Rationality or Irrationality? Deterrence in the Survival Strategy of the North Korean Regime

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Declaration

“This thesis is the result of my own work. Material from the published or unpublished work of others which is used in the thesis is credited to the author in question in the text.”

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ABSTRACT

Much of the academic literature portrays North Korea as an irrational rogue state whose behaviour is aggressive and dangerous, as exhibited through the regime's continuous efforts to obtain nuclear weapons and missile delivery systems, and attempts to threaten neighbouring countries with words or provocations. North Korea is viewed as a cause of regional instability since the regime's high level of defence preparedness and acts of provocation drive the other regional powers to search for their own security in an attempt to offset the belligerence of this state. Although International Relations theory has long recognised the problem of the insecurity states experience in living in the system of international anarchy, the case of North Korea seems to shows that states can have an excessive deterrence threshold that arises from a high level of threat perception, which is driven by the environment of the regime and specific internal determinants inside the North Korea system. Nuclear weapons development has some connection with the regime's internal system when it can help support the legitimacy and power of the leader and at the same time is used in a strategic way to cover the regime's failures in supplying essential. Moreover, the strategy of excessive deterrence is used by North Korea for international leverage with the United States and the international community as the nuclear weapons will be used by North Korea in the negotiating process.

The question then arises if North Korea's deterrence strategy conforms to assumptions of rational actor behaviour when it is clear that the situation of high tension benefits North Korea more than peaceful coexistence and the deterrence strategy is used beyond the survival purposes of a normal state. It is the aim of the thesis to find out if North Korea's behaviour and deterrence strategy are rational or irrational when considered through the theory of rational deterrence and the idea of security dilemma. In particular deterrence theory suggests that states should not actively seek a security dilemma with multiple antagonists yet seemingly this is what the DPRK posture of excessive deterrence achieves. It is hoped to explain if North Korea is one of the normal states calculating its own survival and interest in the condition of anarchy or is an irrational actor that uses unpredictable and criminal behaviour in promoting security dilemmas in the inter-state system from its own distorted view of regime legitimacy and survival.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BDA	Banco Delta Asia
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CVID	Complete, Verifiable and Irreversible Dismantlement
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone
HEU	Highly Enriched Uranium
KCNA	Korean Central News Agency
KEDO	Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization
KPA	Korean People's Army
KWP	Korean Workers' Party
LWR	Light Water Reactor
NDC	The National Defence Commission
NLL	Northern Limit Line
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
PSI	Proliferation Security Initiative
TCOG	Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group
UNSC	UN Security Council
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 North Korea: an Irrational Actor?

The international community has long considered North Korea a threat to international security. This involves a series of acts of violence which North Korea has conducted since the 1960s. The violence by North Korea does not only target the military structures of other countries but also the civilians. Incidents such as the attempted assassination of the South Korean president in 1968, the hijack of a commercial airplane in 1971, the bombing of a hotel in Rangoon in 1983 are among the examples of violence that led some to call North Korea a terrorist country (Y. Kim, 2011, pp. 101-103). The image of North Korea deteriorated further in the post-Cold War period with the first nuclear crisis of 1993 following the regime's declaration that it would withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty. North Korea also conducted a major ballistic missile test in that year. In the 1990s relations between North Korea and the international community appeared to stabilise only to see the total collapse in 2002 of the Agreed Framework achieved after the first nuclear crisis as the US charged North Korea with pursuing a highly enriched uranium programme.

Many literatures portray North Korea as an irrational state. Henriksen (2001, pp. 338-360), for example, says that North Korea is an irrational actor who "acts unpredictably and criminally in the absence of a great power patron". The irrationality of North Korea is judged on various categories. It includes the involvement of terrorist activities, the violation of human rights, the disregard of international agreements, and the pursuit of a nuclear weapons programme. All these characteristics encourage the use of the term "rogue state" in referring to North Korea both in the academic community and in the US foreign policy (Henriksen, 2001, p. 349; Hoyt, 2000, p. 303; Litwak, 2000, p. 26; U.S. Department of State, 2002). The term rogue state reflects the negative perception the international community has towards North Korea (Interview Anonymous, 2011), implying that North Korea is a bad country (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011; Interview Prof. Paik, 2011). The international community perceives North Korea a "bad" and "mad" country which has offensive intent towards the international community and cannot be trusted even after the negotiations (H. Smith, 2000, pp. 597-602). The focus on the irrationality of North Korea is often based on its security

behaviour. North Korea has an unreasonably high level defence and heavily invests in the development of weapons of mass destruction. This effort goes against the economic capability and technical ability of the country to support such development. The regime's high level of defence heightens regional tensions in Northeast Asia and North Korea's decision to increase defence activity provokes other powers to follow the same path. Neither negotiation nor sanction is successful in solving the problem of North Korea's nuclear proliferation. North Korea's nuclear proliferation leads to a condition of near permanent crisis on the peninsula in the post-Cold War period.

North Korea projects an irrational image in terms of its security and defence behaviour, but its irrationality is also perceived to come from the regime's nature being ruled by a dictator under Communist ideology. North Korea trades its security with the welfare of its own people. The system of repressive rule influences the viewpoint of the international community to see North Korea as an irrational country with irrational and unpredictable behaviour (Cha & Kang, 2003, pp. 2-3; Y. Kim, 2008, p. 145). Based on this perception, North Korea is a war-prone country whose irrational and unpredictable behaviour makes it unlikely for the usual operation of deterrence or diplomacy to be useful with this state (Litwak, 2002, p. 56; Nolan & Strauss, 1997, pp. 21-38). The irrationality of North Korea also raises speculation within the international community that the regime will sooner or later collapse.

Therefore, a number of questions arise in relation to North Korea's thinking and behaviour that challenge the assumptions of International Relations about the state as a rational actor particularly in international security.

1.2 North Korea's Security and the Problem of Rational Deterrence

The problem of security of states connects to the concept of rational deterrence. The theory of deterrence assumes that states are rational actors, including in the choices they make in relation to the use of force to settle disputes and the decision to pursue weapons development, including nuclear weapons development. Rational deterrence means that states have to

understand and accept the credibility of the threat that each side imposes on the other before they can make a decision on the choice of action in response to the threat (Achen & Snidal, 1989, pp. 151-152; Knopf, 2009, pp. 37-38; Zagare, 1990, pp. 240-241). Deterrence works when threat is manipulated to make one side convince the other that the cost of war is too high and the end result is too destructive and so the status quo should be preserved (Lebow & Stein, 1989, p. 211). States can face some challenges in carrying out a successful deterrence strategy. Challenges include incomplete information that could impact the decision-making of leaderships or the misreading of the other side's intention on whether the action has defensive or offensive intention (Morgan, 2003, p. 12; Stein, 2009, p. 60).

