism and Constructivism. Neorealism was chosen as one of the most prominent among International Relations theories especially because of its view on limited cooperation among states and the security dilemma. These concepts will be at the center of the analysis of the ongoing tensions and military proliferation. Neoliberalism was chosen as an opposing view of Neorealism, giving alternative explanations on the evolution of the crisis as well as on the prospect of international cooperation. Lastly, constructivism as an alternative or complement to both previous traditional theories is discussed.

From the methodological point of view, this paper will engage in a qualitative case study centering on two cases. The first one is the Korean nuclear crisis, beginning in the early 1990s. Although this crisis is often divided into two separate crises, the first one in the early 1990s and the second one in the early 2000s, they will be regarded in this research as an ongoing situation which can only be viewed in its entirety up until today. The second case are the Six Party Talks, which stood at the end of a long effort to bring all parties involved to one table despite many drawbacks to find a solution together. In light of the recent elections in the US and South Korea, the Korean Crisis is currently in a decisive phase which will impact the situation on the peninsula for years to come. This is why developments that took place after the end of the Six-Party Talks will be included in the analysis.

Sources used will include official statements and documents, academic books and papers as well as newspaper articles. Due to the often secretive nature of intergovernmental communication and especially the aspect of the high degree of isolation of the DPRK, this analysis

will also include actual measures and actions taken by the states involved to try and make sense of their underlying motivation. Empirical data published by governments, international institutions as well as non-governmental organizations are a valuable source to assess the state of multilateral relations and the effects of certain policies.

Chapter 1 gives a detailed explanation of the theories and frameworks used in this research. The theories' precepts are applied to the situation on the Korean Peninsula since the 1990s and tested for their retrospective validity and potential for making predictions about the future, both within the constraints of the respective framework and in connection with the other paradigms. Chapter 2 examines the history of interactions between the DPRK and the international community with regards to the NPT and UNSC, which are important for the two case studies that are the subject matter of Chapter 3. As the current situation on the peninsula has reached another decisive stage following the presidential elections in the US and South Korea, Chapter 4 focuses on the developments that followed after the failure of the Six-Party Talks and current events in the two countries and North Korea.

1. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

1.1. Neorealism

Waltz' book "Theory of International Politics" from 1979 provides the foundation of the Neorealist school of International Relations. One of the core changes from previous Realist notions was the view on what motivated or dictated the behavior of states. Realists suggested that a state's actions were a mirror of intrinsic human behavioral patterns. According to Waltz however, it is not human flaws and their thirst for power but rather the way that states and the international system are structured.

The structure of the international system is anarchic, a situation which is given exogenously and which means that there is no higher authority above state level exerting control over nation states. Anarchy in this sense should not be confused with disorder, it simply means that

there is a lack of the kind of hierarchy we can see within a state. Domestic politics work in a generally orderly fashion, comprising of individual and other actors whose relation to one another is determined by hierarchy. Some exert control and authority over others. The international system on the other hand does not consist of super- and subordinate actors but of (at least nominally) equal actors (Waltz 1979, 88). As Waltz points out, anarchy gives special importance to security and thus directly leads towards the security dilemma. State actions are a result of state interests. These state interests are always valued higher than the interests of others, creating a self-help system (Ibid., 126).

The anarchic system also determines our level of analysis, putting emphasize on states as the primary actors in the international field. Accordingly, the analysis will not focus on internal struggles and domestic politics, the charisma of certain individuals or even the political system. Its starting point will be the states as a whole, viewed as a uniform, rational entity which is in principle no different from the other states. Differences arise from a state's capabilities, especially military and economic endowment, broadly speaking predominantly material aspects. As Waltz points out, it is "size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence" (Ibid., 131) that matter. These differences are the primary motivation behind the actions that states undertake and the source of suspicion and strive for security. The ability to increase one's capabilities in relation to others is crucial as ultimately everything boils down to security as a prerequisite for survival.

One major concept in Realist and Neorealist International Relations Theory is the security dilemma. It basically describes a paradox situation in which actors, by trying to increase their own security, contribute to a heightened danger for everyone through ever increasing military strength in light of others' growing capabilities.

What gives rise to the security dilemma in the first place is insecurity and anarchy on the global level. It is simply impossible to guess the intentions of another actor with full certainty no matter how good relations have been so far or what gestures of good will have been shown. This, according to Booth and Wheeler is the first two levels of the security dilemma, a dilemma of interpretations. The response that will be made is based on this interpretation and constitutes the second level. How a response ultimately looks like depends on the amount of trust or distrust one has for another under a certain circumstance, and what signals they will send to their peers (Booth

and Wheeler 2008, 4). Ultimately, as mistakes can have fatal consequences for a state and its people, most actors will choose security which they can only find in increased military capacity. When all actors do this calculation in a similar manner and without control and mediation from an organization above the state level, tensions will increase and overall security decreases even if none of the actors involved had any such intentions at the beginning.

Cooperation, while not impossible, is only possible to a very limited extent in an anarchic system. States, ever wary of others gaining the upper hand and thus posing a threat to their own survival will only engage in cooperation if their own gains will surpass the possible threat that might arise from the gains that other states will receive as a result. Cooperation thus gets subordinated to a state's suspicion and threat assessment, with security remaining the main necessity and determinant factor in an actor's decision making. Decisions therefore generally depend of the juxtaposition of absolute and relative gains. From the Neorealist perspective, with no possibility of reliably determining other states' intentions, relative gains are what ultimately matters. Cooperation in a certain situation may raise the absolute gains of more than one actor. However, if these gains are relatively lower than those of another actor, they can pose a threat to overall security and cooperation is not desirable by the actor who might find himself on the losing end (Ibid., 105). The difference in the perception of relative and absolute gains is a major distinctive feature between Neorealism and the following theory.

1.2. Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism shares some of its basic assumptions with Neorealism. In both theories, analysis focuses on states as the main actors in an anarchic international system, states have the desire to ensure their survival and decisions are the result of egoistic and rational assessment. However, several distinctions are made which lead to very different conclusions.

Concerning the interests that states have, Neorealism clearly puts the emphasis on military capabilities as a means to guaranteeing one's own survival. Neoliberalism on the other hand grants that military issues only constitute one of many factors that determine state actions in the international system. A connection is made between different levels on which decisions influencing

international politics are made. These can include various domestic and international factors, economics and ideology. As Keohane and Nye put it, there is an “absence of hierarchy among issues” (Keohane, Nye 2011, 20). For the authors, the assumptions that realism is based on are just one of many possible sets of assumptions, situated on one extreme end of a spectrum. These basic realist assumptions are being challenged and called into question, claiming that many examples in the real world cannot sufficiently be explained using the realist framework. Therefore, they created the concept of complex interdependency as a new set of conditions opposed to the realist one which recognizes the variability of hierarchies.

In addition to this absence of hierarchies, relations between states and societies happen on multiple levels. Official ties between governments are one level, but others include informal ties between government elites, supranational and non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations and institutions like banks and corporations whose actions have effects across borders. All these actors have an influence on how domestic politics affects international politics and vice versa.

As the hierarchical order gets more and more blurred, the neorealist emphasize on military capabilities as the primary factor in the international system is replaced by the belief that as interdependence grows, the importance of these capabilities diminishes. Especially the developed nations nowadays are an example of this process. Nations which have until decades ago fought wars against each other now have deep economic and political relations and even to some degree moved towards an integration on the military level. Still, Keohane and Nye do not rule out the possibility of military confrontation even among states with a high level of interdependence. Military capabilities can have great significance in the case of radical political and social changes as well as when pressure can be exerted in return for military protection (Keohane and Nye 2011, 22-23).

Keohane further argues that realist assumptions are incapable of explaining the kind of cooperation we can see in a multitude of areas, including trade, finance and the environment. The reason for this is that in a world operating according to realist assumptions, the root of cooperation would always lie in the countries’ expectations of conflict and their attempt to increase the chances of dominating their adversaries. Types of cooperation that are not first and foremost concerned with increased capabilities as the result of an alliance but lead to benefits for other states in different

fields would not occur (Keohane 1984, 7). In contrast to that, neoliberal precepts allow states to engage in cooperation on a multitude of levels, fostering the establishment of norms, institutions and trust between state actors. States will seek to increase their absolute gains, and the gains of other states are not per se viewed as a loss for themselves. Even egoistic actors can come to the conclusion that cooperation and the establishment of institutions are a way of achieving mutual gains and reducing friction.

1.3. Constructivism

Constructivism as a concept of International Relations has been developed beginning in the late 1980s and 1990s. Put simply into one sentence, what separates constructivism from the previous two theories is its emphasis on ideas before material aspects and how individuals just like states are a product of socialization. Actions thus do not follow from rational decisions made on the basis of certain given assumptions as is the case in realist and liberal theoretical frameworks. Alexander Wendt sums this up in the title of his famous 1992 paper “Anarchy is what states make of it”. Wendt’s work will serve as the corner stone of the theory that will be deployed in this research.

Wendt shares the same view that the structure of the international system is anarchic. However, he comes to a different conclusion as to what follows from this in terms of state behavior. Anarchy in that sense does not predetermine the nature of interactions that will take place between international actors. It is only a condition under which certain patterns can evolve on the basis of interactions. Anarchy, as Wendt puts it, plays merely a “permissive role” (Wendt 1992, 403) in the formation of certain patterns of interaction, not the determining factor in an anarchic international system.

According to the neorealist perspective, capabilities are the determining factor that distinguish states from one another. In contrast, constructivists have a completely different view on what constitutes the actual value of material factors, arguing that it is not so much the “naked” material value that matters but the meaning and importance that is attached to these factors. Analogous to Wendt’s example about the difference in significance that US nuclear weapons pose to Canada as compared to Cuba (Ibid., 397), we can say that while the number of nuclear weapons

in the US arsenal exceeds the North Korean one by far in terms of both quantity and quality, anyone would say that Japan or South Korea do not fear the former's capabilities in as threatening a way as the latter's. The meaning that one attaches to something clearly has an effect on one's reflections and (re)actions. At the same time, constructivists do not try to downplay the importance of materialism, they simply put it into context with other factors that will ultimately influence the value attached to tangibles.

Similar to individuals, states develop an identity as a result of persistent interactions with their environment. A state's basic configuration consists of its material endowment together with a desire to preserve it, in other words to survive. Expectations, be it positive or negative ones, do not exist prior to experience. An individual's personality is the result of a process of socialization with other individuals, depending on which certain values that are being shared and reciprocated become internalized and part of a calculation which determines the way in which someone will approach their peers. Translating this to the state would then mean that a certain behavior is by no means predetermined and exogenous, but a product of previous experiences with other states and patterns and expectations that result from this. The neorealist assumption that states are inherently selfish, suspicious or even hostile towards others in their default state are dismissed by constructivists, as these presumptions cannot be an intrinsic aspect of a state as such but only the result of prior interaction which led to the emergence of these behavioral patterns (Ibid, 402). Interests emerge from identity. Conversely, neoliberal assumptions about the constant calculation of gains and losses that underlie the concept of interdependence are challenged, as the constructivist approach will expect ongoing cooperation and interdependence to alter the involved actors' interests and identities. This common interest would lead to a strengthening of that type of cooperation and make it more resistant to change even if a variation of some variables would reduce the overall benefit that is gained from it. (Ibid., 417)

Social behavior among states is the end result of combining information collected through signaling, interpretation and reaction, which finally leads to the formation of intersubjective meaning (Ibid., 405). Continued interaction and exchange can consequently lead to an international system as described in the other two theories, the claim that this must be regarded as an unalterable given is however a fallacy in that it misses a crucial aspect underlying the currently observable state of things.

This brings us back to the title of Wendt's 1992 article cited above. Anarchy as it is presented by neorealists is not exogenously imposed on the international system but socially constructed by states through reciprocated interactions and the subsequent formation of interests. A system of self-help as described by Waltz is just one of many possible outcomes, depending on the states themselves.

1.4. Theoretical Interpretation

From looking at the evolution of the nuclear and missile crises and the failure of the Six-Party Talks, neorealism seems like a theory that fits in many aspects. North Korea's main concern and motivation for its actions obviously stem from a deep-seated desire to survive by all means necessary. The close collaboration with China fits well into this narrative, just like South Korea's subordination to US leadership. While North Korean military capabilities were oriented towards the South from the very beginning, the shock that followed the disintegration of the international order following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, including the fate of Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu, was a reminder for the North Korean leadership of what was at stake for them if they lost control over their country. As North Korea struggled with the political upheavals around it and severe economic hardship, nuclear deterrence was the perfect tool for protection against foreign intervention and simultaneously as a compensation for decreasing conventional capabilities. This becomes especially apparent considering that even during the terrible famine in the mid-90s, the North would rather alienate its food-donors than make concessions with regard to the nuclear program or engaging in further talks. Another shock was the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq by the US, raising fears of direct military intervention in North Korea. Over the years the DPRK has perfected its use of brinkmanship to exploit both weaknesses in the relations between US and ROK and offers for help and collaboration made by other states for its own advantage without the need for making far-reaching concessions.

Another striking aspect in favor of Neorealism is the security dilemma. Despite all efforts by the other countries, the DPRK since the 1990s has continuously expanded its military capabilities especially with nuclear and ballistic weapons. On the other side of the border, South

Korea has a high-tech army with state of the art weaponry, its newest addition being the THAAD system provided by the US. This in turn has angered China, which might itself seek adequate capabilities to react to this new circumstance. Now that the huge advancements of North Korean missile technology in recent years are no longer a fear about to materialize sometime in the future but a reality, the threat to the US mainland changes the situation that the country finds itself in. Ultimately, from a neorealist point of view the prospect of North Korea abandoning both its nuclear and missile programs and dismantling its existing arsenal is highly unlikely. Instead the security dilemma and brinkmanship are set to continue. From the perspective of the North Korean regime, one sentence describes their thinking very well: “The best defense is a good offense” (Mearsheimer 2001, 36). A nuclear arsenal will not leave the DPRK defenseless even if further economic deterioration will result in a severe decrease of conventional military capabilities relative to the South. Accordingly, the international community has no choice but get used to a nuclear Korean Peninsula. If we keep looking through the lens of neorealism South Korea and Japan, who are most threatened by North Korea will keep building up their capabilities and possibly start or restart their own national nuclear programs. Both countries possess the materials and know-how to develop and produce their own nuclear weapons in a relatively short amount of time if they choose to. The first step for Japan, and one that is being discussed, would be a reformation and expansion of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces and the restrictions under which they are currently allowed to operate.

