

## **U.S.-North Korea Nuclear Talks: Pyongyang's Changing Attitude and U.S. Choice**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

**N**orth Korea's nuclear development has been the focus of interest in the United States and the rest of the international community since Washington and Pyongyang signed the Agreed Framework in 1994. The U.S. paid particular attention to the nuclear facility inspection of Kumchang-ri in 1999, and possible nuclear cooperation with Pakistan, Iran and Iraq. Past nuclear negotiations between the U.S. and North Korea were more of a diplomatic issue to be approached from a long-term perspective, than an urgent discussion of military and security matters. Talks centered on whether to lend cooperation and support for the survival of North Korea.

However, the nuclear weapons development program recently acknowledged by North Korea demonstrates qualitatively different characteristics, since it has the potential to threaten U.S. security in the near future. The nuclear threat posed by North Korea is now real, necessitating that the United States, as well as South Korea, change their approach.

The negotiation composition has developed from bilateral to multilateral six-party talks, and the North's attitude has moved from vague to increasingly demanding. Against this backdrop, characteristic changes in the nuclear crisis have altered the attitudes of participating countries toward negotiations.

This paper deals with the nuclear negotiations between the U.S. and North Korea. The first phase of the paper covers the process leading up to the Geneva agreement and the second phase follows up to the six-party talks. Changes in the negotiation attitudes of Washington and Pyongyang, respectively, will be discussed, focusing on the shift in North Korea's negotiating tactics and corresponding changes on the U.S. side. In order to evaluate the negotiations, the paper will review environmental conditions, negotiation purposes, and strategies and tactics of the two countries.

#### THE FIRST U.S.-NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR NEGOTIATIONS

##### *Negotiation Environment and the Nature of the North Korean Nuclear Issue*

In 1994, as nuclear talks progressed in Geneva, the international community saw the emergence of a new world order dominated by the superpower, the United States. The U.S. aimed to establish a global peace regime that could control weapons of mass destruction, and it focused its attention on renewing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) that would expire in 1995.

The new Clinton administration adopted an engagement policy, avoiding a hostile hard-line stance against North Korea.<sup>1)</sup> In

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1) Park Jong-chul, "Pyongyang-Washington Conflict Structure" (in Korean), *Unification Policy Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (2003), p.127.

particular, the administration, with scant knowledge of the Pyongyang regime, felt that a positive, compromising approach based on engaging North Korea was the easiest way to maintain the NPT regime. Japan, which opposed a nuclearized North Korea, adopted a carrot-and-stick approach to actively persuade and pressure the North at the same time.<sup>2)</sup> However, the international position of Japan, as it was allied with the United States, prevented it from dealing with North Korea independently.

On the other hand, China and Russia took a neutral position regarding the possibility of North Korea's nuclear development, doubting that Pyongyang really had such capability.<sup>3)</sup> China, the country with the biggest clout over North Korea, did not exert pressure, given Pyongyang's instability. And since China's support for denuclearization of the Korean peninsula was traditionally based on its opposition to U.S. nuclear deployment, it was relatively friendly toward the North. While Russia was also against North Korea's nuclear development, it showed little concern, believing that realization of such a program was impossible. Moreover, given its weakened influence in Northeast Asia after the collapse of the Soviet Union, it was reluctant to actively support the U.S.-led effort to deter North Korea's nuclear development.

A modest and rational trend favoring dialogue was created to resolve North Korea's nuclear issues on its withdrawal from the NPT, which also allowed North Korea to be more autonomous in its

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2) Japan adamantly insisted on North Korea's acceptance of nuclear inspections as a prerequisite to establishing official relations between Japan and North Korea, and even sought to establish a theater missile defense system with the U.S. In the meantime, however, economic restrictions were absent as there had been a rise in consignment processing trade in 1993. Korean Institute for National Unification, "Unification Environment and Inter-Korean Relations: 1993-1994" (in Korean), *Annual Situation Report 93*, pp. 74-75.

3) Korean Institute for National Unification, "Unification Environment and Inter-Korean Relations 1995-1995" (in Korean), *Annual Situation Report 94-2*, 1994. 12.

nuclear development policy. Meanwhile, North Korea was experiencing economic and social difficulties that necessitated foreign aid and cooperation. Thus, it also needed to improve relations with South Korea and the U.S., the only countries it could depend on for substantial aid in the increasingly competitive international community.