Based on these calculations of rationality and deterrence, North Korea could be assumed to be a rational actor. North Korea is considered a weak power (Pardo, 2014, pp. 2-4). Although statistics show North Korea as having one of the biggest armies in the world, the military has rather outdated equipment and lack of capable manpower (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011; Interview Prof. Paik, 2011). This has led North Korea to pursue nuclear weapons development for the purpose of adequate deterrence. North Korea claims that,

> "The DPRK's nuclear weapons will serve as reliable war deterrent for protecting the supreme interests of the state and the security of the Korean nation from the U.S. threat of aggression and averting a new war and firmly safeguarding peace and stability on the Korean peninsula under any circumstances." (KCNA, 2006a)

The rise of North Korea as a new nuclear state has been primarily a result of the change in the international political structure in the post-Cold War period. The fall of Communism and the end of the socialist bloc led to heightened vulnerability for North Korea. The situation on the Korean peninsula indicates a high level of hostility and tension. Korea remains a divided country and the issue of unification is among the factors influencing North Korea's security perspective. In addition, the Korean War ended with an Armistice agreement between North Korea and the United States and South Korea but not a Peace Treaty. This unresolved issue creates a border dispute between the two Koreas and obstructs the normalisation of relations between North Korea and the United States. Since the Korean War has not been ended, the continued involvement of the United States in the regional affairs and the alliance partnership

of the United States with South Korea and Japan is a permanent source of threat to North Korea.

North Korea was faced with possible nuclear attack from the United States from the time of the Korean War (Engelhardt, 1996, p. 33). But North Korea did not actively pursue nuclear weapons because the strategic deadlock between the Soviet Union and the United States gave it protection. North Korea's fear of the United States heightened greatly in the new system of the post-Cold War. In this new situation North Korea does not have an ally to help it in time of crisis, while the United States security commitment to its allies remains firm. North Korea then seeks to increase its capacity for deterrence by any means, including nuclear development. The security dilemma on the Korean peninsula increases as a result of the security competition. North Korea may be a weak power but its military build-up and nuclear development are considered a serious threat to regional stability. The threat posed by North Korea is credible when combined with its provocative behaviour. North Korea has clearly shown its intention to risk all costs in going to war, which can be seen through many official statements on the regime's willingness to retaliate (Bluth, 2008, p. 173). North Korea's willingness to create security dilemmas for its neighbours can be seen by others as irrational choices.

The discourse on North Korea as irrational has been shaped by the continuing confrontation between North Korea and the United States in the last 25 years, exemplified by the US idea of 'rogue state'. The US use of 'rogue state' shows both the security concern and the norm concern the United States has with North Korea. While the security concern is based on the viewpoint that North Korea is a threat to the non-proliferation regime, the norm concern deals with North Korea's totalitarian system (Harrison, 2002, p. xvi). The United States wants to secure the nuclear non-proliferation regime in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, which the post-Cold War system provided some opportunity to occur (U.S. Department of State, 1994). The United States demand is for the total nuclear disarmament of North Korea. However, the US policy in achieving this objective has a hidden agenda of coercing change in North Korea. The change includes the behavioural change and the regime change which leads to different use of strategy and policy in dealing with North Korea (Schneider, 2010, pp. 37-43). North Korea understands the US policy. It sees the United States as posing both a military threat and political threat, particularly with the US ambition of a regime change in

North Korea (Bluth, 2008, p. 182). The nuclear ambition of North Korea slowly becomes a long-term goal of the regime, in contrast to when the nuclear project was revealed in the early post-Cold War period as influenced by the fall of Communism (Pritchard, 2003b).

As this shows the irrationality of North Korea is also judged from the internal structure of North Korea. It refers to the viewpoint the United States and the international community has towards the internal system of North Korea. North Korea still adopts Communism as a core system. The confrontation between the US and North Korea includes the identity conflict in a rather similar way as the ideological conflict of the superpowers during the Cold War. The security dilemma created during the Cold War comes from differences of identity which affects the way the two superpowers perceive each other. According to Kennan (1961, p. 190),

> "Many people in the Western governments came to hate the Soviet leaders for what they did. The Communists, on the other hand, hated the Western governments for what they were, regardless of what they did."

Tension on the Korean peninsula has also an element of identity problem between the United States and North Korea. Prof. Paik (2011) says that,

> "The United States dislikes North Korea because it is a socialist and dictatorial country, and also a human rights abuser. The socialist and dictatorial system North Korea has is different from the democratic political system. Whatever North Korea does and whatever action North Korea has is not something familiar to us. We have an instinctively some antagonistic attitude to whatever North Korea does and whatever North Korea shows." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

The use of the rogue state term reflects not only the US security concern on North Korea but also shows the US belief in the evil nature of North Korea (Moon & Bae, 2003, pp. 19-21). Jae Jung Suh (2006, p. 13) stresses that the conflict on the Korean peninsula comes from differences of identity between the United States and North Korea and this factor affects the way they both perceive and respond to threat. He writes,

> "Washington sees in North Korea a rogue state that is hell bent on acquiring weapons of mass destruction, which it depends as a tool of threats, coercion and aggression. Pyongyang views Washington as an "imperialist warmonger" that is constantly looking for an opportune moment to strike. Because each sees the other as an adversary whose identity is the polar opposite of its own, they are predisposed to interpret the other's behaviour as manifesting its aggressive intention. They tend to reduce uncertainty about the other's intention and its likely future behaviour by referring to its antagonistic identity. As a result, they will not merely react to the other's act, but are likely to react more strongly and more quickly than a state that sees its environment as benign." (Jae Jung Suh, 2006, p. 13)

As such, identity is assumed to be also the factor that causes the feeling of fear between states (Booth & Wheeler, 2008, p. 70). The irrationality of North Korea under the term 'rogue state' may be debatable as the term is not an officially acknowledged concept in international relations community and is structured on the western viewpoint (Interview Prof. D. H. Han, 2011; Interview Prof. Koo, 2011). Nonetheless, it reveals concerns about the rationality of North Korea to some extent. It is clear that North Korea does not follow many of the international principles and threatens neighbouring countries with words and behaviours (Interview Prof. S. H. Sheen, 2011). The international community views North Korea as having an irrational system in which the leader disregards the welfare of the people while raising the level of deterrence unnecessarily.

The theories of rational deterrence and the security dilemma both agree that insecurity is created from the international system of anarchy. Since the theory of deterrence assumes that states are rational actors, the deterrence strategy of North Korea should conform to these assumptions. In other words, it should mean North Korea responds to the distributions of external threat resulting from the system of anarchy and the nature of inter-state relations. The deterrence strategy should be created from a sense of insecurity which can in the condition of security competition among states result in the security dilemma. However, there are arguments claiming that the deterrence strategy of North Korea does not conform to these assumptions but is the result of the North Korean regime's nature. The level of

insecurity is created by the totalitarian system which makes it impossible for North Korea to reform their basic system (Interview Prof. S. H. Sheen, 2011). It is the desire of the leader to keep the internal structure and socialist system in place that raises the level of deterrence beyond that related to external threat. The regime factor is clearly seen in the post-Cold War period when there is internal instability caused by the problems of economic deprivation and the leadership succession. The condition of domestic politics motivates the offensive behaviour because the leadership wants to control the situation by drawing attention from inside to outside, such as in the attack on the Yeonpyeong island in 2010 (Interview Prof. D. H. Han, 2011). In addition, North Korea is said to have "a risk-acceptant rationality" because the situation of conflict benefits the regime more than peacetime (Cha, 2012a, p. 228). Nuclear weapons and heightened tension help North Korea draw attention from the United States and gets some concessions out of the negotiations (Bluth, 2008, p. 172; Interview Prof. Paik, 2011).