In some regards, shortcomings of neorealist assumptions do become apparent. As both North Korean capabilities and Chinese assertiveness in the region have grown over the years, neorealists would have expected a strengthening not only of the US-ROK alliance, but also tighter cooperation between the ROK and Japan against common threats. Distrust between the ROK and Japan is still an important factor in their relationship, and military cooperation has not reached the level that one could expect in the East Asian environment. Within the US-ROK-Japan alliance triangle, the ROK-Japan alliance is by far the weakest link. In light of the close ties that both countries have with the US, growing relations with China also seem counterintuitive as China is unquestionably the biggest adversary of the US in Asia. During the Kim and Roh administrations and their pursuit of the Sunshine Policy, South Korea has adhered to a foreign policy that was in stark contrast to that of the US and often more in line with Beijing’s position. Reactions to North Korean provocations were also weak and stand in contrast with predictions inferred from the

assumptions of a security dilemma. Moves towards a demonstrative realignment towards the US by South Korea could not be observed even after the first North Korean nuclear test. It seems that neorealism neglects or understates important factors that do have a profound influence on state behavior in the region.

By focusing on different levels besides the state itself, neoliberalism offers a broader view on which actors play a role in domestic as well as international politics. Civil society and public opinions do matter for example in connection with ROK policy towards Japan and vice versa. Coming back to the two cases outlined in the previous chapters, both the NPT and the Sunshine policy should have contributed to an overall easing of tensions and forestalled the rise of a security dilemma by the continuously increasing the amount of interactions and the establishment of multilateral institutions. The NPT established a framework for international cooperation. Not only restrictions imposed on states, but primarily the tenet that countries should work together and share technology and expertise that will improve the countries' domestic and international position. Kim Dae-Jung's Sunshine Policy is congruent with Neoliberalism. Interactions were initiated on several levels, including high level talks, tourism, business, family meetings and the establishment of bilateral organizations which were supposed to lead to ongoing exchange between professionals. Reaching out to the North and providing economic incentives should have led to benefits for both sides and thus to a persistent easing of tensions in the future. The aim of the Sunshine Policy ultimately lay in the diversification of issues between the two states, eventually significantly reducing or even eliminating the key importance that the military dimension plays. In this context, reacting to the nuclear test by cutting ties and taking military measures would have threatened the greater goal and meant that previous measures were unsuccessful, a mere waste of time and resources. The Six-Party talks also looked like an institution that could lead to better cooperation between regional actors beyond the Korean peninsula. However, the actual amount of cooperation and willingness to engage has been a point of debate many times by the simple refusal to engage in talks or an unwillingness to make concessions on certain points. Furthermore, the Six-Party Talks rather emphasized the role of nation states in the international system as opposed to non-state actors. Ultimately the Korean Crisis has until now not shown to validate neoliberalist assumptions, as the previous examples have all stalled or failed. This does not mean however that neoliberalism has failed. Maybe the Six-Party Talks and direct North-South cooperation simply did not exist long

enough or in a profound enough way to establish cooperation in a deeper sense thus leading to a state of complex interdependence between the parties. However, recent developments, including the cutting of business ties and renewed tensions tend to support the neorealist theory more.

From a constructivist perspective, the current state of tensions is neither the natural state as realists would argue, nor is it unchangeable. The roots of the crisis lie in past experiences, notably foreign influence, the Korean War and subsequent geographical and ideological partition. For decades, the two countries have been on two opposing sides of the great international struggle following World War II. As interactions with states that were not part of the Soviet sphere of influence were low and generally had negative connotations, patterns of negotiating evolved around negative presumptions. The traumatic experience during colonial times might be the reason for North Korea's focus on military capabilities, keeping foreign influence out and also the cult surrounding Kim Il-Sung which passed on to his son and grandson. South Korea shares the same colonial history, but the impact of US presence and the need for international support during the Korean war has led to a very different experience and socialization. While economic progress was slow at first, it grew significantly beginning in the 1960s and added to a positive experience. To some extent it also vindicated a military dictatorship. While the US was demonized in the North following the war and the devastation that came with it, South Koreans regarded them as liberators from communist invaders. Over time, both countries constructed very different identities for themselves.

The shock following the collapse of the Soviet Union left the DPRK regime with a sense of great insecurity, as the loss of Soviet economic and military support increased their perceived vulnerability dramatically. Trust between North Korea on one side and South Korea and the US on the other was virtually nonexistent. Not being fully compliant and letting negotiations drag on without outcome were a prudent tactic to keep one's vulnerability to a minimum while exploring options. For the North Korean leadership, nuclear capabilities are the most straightforward and long-term way to secure their survival. The North Korean arsenal proves Wendt's argument that it is not material value that matters but the meaning attached to them. The potential number of nuclear warheads it possesses is insignificant compared to that of the US, and while China's arsenal is far greater and more sophisticated than that of the DPRK, the US and South Korea do not directly feel threatened by it.

A constructivist perspective might ultimately lead to the assumption that based on the previous experience during the nuclear crisis and Six-Party Talks, distrust and wariness have become internalized by all parties involved. However, this also leaves the option of the situation being changed over time as the parties continue to interact with each other. Despite the long-lasting division of the Korean people, both countries still share a common identity which may turn out to suffice to facilitate a certain level of rapprochement between states and people after such a long time.

Nonetheless the framework is not suitable for explaining sudden changes particularly in the behavior in the South Korean approach towards the North. Also, it is not clear what it takes in terms of time to perceivably change identities. Constructivist assumptions thus mainly remain powerful in retrospective.

None of the theories above can on their own provide a fully satisfying explanation of the whole situation. It is impossible to say that either identity, material power or interests alone would suffice to explain complex situations like the one at hand. Katzenstein and Sil make the case for a more comprehensive approach under the name analytic eclecticism. Concentrating on one theory alone can easily lead to a kind of tunnel vision that sometimes results in the overlooking of important facts or even intentionally turning a blind eye to aspects that go against a theory's precepts. Making a decision in advance as to what framework should be used can favor certain processes and their explanations over others. Important details may get lost for the sake of fitting more neatly into a theoretical mold. (Katzenstein and Sil, 2010)

The nuclear and missile crisis must thus be analyzed under the lens of more than just one paradigm, for example of neorealism and constructivism at the same time. Initially a result of the security dilemma, the nuclear crisis must be seen as having a rather pessimistic outlook according to neorealist predictions. Adding constructivism to the equation may at first glance support this view, but at the same time the continued hopes and failures that come with the negotiations will also have led to an understanding among the parties and that this is a type of game that can be played without resulting in a nuclear nightmare. The US and South Korea understand that the DPRK's provocations are not equal to an actual intent to initiate a nuclear war. Provocations are a useful tool for advancing one's interests, an escalation would most likely lead to the implosion of the North Korean state and the elimination of the North Korean elite. North Korea quickly realized

in the 1990s that targeted strikes against its facilities were not inevitable and were becoming more and more unlikely with their growing capabilities, and that negotiations were a useful tool for gaining influence and resources. It will not give up its nuclear weapons and will most likely not completely stop its missile program. Not the actual destruction that these nuclear weapons may cause is of great importance for North Korea, but the symbolic value that they convey. Important is what it means for South Korea and the US, and what prestige it brings for the Korean state, representing a new pillar on which state identity and the legitimacy of its leadership is based. The DPRK even modified its constitution to include this fact. North Korea will keep playing this game for now, as long as nothing completely unforeseen and shocking happens.

A neoliberal-constructivist perspective could change the way that we look at the Six-Party Talks and other multilateral efforts which so far seem to have failed. As identities can be changed through interaction over time, continuous engagement between the parties can create an environment in which collaboration and institutionalization may reach a level of continuity. The growing interdependence between the parties can manage to foster stability and security in the region as it increases mutual benefits and the potential cost of conflict. This will not happen overnight, and right now the chances seem to be quite slim. But depending on the developments in the near future, an easing of tensions could happen in that way.

Lastly, neoliberalism could ultimately contribute to the peaceful solution of the security dilemma. If North Korea continues on its course to develop long-range missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads, it will have at some point have reached the highest level of deterrence that it could wish for. Potential plans for a US invasion or targeted strikes in spite of the high likelihood of significant loss of life especially in South Korea but also in Japan as a consequence of North Korean retaliation would be off the table with the US coming in reach of North Korean missiles. In an instant, the primary reason for the imposition of sanctions and the fear-driven paranoia by the DPRK would become redundant, offering the chance to start cooperating as the need or feasibility of military options has subsided. A new option would present itself as North Korea could engage with the other states with a new level of confidence. As the nuclear and missile arsenal would be here to stay, engagement on other levels could at least not threaten this aspect of North Korean security concerns. Closing one door could open others and in the best case improve the region's overall security situation.

2. NORTH KOREA AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

For years, North Korea has made the headlines as one of the most notorious members of the international community in its defiance of international agreements. The following will give a brief overview of important resolutions that have been adopted with regards to a number of actions taken by the DPRK, as well as the history of its membership in the NPT. Both of these topics are of great significance in the further assessment of the nuclear crisis and multilateral attempts to reduce tensions on the peninsula.

2.1. North Korea and the United Nations Security Council

After both Koreas joined the UN in 1991, North Korea has been a recurrent topic during meetings of the UN Security Council and the cause for the adoption of several resolutions concerning its nuclear and missile programs. In recent years, the number of these resolutions has increased significantly for obvious reasons.

The first resolution dates back to 1993 and followed a letter sent to the president of the UNSC by the North Korean minister of foreign affairs Kim Yong-Nam in March. The content was quite alarming to everyone seeking a peaceful solution to the Korean question. Mr. Kim expressed his country's decision to withdraw from the NPT out of concern for national interests and as a response to the perceived biased actions of the IAEA and threat posed by the United States. It specifically mentions the conducting of a military exercise between the US and South Korea (UNSC S/25405 1993). In May, the Security Council issued Resolution 825, asking North Korea to stick to the NPT and keep cooperating with the IAEA. North Korea did not follow through on its promise to withdraw from the NPT and IAEA inspections continued. However, the North was unwilling to fully cooperate and give free and unhindered access to its facilities, which made it impossible to determine whether nuclear material had been diverted for anything other than its intended peaceful use. It took the initiative of the US to deescalate the situation and restore

inspections. The Agreed Framework between the two countries from 1994 announced the abandoning of the DPRK's graphite-moderated reactors and related facilities. In return, the US promised to supply the DPRK with LWR capabilities for civilian use and the safe storage of used fuel from another reactor (IAEA INFCIRC/457 1994).

Difficulties between North Korea and the international community remained, but it was not until 2006 that two more resolutions were adopted, concerning ballistic missile launches and nuclear tests respectively. While the first resolution from July did not have any immediate negative effects for North Korea as it called for it to refrain from further missile tests and return to the six-party talks, the second one from October imposed sanctions after a nuclear test was conducted earlier that month. The goods covered by the sanctions included the import and export of luxury goods, some conventional military equipment and vehicles and items related to ballistic missile, WMD and nuclear programs. A committee was established to oversee the sanctions and their implementation (UNSC S/RES/1718 2006).

From then onwards, sanctions were the main topic in the majority of resolutions to come. 2009 saw another nuclear test by North Korea and a subsequent reaction by the Security Council. This time sanctions were expanded to cover all types of arms and other actions or materiel related to their acquisition, production or maintenance, including financial means and transactions for the aforementioned purposes. Also mentioned are substances and equipment listed in information circulars by the IAEA (UNSC S/RES/1874 2009).

In 2013, over the course of merely three months the UNSC issued two resolutions concerning a ballistic missile launch and nuclear test, respectively. According to official statements by North Korea, the missile test served the purpose of launching a satellite into space, in which it did actually succeed. As with other previous launches of a similar nature, this one was also regarded as a violation of agreements and sanctions as it used ballistic missile technology and was regarded as a threat especially by South Korea and Japan. No new sanctions were imposed in January because of the missile launch, but existing ones were expanded to include a number of individuals, government agencies and corporations (UNSC S/RES/2087 2013). Similarly, the second resolution that year from March, which was a reaction to a nuclear test conducted in February, added new names of individuals and corporations, as well as a number of chemicals, equipment and luxury articles (UNSC S/RES/2094 2013).

The next year that saw two resolutions concerning military endeavors by the DPRK was 2016. Remarkably, North Korea conducted two nuclear tests that year, one in January and one in September. Following the first nuclear test, the Security Council adopted resolution 2270 which mostly reaffirmed its commitment to sanctions previously imposed, however expanding them to any kind of item except for food or medicine which a member state would regard as possibly serving the purpose of advancing North Korea's military capabilities or being used for the production of military exports. A list of individuals and organizations whose financial assets should be frozen was added, including vessels that were regarded as assets subject to the sanctions (UNSC S/RES/2270 2016). The most recent and most exhaustive sanctions were imposed in November. Not only was the list of goods, equipment, individuals and corporations. It now also limited the amount of coal that the DPRK could export, even if it was proven that the revenues would not benefit any military purpose. Thus, the sanctions targeted North Korea's single biggest exporting good, the vast majority of which goes to China. The maximum amount of coal which could be exported in 2017 was set at 7,500,000 metric tons or no more than about 400 million US dollars (UNSC S/RES/2321 (2016)). Data from the IAEA shows that this would be half the amount exported in 2014, which stood at 15.6 million metric tons (IAEA DPRK Coal 2014).

2.2. Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

The NPT was created to prevent the widespread proliferation of nuclear arms both among states already owning them as well as states which had not yet acquired the necessary technologies and resources. It was first signed in 1968 and went into force two years later on March 5 1970. Initial signatories included the US, Soviet Union and Great Britain. The two other nuclear powers at that time, who were classified in this very treaty as nuclear-weapon states China and France, joined in 1992 through accession. North Korea acceded to the treaty in December 1985.

The treaty has three main precepts. Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the right of any state to engage in the peaceful use of nuclear technology, and nuclear disarmament. The nuclear-weapon states agreed to refrain from supporting non-nuclear-weapon states in their pursuit of developing nuclear weapons or to directly supply these weapons. Signatory states without a nuclear

arsenal at the time of the treaty's creation agreed to abstain from acquiring nuclear weapons and not to seek support for the development or production of said weapons. As a means to oversee the use and whereabouts of nuclear material and other aspects defined in the treaty, international safeguards under the patronage of the IAEA were implemented. In line with the IAEA's statute, the misuse of nuclear technology for military purposes was to be prevented. Every member state should follow the safeguards in connection with source material and special fissionable material as defined in the IAEA statute.