Internally, North Korea needed defensive security measures to protect its regime. In other words, it needed a tangible way to maintain national pride, which, in turn, would secure the loyalty of its citizens. Development of nuclear weapons was thus a means to unite the people, not only in the era of Kim Il-sung, but also during the period of post-Kim Il-sung transition.

In sum, North Korea's nuclear development was a major tool for defending its regime politically and militarily. Pyongyang, which felt that it was impossible to renounce the nuclear development program permanently, secured its regime by reserving its options on past nuclear development; while at the same time, it was able to escape outside pressure and economic distress by agreeing to a limited freeze on its nuclear program.<sup>4)</sup>

#### *Evaluation of North Korean Negotiations*

The negotiation environment leading up to the Agreed Framework was the consequence of North Korea's nuclear development, the nature of which was two-fold: to defend its regime and to win concessions from the United States and the international community. Thus, North Korea partially retained the capability of possessing nuclear weapons, while giving up future nuclear development, so as to maximize its negotiation interests.

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4) North Korea first showed a change in attitude in the inter-Korean talks in 1990s, seeking benefits from negotiations. Kim Do-tae, "North Korea's National Interests and Change in Attitude during Negotiations" (in Korean), *Negotiation Study*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (2001), pp. 86-88.

The North's objectives were, therefore, double-edged. One objective was to obtain security assurances for the regime and economic assistance from the U.S., leading to a genuine negotiations and an agreement. The other purpose was to maintain nuclear capability through a nuclear freeze, rather than complete dismantling. In other words the talks were "pseudo negotiations." The North had a hidden purpose, which differed from the negotiation agenda. Finally, the negotiations between North Korea and the U.S. ended inconclusively and with past nuclear activity unverified. This held great advantage for North Korea.

North Korea's strategy and tactics in the negotiations followed traditional negotiating methods. In order to proceed in its pseudo-negotiations, it adopted the "contending" and "inaction" strategies. And for genuine negotiations, it adopted the "yielding" strategy.<sup>5)</sup> These strategies effectively concealed their dual objectives from the counterpart, allowing Pyongyang to achieve the two goals simultaneously.

The tactics, following the dual concerns model, were also complex: The North employed tactics of delay, rejection, alienation, and sabotage of agreement. It also repeatedly tried to split the agenda (salami tactics) to earn more outcomes.<sup>6)</sup>

North Korea followed a typical pattern. First, it used various strategies and tactics simultaneously; Secondly, it started with a hard-line approach and then moved to a softer one in order to secure the most advantageous position, or to gain the most by yielding the

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5) The types of negotiation strategy this paper mentioned here were classified by Dean G. Pruitt, "Strategy in Negotiations," in Victor A. Kremenyuk, ed., *International Negotiation* (San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, 1991), p. 78.

6) Examples of how these tactics are used in negotiations show that North Korea dealt separately with the suspicion over its nuclear weapons at each stage, and rejected the U.S demand for IAEA inspections and negotiations with South Korea. The agenda addition strategy also puzzled the U.S. Typical negotiation methods of North Korea are delay, agenda separation, and agenda addition, which are applied in three stages.

least; Thirdly, it regarded the counterpart as a competitor, not a collaborator, which enhances the effect of concessions and justifies their refusal to compromise.

In the first phase of Pyongyang-Washington negotiations, it can be assessed that North Korea obtained the suspension on the basis of verification of its past nuclear activities as well as other benefits in return for a freeze on its future nuclear activities. The negotiations were also meaningful in inducing North Korea to make partial concessions.

#### *U.S. Choice*

In order to understand how the United States accepted the North Korean negotiations method, we can look at the conditions, purpose and strategy of the U.S. in the first phase of negotiations.

In this phase, the U.S. had to face disadvantageous negotiation conditions: First was the time constraint. It had only three months to prevent North Korea from withdrawing from the NPT; second, the Clinton administration evaded a hostile, hard-line stance under its engagement and involvement policy; third, the United States had high expectations that South and North Korea, the two parties involved in the settlement of Korean peninsula issues, would solve their problems through inter-Korean dialogue. The United States thus, continued to include the principle of denuclearization of the Korean peninsula in its requests to North Korea; finally, the U.S. lacked an effective coordinator who could build trust in the negotiations with North Korea and ensure smooth progress.