It seems that North Korea's decision-making and behaviour has both rational and irrational characteristics. North Korea risks provocative behaviour and follows a nuclear ambition that heightens the security dilemma in the Northeast Asian region. At the same time that North Korea claims the military strategy is adopted for the purpose of deterrence. Nonetheless, regardless of the reasons for the deterrence and the high tension that is created, the situation in the Northeast Asian region can be considered stable. Tension has never turned to war since 1953 suggesting that the system of deterrence does fully function. This situation goes rather against the idea that North Korea is an irrational actor who cannot be deterred.

If we are to judge whether North Korea is rational or irrational then it should be done with the use of International Relations theory. The theories of rational deterrence and the security dilemma assume the external factors of an anarchic system and the need to achieve security through deterrence play the major role in shaping the security choices of states. As such, the question to be asked is if North Korea is a rational or irrational actor whose deterrence strategy does or does not conform to international relations theory. The theory assumes that states are driven by the desire for security but the level of insecurity of states varies depending on individual political condition. If we account for all the factors, both internal and external, how rational is the security evaluation and deterrence strategy of North Korea? Is North Korea a rational actor who seeks to attain security in the condition of anarchy or an

irrational actor whose provocative behaviour is beyond the assumptions of rational deterrence?

The thesis will study North Korea's thinking and behaviour on the security perspective. The thesis will assess the security perception and strategic behaviour of North Korea examining both the internal and external factors in order to assess whether North Korea is rational or irrational as based on the assumptions of security studies and strategic studies.

1.3 Research Structure

The deterrence strategy of states deals with how states perceive and respond to threat. There are two main elements in studying North Korea's deterrence strategy. The first is the internal structure which forms part of the regime evaluation of threat. The second is the factor of the regional environment which is a result of the relationship North Korea has with the regional powers and how this affects the perceived need for deterrence by North Korea. The thesis aims at evaluating North Korea's security behaviour since the post-Cold War period where the deterrence strategy has been changed. As earlier outlined, the problem of North Korea also comes from the issue of identity. Therefore, the thesis will use both the realism and constructivism in analysing the case of North Korea in order to find out whether the deterrence strategy is rational or irrational. The international relations theory will appear before other chapters evaluating the internal and external determinants on North Korea's security choices and deterrence behaviours. The structure of the thesis will appear as follows:

Chapter Two focuses on the international relations theory. The chapter will discuss the concepts of anarchy and security through the assumptions of realists and constructivists. After the idea of system of anarchy and inter-state relations are discussed, the chapter will study the concepts of rational deterrence and security dilemma. The political condition North Korea experiences will also be laid out to give some backgrounds for the evaluation of the regime's behaviour from the security and strategic studies. The hypotheses, the conceptual questions, and the analytical questions will be structured at the end of Chapter Two.

Chapter Three focuses on the internal structure of North Korea. The unique nature of North Korea makes it imperative to begin with the study of North Korea since the leadership of Kim Il Sung at the end of the World War II. This is to find out how the internal system is structured and also explore how the historical background, the Juche ideology, and the political system of the regime contribute to shaping the threat perception and the level of deterrence.

Chapter Four focuses on the relationship North Korea has with South Korea. The chapter will explore the inter-Korean relations since the division of the two Koreas from the Korean War. This is based on the historical fact of the forced division of the country. The division makes the issue of unification becomes part of the policy both countries aim at achieving. The relationship between the two Koreas plays a decisive role in the foreign and defence policy of both countries. The chapter will examine how the inter-Korean relations contribute to the threat perception of North Korea and whether or not North Korea's behaviour, including military and other forms of provocations, towards South Korea is for the purpose of deterrence.

Chapter Five focuses on the relationship North Korea has with the three regional powers – China, Japan, and Russia. Since it is assumed that the deterrence is a result of the inter-state relations, it is imperative to study how the bilateral relations North Korea has with these three countries contribute to North Korea's decision making on the deterrence level. The chapter will also examine why the regional powers fail to reassure or deter North Korea despite they share the same perception on the nuclear problem of North Korea.

Chapter Six focuses on the relationship between North Korea and the United States. The United States is believed to have the highest impact in affecting North Korea's deterrence level. The United States has engaged in solving the nuclear problem of North Korea since the first nuclear crisis in 1993 and different methods in policy choice have been applied. Nonetheless, the effort does not result in the denuclearisation of North Korea. The chapter will find out what the primary objective of the US strategy towards North Korea is. It is also aimed at studying whether the US policy towards North Korea is a cause or a means of managing the security dilemma in the region.

Chapter Seven focuses on the Six-Party Talks. The multilateral cooperation in the form of the Six-Party Talks is formed as a means to solve the North Korea's nuclear problem. However, the Six-Party Talks failed in the mission to denuclearise North Korea. North Korea has lost interest in the Talks and eventually declares in 2009 its intention not to attend any future Talks. The aim of this chapter is to find out what causes the failure of the Six-Party Talks and explore if there any possibility to improve the multilateral engagement in persuading North Korea to lower its deterrence threshold.

Chapter Eight is the conclusion of the thesis. Internal and external determinants, as outlined in the previous chapters, will be explored and evaluated to see how they contribute to the security perception of North Korea. The chapter will later conclude whether the North Korea's deterrence strategy is rational or irrational as based on the international relations theory.

1.4 Methodology

The research uses the international relations theory from both the security studies and strategic studies in assessing North Korea's deterrence strategy. It will include the discussion of the assumption of anarchy and states' security by realists and constructivists. The concept of deterrence and the security dilemma will also be analysed based on the assumption that they both are a result of how states live interdependently in the system of anarchy. The use of both the security studies and strategic studies is to assess how North Korea understands the security and how the deterrence strategy is built in response to the political condition North Korea experiences.

In giving more details on how the deterrence strategy of North Korea is formed, the thesis will use two methods. The first is qualitative textual analysis. Data in this method comes from various sources in drawing as much information on North Korea as possible. Apart from textbooks and journal articles, data includes analysis and opinion of experts on North Korea from leading research institutes such as Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability, 38 North, the Brookings Institution, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. The

Woodrow Wilson International Center for scholars, for example, has the North Korea International Documentation Project which stores a collection of declassified documents on North Korea since the leadership of Kim Il Sung. They are documents which record actions and policy of North Korea based on the report, telegram, conversation North Korea has with the Communist countries or among officials from Communist countries themselves. The documents are translated in English and available online via the website.

Data related to the policy of North Korea comes from the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), the official news agency of North Korea. The KCNA publishes on a daily basis news and policy of North Korea which is available from 1 January 1997 onwards. They are published in many languages including English and can be retrieved online via the website. Data before this period is retrieved from official speeches made by Kim Il Sung which are complied and published in a series of publications called the Selected Works. The tight-controlled nature of the regime makes it unlikely to access data beyond what is published at the governmental level. It is also impossible to interview the diplomats or state officials of North Korea. To overcome this constraint, data about North Korea are also retrieved from media websites such as the Daily NK, NK News, the North Korean Economy Watch, the North Korea Tech. These are websites which base outside North Korea but contain insightful data, information, and analysis on the regime. The Daily NK, for example, provides information on North Korea from the perspectives of an ordinary people as the website publishes articles written by the North Korean defectors. The NK News, on the other hand, contains information on internal political structure, news about North Korea, the political structure at the leadership level, and analysis of experts on North Korea. The retrieval of data and information from various sources is imperative in obtaining as much information on North Korea as possible. This is because the leadership style of each leader makes differences in the availability of resources. By contrast to his father who regularly makes speeches in front of the public, Kim Jong Il avoids public appearances due to his shy personality. Hence, there are few speeches of Kim Jong Il available. Speech and statement made by Kim Jong Il are retrieved from memoir of foreign diplomats who met with Kim Jong Il. They appear in various sources such as books, journal articles, and analysis by the experts on North Korea.