At the same time the treaty grants countries the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and encourages non-nuclear and nuclear-weapons states to support each other in the exchange of expertise, technology and materials, all under IAEA safeguards. Furthermore, the nuclear-weapons states agree to work together in undertaking actions with the aim of leading towards nuclear disarmament (IAEA INFCIRC/140 1970). On the one hand this passage is quite remarkable as all nuclear weapons states did agree to make a joint commitment about the future reduction of their nuclear arsenal. Then again the phrasing leaves actual details aside. While complete disarmament can be seen as a utopian notion anyhow, given the power and prestige that comes with it, pursuing negotiations "in good faith" about disarmament can also be seen as an eloquent way to effectively evade a meaningful commitment in that matter. It also makes it harder for nuclear-weapons states to make a consistent argument against another country seeking to develop nuclear capabilities as long as they themselves can in turn be portrayed as not following through on a supposed promise made decades ago.

3. THE KOREAN CRISIS

3.1. Definition

The current situation on the Korean Peninsula poses a risk to the security of the whole region and in particular the Korean people in various ways. Ideological stubbornness and the adherence to ineffective and harmful economic policies have led to widespread poverty and at times the deaths of millions of people due to starvation in the North. Malnourishment is widespread

and has left large portions of Koreans stunted and delayed their physical and mental development. Facilities and machinery are completely outdated and would leave companies unable to compete with foreign firms if the country were to open up to the international market. Goods and fuel are in short supply and power shortages are a regular occurrence even in the capital.

Politically, North Korea has remained a relic of the past, resisting adaptation to a changing world unlike China or other former communist states. Seeing South Korea thrive as a free country following principles of market economy, replacing military dictatorship with democracy and becoming one of the world's most important exporters of high tech goods has not given the rulers in the North an incentive to rethink their own system. To the contrary, fear of unrest and civil disobedience following political, social and economic liberation must have convinced the Kim family of continuity as their only way to ensure their own survival.

The military dimension of the Korean Crisis comprises of two heavily militarized countries as well as military presence of a foreign power in the south. While already being a conflict with devastating potential regarding the conventional capabilities on both sides, the successful development of nuclear weapons by the DPRK has raised it onto a whole new level. In absolute terms, North Korea also has the bigger army, i.e. active military personnel excluding reserves, with a number of nearly 1.2 million (ISS 2016, 264) compared to South Korea with 630.000 (Ibid., 267). Absolute numbers are misleading though. South Korea has had close military ties with the US since the Korean war, including a mutual defense treaty signed by both countries in 1953. The ROK's first involvement in a military conflict overseas was during the war in Vietnam. Since then it has been deployed many times as part of UN peacekeeping forces as well as the war in Iraq. The ROK Armed Forces are using state of the art equipment from both the US and Europe while also maintaining their own domestic military industries. In 2016 the defense budget amounted to US\$ 33.5 billion, roughly 2.4% of GDP (Ibid.). The North Korean Army on the other hand is suffering from outdated or nonfunctional equipment which would not be of great value in a conventional war. Actual numbers are basically impossible to get regarding the amount of money and percentage of GDP spent on the military, but some estimates locate it at around US\$ 7.5 billion (Global Firepower 2017), significantly lower than the ROK's budget. It still means that the DPRK is using a large part of its overall budget on military spending. Despite having vastly greater

conventional capabilities, South Korea is aware of the devastation that the North could achieve in case of an escalation with the capital Seoul well within range of some of their artillery.

In recent years, North Korea's development of Nuclear capabilities has been the main cause for headache among South Korean and international politicians and military strategists. Several nuclear tests have been conducted since 2006. More recently international experts had to acknowledge that North Korean efforts for the development of nuclear warheads had been gaining momentum at a greater speed than previously expected. Simultaneously it has been pushing its ballistic missile program forward under the disguise of making use of its right to the development of a peaceful space program. These developments have added to the already high tensions in the region.

This research thus regards the Korean Crisis as a process that has been ongoing for decades, with times of relaxation and relative stability on one hand and times of great concern, like the more recent rise in tensions. The whole Korean Crisis is too big an issue to be covered in one thesis, that's why the focus here lies on the military and political implications of the events starting with the nuclear crisis in the 1990s.

3.2. North Korean Nuclear Threat and First North Korean Nuclear Crisis

North Korea has made headlines in recent years mostly for its nuclear weapons program. The history of its nuclear program as such dates back to the 1950s. Cooperation with the Soviet Union and later with China led to a transfer of knowledge and technology in the field. At first this kind of support was meant to develop peaceful nuclear capabilities only, but perceiving the US in the south and nuclear weapons stationed in South Korea as a major threat to their own state's very existence, North Korea probably started shifting its focus on acquiring nuclear technology with the aim of developing its own nuclear arsenal for the purpose of deterrence early on. It is not clear when exactly this decision was made, but it is not unlikely that this already happened in the first years of cooperation with the Soviet Union. While officials mentioned the deployment of nuclear weapons by the US forces in South Korea in the 1970s, initial deployment could reach back until the late 1950s (Lee 2009, 2). The Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center was founded in

1964 in cooperation with Soviet scientists. The first reactor started operating one or three years later. More reactors were added in the 1970s and 1980s. While the first reactors were being imported, North Korea completed construction of its first own graphite moderated reactor at Yongbyon (Bolton 2012, 3).

The Soviet Union, becoming increasingly aware of the DPRK's growing nuclear capacities, began pressuring their ally to take part in international arrangements for the development of civilian nuclear programs and subject their facilities to international safeguards. Apparently in exchange for the supply of further reactors by the Soviet Union, which were ultimately not delivered, North Korea joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1985 (Carrel-Billiard, Wing 2010, 29). The treaty was meant to prevent the spreading of nuclear technology for military purposes but supports countries in their pursuit for peaceful nuclear technologies. The treaty has so far been signed by all countries except for India, Israel, Pakistan and South Sudan. North Korea, however, has been defiant in its implementation of the measures specified in the treaty from the very beginning. Contrary to what it had agreed to through its accession to the treaty, the DPRK refused to implement the required safeguards in due time. In fact, it took about five years to do so. North Korea also expanded its testing and plutonium production capabilities by adding a new reactor and a plutonium reprocessing facility in 1986 (Albright 1994, 64).

In January 1992, the ROK and DPRK signed the Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. After its entering into force the following month, the declaration established six points with which both countries should guarantee a nuclear weapon free Korean peninsula as one of the preconditions for peace and reunification. Among the points were commitments to refrain from testing and acquiring nuclear weapons, reprocessing and enrichment of nuclear material and strictly using nuclear technology for peaceful purposes only. As a way for overseeing each other's progress or breaches, the South-North Joint Nuclear Control Commission was established to assume a supervisory role (US Department of State Archive 1994). Unfortunately, the two sides showed to have major differences which made discussions difficult and unproductive from the beginning, leading to a suspension of the joint meetings after the 13th had taken place in April 1993 (Kim 2001, 154).

After North Korea decided to follow up on the commitment made in the NPT regarding safeguards in 1992, the initial report sent to the IAEA disclosed the existence of far greater

capabilities for the production of plutonium needed for warheads than had previously been assumed by the agency and other countries (Fischer 1997, 288-289).

When inspectors entered the country for inspections shortly after the IAEA received the report, they reported discrepancies between North Korea's officially acknowledged nuclear program and what was actually underway in its facilities. Comparing the findings of the inspections with data provided to the IAEA revealed significant inconsistencies in the amount of Plutonium it had separated as well as the origin of it. These findings led the agency to believe that North Korea must have acquired between tens of grams and several kilos worth of plutonium more, depending on what type of material had been reprocessed. Confronted with these accusations, the Koreans rejected them as false and insufficiently substantiated, in return providing explanations which still could only partially explain the total amount of plutonium which the IAEA's calculations had revealed (Albright 1994, 64). Special inspections demanded by the IAEA were refused, causing the IAEA to determine that the DPRK was in non-compliance with the safeguards agreement. The questions surrounding North Korea's nuclear program together with the announcement in 1993 that it had the intention to withdraw from the NPT as established in article ten (which was the first and only country to do so in the history of the treaty) set off what is known as the First Korean Nuclear Crisis. This first announcement of withdrawal from the NPT was turned into a suspension from the withdrawal after both governments sent high-level official to discuss the matter in New York in June 1993. Assistant Secretary of State Robert Gallucci and First Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Kang Sok-Ju agreed that both states were still committed to peaceful reunification, respect for the other's sovereignty and non-interference in internal matters and a peaceful and nuclear-free Korean Peninsula (Nautilus 1993). The agreements in this Joint Statement were only short lived however.

As a consequence of the DPRK's continued non-compliance and its renewed announcement to withdraw from the NPT again in 1994, the UNSC addressed the matter and urged the country to allow inspections and not to invoke article ten of the NPT. North Korea did not follow through on its promise to leave the NPT and inspections did take place, however not on the scale that the IAEA had requested. Therefore, it was not able to determine exactly what purpose the Koreans were following with their nuclear program and what happened to the fuel used in their reactor cores. Following a resolution by the IAEA to suspend non-medical Agency assistance to

North Korea, foreign minister Kim Yong-Nam three days later informed the US of their withdrawal from the IAEA. The diplomatic note stressed that this was due to the infringement on the DPRK's sovereign rights even though they had shown their goodwill in allowing inspections by the agency "despite [their] unique status based on the temporary suspension of the effectuation of our declared withdrawal" from the NPT (IAEA INFCIRC/447 1994).

3.3. The Agreed Framework and Four-Party Talks

The situation between the IAEA and North Korea deteriorated significantly between 1993 and 1994. Despite being a signatory of the non-proliferation treaty, the DPRK refused to fulfil its obligations as stated in the treaty. The IAEA was unable to adequately oversee the state of the North's nuclear energy program and the amount of plutonium in its possession, lamenting irregularities in the amount of nuclear material and waste declared by the DPRK and the IAEA's findings during the inspections. The agency demanded permission to conduct further investigations for which it would have required additional access to Korean facilities and information sharing which the Korean side refused (IAEA GOV/2636 1993). Less than one month after the IAEA's request, the DPRK informed the President of the UN Security Council about its decision to leave the NPT, citing concerns about its national security following unjust treatment and violations of its own statute by the IAEA and threats by the US and South Korea through joint military exercises. The DPRK portrayed itself as a victim of bullying by a nuclear-weapon state and compliant international bodies, making a renewed accession to the treaty dependent on future actions by the US and the IAEA (UNSC S/25405 1993).

To prevent any further escalation the US government decided to act and, inter alia, former US president Jimmy Carter traveled to Pyongyang in June and met with Kim Il-Sung. While officially on a private trip to the country, Carter managed to contribute to the soothing of the crisis (Sanger 1994). Bilateral talks which commenced the following month in Geneva were quickly suspended for a few days following the unexpected demise of the North Korean leader on July 8. After a period of mourning, the talks continued and eventually paved the way for the Agreed Framework signed on October 21. With the signing of this document, the US promised to supply

the DPRK with a LWR having a capability of around 2 gigawatts of power by the envisaged date of 2003 to replace the DPRK's graphite-moderated reactors. This included organizing the required financing for the whole project under stewardship of the US. Until the completion of the LWR, the US also agreed to provide 500 000 tons of oil yearly as an alternative source of electricity after the graphite-reactors had been taken off the grid. In return, the DPRK would remain party to the NPT and stop the operation of its graphite-moderated reactors within a month of signing the document under supervision of and full cooperation with the IAEA. The used fuel from the reactors would be disposed of without being reprocessed inside North Korea, with specifics set to be discussed in further talks. Furthermore, the agreement included some points regarding economic and political aspects. Bilateral relations should be upgraded and sanctions reduced (IAEA INFCIRC/457 1994). In accordance to the provisions of the agreement, KEDO was founded in 1995. As a multilateral organization under leadership of the US and with Japan and the ROK as founding members, it was open to other countries and expanded its membership over the years. KEDO was put in charge of supplying the reactor in the scheduled timeframe, training North Korean staff, assisting in LWR fuel supply and maintenance (KEDO 1995).

However, during Bill Clinton's first term in office, the majority shifted from a Democrat to a Republican majority in both chambers of the United States Congress in 1995. Many voices in the Republican party were more suspicious about the DPRK due to what they regarded as provocations and urged the government to show more restraint in opening up to the country and providing assistance through KEDO. In a joint resolution passed in September, the president is asked not to elevate diplomatic relations with the DPRK above the level of liaison offices nor to ease economic sanctions without first making sure that they were willing to make more concessions in regards to North Korean military exports, denuclearization and dialogue with the ROK (United States Congress H.J.Res.83 1995).

Around the same time, the DPRK increasingly showed its desire to replace the armistice agreement from 1953 with a different kind of arrangement to safeguard peace in the region together with the US, most likely with the intention of having the US sign a peace treaty directly with the North. To undermine the armistice agreement, the DPRK tried to get rid of the MAC representing United Nations forces at Panmunjom, which was part of the armistice agreement. The Czech and Polish forces present on the North Korean side were expelled in 1993 and 1995 respectively. In

1994, the DPRK withdrew its own delegation to the MAC and asked China to follow suit (Kwak 2003, 3). On the South Korean side the MAC is still active and present at Panmunjom, fulfilling its supervisory obligations stated in the 1953 agreement.

Therefore, the issue was being discussed in the UNSC with the United States in favor of imposing sanctions. As it was not clear how the North would react to sanctions, the US decided to raise the number of troops stationed in the South, causing a dangerous deterioration of the situation. Further degradation could eventually be averted by diplomacy with the US and the North beginning talks about the Nuclear issue (Sigal 1997).

However, these talks did not include the South Korean government as the North insisted on bilateral talks directly with the US, which of course was unacceptable for the South. During his speech at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York in 1996, then foreign minister Gong Ro-Myung lamented the unwillingness of North Korea to engage in talks to discuss inter-Korean issues. The North also clearly showed its disregard of the armistice agreement by violating some of the provisions. It had troops enter the demilitarized zone with weapons that were prohibited according to the agreement and by conducting combat drills (Plunk 1996). Later that year over two dozen soldiers entered South Korean terrain after a submarine ran aground. He interpreted these actions as open provocations aimed at undermining the current fragile peace as well as future efforts to stabilize the situation and pointed to the joint proposal by US president Clinton and Korean president Kim Young Sam from April 1996 as the best way to ensure stability and peace. This proposal included the participation of the ROK, DPRK, US and China to reduce tensions and ultimately turn the armistice agreement into a peace agreement. It was acknowledged by the South Korean side that the inclusion of two other former parties to the war would make it easier for the two Koreas to start rebuilding mutual trust and engaging in constructive a dialogue (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea 1996).

Despite these efforts the North continued to refuse direct talks with the South. Instead, negotiations about its ballistic missiles program continued with the US. The conversion of the armistice agreement into a peace treaty was initially not part of these talks. As a prerequisite for this to happen, the US insisted that the North improve its relations with the South and furthermore accept the proposal of multi-party talks including the ROK.