For Washington, the purpose of negotiations was to deter North Korea's nuclear development program, evidenced by continuous efforts to induce the North to accept IAEA inspections. Under disadvantageous conditions, the U.S. at least hoped to secure the North's return to the NPT regime. In Washington's view at the time, the North's program did not directly threaten U.S. security. Rather, it

hindered efforts to maintain stability in Northeast Asia and the world.

Consequently, what the United States needed was not a competitive strategy to overwhelm North Korea, but a rational solution to the issue. It did not see the verification of North Korea's past nuclear activities as a serious matter; thus, it could compromise applying the "cost-benefit" theory. Washington thus agreed to provide heavy fuel oil and two light water reactors as part of the Geneva agreement.

During negotiations, the U.S. position was quite vulnerable to North Korea's negotiation tactics. In the race against time, North Korea's traditional delays, brinkmanship, threats and hindrances added to the difficulties. In response, the United States chose soft-line, compromising tactics to continue the dialogues, setting minimal goals and resorting to concessions and compromise.

#### **THE SECOND U.S.-NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR NEGOTIATION**

The nuclear crisis arose again when North Korea acknowledged its clandestine uranium enrichment program during U.S. envoy James A. Kelly's visit to North Korea (October 3-5, 2002). At the time, the two sides traded verbal blows without actually meeting face-to-face; that is, until the three-way talks got under way among North Korea, China and the U.S. through intermediation by China (April 23-25, 2003). In these talks, North Korea put forward what they called "a bold approach," which was rejected by the U.S. The two sides, in a standoff, agreed to hold six-party talks at China's urging. On August, 27-29, 2003, the first round of six-party talks was held in Beijing. However, North Korea downplayed the first six-party talks and announced that it would not attend the second round of six-party talks, to which it had already agreed. However, the United States and other neighboring countries persuaded the

North to attend the talks, which were held in Beijing, February 25-27, 2004.

*The Negotiation Environment and the Nature of the Crisis*

By autumn 2002, the international environment had already been fundamentally changed with the launch of U.S. President George W. Bush's hard-line administration and the September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001. President Bush was leading the effort to create an active and participatory world order and establish an anti-terror cooperation network to defend against non-conventional and asymmetric threats, and in Northeast Asia, it had secured the participation of South Korea, Japan, China and Russia. At that time, Bush also branded North Korea as one of the "axis of evil" countries, together with Iraq and Iran, and actively pushed for North Korea to abandon its nuclear development in a complete and verifiable way.<sup>7)</sup>

In the meantime, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi visited North Korea in October 2002, and during meetings, the North acknowledged its abduction of Japanese citizens and its responsibility for the December 2001 infiltration of one of its vessels into Japanese waters. However, Tokyo has increased pressure on North Korea, along with Washington.<sup>8)</sup>

China, as a political and military sponsor of North Korea, has worked to maintain peace on the Korean peninsula. Since the September 11 terror attacks, however, China has made it clear that it would work with the U.S. to combat terrorism. It is opposed to the

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7) For the U.S. perception of North Korean nuclear weapons, refer to Rha Mi-kyung, "Nuclear Political Change in the U.S. and the Recent Situation on the Korean Peninsula" (in Korean), a paper presented at a National Unification Council seminar, July 28, 2003.

8) Japan and the U.S. held vice foreign minister-level talks on June 10 and agreed to the need to increase pressure against North Korea. *Chosun Ilbo*, June 12, 2003.



nuclear development of North Korea<sup>9)</sup> and supports the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and the IAEA's nuclear inspection of North Korea.

Russia has been friendly with North Korea, depending on it for much-needed economic cooperation. Yet, it has also been opposed to North Korea's nuclear development and terrorism. Since Russia didn't consider North Korea's nuclear capability as significant, however, it has been relatively inactive in opposing it.<sup>10)</sup>

Against this backdrop, the Northeast Asian region became the target of Bush's hard-line policy after September 11. As mentioned, China and Russia, traditional supporters of North Korea, are opposed to North Korea's nuclear development.<sup>11)</sup> The United States, as it did in Afghanistan and Iraq, has not retreated from its anti-terror and anti-nuclear policy.

Meanwhile, inter-Korean relations were relatively amicable, evidenced by the agreement on the reconnection of the Seoul-Shinuiju and East Coast Railways. The agreement indicated that North Korea wanted to deal with its difficulties through good relations with South Korea, as it offered a slim chance of outside support.