Apart from the KCNA and the media websites as mentioned above, information on the Juche ideology, internal institutions, and internal political system of North Korea is also retrieved

from the publications by South Korea both at the governmental and public levels. They include the book titled "Understanding North Korea 2012" published by the Ministry of Unification of South Korea and the book named "North Korea Handbook" published by the Yonhap News Agency. They give clear and informative facts on various aspects of North Korea from the political system, the military system, foreign policy and diplomacy, and the hereditary succession.

In analysing the relationship North Korea has with the regional powers, data related to the policy between both sides is also drawn from official statements and declarations each government has on the issues. They are retrieved from, for example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Unification of South Korea, the White House, the U.S. Department of State.

News reports at the regional and international levels will also be used. News reports at the regional level are retrieved online from leading newspapers and news agencies. For example, they are Yonhap News Agency from South Korea, RIA Novosti from Russia, Xinhua News Agency from China, and the Japan Times from Japan. News reports at the international level are from, for example, the CNN, the BBC, the AFP.

The second method used in collecting data and information on North Korea is interviewing. The semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face with 11 interviewees who are former officials and academicians of South Korea. All the interviews took place between August to September 2011 in Seoul, South Korea. The use of semi-structured interviews is to allow the interviewees to express their own opinions and ideas on the issues of North Korea without being constrained by the fixed questions. Some interviewees have experience working with North Korea, while others have good background knowledge on domestic politics and foreign policy of North Korea. Information shared by the interviewees is deemed perceptive and insightful. This is because although both North Korea and South Korea are two separate countries, the two states are still attached by the history, language, and culture of the Korean nation. Both countries are also bound by the issue of unification which makes the inter-Korean matters and inter-Korean relations become more of a daily topic. Most of the interviews were audio recorded. However, some were not and this is because of the sensitive nature of the issues. The recording of the interviews, the citation of the interviewee's names,

the direct quotation of the conversations on the thesis depend on individual interviewee's agreements. Full details on names and institutions the interviewees are affiliated with are attached in the appendix of the thesis.

Chapter 2: Using IR Theory to Define North Korea and Its Behaviour

North Korea's pursuit of a nuclear capability has raised controversy on whether nuclear acquisition for dangerous and isolated states like North Korea can ever be justified. Under the rogue categorisation North Korea projects the "nuclear nightmare" which involves various aggressive and threatening activities from violating international obligations to the use of nuclear threat for belligerent purposes (Triplett II, 2004, p. 2). Nonetheless, it is clear that states do not develop nuclear weapons for their own pleasure. It has been argued that nuclear weapons enhance a state's military power and international prestige (Alagappa, 2008, p. 85) because the more powerful the states are, the higher the chance for these states to achieve their objectives without having to employ force (Gilpin, 1981, p. 31). Security incentives are assumed to be the major factor pushing states to choose the nuclear path (Epstein, 1977, pp. 16-28; Frankel, 1993, pp. 37-78; Mearsheimer, 1990b, pp. 35-50; Sagan, 1996, pp. 54-86). The expansion of the nuclear club has become even more worrisome with the spread of nuclear weapons among small and middle powers in the post-Cold War period (Bracken, 2012, p. 95). Despite the destructive nature of nuclear weapons, some argue that peace could be guaranteed even with nuclear proliferation. Mearsheimer (1990b, p. 39) writes that "[nuclear weapons] are powerful force for peace" and that states would not choose to fight knowing the "horrendous devastation" that will result from nuclear usage. Waltz (1981, pp. 1-39) says that war with nuclear weapons is costly, and fully aware of this fact, states are more logical and careful when approaching each other as they want to minimise the chance of war. In other words, states would prefer to strategically rather than physically use their nuclear weapons in achieving their objectives.

Nuclear weapons acquisition is strongly connected with the security of states but the prospect of war is changed under nuclear conditions because states are no longer limited to the traditional idea of using force to achieve a policy objective. Nuclear weapons strongly advance the concept of deterrence dissuading states from the use of force when the level of risk appears much higher than with conventional war (Ayson, 2008, p. 562; Brodie, 1978, pp. 65-83). Bull (1968, pp. 593-594) says that the core focus of strategic analysis shifted in the nuclear age from the thinking of "war as instrument of policy" to "the threat of war" driving strategies of "deterrence, crisis management, and the manipulation of risk". These

assumptions point to the correlation between the conceptions of security and strategy. According to Ayson (2008, pp. 558-575), security should be seen as a condition to which strategy is the response: strategy is the way states deal with the security challenges they are facing. Strategy also means the effect the action of one state has on the behaviour of other states. Schelling (1960, p. 3) says that strategy focuses on "the interdependence of the adversaries' decisions and on their expectations about each other behaviours" in which "the best course of action for each player depends on what the other players do". Thus, strategy relates to the problem of how well states adjust their policies and behaviours during experience of threat in order to meet security challenges. By focusing on state's security and the strategy, it is assumed that states would opt for the best choice that would not only help them gain in the conflict but also ensure their survival.

The above-mentioned statements show the interdependence of security and strategy and so the interdependence of security studies and strategic studies. While security refers to "the alleviation of threats to cherished values" (Williams, 2008, p. 1), strategic analysis examines the behaviours of states in responding to the conditions they experience (Ayson, 2008, p. 572). In exploring the nuclear question of North Korea, it is necessary to take examine the security experience and the strategic behaviour of North Korea in order to explain the choices the North Korean leadership has made. This is especially the case in the period after the Cold war as the relationship between security environment, strategic behaviours and decision-making changed decisively at that point. This chapter will review the theory and literatures from both security and strategic studies and connect them to the analysis of North Korean behaviour. It will begin with a review of the International Relations theory focusing on the idea of security as a political condition that states experience in the system of anarchy. Strategic studies will be studied after this with a focus on the rational actor assumptions and the problem of deterrence as this was developed during the Cold War and modified in the post-Cold War period.

2.1 International Relations Theory: Anarchy and Security

The focus on security as a main priority of states is based on the assumption that the international system is anarchic. Waltz (1979, pp. 105, 114) states the international system is

formed by the existence of units that are similar but not identical and in which there is an imperative of self-help that requires each unit to seek a means to protect itself against others. Based on Herz (1962, pp. 39-42), states in the system may recognise each other's sovereignty and independence but states will never feel safe because relations of states are formed on a basis of unequally distributed power that allows the stronger to threaten the weaker. Importantly, anarchy is perpetual in this system as it lacks a central authority or control above states to which they might appeal for protection. This kind of structure causes a condition of permanent insecurity that pushes states to compete for power because power is the only means that could protect states from conquest in a self-help system (Mearsheimer, 2007, pp. 79-80). As well as seeking power for themselves states can also promote predictability through collective efforts to manage the balance of power: they can adjust their relations in a way that equalises the distribution of power and security can be advanced depending on how able states are in maintaining relative distributions of power (Deudney, 2011, p. 17).