The first meeting including the ROK took place in 1997 at Columbia University. Talks

ended without any major results, but it was agreed upon to meet again later in that same year. Finally, in November, following a third meeting, US Assistant Secretary of State Charles Karman officially announced an agreement which included formal peace talks set to begin in December (Trimel 1997). Over the course of less than two years, the parties met several times to discuss how tensions on the peninsula could be reduced. Talks focused on the establishment of a peace regime, but deeper measures were not on the agenda as both North Korea and the US refused to make major concessions. The North demanded a withdrawal of US forces from the Korean peninsula which was of course out of question for the Americans and the South Koreans and thus rejected. It also showed the attitude with which the North entered the negotiations. Entering the negotiations with requests like troop withdrawal, of which they knew that the other side could never accept at this stage so as to subsequently refuse to make concessions on the North's missile program (Buszynski 2013, 56). This tactic certainly was an effective way of veiling one's own contribution to the ultimate failure to reach a compromise.

It is no coincidence that the end of the Four-Party Talks coincided with the election of a new President in South Korea, Kim Dae-Jung. His predecessor Kim Yong-Sam had defeated him in the 1992 presidential elections. During the election campaign, his stance was a tough one as opposed to that of his adversary. This changed however after the election. Kim Yong-Sam himself claimed that it was him who dissuaded the US from taking military action during the first Nuclear crisis and attacking North Korean nuclear facilities, thus taking credit for preventing all-out war on the peninsula (Choe 2015). Despite continuous provocations by the North, his government continued on its course by sending food aid in summer 1995. North Korea at that time went through a devastating famine that might have led to the deaths of 600 000 people, or 2.3 percent of the population (Goodkind et al. 2011, 13). Contrary to a previous agreement between the two countries, the vessel carrying the aid was forced to fly the North Korean flag upon entering Chongjin harbor. The South, being furious at the behavior of the DPRK's officials stopped all other shipment which were on their way at the time. Pyongyang apologized and put the blame on miscommunication on their side, but just over a month later the next incident followed. Another South Korean ship carrying food aid was detained on allegations of espionage after one of its crew took a picture, therefore violating agreements made by both governments. On this occasion the South saw itself forced to apologize to the North, lowering his standing among the population. Consequently, Kim

Yong-Sam's policy towards the DPRK became much less accommodating and food aid was suspended indefinitely, insisting on further talks as precondition for a continuation of aid. The ROK also asked the US and Japan to follow suit and adapt their policies accordingly (Kim 2011, 178-179).

Kim Dae-Jung's victory in the 1997 elections promised change in the South Korean policy towards the North. For the latter, it also came at exactly the right time, offering a more rewarding alternative than tedious negotiations within the framework of the Four-Party Talks including the US.

3.4. Sunshine Policy

Following the beginning of Kim Dae-Jung's as Presidency in the ROK, the country's policy towards the North underwent a major change, known as the Sunshine Policy. This policy initiative aimed at directly engaging with North Korea in a reconciliatory and cooperative manner for building up trust, leading to "warming" bilateral relations and signaling its good intentions. The hope behind this strategy was that as a consequence North Korea would react by implementing reforms and opening up towards the South as well as the international community and ceasing hostile behavior. South Korea adjusted its official wording by refraining from using reunification in comments and statements with words that emphasized the new focus on peaceful coexistence and mutual economic prosperity. This was supposed to clarify that the South had no intentions to absorb North Korea in case of reunification. Concerning previous escalations involving the two countries' armies and weapons programs, the new government insisted on North Korea abstaining from any military provocations as a prerequisite to implementation and continuation of the Sunshine Policy (Levin, Han 2002, 24). Partly because of his leading role in the initiation of the Sunshine policy, but also his previous commitment to democracy and human rights in South Korea, Kim Dae-Jung was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2000.

In the summer of 2000 Kim Dae-Jung and Kim Jong-Il met in Pyongyang for talks about the future shape of South-North relations and the nature of a future reunification. Both countries agreed to work towards the goal of reunification in a way that focuses on the overlapping that

existed in both countries visions in that regard as well as that it was an issue that has to be solved by the Korean people without meddling from outside. Other points included joint efforts regarding the economy, health and the reunion of families that had been separated by the Korean war and subsequent division of the peninsula (South-North Joint Declaration 2000). It is quite noteworthy and also telling that the Joint Declaration issued on June 15 specifically mentions the North's concern about convicted communists being imprisoned in the South, called unconverted long-term prisoners. Bearing in mind the dire human rights situation in the North, this part of the declaration seems rather ridiculous, especially in the absence of any reference whatsoever of what dissidents are facing inside the DPRK. Political activists and ordinary people sure have suffered under previous governments and dictatorship, but South Korea as a state has without doubt made huge steps towards a free society after the Sixth Republic was established in 1987 and democracy finally prevailed. It is telling insofar as it shows the degree to which President Kim Dae-Jung was willing to accommodate the North Korean side in his attempt to achieve the goals set for his policy and show his political adversaries at home and abroad that his approach was not merely wishful thinking but an actual alternative to the rigid stance of his predecessors. On 2 September 2000, 63 elderly prisoners who had spent several decades in South Korean prisons for spying or guerilla activities were repatriated to North Korea amidst public protests. The fact that President Kim released those men without the simultaneous return of South Korean's held in the North was criticized by many, and his calculus behind this move that it would hopefully lead to the release of South Korean citizens in return was not considered enough to appease his critics and family members (Ahn 2000).

Another immediate and more welcomed success of the Inter-Korean Summit were family reunions, the first of which took place in August. Around 200 Koreans from both sides got the chance to meet with their family members living in the other Korean state. A small number considering the vast numbers of Koreans who share that same fate, but a strong signal of hope to the public nonetheless. Several of these exchanges have taken place over the years, totaling 18 face-to-face reunions between 2000 and 2013. Under the auspices of the North and South Korean Red Cross, about 18 000 persons from 4000 families (Korean Red Cross, Inter-Korean) were given the chance to meet their loved ones after half a century of forced separation, often not knowing what had happened to their relatives or even if they were still alive.

Economic interaction and cooperation were another major aspect of the Sunshine Policy, important both for the South - which could increase its influence and the North's dependency - and the North, seeking new sources of revenues during times of ongoing economic hardship. The most important place where direct economic cooperation took place was the KIZ close to Panmunjom. It dates back to further negotiations and agreements undertaken by both sides in the early 2000s, creating the basis on which this North Korean border town could provide a suitable space for the construction of factories by South Korean companies employing North Korean Workers. Construction of the facilities started in 2003, production was launched in December of the following year. Two companies from the South, Hyundai Asan and the Korea Land Corporation, both were a major force behind the venture.

For South Korean companies, Kaesong offered the opportunity to produce goods at significantly more favorable conditions in terms of wages and taxes compared to South Korea with a linear distance of only a little over 50 kilometers from Seoul. The Corporate tax rate stood at 10% to 14%, about one third and a half, respectively of that in South Korea in the year 2004, with the rate in the South falling to slightly over 24% from 2009 (with the exception of the year 2011) (IECONOMICS 2017). Companies were also generously offered exemptions from the tax as well as a reduction by 50% for limited periods of time during the first few years. The South provided low interest rates for loans taken by companies that invested in the industrial complex (Manyin and Nanto 2011, 6). Hourly wages were also considerably lower, giving an incentive for firms producing labor intensive goods. The monthly minimum wage in 2004 South Korea stood at ₩641.840 (Minimum Wage Commission of the Republic of Korea 2013). This corresponds to roughly \$585 using the exchange rate from December 30, 2004. Workers at Kaesong were payed less than a tenth of that with around \$50 at the inception of the complex. This number was however raised over time. In addition, premiums were payed for working overtime or on holidays and parts of the workforce received a higher wage rate. From the side of the companies, costs not only consisted of wages but also of insurance fees. The North Korean government on the other hand deducted a considerable percentage of wages by charging workers insurance costs and fees for state services and public authorities (Manyin and Nanto 2011, 10). Besides what remained from their gross wage, workers also received other things like sweets and candy from their South Korean superiors. Notably a famous brand of snack cake called Choco Pie. These became so popular

among North Koreans that workers preferred to receive their premiums in the form of Choco Pie rather than in cash, as their price on the black market was several times higher than their actual price on the market in South Korea, providing a substantial addition to workers' actual wage without the government taking their share (The Chosunilbo 2010).

Looking at statistics by the Ministry of Unification in South Korea, Inter-Korean trade has expanded greatly after the adoption of the Sunshine Policy. Taking only the information about KIZ, both the numbers of workers and the output of companies have risen each year during the decade between 2005 and 2015 with the exception of the year 2013. This year saw two separate resolutions by the UN security council condemning a nuclear test and the launch of a ballistic missile. North Korea reacted with anger to the verbal condemnation by the international community as well as a tightening of sanctions agreed upon by the security council in adopting the resolutions. The gates of the KIZ were closed in April and production ceased (Kwon 2013). Activities commenced in September only after negotiations between North and South Korea, in which both sides pledged to shield the KIZ from any consequences due to political tensions in the future (Park 2013). As the statistics show, the combined output of companies present in the KIZ has multiplied by a factor of about 38 in the decade up to 2015, growing from US\$ 14.9 million to US\$ 564 million. The number of North Korean workers has grown nine-fold from 6000 to nearly 55 000. The amount of South Korean workers at the complex has been fluctuation on a much smaller scale between 500 and 1055 people (Ministry of Unification of the Republic of Korea Data & Statistics).

As a result of the Sunshine Policy, humanitarian assistance including food aid coming from the South either directly provided for by the state or via NGOs has reached significant amounts in some years. Especially in parallel with the Sunshine policy a substantial rise can be seen in government as well as NGO assistance. The figures have risen six and 1.7-fold, respectively, from 1999 to 2000 (Kim 2014, 443). Numbers stayed high until the end of Roh Moo-Hyun's term, being succeeded by Lee Myung-Bak in 2008 who took a much firmer stance towards the north, effectively marking the end of the Sunshine Policy.

To this day the Sunshine Policy has had many admirers but also its fair share of critics. As already mentioned, Kim Dae-Jung's efforts were honored under international praise by the Norwegian Nobel Committee in 2000, but it would not have been the only occasion on which this group of people had chosen individuals with a questionable legacy as recipients of this prestigious

award, or at least presented it rather prematurely. In his speech during the award ceremony, the Chairman of the Committee mentioned both Kim's history as an advocate of human rights and democracy along with his reaching out to the DPRK, this last point representing a turning point in the relations between both countries (Berge 2000).

Following the renewed tensions in connection to the nuclear issue already in the early 2000s, many academics questioned the merits of Kim Dae-Jung's approach as it did not seem to contribute to overall stability. In fact, several skirmishes have erupted during Kim's presidency, most notably the two battles of Yeonpyeong Island in 1999 and 2002 which also claimed the lives of North and South Koreans. Many thought that this should be more than enough evidence of the North's unwillingness to change its hostile attitude and should lead to a revision of the Sunshine Policy. Only days after the Second Battle of Yeonpyeong, member of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Korea Ahn Byung-Joon painted a grim picture of the Sunshine Policy's prospects while expressing doubts about its effectiveness in changing relations with North Korea in a favorable direction. Still he did give some credit to the increased dependence of the Regime on foreign donors which might turn out useful (Ahn 2002). Others have gone so far as calling Kim's strategy unwise and full of shortcomings, requiring a reorientation towards negotiations involving both the possibility for incentives as well as increased pressure if necessary (Lee and Moon 2003, 146).

3.5. The Second Nuclear Crisis

All that was left of the hopes that had been placed in the Agreed Framework from 1994 were shattered in 2002. On a visit to Pyongyang in October, American diplomat James Kelly was informed about secret activities undertaken by the DPRK to produce enriched uranium for the production of nuclear weapons. This program must have dated back several years and evidence appeared that the country had established ties with Pakistan and engaged in technology transfers (Sanger 2002). In the context of the Bush administration's realignment of its foreign policy following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon a year earlier, these

revelations were sure to have significant consequences. In his State of the Union Address in January 2002, George W. Bush first talked about the Axis of evil, a number of states trying to get their hands on weapons of mass destruction and with connections to terrorists groups. North Korea was mentioned together with Iraq and Iran (The White House 2002). The apparent confession by the North Koreans later that year seemed to confirm this narrative. From a South Korean perspective, it could have derailed Roh Moo-Hyun's presidential campaign, as he mostly campaigned on the promise to continue Kim Dae-Jung's Sunshine Policy towards the North. However, despite the setback following the second nuclear crisis, he managed to win the election, creating some level of tensions with the US who followed a more hawkish approach. The members of the KEDO executive board decided in November to condemn the DPRK's nuclear weapons program and to label it as a breach of the Agreed Framework as well as its obligations under the NPT and in regards to the IAEA. As a result, the oil shipments promised as compensation for the shutdown of the graphite-moderated reactors were cancelled from December until the DPRK would halt its enrichment program. Other activities were to be placed under scrutiny as well (KEDO 2002). In 2003, following the DPRK's withdrawal from the NPT and resumption of its reprocessing activities, the US and other states completely stopped their funding of the LWR. Japan and Korea continued to do so but the amount dropped significantly in the following years. The construction of the reactor had been stopped, or turned into a state of maintenance in December while preserving the option of resuming the project should the DPRK fulfil its commitments. The LWR project had been 34.5% complete according to KEDO reports (KEDO 2003, 5).

KEDO itself continued to be active until 2006, when operations were terminated and workers called back. Nonetheless, the supply of fuel oil by contributing states through KEDO never resumed after 2002 and funding for the LWR construction decreased drastically after 2003. The LWR was about one thirds completed by the time that the project was cancelled. KEDO workers had to leave the DPRK but equipment and materials had to remain inside the country following a ban imposed by the DPRK which had been in place since 2003. While the first construction stop was initially only imposed for a period of one year, subsequent assessments of the situation and the state of cooperation and compliance by the DPRK made the organization decide to keep it in place until KEDO officially completely terminated the LWR project in November 2005 including maintenance. According to KEDO's official statistics, the organization has received a total of over

US\$2.5 billion between 1995 and 2005. By far the biggest contributor was South Korea with a total of nearly US\$1.5 billion, amounting to nearly 58% of total financial support. Second was Japan with US\$500 million (20%), the US with US\$405 million (16%) and the European Atomic Energy Community with US\$120 million (<5%). The remaining 27 countries only contributed around US\$33 million collectively, less than 1.5% (KEDO 2005, 13).