October 2002 marked the time when North Korea felt most isolated: military threats caused by the U.S. anti-terrorist policy, lack of support, numerous economic difficulties, and the growing discontent of its citizens, all added up to a threat to the regime. Given this, it is presumed that the North's position on nuclear weapons has also changed.

In the past, North Korea regarded its nuclear program as a means to confront South Korea and the United States, but it also became a negotiation tool to overcome economic hardship and international

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9) Korean Institute for National Unification, "Unification Environment and Inter-Korean Relations 002-2003" (in Korean), *Annual Situation Report 2002*, p. 61.

10) *Ibid*, p.70.

11) *Ibid*, pp. 59-70.

isolation. This can also be inferred from the fact that North Korea is trying to improve relations with the U.S. and Japan. Under increasing pressure from the U.S. and the international community to abandon its nuclear program, North Korea is using it to get as many benefits as possible.

Second, North Korea is using the programs to strengthen government authority. If it gives up nuclear weapons, it wants the maximum in return in order to secure public support at home.

Third, nuclear weapons are a way to guarantee the safety of the regime. North Korea regards a non-aggression agreement with the United States as the biggest benefit it could get from the negotiations.

#### *North Korea's Assessment of the Negotiations*

The purpose of the second U.S.-North Korea negotiations was to secure a means to guarantee survival—or more specifically, non-aggression in political and military terms and economic aid from the United States, evidenced by North Korea's firm insistence on bilateral talks with Washington.

North Korea choose the type of agenda, purpose, strategy and tactics that perfectly suited those negotiations. It implemented a "yielding" strategy for practical earnest negotiations and a "problem-solving" strategy. "Contending" and "inaction" strategies of the past diminished. North Koreans cooperated to achieve their purposes but never compromised on benefits they intended to reap from the negotiations. As part of this strategy, North Korea actually adopted the method of "first concede and then request."

It used brinkmanship and "salami" tactics to intimidate the opposing parties and to extract more benefits. Withdrawal from the NPT, reprocessing of spent fuel rods, acknowledgement of possession of nuclear weapons, and cancellation of the talks are typical examples of this brinkmanship. The bold approach or staged resolution suggested by North Korea is typical of the benefit-seeking

or “salami” tactics. All these tactics are based on an aggressive attitude and complex demands, and they effectively produce agreement at the end of the negotiations through concessions and compromise.

What is notable is that North Korea is no longer using delay or sabotage tactics as it once did. North Korea offered dialogue during the stalemate, and tried to compromise as evidenced by the bold approach, participation in multilateral talks, request for a non-aggression agreement from the United States, and recognition of a third party as an intermediary in multilateral talks. Such actions indicate that North Korea is earnest in its efforts to gain profits through negotiations by avoiding delay or sabotage. Presumably, North Korea is suspicious of the mediated format,<sup>12)</sup> and thus, insisted on bilateral talks with the United States during the trilateral talks and the six-party talks. In the eyes of the North, a mediator makes it more difficult to gain what it wants since the third-party countries are participating in the U.S.-led group.

In the second negotiations, North Korea insisted that it couldn't give up its nuclear weapons without security assurances from the United States, and it never yielded on that point. North Korea understands well what it needs to achieve in negotiations against the hard-line policy of the United States, for it will determine the country's very survival.

#### *U.S. choice*

In the second U.S.-North Korea negotiations, North Korea's nuclear development was not a simple diplomatic issue for the United States, but rather a possible terrorist threat to U.S. security. The issue, therefore, has become not only part of its global strategy,

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12) North Korea limited China and Russia to the role of mediators rather than as interested parties to the negotiations. In fact, North Korea asked for security assurances from the U.S., but not them. *Chosun Ilbo*, August 29, 2003.

but also an independent part. In other words, the U.S. has its own stake in deterring the North Korean nuclear program. This is a departure from the nature of the first negotiations, and shows that the options of the United States have shifted.<sup>13)</sup>

Since the United States had already used physical force to deal with Afghanistan and Iraq, it couldn't backpedal, using compromise and concession with the North.<sup>14)</sup> Washington has consistently maintained that North Korea should first abandon its nuclear weapons in a transparent and irreversible manner, and then the U.S. would provide security assurances and economic aid.

To that end, it adopted a contending strategy while patiently attending the dialogues to solve the problem. It brought China and Russia together as part of the pressure against North Korea, emphasizing global cooperation against terrorism and destabilizing threats. In doing so, the U.S. delegated responsibility for solving the North Korean nuclear issue.