A key debate in International Relations has arisen as to how stable anarchy can be when the condition of anarchy itself forces states to strive for more power. Scholars have different viewpoints regarding the amount of power states need, so that contemporary realism has divided into two groups with two views of the consequences of anarchy. Defensive realists such as Waltz believe anarchy shapes the behaviour of states causing them to focus on their security and promoting the balance of power as an ordering principle. Waltz (1979, p. 126) says that power is a means towards the end of achieving security but "the first concern of states is not to maximise power but to maintain their positions in the system". This is because the offensive choice of one state increasing its power could threaten the security of other states forcing them to counterbalance the threat by expanding their power (Lobell, 2009, p. 47). Offensive realists in contrast see the possibility of an imbalance of power caused by the security imperative of states. States would continue to seek for more power until reaching the point of their absolute security, because states find it difficult to calculate an adequate level of power they need in deterring their rivals and in winning a war (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 34-35). Therefore the ultimate solution to the security imperative is not balance but hegemony. Despite the differences between defensive and offensive realists as to the way states achieve security, they share the same view that the behaviour of states is fundamentally driven by insecurity under anarchy. A desire for security drives states to compete for survival and the key to competition for security is power. At the same time uncertainty about how much

power is necessary to achieve security can lead states to pursue power beyond the point that is necessary for their security and this may in turn reduce the security available to others (Posen, 1993, p. 28). This then creates the possibility of the security dilemma in which the misperception of one state about adequate security leads other states to respond, undermining and contradicting the initial attempt. Thus the question of how accurately states perceive their security and respond to its needs becomes an important element in understanding balance of power dynamics.

A further issue pointed out by realists is that an international system built on a self-help basis makes it very difficult for states to overcome their fear and cooperate with one another. The motives and intentions of states are seen as unpredictable and changeable over time and this forces states to focus on the ability to attack rather than the intention of their adversaries (C. Glaser, 1994, p. 56). Mearsheimer (1990a, p. 12) argues that states need to have a relative power that matches those of other states and the search for relative power advantage makes it possible for states to behave aggressively seeking more power and weakening their adversaries. Realists therefore support the idea that states need power because power is the only thing that could help them survive the competition among each other; but even though power is the critical factor behind survival states have great difficulty evaluating their relative power: how much power is adequate for their security and how much others should have for their security. Realists themselves have found it difficult to define the power of states leading Lebow to describe such attempts as "imprecise, making it difficult to develop measures of polarity" (Lebow, 1994, p. 255). Nevertheless all realists believe that it is the organisation of relative power among states that gives rise to the international political structure. The nature of this international political structure is important because states do not base their security on individual relationships alone - is A more or less powerful than B? - but on the relative distributions of power among groups of states in a political structure regionally or globally.

The idea that states compete for survival leads most realists to accept that states are rational political actors. Realists believe that the international system comprises of political units, each with a goal of their own, and in securing their own goal, states would rationally choose the most effective means available within the constraints they face with an uncertainty of the environment and an incompleteness of information (Legro & Moravcsik, 1999, p. 12). The assumption about states as rational actors is one of the core ideas of structural realism.

Keohane (1986, pp. 165-167) writes that the rationality assumption explains how strategy and interests of states are set up after a careful calculation states make based on their position in the system, and how costs of action are calculated in a search to increase the expected utility in the environment of uncertainty. Mearsheimer (2011, p. 127) elaborates on the rational actor assumption arguing that it refers to the belief that states are well aware of the external environment and that the interaction they have among each other will effect the action and strategy of each, even as they seek to maximise their chance of survival. The position of Waltz is somewhat different since he questions that states are always rational. States are seen as strategic and logical in their balance of power behaviour and fully understand the need to do well or face falling behind others (Waltz, 1979, p. 118). But he states that,

> "the theory requires no assumptions of rationality or of constancy of will on the part of all actors. The theory says simply that if some do relatively well, others will emulate them or fall by the wayside." (Waltz, 1979, p. 118)

It is quite common to find scholars that relate realism with the rational actor assumption. Kahler (1998, p. 923) points out some complexity within the idea of rationality and doubts whether the behaviour of states will always have a rational foundation, but he also notes the pairing of realism with the idea of the state as rational unitary actor. Other scholars, such as Elman (1996, p. 20), do not focus on the nature of the state but on system level features and how these play a role in states' decision-making. Waltz's account of "the third image" focuses on the international system of anarchy, and the relations between anarchy, conflict among states, and behaviour of states that result (Waltz, 2001, pp. 159-186). Elman (1996, p. 20) refers to Waltz's third image as the basis of assumptions that states assess the external environment when making a decision and the strategy of states will depend if it yields an expected gain or an expected loss as rational choice theory suggests.

Realism has been considered one of the oldest traditions of political theory that attempts to explain the behaviour of states both in peacetime and in conflict through using various kinds of analyses from human nature to the structure of the inter-state system. Realism has of course received criticisms which question its assumptions in explaining the organisation and behaviour of states under anarchy. The most concerted criticism involves the realists' focus on material capacity as a basis for explaining how the state system and international political

structure are organised. Realism is criticised as having a materialistic approach with the theory's view of power focusing on the material capabilities and using materialist assumptions such as the influence of human nature on an actor's behaviour (Barkin, 2003, pp. 329-330). Realists consider the international structure a "material structure" as seen in the security competition that pushes states to seek material capabilities of power (Mearsheimer, 1995, p. 91). With a concentration on a material approach, it is pointed out that realism lacks an analysis of the social dimension - factors that differentiate one state from another depending on history, background and culture. Ruggie (1998, p. 865) writes that a political model of neorealism such as that of Waltz can be considered physicalist with little focus on ideational factors. Traditional Realism often starts from the basic assumption that human nature will drive states to seek for power as dictated by the search for survival under anarchy. This emphasis on the relationship between human nature and political structure can be criticised as overlooking the issue of identity formation and its roles in shaping political behaviour (Jepperson, Wendt, & Katzenstein, 1996, pp. 46-47).

The weaknesses of realism in analysing behaviour and organisation in the states' system and the international political structure led to the emergence of a new school of social constructivism in the post-Cold War period. The leading critic of realism Alexander Wendt (1992, p. 397) writes that the realists' conception of anarchy and the distribution of power cannot explain the differences in approach that states have towards friends and enemies in the international system. This is because the realists' assumptions do not consider the conception of a distribution of knowledge in understanding the way states perceive themselves and others (Wendt, 1992, p. 397). Constructivists base their assumptions about political behaviour and organisation on the relationship between social practices and states' identity, and how the interaction of states - each with its own social identity - could effect the formation of the international political structure. In other words, constructivism regards human beings as social beings, whose subjectivity is created and formed as a result of an interaction among them (Dunne, 1995, p. 371). Onuf (1989, p. 36) states the meaning of constructivism is that "people and societies construct, or constitute, each other".