Table 1. Expenditure for LWE and HFO by KEDO between 1995 and 2005 (US\$)

YEAR	Light Water Reactor	Heavy Fuel Oil
1995	3.000.000	12.214.127
1996	6.000.000	24.613.737
1997	0	22.865.135
1998	45.000.000	48.191.600
1999	0	63.255.935
2000	412.546.734	63.206.836
2001	322.816.547	72.160.983
2002	316.624.780	88.030.597
2003	354.761.826	0
2004	98.700.554	0
2005	29.270.058	0
TOTAL	1.553.720.499	394.538.950

Source: (KEDO Annual Report 2006)¹

¹ Discrepancies in the total amount of LWR funding stem from the fact that part of the costs have been financed by a loan. Money denominated in foreign currency were converted to US\$ at later exchange rates

3.6. The Six-Party Talks

As a reaction to North Korea's revelation about its continuing nuclear program and withdrawal from the NPT, efforts were made towards a formation of multilateral talks addressing the issue and hopefully resolving it peacefully. Remarkably, China played a decisive role in bringing the to the negotiating table. Following a test-firing of a missile into the Sea of Japan by the DPRK, China decided to put pressure on the regime by curbing its oil flow from Liaoning Province to the country for three days in March 2003. Officially, the Chinese side mentioned technical issues as the source of this cutting off of supplies which the DPRK desperately relies on, but it was obvious that this was done to send a clear message to Pyongyang (Watts 2003).

Three-Party Talks between the US, North Korea and China were held in Beijing the following month. These talks were a compromise between North Korea's desire to talk directly to the US without the involvement of other countries and the US preference for multilateral talks. China, in taking the role of a mediator managed to create a framework which was acceptable to both sides.

During these talks, the representative of the North Korean delegation, Li Gun told the US side that the DPRK had in fact already acquired at least one nuclear weapon. Whether or not there would be a demonstration of this claim was to depend on how the US would act in the future. He also hinted at the possibility of stopping the nuclear weapons program should the US deliver assurances that it would not attack, however giving up nuclear weapons was not on the table. These remarks proved previous intelligence reports claiming the existence of nuclear weapons in the DPRK's arsenal right. The US reiterated its determination to include its partners Japan, the ROK and also China in finding a multilateral solution and not be intimidated by this new revelation (CNN 2003). It certainly didn't make them more likely to make any concessions towards the North without getting something substantial in return. The Three-Party Talks thus didn't seem to have led to any progress in resolving the issue, rather to the contrary. For the Chinese side, this outcome was not what they had hoped for. They have always stressed their wish for stability in the region, which also included supporting the DPRK regime to a certain extent while not wanting to irritate the US. The Three-Party Talks were a tool for them to both decrease tensions as well as elevating

their own role on the international level, but they didn't serve their purpose of appeasing the involved parties but rather led to more suspicion and disapproval. Following the talks, the Chinese side was reluctant to confirm that their Korean allies had in fact acquired nuclear weapons, as their own stated goal was to keep the Korean Peninsula nuclear weapons free. Spokesman for the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Liu Jianchao, responding to reporters' questions about the talks on 29 April denied having any knowledge of the remarks that Li Gun had made towards his American counterpart in Beijing the previous days. Instead he resorted to very diplomatic phrasing, stressing the need for all sides to further elaborate their different standpoints and also showed sympathy for North Korean worries about their country's security. In his view, the Three-Party Talks were going in the right direction in terms of finding a peaceful solution and the Chinese side expressed their wish to continue multilateral talks (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Hellenic Republic 2004).

One positive aspect however was, as the Chinese side rightly mentioned, that a first step had been made towards the establishment of multilateral talks including parties other than the US and DPRK. Already during the prelude to the Four-Party Talks could the DPRK's aversion to accepting anything other than direct talks with the US.

Following the months after the Three-Party Talks ended in such a disappointing way to each of the parties, China kept pushing North Korea to accept further talks. Chinese President Hu Jintao had letter delivered to Kim Jong-Il through his Vice Foreign Minister and other high officials, calling for him to stop his country's nuclear program in exchange for economic help and the prospect of a non-aggression guarantee by the US (Lam 2003). A non-aggression treaty has been on the top of North Korea's list since the first nuclear crisis, but just like before it seems out of reach because of US reservations. Initially, the US did consider giving the North at least a written note, if not a treaty, clarifying that it was not going to launch an attack against them. This was also ruled out by late August shortly before the Six-Party Talks were scheduled to take place in Beijing. These talks could take place after North Korea accepted the participation of South Korea, Japan and Russia alongside China and the US. It's initial insistence on bilateral talks with the US were respected by the latter in the shape of informal talks directly with the DPRK's emissary during the gathering (Shenon 2003).

The U.S. has undergone a shift in its dealings with North Korea after the events in 2002. As already mentioned before, the Agreed Framework was considered obsolete and ultimately declared as failing its purpose. While funding for KEDO has been a contentious issue in Congress from the beginning, the administration was more in favor of providing financial support and continued to request funding in early 2003. Simultaneously, the US government has been struggling to find a consistent strategy in approaching the DPRK. Before, the US insisted on compliance with its agreements concerning the nuclear issue by the North and dismantling its nuclear program. Negotiations could only happen as a result of fulfilling this request. On January 7, in a joint statement by the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group representing the US, South Korea and Japan, the three countries reiterated South Korea and Japan's commitment to engage in bilateral talks with the DPRK as agreed upon in 2000. More surprisingly and in contrast the previous policy, the US also express its readiness to accept direct talks with the North even before their nuclear program had been dismantled while stressing that previous demands would not be dropped (Boucher 2003). The Bush administration had already put its focus on the invasion of Iraq which was to follow in March. It was thus decided that the problems with Korea would not be categorized as a crisis and thus elevating it on a similar level of urgency and threat as Iraq. This also made it necessary and reasonable to soften the US government's stance which was crucial in paving the way for the upcoming negotiations. These were about to take place over the following years, with the last round of talks taking place in 2008.

The first round of the Six-Party Talks was held from August 27 to 29 in Beijing. American hopes for support by the other participants to ask for a guarantee that the nuclear weapons program would be halted and disarmed turned out to be false. South Korea's new government sided with Russia and China in its desire that the US drop their conditions and take a more flexible standpoint, offering incentives which its government had ruled out before. For Roh Moo-Hyun, the Six-Party talks were an important step towards achieving one of his stated goals, namely resolving the North Korean nuclear issue "peacefully through dialogue" (Roh 2003). Similar to his own government's approach towards the North, he also wanted the US to make more concessions and abjure any military options. Ultimately, this first round of talks ended without any agreement or other results, except for the realization that more talks were needed to make progress. The second round of talks took place in February 2004 and the third in June. Both meetings only had very limited

achievements to show for. All sides agreed that the Korean Peninsula should be denuclearized. Other than that, they only agreed to continue the Six-Party talks later that same year (Chairman's Statement for The Second Round of Six-Party Talks 2004). Following the talks, the North Korean delegate lamented the US position and lack of willingness to "resolve the nuclear issue through peaceful negotiations" (China Daily 2004). The other parties expressed a more positive view on what has been achieved during the meetings. In June 2004, the third round of talks ended with a statement that was in large parts a reiteration of the previous one (Chairman's Statement for The Third Round of Six-Party Talks 2003). If anyone profited from this delay, it was the DPRK. They could use more time to continue their nuclear program while the US was already deeply involved in another conflict. The Director General of the IAEA Mohamed ElBaradei mentioned this in a later interview, saying that "time is not in favor of the international community" and that the DPRK probably had enough plutonium to produce a minimum of six to eight warheads (ElBaradei 2005, 3). As the other parties showed more willingness to accommodate the north by offering incentives, the DPRK could also feel more relaxed about the possibility of severe repercussions by the US from stubbornly upholding their refusal to end the program.

Contrary to what has been agreed on during the third round, the next round of talks was delayed until 2005. US elections were held in November 2004, and a democratic victory might have meant realignment of foreign policy in a way that would have suited North Korea. Kerry criticized how the Bush administration had previously ignored North Korea amidst its focus on Iraq and Afghanistan, laying the foundation for the current problems. His remarks also hinted at the possibility of direct talks between the two countries in case he was elected (Sanger 2004). North Korean hopes were shattered on November 2, when Bush was elected for a second term as US President.

On February 10 2005, North Korea for the first time officially declared that it was in the possession of nuclear weapons, ostensibly as a reaction to US policy which aimed at isolating the DPRK. Although it was impossible to confirm this statement, it raised the DPRK's position relative to the other parties. North Korea also proclaimed its withdrawal from the Six-Party Talks. Eventually however, they could be persuaded to return to the negotiating table starting from July 2005. South Korea in particular significantly increased its efforts to retain the North Koreans in the Six-Party Talks. While the US were contemplating punitive measures, the ROK promised to

support their northern neighbor with food, fertilizer and industrial facilities. Electricity supplies were promised in return for the dismantling of nuclear warheads (Buszynski 2013, 94-95).

Between July and September, the fourth round of talks took place. The first phase of these talks again was rather fruitless without any progress made after it ended in August. Much to South Korea's dismay, the US not only relied on verbal commitments hoping that leniency would suffice to convince the North of opening up and making concessions. The Bush administration chose to follow a strategy of simultaneously negotiating and putting pressure on the North. Out of frustration about standstills and slow progress in the Six-Party Talks, punitive measures were deemed beneficial and even inevitable if denuclearization was ever to be achieved. For this reason, US banks were directed to stop doing business with Macao based Banco Delta Asia on money laundering allegations on September 15 (U.S. Department of the Treasury 2005). As a result, some North Korean Companies which were customers of that bank were unable to access their assets as their accounts had been frozen. This eventually even led to a meeting between US and North Korean officials later in 2006, pointing at the effectivity of the measure (Brinkley 2006).

Still, despite these developments the North Korean side continued engage in talks during a second phase which began on September 13 and ended on the 19th with a long list of goals and agreements. North Korea pledged to return to the NPT and its obligations according to IAEA safeguards, abandoning both its nuclear program and weapons. In turn, it was stated that the DPRK had the right to use nuclear technology for civilian purposes. In connection with this, the other parties showed their willingness to discuss supplying a LWR anew without specifying a timeframe. South Korea's previous offer to supply 2 GW of power was now included in the statement (Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks 2005). In addition to that, both the ROK and the US declared that they had no nuclear weapons deployed on South Korean territory and affirmed that there was no intention to attack the DPRK with nuclear or conventional means. While the number of points on which the parties managed to find common ground look impressive given the previous difficulties, it is noteworthy that in none of the points were included the time and fashion in which they should be implemented. The only definite statement was the amount of electricity, whereas the most explicit measure of time was the phrasing "at an appropriate time" (excluding the agreement to hold another round of meetings later that year). This lack of detailed arrangements shows how deeply the involved parties distrusted each other and how difficult it was for them to

take steps towards reaching a much-desired normalization of diplomatic exchanges, restoring some degree of mutual trust which had been lost following years of broken commitments and policy shifts.

The first phase of the fifth round of talks took place in November 2005 but brought only minor changes to the wording of the previous joint statement. Given what was going to happen the following year, remarks made by DPRK officials right after the first phase was concluded sound bizarre. North Korean chief negotiator Kim Gye-Gwan told Chinese journalist on his arrival back from the Six-Party talks in Pyongyang that the DPRK would take the steps outlined in the common statement and expected the other parties to also work towards building trust and reducing suspicion (Embassy of People's Republic of China in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea 2005).

Following this first phase, North Korea rejected to go ahead with the talks as long as business and financial transactions conducted by North Korean companies were impeded by US sanctions on grounds of money laundering and counterfeiting. Allegations which they of course rejected vehemently. Instead, the emissaries which were also present during the Six-Party Talks met again on the occasion of an academic conference in Tokyo, but without holding official talks together. North Korean officials did meet with counterparts from China, South Korea and Japan. Kim Gye-Gwan was reported as saying that he would favor meeting with the US side as well, which did not happen before the conference was over. The latter referred to the Six-Party Talks as the appropriate forum for negotiations (Onishi 2006a). Pyongyang, while continuing to refuse rejoining the talks as long as sanctions were in place tried to convince the US of engaging in bilateral talks to discuss how to proceed from last September's agreement, but to no avail. Kim demanded that the US stop targeting financial institutions which harbored funds from North Korean companies on allegations of conducting illegal activities like money laundering and unfreeze the accounts. The US kept rejecting these demands as it regarded them as a separate issue from the nuclear program.

In early July 2006, North Korea conducted a series of missile launches, including long-range and short-range missiles. One Taepodong-2 long-range missile, possibly able to reach Alaska, failed shortly after it was launched. Japan sent a letter to the President of the Security Council requesting a meeting to discuss the issue (UNSC S/2006/481). Only about two weeks earlier, a North Korean Foreign Ministry official said that his country did not consider itself bound to an

agreement signed with Japan in 2002 extending a moratorium on long-range missile tests (Cooper, Gordon 2006). Japan and the US on the other hand regarded this moratorium to still be in place and valid, blaming the DPRK for breaking its commitment. North Korea specifically mentioned the US military exercise Valiant Shield which was held between June 19-24 in the Pacific, with over 20 000 men participating. Together with previously imposed financial sanctions, the DPRK saw these as opposed to what the US had agreed on in the joint statement. The missile launches were a way to preserve the balance against US and their allies' aggressions and ultimately benefitting the stability of the region as a whole. In fact, they saw their own deterrence measures as the only thing which prevented the US from attacking (Korean Central News Agency of DPRK 2006a). On July 15, the UNSC unanimously decided to impose sanctions on technology and financial resources related to the North Korean missile and WMD programs (UNSC S/RES/1695 2006, 2). North Korea protested against this move, putting the blame on the US and Japan as well as labelling the Security Council as irresponsible. According to the North Korean narrative, the issue was chiefly between itself and the US, denying that the Security Council should have any say whatsoever. The DPRK was motivated by the desire for self-defense against American aggression and their attempt to create an alliance to wage war against the North (Korean Central News Agency of DPRK 2006b).