Tactics on which the United States relies include: delay tactics, containment and intimidation, and isolating the North through the multilateral approach. Those aggressive, hard-line tactics efficiently nullified North Korea's traditional ploys—salami tactics and brinkmanship.

The U.S. choice of the multilateral approach is also quite practical because the United States needs a watchdog or coordinator who can

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13) Dr. Huh Moon-young from Korean Institute for National Unification said that the effort to deter North Korea from developing nuclear weapons is related to the U.S. attempt to maintain hegemony in Northeast Asia, which could lead to a crisis on the Korean peninsula. Therefore, without a comprehensive solution, it is hard to expect any concession and compromise from the U.S. (In an interview, November 21, 2003).

14) In the U.S. there are conflicts between the hardliners and the moderates. However, both sides agree that North Korea's nuclear program should be stopped. Resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue requires that North Korea give up nuclear weapons and that it refrains from producing or exporting any nuclear byproducts.

detect any hint of renegeing, or refusal to follow through on the agreement. Therefore, Washington promotes the idea that the nuclear issue is a common threat to countries surrounding the Korean peninsula.<sup>15)</sup>

In the second negotiations, the United States recognized the nuclear issues as not only a threat to the regional stability in Northeast Asia but also to that of the United States. In seeking a resolution, the U.S. sought concessions from North Korea first, so as to guarantee agreement of the two sides. This kind of negotiation method, to pursue what is concrete and certain, was the result of Washington's first experience with Pyongyang.

#### COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE TWO NEGOTIATIONS

##### *A Shift in the Negotiation Attitude of North Korea*

A factor that modified North Korea's attitude was the shift in how its surrounding neighbors perceived the North Korean nuclear program. For example, in recent negotiations, Russia and China have been opposed to nuclear development as they now realize the possibility of such development. On the other hand, North Korea wants to see concrete benefits for dismantling its nuclear program but is reluctant to be pressured, even by Moscow or Beijing.

The first negotiations were characterized by confrontation between North Korea and the United States, but now there is more focus on maintaining the North Korean regime. As a result, North Korea has shifted its negotiation methods.

As for the negotiation objectives, in the Geneva negotiations,

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15) Choi Jin-wuk, "The Course for North Korea-U.S. Relations and the U.S. Policy," a paper presented at a seminar hosted by the Korean Association of International Politics, September 23, 2003.

North Korea refused to compromise on its past nuclear activities, therefore resorting to limited (pseudo) negotiations. Recently, however, it is more interested in pursuing genuine negotiations, considering what benefits it might gain. North Korea wants not only security assurances, but also enough economic assistance to become a full-fledged member of the international community.

North Korea preferred bilateral to multilateral negotiations, and resisted the notion of Russia and China as mediators. Pyongyang was also concerned that the range of support from South Korea and Japan would be limited in the multilateral negotiation scheme.

The change in negotiations strategy resulted from a difference in negotiation methods. In the Geneva negotiations, Pyongyang valued the inaction and contending strategies that made progress difficult—but during the earnest negotiations of the second phase, it relied on problem-solving and yielding, preparing for options and considering benefits that might come from the negotiations.

But the change in strategy never changed their tactics. North Korea traditionally prefers aggressive tactics<sup>16)</sup> such as brinkmanship, threats to dismantle agreements, deadline setting, and upsetting the other negotiating parties. It continued to employ these tactics even in the trilateral talks in Beijing and the six-party talks. On the other hand, tactics such as delay, negotiation disruption, unilateral breakdown of agreements, and rejection tactics have not been used in the second phase because North Korea actually wants the negotiations to succeed.

In addition, although it used its traditional aggressive tactics during the second talks, it also maintained its participation indicating that the mediating format worked. Unlike the first phase of bilateral negotiations in which there was repeated disruption and

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16) Kim Do-tae, *Study of the Characteristics of North Korean Negotiation Tactics* (in Korean), (Seoul: KINU, 1994), pp. 117-119; Song Chong-whan, "Chapter 4: Characteristics of North Korean Negotiation Behavior" (in Korean), *Understanding North Korean Negotiation Behavior* (Seoul: Orum, 2002).

resumption throughout, thanks to the mediators' role, the North participated in consecutive trilateral and six-party talks, regardless of the results. However, it is difficult to say whether North Korea will continue to come to the negotiation table in the future, since it doesn't fully trust the mediation format, and also believes that the structure of multilateral talks is disadvantageous.