The constructivists do not reject the categories of realism - state, anarchy, competition, war - but the explanations of realism for why these things exist and how they work. So constructivists base their assumptions on the conception of "states under anarchy" in the

same way that the realists do. But constructivists analyse the meaning of anarchy by referring to the perception and judgement each actor may have towards the international system. Anarchy can have several meanings as the interpretation depends on individual understanding, and this reflects the understanding that each state has of its own identity, built up from its own history and culture. It is also social identity that makes states understand each other's behaviour because identity contains preferences of states that influence their consequent actions (Hopf, 1998, pp. 175-176). Wendt (1992, pp. 397-399) emphasises an actor/state's identity because it forms part of the actor/state's interest. The international structure is formed as a result of how states socialise so that anarchy is composed of "the set or structure of identity and interest" (Wendt, 1992, pp. 397-399). As a result anarchy has no fixed form. Copeland (2000, p. 188) elaborates that anarchy has "different cultural instantiations" because it comes from a process of interaction which can be shaped and reshaped according to how the state's self - its identity and interest - is formed from interacting with others. According to Barkin (2010, pp. 27-28), inter-subjectivity is created by actors in the system as they socially interact. Common knowledge and practices actors hold together create the international political structure so that the structure does not and will not "exist outside mutable norms and discourses that define the identities and interests of actors" (Barkin, 2010, pp. 27-28). Identities and interests of states, as such, are built on how states interact among each other under the socialisation process and shared ideas among states from norms and rules that would tell states what behaviours are appropriate (Atkinson, 2006, p. 511).

What can be concluded is that the constructivists focus on three issues - an individual identity, a connection between an actor's identity and actor's interest, and an influence of an actor's identity on the formation of the system. These ideas constitute new assumptions about the actor's perception as affected by each individual interest, and the connection between actors and structure. Constructivists challenge the traditional idea put forward by realists about the dominance of materialist factors by saying that material capabilities could also be viewed through the social context apart from considering them through the issue of necessity alone (Checkel, 1998, pp. 325-326). The "identity-interest" relationship one state has with another - whether friend or foe - plays a fundamental role in threat perception and this turns out to be a better explanation of behaviour than the realists' materialist assumptions. This is shown when shared knowledge comes into effect in explaining a correlation between material

resources and social structure and in providing meanings between material resources and human action (Wendt, 1995, p. 73). It is true that a need for security pushes states to acquire weapons and seek to enhance their military but the constructivists' claim that "threat" and "defense" are social relationships so that weaponry and military hold values beyond national security purposes. Weaponry has a normative nature and holds a symbolic meaning as associated with the social structure. Eyre and Suchman (1996, pp. 86-87) give an example by using the words modernity and efficacy in referring to military equipped with a high technology. Material capabilities provide states with power to not only secure themselves but also the ability to coerce other states to do what they want them to. Nonetheless, the conception of power is more complex than analysed only through the realists idea of physical force. Power is produced based on how actors interact socially. Power is created as actors are socially related and this points to how social practices play a role in shaping the perception of actors on individual identity and ability to exercise power over other actors in the system (Barnett & Duvall, 2005, p. 46).

In consequence, the following arguments can be made as a summary from the assumptions of the dominant school of realism and its main critic constructivism. First of all, security is a political condition. It refers to the condition or the situation that states experience, especially where the interaction between states produces a security condition for one state from the policy/behaviour of another state. Secondly, the system in which states exist is anarchy in that there is no higher authority to which they can appeal to secure their own existence. Anarchy affects the behaviour of states as the desire for security forces states to be strong and powerful. However, anarchy is not a fixed form. It is varied depending on the interpretation of states as based on individual social context, history, and culture, etc. Thirdly, states and the states system complement each other. While relations of states create the system, the system itself affects states' behaviour. The way states behave and perceive threat depend on the experience they have of the system as an international political structure. Fourthly, most realists and constructivists assume that security is what concerns states the most. Nonetheless, they have different views of anarchy and the rational choice of security. To realists, rational responses to security are driven by two factors: anarchy pushes states to compete for security and the balance of power is created from the distribution of power. On the other hand, Constructivists take the issue of identity and interest into consideration. Identity and interest affect a security desire of one state in relation to other states. Thus, the

way states perceive and respond to threat depend on their identities and their understanding of other identities. Lastly, the international political structure needs to be explained through the assumptions of both the realists and the constructivists. For example, the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War shows the security competition and an attempt to balance each other's power. At the same time, the antagonism of the two superpowers is also a matter of the identity and interest issues. The United States and the Soviet Union do not share the same political ideology and both actors differ in terms of history, culture, and political system and these factors shaped their perception of the identity and interest division between them. As such, analysis of complex security problems should use the assumptions of both schools in explaining the security perception and strategic behaviours of states.

2.2 Rational Deterrence in the Cold War and After

As noted by Bull (1968, pp. 593-594) strategic analysis changed in the nuclear age so that "the studies of actual violence have given place to analyses of "deterrence", "crisis management", "the manipulation of risk". In other words, it changed from the study of the conduct of violence to the study of how to reduce the threat of war by means of deterrence. This assumption gave rise to another vital question – what was an adequate level of deterrence for states to pursue? The system of permanent insecurity pushes a state to seek to guarantee its survival by increasing its defence capacity to a level that it thinks adequate. This idea of adequate defence gave rise to the theory of rational deterrence, which seeks to analyse the strategic behaviours of states as based on the rational choices of their leaderships as they evaluate security realities. It is assumed that these rational choices were practised on a range of objectives from the necessity of survival to more complex gain and loss calculations. However, the questions of security perception and deterrence behaviour among states leaderships produced a new debate. The gap between one state's choice and another state's perception of its intentions gave rise to the idea of the security dilemma, which was first noted by Herz in 1950. Herz (1950, p. 157) writes:

> "Wherever such anarchic society has existed--and it has existed in most periods of known history on some level - there has arisen what may be called the

> "security dilemma" of men, or groups, or their leaders. Groups or individuals living in such a constellation must be, and usually are, concerned about their security from being attacked, subjected, dominated, or annihilated by other groups and individuals. Striving to attain security from such attack, they are driven to acquire more and more power in order to escape the impact of the power of others. This, in turn, renders the others more insecure and compels them to prepare for the worst. Since none can ever feel entirely secure in such a world of competing units, power competition ensues, and the vicious circle of security and power accumulation is on."

A consequence of one state's decision to increase its deterrence level can potentially provoke other states to increase their defence capacity producing a decline not an increase in the security situation of the first state. Booth and Wheeler (2008, pp. 4-5) argue that the security dilemma occurs when one state has to make a choice on how to react to another states behaviour. In other words, a security response is a result of an interpretation of one state's intention by another. Heightened deterrence is a rational response for countering another state's aggressive intention but may not be rational if the state's intention is defensive. What is rational choices for deterrence can be undermined by state's misunderstanding of each other's intentions.