The situation even continued to deteriorate when the DPRK on October 3 expressed its intention to conduct a nuclear test. The statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was received with great concern by the Security Council, which called on the country to return to the Six-Party Talks drawing upon the joined statement from last September. Then, on October 9 the North proceeded to conduct its first nuclear test, finally showing the world that previous statements about the successful development of nuclear weapons were not just a bluff. This did not only deal a heavy blow to recent efforts by the countries that were part of the Six-Party Talks, but all those appeasement strategies that had been developed in reaction to North Korea's behavior since the early 1990s. It called into question the value of the NPT, not least since both India and Pakistan could not be deterred by international agreements either. The Clinton administration's hopes that the Agreed Framework would really lead the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons program in exchange for support in establishing a peaceful one turned out to have been too naïve. The same could be said about the Sunshine Policy. Years of efforts and billions of dollars from the South

Korean government most likely only accelerated or at least facilitated the nuclear program, offering foreign currency, food, raw materials and diplomatic support against detrimental moves by the US. Some members of the political elite on the left went so far as to put the blame on the U.S., rejecting any kind of policy readjustment as unnecessary (The Chosunilbo 2006a). China also realized that it had failed to achieve one of its main goals, the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. A stable North Korea has been in the interest of China, which was the reason for continued assistance in the form of energy and food supplies, as well as being its biggest economic partner by far. A collapse of its neighbor, the possibility of large numbers of refugees and of it being absorbed by the South would have meant sharing a border with a country that allowed US military in its territory and had a long-standing military alliance with them. A nuclear North Korea however did not lead to more stability and probably even pushed the US towards strengthening its presence in the region.

Just like the previous resolution concerning the missile tests, all members of the UNSC on October 14 voted in favor of a new resolution condemning the nuclear test and expanding existing sanctions. This seemed to reflect a common conviction that the DPRK would need to feel consequences following its disregard for the warnings and pleas from many countries after it had first announced that it was going to detonate a nuclear warhead. However, China and South Korea announced straightaway that they had no intention to close their economic relations with the North or even follow through on what had been agreed upon in the resolution. These two countries were basically the only ones with a significant leverage on the North Korean economy, being the two biggest trading partners and sources of currency and fuel. South Korea argued that the sanctions did not have any implications for its economic cooperation with the North, especially the Kaesong Industrial Complex and tourist industry around Mount Kumgang. The numbers show that the South Korean government did not think of using its economic ties as a bargaining chip. Output more than doubled from 2006 to 2007, rising from US\$74 million to US\$185 million (Ministry of Unification of the Republic of Korea Data & Statistics), another proof of how big the divide between South Korea and the US has gotten after the election of Roh Moo-Hyun. China, which was the single biggest trading partner of the DPRK similarly refused to take any strict measure limiting cross-border trade. Also, inspections of North Korean vessels as described in the resolution were rejected by the Chinese, partly out of fear that this might be viewed as a provocation and lead to confrontation (Onishi 2006b). The sanctions imposed by the UNSC were thus severely undermined

immediately after the resolution had been adopted, and North Korea could hope to circumvent measures carried out by the US and others in accordance with the sanctions by diverting deliveries of goods through Chinese ports and territory.

The US, China, ROK, Japan and Russia nevertheless all agreed that the only viable option for now would be to continue the multilateral talks with Pyongyang. Chinese officials were the first to meet with Kim Jong-Il in Pyongyang in October following the nuclear test, increasing hopes that he would agree to send emissaries to Beijing to continue the Six-Party Talks soon (The Chosunilbo 2006b). It took two months before this happened on December 18, more than a year since the last joint statement had been issued in November 2005. This time the Six-Party Talks were more like a combination of “bilateral and trilateral talks” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2006), and the question of frozen North Korean accounts was discussed. Talks resumed in the form of a third session on February 8 2007, with another Joint Statement published on February 13. The DPRK agreed to shut down the nuclear facility at Yongbyon, allowing the IAEA to inspect the reactor and reprocessing facility and let them continue their monitoring and verification activities. It would disclose its nuclear program to the other parties and inform them on the plutonium gathered from spent fuel. Also, the DPRK would engage in bilateral talks with the US and Japan, calling on the US to remove them from the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism and the TWEA, both of which allow for a number of sanctions to be implemented and the latter to significantly constraining trade between another country and the US, giving the president the authority to fully control any kind of trade taking place with the possibility of completely restricting it. Additionally, Working Groups were established independently from each other to find ways of implementing what has so far been agreed upon in the Joint Statement, specifically the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, normalization of US and Japan relations with the DPRK respectively, cooperation in the fields of economy and energy and lastly a Northeast Asia Peace and Security Mechanism. The Working Groups were scheduled to meet no later than one month after the talks had been concluded. While these Groups started their work, the DPRK would already receive humanitarian assistance and fuel deliveries in return for the implementation of its above-mentioned concessions (Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement 2007). For the first time since 2002, IAEA inspectors were invited back into the country. ElBaradei visited Pyongyang in March and seemed confident about future cooperation with the DPRK and a possible return to the NPT (IAEA 2007a).

According to schedule, the sixth round of the Six-Party Talks was held from March 19-22, 2007. However, the parties quickly reached an impasse which led to cessation of talks without further progress as the disagreement about financial issues between the US and North Korea surfaced. Already before that, Japan on the first day announced that it refused to offer any support to the regime in Pyongyang unless it would fully cooperate on the issue of Japanese nationals that had been kidnapped and taken to the DPRK decades earlier. The DPRK had previously admitted to some of the abductions and allowed five Japanese to return to their home country, but other cases had so far not been disclosed or admitted to and the regime did not agree to cooperate further. Kim Gye-Gwan subsequently showed his discontent with the fact that the Japanese emissary was even allowed to attend the talks (Fan 2007). The financial issue on the other hand seemed to come to a mutually agreeable conclusion, as the US announced on the same day that a total of US\$25 million of North Korean assets that had been frozen in connection with the targeting of Banco Delta Asia would be unfrozen. While at first the North Koreans showed their satisfaction at this announcement, three days later they refused to proceed with any talks as long as they could not access and transfer the money. This question seemed to be a technical one as banks were reluctant to deal with funds that might have them end up on the US sanctions list and the Chinese side decided to end the talks until North Korea was willing to proceed with the negotiations (Lague 2007).

Despite these disagreements, progress was being made on some important issues before another round took place. Whereas Japan and North Korea could not make any noteworthy progress in the abduction cases, disagreements and difficulties between North Korea and the US in the case of frozen assets were overcome in June. Provided that the US give a written assurance that the bank would not be added to a sanctions list, a Russian financial institute was chosen as an intermediary through which the funds were transferred from Banco Delta Asia to a North Korean institute in June (Tan 2007). This in turn opened the way for further steps by Pyongyang in connection to its promise to disclose details of its nuclear program. On July 14, an IAEA inspection team was sent to the Yongbyon nuclear facility to verify the shutdown of several facilities including power plants. The team then proceeded to reinstall monitoring devices and seals (IAEA 2007b).

On July 18, the first phase of the sixth round of the Six-Party Talks resumed. In the concluding statement from July 20, the parties agreed that recent progress has been received with great satisfaction. While repeating their previous commitments, they furthermore decided that the

DPRK should receive shipments of 950 000 tons of HFO labeled as economic, energy and humanitarian assistance. Moreover, the working groups were set to meet before September to discuss the details of the implementation of their respective aims. Other previous obligations were to be achieved through the principle of “action for action” (Press Communique of the Head of Delegation Meeting of the Sixth round of the Six-Party Talks 2007). In August, president Roh even mentioned the possibility of creating an Inter-Korean economic community and free trade zone to boost trade and restore North Korea’s economy in connection with an upcoming meeting between the two countries’ leaders for the first time since 2000 in Pyongyang (The Hankyoreh 2007).

During the second round from September 27 to 30, the DPRK agreed to disable its nuclear facilities. These actions were to be implemented under the leadership and funding of the US. Preparations were set to begin in two weeks’ time and the 5 MW graphite reactor at Yongbyon was scheduled to be disabled by December 31. Also, the DPRK agreed to fully disclose all nuclear programs until that date. In turn the US committed to removing the DPRK from its list of state sponsors of terrorism. Japan and the DPRK promised to continue working towards the normalization of their relations, the prospects of which seemed quite good after Fukuda Yasuo was elected prime minister, showing signs of a more relaxed and flexible stance towards North Korea (Second-Phase Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement 2007). These agreements were received in a very positive way by all parties, and worries about new allegations that the DPRK had given nuclear assistance to Syria following an Israeli air strike seemed not to have any negative effect on the negotiations.

In reality, the initial euphoria and optimism soon turned into renewed frustration as deadlines were not met. North Korea, while having shut down the facilities at Yongbyon, the status of other facilities was not disclosed. The amount of reprocessed plutonium reported by the North was lower than what experts had expected, but they only agreed to further disclosure after the other parties had fulfilled more of their commitments (Hecker 2008). These issues continued to pose a problem and dragged on until June 26 2008, when the DPRK finally submitted a detailed nuclear declaration, which was accepted by the US and led to the lifting of sanctions. In particular, George W. Bush took steps to remove measures implemented in accordance with the TWEA and notified Congress that he was seeking to remove the DPRK from the list of state sponsors of terror. Some

details, such as uranium-enrichment activities and connections to Syria were not addressed in the report (Shuster 2008).

The Six-Party Talks resumed the following month, with meetings taking place between July 10 and 12 2008. As mentioned before, in a statement released by the head of the Chinese delegation on receiving word of the DPRK's declaration, the parties agreed on the creation of a monitoring mechanism to oversee both efforts made by the DPRK and assistance provided by the other countries. A verification mechanism was established as well for the purpose of confirming and undertaking verification measures like visits to nuclear facilities, conducting interviews with involved workers and the evaluation of documents. The possibility to include the IAEA in this mechanism if necessary was added to the document. The disablement of the facilities at Yongbyon in concurrence with the supply of remaining HFO and non-HFO assistance was scheduled to be completed by the end of October, the exact date for the next meeting had not been fixed (Press Communiqué of the Heads of Delegation Meeting 2008).

Already two weeks later, the parties met again. This time however, the meeting took place in the margins of the ASEAN Regional Forum held in Singapore on July 24. One day earlier, the US, ROK, DPRK, China, Japan and Russia met for an official high-level conference. This was followed by direct talks between Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and North Korean foreign minister Pak Ui-Chun, where they discussed the implementation of the agreements reached during the Six-Party talks and how things could be sped up. Both the US and North Korea delegations expressed their satisfaction and belief that the objects of the joint agreement could be fulfilled in the future (Cooper 2008).

Despite these seemingly positive developments, certain details, or rather their interpretation continued to hamper denuclearization efforts and the implementation of the joint agreement. The Koreans declared that they had stopped the process of disabling their facilities on August 14. For now, the decision whether the facilities would be restored in the future was not yet made but on a list of options. From the North Korean point of view, the US was to blame for this decision as they had yet to effectively remove the DPRK from their list of states sponsoring terrorism. However, the US side insisted that it was the DPRK's move to first fulfill their commitments and proceed with the deconstruction of their nuclear facilities before the US would consider the requirements met and finally take the country off the list (The Hankyoreh 2008a). The US saw now violation of

the agreement on its part. In fact, the wording of the joint statement from February 2007 made no direct connection between the removal of the DPRK from the list of states sponsoring terrorists as a prerequisite for the country in turn proceeding with the disabling of nuclear facilities. Things seemed even more complicated as there had been rumors about Kim Jong-II's health. This was later confirmed by the NIS. There was strong evidence that he had suffered a stroke on August 14 and for nearly two months he was not seen in public. Yet it is not known what effect this might have had on the North Korean actions concerning its nuclear policy and government officials denied that there was any truth to the reports (The Hankyoreh 2008b). In late September, the IAEA declared that it had received a request by the DPRK to remove the seals and surveillance devices at the Yongbyon reprocessing plant it had reinstalled in 2007. This had been done by September 24. The IAEA were then informed about their inspector's barring from accessing the reprocessing facility and their plan to start the reprocessing of fissile material over the following week (IAEA 2008a). Two weeks later the IAEA was informed that access to all facilities at Yongbyon had been denied completely to their staff. The inspectors remained in Korea for the time being (IAEA 2008b).

It was another example of calculated escalation by the North Koreans. While targeting the IAEA inspectors and thus openly showing disrespect for their own commitments, the DPRK reached out to the US and invited them to negotiations. Chris Hill, the head of the delegation to the Six-Party Talks went to Pyongyang from October 1 to 3 also on behalf of the other parties involved to discuss the verification issue. Subsequently, the US published a list of agreements that had been achieved. The role of the IAEA was restored on paper by mentioning their consultative and support function in regard to verification measures. Inspectors were allowed to enter the facilities on October 13. Furthermore, the agreement declared that experts from all six states would be allowed to participate in the verification measures. Access was being granted to certain declared facilities. This was definitely a weakness in the agreement, as inspections of other sites and facilities would require mutual consent, giving the North every chance to withhold crucial information in case of the illicit conduct of activities related to its nuclear arms program. The DPRK also declared that it would continue the dismantling of facilities. In turn the US removed the country from the list of state sponsors of terrorism (State Department Special Briefing 2008).

At the following meeting between the six parties between December 8 to 11, disagreement about the focus of the talks resulted in a standstill. North Korea wanted to talk about the outstanding

deliveries of HFO and disablement of facilities at Yongbyon while refusing to discuss verification matters as agreed upon with the US in October. For instance, North Korea was not willing to agree on sample testing from nuclear sites which the US argued they had been assured of verbally. The other parties were also on the US' side, but the DPRK envoy did not concede this point. The meeting ended without making any progress. The parties couldn't even agree on when the next meeting should take place (Myers 2008). It ended, as did President Bush's last term in office, with what could be interpreted as the DPRK outsmarting the US and other parties. After the North had gotten what it wanted by being removed from the list of states sponsoring terrorism and financial sanctions had been lifted, they decided not to take any further steps on their behalf as everyone had anticipated, knowing that the current administration was not going to respond to that move and hoping to make a fresh start with the new administration in 2009 from a strengthened position.

3.7. US military presence in South Korea

The continued presence of US troops on South Korean Territory is one aspect of the conflict on the Korean Peninsula that bears great significance both for the DPRK and China. While it can be regarded as the only reason that hostilities did not flare up again after the 1953 armistice, North Korea sees them as an existential threat as well as the biggest obstacle to reunification, with the South Korean government and military as mere puppets. China's foreign policy is influenced greatly by its fear of having US troops at its border.

Since the 1950s, the United States has maintained a permanent military presence in South Korea. Originally these forces were deployed to liberate Korea from the North Korean invasion in 1950. After the Armistice Agreement following the Korean War, US troops remained in the South to deter any possible future ambitions by the DPRK for a renewed attempt at achieving reunification through military means. South Korea was at that time in no position to successfully defend itself against a neighbor that had the upper hand economically well into the 1970s.

The US presence is nowadays regarded by many as the natural state of things. Military personnel can be seen all over Korea and inter-ethnic marriages with American soldiers are widespread. US and Korean military equipment are mostly compatible or even identical and joint

exercises are taking place regularly. Nevertheless, the situation of close cooperation that can be observed nowadays was not anticipated by US or Korean officials before the outbreak of the Korean War. A prolonged military presence was rather a result of the North Korean Invasion and turned into a permanent mission over the years.