### *Changed Attitude of the United States*

The basic key to understanding Washington's purpose for negotiations is knowing what kind of threat North Korean nuclear development poses to the United States. In the first negotiation, the U.S. disregarded the fact that North Korean nuclear development posed a security threat. Thus, it focused on bringing North Korea back into the NPT regime, and deterring future nuclear development. In the second phase of the negotiations, however, Washington is asking for complete abandonment of the nuclear development, since it regards the weapons program as a physical threat to the security of the United States and to its goal for world peace. From Washington's perspective, the purpose of the negotiations is to move from the deterrence mode of the first phase to complete abandonment of the second phase.

The change in purpose required a change in negotiation methods. Indeed, many changes have taken place in strategy and tactics used toward North Korea. The Northeast Asian strategy also changed with change in perception. While, in the first phase, the U.S. considered it as subordinated by its global strategy, in the second phase, it was seen as an independent issue, although still linked to stability in Northeast Asia. Furthermore, changes took place on the level of problem resolution. The United States wants North Korea to give up nuclear weapons in a transparent and irreversible manner, a departure from concessions it made in the Geneva Framework, Washington's reason: North Korea cannot be trusted.

As mentioned, U.S. pressure is increasing based on expanded

objectives, strengthened justification and means, and the added number of participants. In sum, it represents a hard-line, contending strategy.

Other differences are obvious. Despite the lack of urgency, the United States took the offensive to pressure North Korea to take better care of its people. It also borrowed delay tactics, and continued to use intimidation, suggesting the possible use of force and containment. Based on the changed global environment, the United States also induced international cooperation to counter terrorism and threats of destabilization. In the end, it moved from a defensive, compromising stance to one that was offensive and uncompromising, and it became realistic and pragmatic in reaction to the North's negotiation behavior.

#### CONCLUSION: PROSPECTS AND TASKS

Thus far, we have looked at how North Korea has used the negotiation environment to its advantage and how it employed certain tactics to get what it wanted in the first and second phases of negotiation. In the first phase, North Korea was able to put the suspicion over its nuclear development to bed—at least temporarily—and obtain a pledge to receive heavy fuel oil and light water reactors. In the second phase, North Korea has demanded security assurances and economic assistance from the United States, using the threat of its nuclear weapons.

North Korea will not be as successful as it was in the first phase, given Washington's new stance. Regarding the outcome as a determining factor in the stabilization of Northeast Asia, as part of that strategy it brought China and Russia into multilateral talks to increase the pressure against North Korea. It was determined not to make concessions.

Against this backdrop, any agreement on North Korea's



abandoning its nuclear weapons will be difficult and negotiations are likely to be prolonged. In particular, North Korea had no other choice but to arm itself with nuclear weapons unless there was a breakthrough in assuring its survival.<sup>17)</sup>

In the event that U.S.-NK conflict increases and tension mounts on the Korean peninsula, calls for mediation will increase. A fundamental agreement will not likely be forged between Washington and Pyongyang alone: The issue will be discussed and solved through a multilateral scheme, in which participating countries and South Korea share the burden, because keeping the peace on the Korean peninsula hinges on North Korea's abandonment of its nuclear program.

South Korea must consider its relations with the United States, the stability of North Korea and international cooperation with neighboring countries in preparing measures to deal with future negotiations on North Korea's nuclear development.

As for Washington, its competitive, offensive and intimidating negotiation strategy will not help to stabilize the Korean peninsula, and any negative results will also be attributed to South Korea. A more solid U.S.-SK alliance and stabilization of the status of U.S. forces are much needed before negotiations with North Korea can proceed.

In terms of North Korea's survival, it is necessary to improve relations between the two Koreas and between North Korea and Japan so as to deter North Korea from developing nuclear weapons. It is also important to further develop existing inter-Korean relations and to reduce tensions with Japan. By following this approach, North Korea will gradually understand that nuclear development is not the only way to guarantee survival.

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17) Many scholars agree that North Korea's intention to possess nuclear weapons has always existed. Chun Sung-hun, "North Korean nuclear crisis and South Korean security," paper presented at a seminar by the Korean Association of Political Science, September 23, 2003.

In the meantime, for the sake of diplomatic coordination, frequent exchanges of opinions are necessary in multilateral talks, including with China and Russia. This can be a realistic alternative—to apply combined pressure on, and monitor North Korea, while inducing Pyongyang to move toward reform and opening up.