The concept of deterrence becomes a function of inter-state relations in conditions where states are interdependent. One of the most important theorists of rational choice deterrence Thomas Schelling (1960, p. 13) writes that deterrence is demonstrated in the way one state seeks to influence another state's decision-making by implying that its behaviour will affect its own behaviour; and most importantly, deterrence operates in a situation in which the parties involved have both "conflicting and common interests". The essence of deterrence is illustrated further by Knopf (2009, p. 41) who says that deterrence involves anything that dissuades one state from doing something by implying through its manner that there would be negative consequences of either military or non-military kinds if the action is carried out. At its most basic, deterrence is one state's attempt to prevent another from doing something through the use or threat of force, so that this threat creates a feeling of uncertainty and apprehension in the deterred state. It is an attempt to convey that the cost of conflict is greater than any potential gain. A profit-and-loss calculation should bring about increased rationality

in the decision-making process. Rationality is structured on the perception that the optimal policy choice for a state during the approach to, or in the early stages of, conflict, is to avoid employing force. However, if the choice is inclined towards a direct confrontation, the cost of implementing the threat must be lower than other alternatives, and the benefits to be gained through the conflict must also be guaranteed (Morgan, 2003, pp. 44-46). Scholars such as Achen and Snidal (1989, p. 150), George and Smoke (1974, pp. 72-83), Stein (2009, pp. 61-62), and T.V. Paul (2009, pp. 5-6) base their conception of deterrence on state behaviour by assuming that the state in question is a rational actor acting on a calculation of loss and benefit, and this assumes that the state would not choose to engage in conflict if the costs exceed the expected gains. Schelling (1960, p. 6) points out the relations between threat and rationality, saying,

> "the rationality of the adversary is pertinent to the efficacy of threat, and that madmen, like children, can often not be controlled by threats. We have recognised that the efficacy of threat may depend on what alternatives are available to the potential enemy, who, if he is not to react like a trapped lion, must be left some tolerable recourse."

Hence, deterrence is more of a "psychological than physical" process as it involves the decision-making of one state when faced with a choice offered by another state (Knopf, 2009, pp. 37-38). Deterrence theory requires some assumptions about the perception of threat and the way states respond to threat. Based on this assumption, it is possible to conclude that deterrence assumes rationality of actors in making a threat credible and in making deterrence work. Nonetheless, there is a possibility that irrationality overcomes rationality and takes control in the decision-making process. Schelling (1960, p. 16) writes about rationality and irrationality as,

> "Rationality is a collection of attributes and departures from complete rationality may be in many different directions. Irrationality can imply a disorderly and inconsistent value system, faulty calculation, and inability to receive messages or to communicate efficiently."

Therefore even though deterrence assumes rationality of states Jervis (1979, p. 299) argues that rationality cannot always guarantee peace and security because rationality can also be undermined, for example, if states are faced with a very intense and stressful situation. Irrationality can also happen in a situation when states cannot properly exercise their gain and loss calculations (Morgan, 2003, p. 60).

During the height of a conflict, it is expected that the choice a state makes should be based on a rational calculation of gain and loss, so that the rational choice should be the one that is the least costly, the least risky, but with the most beneficial outcome. Different states may calculate gain and loss differently and may react to a situation differently depending on their perceptions of risk (Lebow & Stein, 1989, pp. 208-209). While some might prefer to focus on minimising losses, others may focus on maximising expected gains. Whatever the preferences are, the choice should be made based on the norm of rationality. What makes the situation more complex is that the uncertainty created by anarchy has an effect on states behaviour: anarchy can cause a sense of insecurity towards neighbours, and states adopt policies that reflect this insecurity. States face a challenge in responding to another's behaviour that it perceives to be aggressive between raising their own deterrence capacity, or acting in a more conciliatory manner. However, states are likely to react to another state's decision to instigate a military build-up by pursuing a similar policy. The reaction one state has to the actions of another thus creates a spiral model, which is a process of mutual and direct military responsiveness driven by insecurity and fear, resulting ultimately in a low level of security at a higher level of destructive power in an insecure environment (Jervis, 1976, pp. 58-113). This scenario frequently occurred during the Cold War period, with the arms race between the superpowers a particularly stark example. The spiral model occurs because states feel uncertain whether and when the situation will turn from peace to war and who their enemy in the conflict will be (Booth & Wheeler, 2008, p. 41). Uncertainty drives states to seek to guarantee its own security, which usually happens at the expense of other states.

Deterrence theory has become the standard explanation for how states interact around threat and conflict. The theory was developed during the Cold War period and faced further change in the post-Cold War period. The arms competition during the Cold War underlined the concept of deterrence. Both sides sought strategic superiority over each other and some of

their behaviour, such as the development of a second-strike capability, appeared to be offensive rather than defensive in nature (Jervis, 2001, pp. 36-60). A most important aspect of deterrence theory in the Cold War and after was the role of nuclear weapons proliferation. The possibility of nuclear warfare transformed deterrence from an occasional practice to a comprehensive and elaborate strategy. The destructive nature of nuclear weapons presented states with only one choice – that of attempting to counter and balance the threat of nuclear weapons by developing their own. The nature of deterrence is fully revealed when states chose to obtain rather than use nuclear weapons in response to other states' nuclear weapons capacity (Freedman, 1989, pp. 40-41). Mutually assured destruction made states realise that there could be no winner in a nuclear war (Jervis, 1999, p. 89) and nuclear weapons, to some extent, can be seen as supporting stability if not peace between great powers. Waltz (1981, pp. 3-5) elaborates on this, stating that a nuclear second-strike capability advanced the quality of deterrence because deterrence is based on "the ability to punish", not "the ability to defend".

With the end of the Cold War assumptions about nuclear proliferation changed also. The sudden dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the end of its deterrence capacity set the framework for a strategic unipolar world, but some theorists were sceptical about the endurance of this power structure. Waltz (2000, pp. 27-32) writes that unipolarity is not an endurable form as the power of the dominant state will soon be weakened either by involving itself in too many affairs or new great power states will emerge to even out its power. This situation resembles the post-Cold War structure in which there is competition between the dominant power, the United States, and other great powers, notably China and Russia, and also includes the reactions of smaller states to the risks of unipolarity. Nonetheless, Russia and China have tended to focus on their conventional arms modernisation rather than building up nuclear capacity in countering the US power and influence. Proliferation challenges have not come within the politics of the great powers but from other states responding to US dominance or regional problems. Deterrence and proliferation theory changed to take account of these developments. In 1996 Sagan (1996, p. 55) proposed three theoretical models in explaining states' decision on whether "to build or refrain from developing nuclear weapons". These are,

> “"the security model," according to which states build nuclear weapons to increase national security against foreign threats, especially nuclear threats; "the domestic politics model," which envisions nuclear weapons as political tools used to advance parochial domestic and bureaucratic interests; and "the norms model," under which nuclear weapons decisions are made because weapons acquisition, or restraint in weapons development, provides an important normative symbol of a state's modernity and identity” (Sagan, 1996, p. 55).

Based on Sagan’s three models, the security model is the one that reflects the concept of deterrence in the Cold War period. The rise of nuclear weapons states, either in the Cold War period or at the present time, results from the insecurity that drives states to seek the ultimate deterrent (Sagan, 1996, p. 85). However, the security model cannot fully account for the nuclear proliferation strategies in the post-Cold war situation. Bracken (2012, pp. 106-108) points out several other factors influencing states’ decision to seek a nuclear capacity. This includes ideological demands such as nationalism and the change in the political structure from the Cold War to the post-Cold War. He argues that the new nuclear states of the post-Cold War period see the possession of nuclear weapons as national accomplishment (Bracken, 2012, pp. 115-116). This in part accounts for the fact that most recent proliferation has been in Asia where many states ideologies are driven by a sense of nationalism or national grievance.