After the Second World War and Japanese Occupation ended in 1945, the southern part of the Korean Peninsula was administered by the USAMGIK under General John R. Hodge, while the North was under Soviet control. American troops landed in Incheon on September 8, with General Hodge accepting the surrender of the Japanese troops in Korea on day later in Seoul. Initially the division of the Korean peninsula into one Soviet and one American zone was supposed to be only temporary. The Soviet presence in Korea resulted from their decision to join the war against Japan shortly before the latter's capitulation. As the US was preoccupied with taking over Japan, Soviet troops marched into Northern China and Korea. Not willing to give up the Korean peninsula completely, the Americans decided to at least secure the southern part and offered their Soviet counterparts to set the 38th parallel as a demarcation line between the territories under their respective administration (Kim 2012, 365).

The US set up a military government in the south and had Syngman Rhee, a Korean who spent decades in the United States, return to Korea as a loyal political figure strongly opposed to the left and communists. The political left had significant influence and the US were afraid of them growing too strong, lest an alternative on the right could be established to guide the country's political future. The Americans also went on to uphold order by reorganizing the police and military. Just like in Germany, there was a great challenge in finding competent people who had not been tarnished by collaborating with the previous Japanese government and who were despised by the general population. Having the Japanese forces resume their duty for a transition period was also not feasible for obvious reasons. The solution was an official break with the police's colonial history, however in reality most officers active under Japanese rule were simply reemployed (Kuzmarov 2012, 3). The same was true for the South Korean military, which had to rely to a great extent on officers with previous military experience, mostly acquired during service in the colonial forces.

Initially a Trusteeship of Korea was supposed to be instated for a period of five years, guaranteed for by the US, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and China. A provisional government

created with the consent of both the US and the Soviet Union was part of the plan, but ultimately impossible to achieve because of the deep distrust and rising tensions between the two. Bilateral talks were conducted from 1946 to 1947 but to no avail, as the two sides could not agree on which political parties would be part of the provisional government. Retaining influence in Korea was too important to have it jeopardized by a possible future takeover by the opposing political camp.

Following the failed talks between the US and the Soviet Union about the future of a unified Korean state, the US brought the issue up in the United Nations General Assembly. In November 1947, it was decided that elections should be held in both the northern and southern parts of the peninsula, despite the Soviet Union's opposition and rejection of UN jurisdiction over the issue. With this resolution, the UN decided that Korea-wide elections should take place under the supervision of the UNTCOK consisting of nine countries including China as a step towards independence for the Korean people under the leadership of representatives which they had chosen themselves, as opposed to the governments established by foreign countries. The number of elected representatives should be proportionate to the population size of each zone, effectively giving the South more influence as it was the more populated part of Korea. Furthermore, foreign military forces were to leave Korean territory as fast as possible following the elections and subsequent creation of a Korean government and security forces (UN A/RES/112 (II) A 1947, 17).

The Soviet Union rejected the UN General Assembly's decision and refused to allow UNTCOK to start its operations in the North. Nonetheless, the US stuck to its approach of addressing the Korean question at the UN. Following a resolution at the General Assembly in February 1948, UNTCOK announced that it would oversee elections in those parts of Korea which it was not denied access to (Kim 2012, 380). Efforts to stop the separate elections in the South failed and Syngman Rhee was elected the first president of the ROK on July 20, 1948.

The Soviet Union withdrew its troops at the end of that year and the US followed in 1949 despite worries about the economic and political instabilities which were believed to be a real threat to the young Republic. US intelligence reports questioned that the ROK would survive lest the US withdrawal were postponed until 1950, giving the country time to adequately train and equip its military force. While an invasion was not deemed too likely, but not excluded as a possibility either, worries were focused on the effects of internal uprisings and infiltration by communists. UNCOK, the successor of UNTCOK was not seen as sufficient to prevent such developments (CIA 1949, 2).

Tensions between the DPRK and ROK continued after the withdrawal of foreign troops, involving border clashes and guerilla activities in the South. Finally, on 25 June 1950 North Korean troops started their attack on the ROK. Contrary to a common misconception, this decision was not made as a consequence of then Secretary of State Dean Acheson's remarks during a speech before the National Press Club in Washington D.C. Critics lamented that his definition of a defense perimeter excluded Korea while including Japan and the Philippines. However, he also mentioned that areas not part of this perimeter were under the protection of the US and UN in case of an attack (Truman Library 1950, 1). The KPA made quick advancements. Seoul fell already on the 28 of June, and air strikes by the US did not manage to slow the North Koreans down. The UNSC, taking advantage of the absence of the Soviet delegate adopted a resolution authorizing a military intervention as a response to the North Korean invasion (UNSC S/1657 1950, 6). This led the way towards a redeployment of US troops on the Korean Peninsula. In fact, the UN Security Council requested the formation of a Unified Command under US command on July 7 (UNSC S/1588 1950). In a move to further deepen cooperation with the US and further integration of both armies, President Rhee on 15 July 1950 transferred authority over the South Korean troops to General MacArthur or a commander assigned by the General for the duration of the war (Park 1975, 102). After the UNC grew rapidly in number, it proved to be successful in pushing back the KPA beyond the 38th parallel and marching deep into the North. China entered the war in October 1950. Following an atrocious war and the deaths of millions of Koreans and foreign soldiers, hostilities ended on 27 July 1953 following the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement in Panmunjom, establishing a military demarcation line along the 38th Parallel, similar to the pre-war status.

Thus, one lasting effect of the Korean War other than the solidification of partition was the redeployment of foreign forces, especially US forces which continues to this day. The presence of the USFK has been the topic of many discussions and criticisms both outside and inside Korea. On the other hand, it is welcomed by many as the most effective aspect of deterrence against a North Korean attack. For the DPRK, the US and its military presence is a recurring topic in political propaganda and rhetoric as well as one of the reasons brought up for the development of a nuclear capacity as a defensive tool against US imperialist aggression.

For more than two decades following the end of hostilities, UNC was in control of the majority of troops in the ROK, including the ROK armed forces. In 1978, partly due to the planned

withdrawal of forces by the US a new structure was created. The CFC included both South Korean and US military staff and was under the joint authority of both countries, while the commander in chief was a US general. The commander in chief combines command over CFC, UNC and USFK in one person. From 1994, peacetime OPCON over the South Korean forces was transferred back to the ROK government from the CFC. In case of war, the ROK forces will again be under US OPCON. This fact has been an issue in US-ROK relations and was brought up many times over the last decades, but so far a complete transfer of OPCON to the ROK has not happened. Roh Moon-Hyun was a strong proponent of transferring OPCON and discussed the topic with Bush. The agreed date in 2012 was postponed, and after the 2010 Cheonan incident the year 2015 was set as the new date. Again, things turned out differently. In 2014, both sides came to the conclusion that before handing over OPCON South Korea should have adequate capabilities to counter new threats resulting from the DPRK's advancements in nuclear and missile technology, envisaging the year 2020 as a possible date for completing the transfer (Jeong and Kim 2014).

Today, the USFK have around 28500 soldiers stationed on ROK territory, which includes Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Special Operations Command (Gamel 2016). These forces regularly engage in military exercises with their South Korean counterparts, leading to regular criticism both by the DPRK and China, who see them as contributing to the destabilization of the region.

3.8. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense System deployment

THAAD is a land based ballistic missile defense system developed by Lockheed Martin. It is used to destroy ballistic missile warheads before or after reentering the atmosphere up to 150 km high with kinetic energy (by collision, hit-to-kill technology). Its range is 200 km. One battery consists of truck-mounted launchers which are highly mobile and can be reloaded quickly, carrying up to eight interceptor rockets at a time. The Army/Navy Transportable Radar Surveillance (AN/TPY-2) can be moved by air or on land, with a range of 1000 km and high resolution giving the ability to distinguish between different sized objects. In connection with THAAD the AN/TPY-2 will be set to detect and track missiles in their terminal phase and guides the THAAD interceptor

rockets towards their target. Fire Control, which is also transportable by air or land is responsible for executing the interception of incoming rockets by combined use of the systems deployed. THAAD can be used together with other weapon systems like Patriot and Aegis. Until 2016 six Batteries have been delivered and activated by the US both on the mainland and on bases in Hawaii and Guam, the AN/TPY-2 has been deployed in Israel and Turkey.

Following several nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches aimed at developing medium and long range missiles capable of carrying nuclear war heads and other weapons of mass destruction by North Korea, South Korea and the US started to contemplate the possibility of deploying THAAD on the Korean peninsula. Formal talks were agreed upon in February 2016 after North Korea successfully launched a rocket carrying a satellite into space. Those satellite launches are generally considered to be a disguise for testing long range missiles. After months of talks and simultaneous meetings between US and Chinese officials to discuss sanctions on North Korea, the decision to deploy THAAD in Korea was made public on July 7 2016 (United States Forces Korea 2016).

China has always been strongly opposed to the deployment of THAAD in Korea, officially citing security concerns. As THAAD is only capable of destroying missiles aimed at striking Korea, there is no direct threat for China as there is no offensive capability. Not even rockets overflying Korea could be intercepted. Missile launches could be detected, but those missiles could not be intercepted by the system operating in Korea. If said missiles were targeting US territory, the Korean THAAD would also not be able to intercept them upon re-entry far away from its position. Anyway, the system would be set to terminal mode (detecting missiles upon re-entry in their terminal phase), not allowing it to detect Chinese intercontinental missiles in the first place. Changing the system into forward-based mode for this purpose would take several hours, rendering it incapable of detecting North Korean missiles aimed at South Korea for this period of time. China's concerns stem from the capability of the radar used in connection with THAAD, having a range that goes far beyond the Korean peninsula and thus going "far beyond the defense need of the Korea Peninsula" according to Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China 2016). The radar could be used to survey activities on the Chinese mainland, giving important information to South Korea and thus the US military.

Even before talks on THAAD deployment in Korea were officially underway, China has

on several occasions voiced its concerns and possible repercussions for China-Korea relations. In light of a possible deployment, China said that the only way to defuse the situation on the Korean peninsula is to continue the six party talks and find a solution together with all countries involved. THAAD would not be adding to South Korea's security, but turn out to be a highly destabilizing factor adding to the already high tensions in the whole region. Deploying THAAD would also show a lack of determination and effort by the US and South Korea to solve the question by political means (China Daily 2016).

Following the decision to deploy THAAD in Korea, China has repeatedly shown its dissatisfaction with the Korean government. According to the Chinese viewpoint, deployment of THAAD, by alienating China and Russia will damage the mechanism which has so far kept North Korea under certain control. Even worse, deployment of THAAD might push China and Russia to develop and update their nuclear arsenal to increase their chance of penetrating missile defense systems. A new arms race would be the consequence, including Japan which so far has refrained from turning its Defense Forces into a normal force and adapt their pacifist constitution accordingly (Zhao 2016).

One of the first sectors of the Korean economy to feel the negative effects of the Korean government's decision was the K-Pop industry. Enjoying increasing popularity around the world and especially in other Asian countries, Korean music and soap opera exports have become significant part of the Korean portfolio. Shortly after the decision to deploy THAAD had been made government media regulators in China stopped issuing approvals for new Korean programs. Korean movies disappeared from Chinese cinemas. The purge also affected Performers and actors who were barred from entering China for shows and appearances. Some have been replaced by Chinese actors instead (Ordillas 2016).

Korean companies also fear reprisals for their government's decision. In December, Chinese authorities launched a tax probe into Lotte Group, a Korean-Japanese Chaebol. According to the Korean embassy in Beijing, surprise inspections had been conducted in several localities and branches of the company. Even though inspections without previous notice have taken place before, the scale this time was exceptional (Lee 2016). Later that month China refused to allow non-scheduled charter flights between the two countries by Korean Airlines during Lunar New Year when many people go home to their families. China Southern and China Eastern Air followed and

turned down a request made by South Korea to add flights during the holiday season (Yonhap News Agency 2016). More recently Chinese authorities banned several cosmetic products, most of them from Korea ostensibly on grounds of change of ingredients, lack of documentation or exceeding the permitted level of bacteria in those products (Kim 2017). Although it cannot be said for sure that the deployment of THAAD has triggered this increased scrutiny by Chinese authorities, it resembles a pattern seen in similar situations in which china claims unfair treatment or an infringement on its sovereign rights.

4. AFTER THE SIX-PARTY TALKS

4.1. North Korea policy under the Obama administration

The continuation of multilateral seemed to be a great chance for everyone, something that a realignment of foreign policy under a new administration could allow for. Barack Obama's inaugural address included a passage that can be interpreted as an invitation to talks for those countries in the world that have had differences with the US. He mentioned working with former foes to reduce the nuclear threat and reaching out to those leaders who are willing to better their relations with the US and open up (Barack Obama's Inaugural Address 2009).

However, this kind of optimism was short lived. In April, North Korea conducted a missile test under the pretext of launching a satellite into space which has become a standard explanation by the regime in Pyongyang. On April 14, IAEA inspectors were told to leave the country and remove all surveillance equipment, as it would start reprocessing spent fuel again and activate all of its facilities (IAEA 2009). On May 25, the DPRK continued its provocations with conducting its second nuclear test. The UNSC reacted with the adoption of Resolution 1874 on June 12, which allowed for the searching of North Korean vessels for equipment that might be related to its nuclear program. Three days after the nuclear test, North Korea announced that it would terminate the Armistice Agreement from 1953. Troops both from the US and ROK in South Korea were set on the second highest level of alert and the US reassured its allies that it stood firmly behind their alliance (BBC 2009). Still, the new administration followed its principle of strategic patience and

working together closely with its allies in the Six-Party Talks. Secretary of State Clinton expressed her confidence in making progress with North Korea after diplomat Stephen Bosworth went to Pyongyang for meeting concerning a continuation of the Six-Party Talks, despite him leaving the country without a commitment by the Korean (VOA 2009). On March 26 2010, the ROK Navy ship Cheonan sank off the west coast of Korea killing 46 soldiers after being split in two. Suspicion immediately fell on the DPRK and an investigation including international experts was started. The South Korea-led investigation did come to the conclusion that the sinking must have been caused by a torpedo fired from a North Korea submarine, as the ROK informed the president of the UNSC in June 2010 and asked the council to take measures in light of this provocation (S/2010/281 2010). An attack on this scale would mean a significant increase in the nature of hostilities that the two countries have exchanged over the years since the signing of the Armistice Agreement. Considering the loss of life, it is only comparable to the terrorist attack from the late 1980s when North Korean agents planted explosives on a Korean Air flight, killing all 115 people on board.

The next violent incident followed on November 23 at Yeonpyeong Island, just about 11km south of the North Korean mainland. The ROK army fired some artillery projectiles in the context of a maritime exercise close to the NLL which is being disputed by the DPRK. After the ROK army refused to stop the live firing exercise after a request sent by the DPRK, North Korean artillery started attacking the Island. Claims that the South had fired shots into North Korean water were refuted, saying that they were aiming away from the North. South Korea returned fire and attacked the Island Mudo and rocket launchers on the mainland. When the shelling came to an end, South Korean casualties stood at two soldiers and two civilians killed with several more wounded. Numbers of casualties on the DPRK side could not be confirmed but according to the South Korean were much higher (Los Angeles Times 2010). Following the attack, US reaffirmed its commitment to the US-ROK alliance and prepared to engage a joint military exercise with the ROK army. The aircraft carrier George Washington was sent to the Yellow Sea from its base in Japan to join. On the diplomatic stage, China continued its attempt to convince the US, South Korea and Japan to restart the Six-Party Talks despite recent provocations. However, they first demanded actions by China to discipline its ally following the aggressions.

This attitude slowly changed after there were clear signs that the DPRK was making progress in its nuclear and missile programs. American scientists were shown around nuclear

facilities at Yongbyon in mid-November. According to a report published, coincidentally, on the day before the attack on Yeonpyeong Island, North Korea had managed to expand its capabilities through its own efforts, no more relying on foreign help. The facilities were modern and comparable to those of developed countries. While they appeared to be used for peaceful purposes at the moment, they could be used for uranium enrichment as part of an effort to produce nuclear warheads. Stanford scientist Siegfried Hecker estimated that plutonium production and reprocessing, while currently dormant, could be resumed within half a year. After that enough plutonium can be made for the production of one warhead every year. So far, he estimated the already available amount of plutonium to be sufficient for up to eight nuclear weapons (Hecker 2010, 4-6).

The contents of the report were worrisome and called for action, but at the same time offered the opportunity to convince the North Korean to replace their military nuclear program fully with a civilian version. The following year, both South Korean and US officials conducted separate bilateral meetings with North Korean counterparts. The first US-DPRK bilateral meeting took place in July and ended with statements by both sides that they were interested in open discussions about denuclearization. They met again in October, going more into detail about their respective goals in terms of putting a stop to the nuclear program and how to reestablish a frame for formal talks. The US insisted on stopping the enrichment program while the DPRK stressed its desire to keep operating its facilities which it insisted were only used for peaceful purposes (Cumming-Bruce 2011).

On Saturday, December 17 2011 Kim Jong-Il died of a heart attack at the age of 70 (69 according to North Korean records). Talks did not resume during this time and South Korean and Japanese troops were set on high alert as the following transition of power was considered a great threat to stability. These worries turned out to be false and with Kim Jong-Un the third member of the Kim family inherited his father's place at the top of the North Korean state. Still, no one really knew what kind of foreign policy they could expect from this young leader.

Good news followed in February, as US and DPRK emissaries congregated for a third meeting to further elaborate on the points agreed upon during the previous meeting. North Korea agreed on a moratorium on nuclear tests, uranium enrichment and long-range missile launches. IAEA inspectors would be allowed back into the country to resume their verifying and monitoring

activities. In return, the US offered substantial food aid and assured the North that sanctions were not targeting the livelihood of the people (State Department Press Statement 2012).

However, only weeks later the DPRK announced that it would proceed to launch another satellite into orbit. The US reacted with complaints that this would constitute a breach of the recent agreement which forbade long-range missile launches. According to the Korean narrative, the two were not related and as a result they did not breach any of their agreements. The US made clear that were the DPRK to proceed with the launch, future relations would be severely damaged and the provision of food aid could not be guaranteed in this climate (State Department Daily Press Briefing 2012). Kim Jong-Un proved his defiance and led to disillusionment among optimists when he ordered the launch of an Unha-3 rocket carrying a satellite on April 12, shattering all progress made during previous meetings. Another satellite launch in December led to the adoption of Resolution 2087 in January 2013. Not impressed by this response, North Korea conducted its third nuclear test exactly three weeks later, which was in turn followed by Resolution 2094 that led to a further tightening of sanctions. In a strong signal to the North Korean government, Bank of China cut all its ties with the Foreign Trade Bank of the DPRK, following a unilateral move by the US to freeze all assets and transactions (Bradsher and Cumming-Bruce 2013). So far China had always been hesitant in imposing sanctions against the regime. Since then, China has continued to take a much firmer stance towards Korea and continued provocations in the form of nuclear and ballistic missile tests, following through on sanctions according to UNSC resolutions and blocking coal shipments from North Korea. At the same time, Beijing keeps stressing its conviction that ultimately the crisis can only be solved through negotiations.

The Obama administration failed to make any progress with regards to the nuclear issue on the peninsula. At a time when South Korean presidents Lee Myung-Bak and Park Geun-Hye both followed a hardline position on North Korea, the strength of the US-ROK alliance grew but simultaneously the DPRK managed to make huge steps in its nuclear and ballistic missile programs. In this sense, Obama's policy of strategic patience has not been able to make a palpable contribution to a reduction of tensions in the region.

4.2. The Trump administration and the Korean Peninsula

With Donald J. Trump taking over office from Barack Obama as 45 President of the United States, foreign policy analysts and governments all over the world are struggling to anticipate future developments in the US approach on foreign issues. It has neither helped them that Trump has never held office and never had to have a firm standpoint on any issue, nor that his own statements and those of his fellow campaigners have too often been vague or inconsistent. The only thing that can be said with great probability is that US foreign policy will not follow the status quo. In regards to NATO, Trump has repeatedly insisted during his campaign that the member states should respect their commitment and fulfil their proclaimed aim of spending at least 2% of GDP on their militaries. According to Trump, the current situation was a sign of foreign nations exploiting the good will of the US. With him as president, those countries would need to pay their share in return for protection by the US or provide for their own security in the future. All in all, the US focus in the future would lie more on economic aspects, making issues like intervention abroad and nuclear deterrence dependent on them (Sanger, Haberman 2016). In regard to Kim Jong-Un and North Korea specifically, Trump stated both that he would be willing to meet the current leader of the DPRK while also lamenting in the wake of the alleged hydrogen bomb test that China didn't do enough to put more pressure on the country. If China were to choose to stay idle in this matter, economic retaliation could be an option (Byrnes 2016). Oddly enough Trump also found words of praise for Kim Jong-Un's way of handling matters at home and getting rid of political opposition (Kopan 2016).

From April 6 to 7, President Trump met with Chinese President Xi in Florida to discuss issues concerning trade relations between the two countries as well as North Korea. Trump had previously criticized China as doing too little to pressure the regime in Pyongyang and for alleged unfair practices in regard to currency manipulations, hurting US companies and workers. During the meeting, however both sides managed to keep calm and not let the event be overshadowed by too much emphasize on their differences. The Chinese President extended an invitation to his American counterpart which was accepted, and both sides stressed the importance of and progress made in the relation between the two countries. The Chinese side also expressed their wish to deescalate the situation on the Korean Peninsula without resorting to military measures (Süddeutsche Zeitung 2017).

On April 7 Donald Trump stressed the importance of the US-ROK alliance in his conversation with Hwang Kyo-Ahn, currently Acting President following the National Assembly's vote to impeach Park Geun-Hye (The White House 2017). One day before, while the meeting with Xi was still ongoing, the US responded to the alleged use of chemical weapons on Khan Shaykhun on April 4 with the launching of 59 Tomahawk missiles from vessels in the Mediterranean Sea against a Syrian Air Force base at Shayrat outside of Homs on April 6 (Katkov 2017). This stands in contrast to Obama's policy in Syria, which did not involve direct attacks on the troops of Bashar Al-Assad despite crossing a "red-line" in previous alleged chemical weapons attacks. It also sent a strong signal to the North Korean regime that the US would not hesitate to react to provocations.

As April 15 came closer, concerns over possible missile or nuclear tests grew. On that day, the DPRK celebrate the birthday of Kim Il-Sung with festivities and a huge military parade in Pyongyang. This time was the 105th anniversary, expected to lead to bigger celebrations than normal. Military equipment was displayed, including what looked like a Korean version of an ICBM transported on trucks. The Pukgukson-2 medium or intermediate-range ballistic missile capable of carrying nuclear warheads was also on display. Earlier in 2017, North Korea showed the world that it had by now mastered solid-fuel technology for this type of rocket. This has grave implications for the ROK and US, as solid-fuel rockets can be launched much faster compared to liquid-fuel rockets, requiring less time for preparation, making them more stable for transportation and thus much less easy to detect. Preemptive strikes will be much harder to carry out and may in any case be much less effective as launch vehicles can no longer be identified based on the additional equipment needed for fueling liquid-fuel rockets and change their position much more freely (Fisher 2017).

On April 16, another missile, possibly medium-range, was launched. The test failed as the rocket failed and exploded shortly after. It did send a clear message to the ROK and US, as not only coincided with recent celebrations but also the visit of US Vice President Mike Pence in South Korea. Pence proceeded to pay a visit to Panmunjom, pledging that the US would defend its ally in case the DPRK chose to attack, be it with nuclear or conventional weapons. All options were on the table in a US response. Pence also agreed with Hwang that the deployment of THAAD should be sped up, partly because the upcoming presidential election in South Korea added uncertainty whether the newly elected president would support a deployment of this defensive system amidst

Chinese objections (Neidhart 2017). Russia shares China's view that THAAD should be seen as a destabilizing factor in the region. Nevertheless, following the arrival of parts of the system in South Korea in March, deployment continued in April and US forces conducted a military exercise on at sea towards the end of April.

On April 28, the UNSC gathered for a special meeting on North Korea with US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson serving as President of the Council. Foreign ministers of the other members were present as well as the foreign minister of South Korea. Tillerson and his Korean and Japanese counterparts Yun Byung-se and Fumio Kishida met in advance to find a shared response to the Korean issue. In his speech, Tillerson confirmed the US goal of a denuclearized Korean Peninsula and the discontinuation of the DPRK's nuclear and ballistic missile programs as a prerequisite for peace and stability. He specifically mentioned the unreliability of the regime over the past decades which made it unlikely that they would change their behavior if the international community continued to take only reactive instead of proactive measures under the sanctions framework. It was time to increase pressure, both diplomatically and economically in a concerted effort by all countries. To achieve this, Tillerson stressed the US commitment to the measures agreed upon in resolutions 2321 and 2270 from 2016, adding that all countries should also downgrade their diplomatic relations with the DPRK. In connection to the sanctions, he announced that the US would target not only entities and individuals from the DPRK but also from third countries involved in financial dealings with the DPRK. With regards to China, following repeated similar statements by Trump, Tillerson emphasized the country's unique and pivotal role in curbing currency flows used for military programs and the overall effectiveness of sanctions. Also, he especially highlighted the US stance regarding negotiations and the DPRK's fulfillment of commitments and requirements according to UN resolutions. The US would not "negotiate their way back to the negotiating table" and simply fulfilling the precepts of resolutions and other agreements which the North had previously violated would not be rewarded. Only after that would the US be ready to engage in negotiations. The ROK was in line with US demands, adding that the international community should not forget the threat posed by the DPRK's chemical and biological WMD capabilities and requesting the UNSC to discuss a further tightening of sanctions and even considering the expulsion of the DPRK from UN altogether. Japan raised the issue of abductees whose whereabouts are still unclear.

China on the other hand refuted the Idea that it had a special role in pushing North Korea to comply to its commitments and give up its nuclear and missile programs. They see the right approach not only or mainly in the implementation of sanctions (even though they called on all states to implement previous resolutions), but saw multilateral negotiations as crucial. The involved parties should not wait for one of them to make the first step, but proceed by making parallel steps towards decreasing tensions and reaching China's main goal of a denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Unlike the US and their allies, China sees previous diplomatic efforts and especially the Six-Party Talks not as a mere failure, but in fact as the only time that a certain degree of stability was achieved. China called both on North Korea and the US to stop their nuclear weapons and missile programs and military exercises with the ROK respectively. As expected, China also demanded that the US and ROK immediately stop their deployment of THAAD as it damages trust among states as well as damage the strategic security not only of China but other countries in the region as well (UNSC Special Meeting on North Korea 2017).

CONCLUSION

The goal of this research was to answer why previous multilateral attempts at resolving the issue on the Korean Peninsula have been ineffective and how international relations theories may be able to give a satisfactory explanation and even let us make predictions about future developments. As the previous chapters have shown with regards to the nuclear and missile crisis and the Six-Party Talks, theories can shed light on these complex matters and help disentangle them. All three theoretical frameworks that were discussed had some validity with regards to some aspects of the cases that were addressed here. Especially neorealism and constructivism give convincing explanations as to why proliferation has continued on the peninsula. However, shortcomings were also apparent with regards to each paradigm, thus showing the need for a different approach. Combining different paradigms through the use of analytic eclecticism provides the possibility to broaden the focus and reduce the risk of missing important aspects and details following strict adherence to the precepts a single framework. This has shown that both neorealism and constructivism can give convincing explanations of why proliferation has continued and why multilateral efforts were doomed to failure. The reason for this can be found not only in the security concerns of the countries involved, but also in their identities and expectations. Subsequently, this leads to the conclusion that proliferation has continued because the North Korean concern about security and survival has focused on reaching the highest possible deterrence capabilities, nuclear warheads and adequate delivery systems. Both initial research questions are tightly intertwined. The reason for the failure of multilateral efforts to resolve the crisis can ultimately be found in the answer to the question about proliferation. Both security, identity and the prestige of the North Korean leadership has given utmost importance to the successful development of nuclear capabilities. Not even fundamental threats to stability like the famine in the 1990s could discourage the DPRK from continuing their provocations in return for much needed aid shipments. Similarly, the nuclear and missile programs were never considered negotiable in exchange for especially economic help by South Korea. North Korean negotiating tactics were aimed at getting concessions from other countries while promising as little as possible in return and breaking previous agreements that were not considered useful anymore. Together with the often considerable

protraction of negotiations has provided the country with the space it needed for advancing its nuclear and missile program significantly over the last decades.

While multilateral efforts turned out to be ineffective in curtailing proliferation so far, they might be useful in the future. The hope of a denuclearized Korean Peninsula is gone, the DPRK will neither stop its nuclear program nor will it dismantle the existing warheads. The analysis suggests that after reaching the desired level of deterrence, there is no reason to believe that the security dilemma will continue to lead the countries involved on a downward spiral which must end in escalation. Instead, tensions could then have reached their peak, providing an opportunity for the countries to engage in cooperation in some fields and establish institutions for those means. And even though the Six-Party Talks have had rather disappointing results, they might at least stand at the beginning of more promising multilateral frameworks and negotiations that could take place in coming years.

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