In summary strategic studies has concluded that deterrence is practised on the basis of perception of threat and the gain and loss calculation of states leaderships. Nuclear deterrence has risen as a preference for states leaderships because it is more cost effective than the conventional deterrence: access to nuclear knowledge and technologies makes it cheaper for new nuclear states to “profit from copying experience and knowledge” of the first nuclear states like the United States or the Soviet Union (Bracken, 2012, p. 119). The decision of states to invest in nuclear capacity supports rational actor assumptions about the imperative for survival and on a general calculation of cost and benefit in the making of their security decisions. Nonetheless, strategic studies also concludes that the study of deterrence should not focus only on the rational search for security among states. Domestic politics, ideology, national identity, and international status should be taken into consideration as these effect

states' perceptions of the international political structure and the choices made for strategic success.

2.3 Applying Security and Strategic Theory to North Korea's Behaviour

In assessing North Korea's understanding of security and its deterrence strategy, the assumptions of both security studies and strategic studies will have to be used. Explaining North Korea's behaviour is important not only for developing some responses to the ongoing crisis on the peninsula but because North Korea's behaviour is often seen as a challenge to the assumptions of international analysis that state's decision-making and strategic choices are driven by rational calculations. North Korea's security perception and deterrence strategy are often portrayed as irrational: no attempts to lower North Korea's threat levels have been successful so that the country operates on a condition of permanent belligerence and North Korea has made consistent attempts to escalate deterrence levels, especially through efforts in obtaining nuclear weapons and missile delivery systems. Security studies and strategic studies would address this problem from the following perspectives:

Security studies would suggest:

1. A primary issue is the nature and experience of the North Korean regime. The international community sees North Korea as pursuing a high deterrence threshold with its constant increases in defence capability. Given security studies assumptions that threat perception and security concern are shaped by states' identity and interest, the question arises of how the nature and experience of the regime shapes the way it perceives threat, anarchy, and security. In addition, we should ask how the history, culture, and institutions play a role in states' understanding of security as based on the interest-identity context.

2. The second point concerns the assumption that the international system is a state of anarchy. Based on this assumption of security studies questions should be asked about the condition of anarchy North Korea has experienced and how the international political structure has affected North Korea's decision-making. These two questions

deal with the complex regional environment which involves a divided nation, several regional great powers, and the United States and its alliance system in Northeast Asia.

On the other hand, different kinds of questions can be drawn when the issue of North Korea is examined through the context of strategic studies:

1. Deterrence is a response to how states live interdependently in the system of anarchy. The greater the level of interdependence, the greater the need for states to seek security by deterrence in order to survive. The condition of interdependence also pushes states to make cost calculations in their strategic relations with other states. Based on these assumptions of interdependence, security and strategic calculations what needs to be examined is the changes to the security interdependence of North Korea, especially the changes to the international political structure with the end of the Cold war system.

2. The security dilemma is a common condition in the system of anarchy where states have limited means of determining each other's intentions. A spiral model can be created where deterrence actions of one state drive other states increase of defence capacity. The situation on the Korean peninsula suggests that both the security dilemma and the spiral model are in practise. Nonetheless, the continued increase of defence capacity of North Korea raises the question if this is a deterrence strategy for escaping the spiral model it has with other regional powers or whether it has other objectives.

3. The first two points – interdependence and spiral model – assume security to be the highest concern of states. Taking these two points into consideration, focus can be turned to North Korea's acquisition of nuclear weapons. What needs to be answered is whether North Korea conforms to the rational actor model in their deterrence strategy, particularly since the changes to international political structure as the Cold War ended. In addition, we should also ask if the rational actor assumption can be improved when nuclear weapons development is connected to the models proposed by Sagan and Bracken that include domestic coalition, norm taking or norm rejection, and nationalist ideology.

In order to evaluate the relevance of the assumptions of security studies and strategic studies to the North Korean question it is necessary to provide some overview of analysts' assumptions about North Korea's condition and behaviour since the end of the Cold war.

First of all, the Korean peninsula is an area where there is continued influence of other regional powers into Korean affairs. The two Koreas must co-exist with the United States, Russia, China, and Japan who have their own interests in the Korean affairs but also use the Korean question to test their own relations. Prof. Paik (2011) refers them as the "four powers", saying,

> "The strategic location of Korea draws the so-called "four powers" to interplay in Korean affairs. They interact cautiously. They are obsessed with one another as they want to counterweigh each other influence on the Korean affairs. The cross-section of their interests gives an opportunity for Korea to be more independent and not entirely depend on one particular nation." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

The interplay of regional powers in the Korean affairs underlines the deterrence problem and the security dilemma. During the Cold War period, the extended deterrence the United States and the Soviet Union granted to their allies created a balance in the level of deterrence between the two camps. The situation changed once the Cold War ended. The fall of Communism deprived North Korea of the extended deterrence of the USSR and made it more vulnerable to the deterrence practises of the other regional states. North Korea was left as a Communist country, struggling to avoid the collapse of its regime. The situation was further exacerbated by the internal economic crisis so that it fell behind other countries in every aspect. North Korea becomes more uncertain and wary of the external environment and develops security concerns with nearly all its neighbours. Nuclear weapons are the method by which North Korea seeks to compensate for the imbalance of power and deterrence. The nuclear programme has been accelerated since the early 1990s and slowly allows North Korea to claim the status of partial nuclear weapons state today.

The outbreak of the first nuclear crisis in 1993 reveals the cycle of a security dilemma. Negotiation fails to reduce the tension on the peninsula. One of the reasons for the failure is

North Korea's sense of fear and insecurity has not been addressed by other states. North Korea considers the overall situation "a state of war" based on its viewpoint that the proper peace treaty has never been negotiated and signed to replace the Armistice that ended the Korean War (D. Kang, 2003, pp. 43-44). Prof. Paik (2011) says that the goals of North Korea are "to officially end the Korean War; to sign the peace treaty; and to get normal relationships with the United States, Japan, and South Korea" (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011). North Korea has not trusted the dialogue on nuclear talks that it has either in the bilateral or multilateral forms. Stephen Bosworth, a former US special representative for North Korea policy, says that North Korea's reluctance to fully disarm comes with the disbelief that the Agreed Framework would help it achieve the normalisation of relations with the United States (PBS, 2003). North Korea has felt intimidated and insecure as a result of internal weakness that makes it fall behind other countries. The feeling of insecurity is further emphasised by the hostile policy of the regional powers. Prof. M. Kwon (2011) says that,

> "The external environment is not very friendly to North Korea. The United States threatened North Korea, by saying that North Korea might probably be the next target after Iraq. Also, North Korea feels intimidated by South Korea, particularly when South Korea begins to talk about unification because it would mean the absorption of North Korea by South Korea. They intimidate North Korea but they do not realise it." (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011)

The second point relates to the nature of inter-Korean relations. There have been efforts of both Koreas to reach for reunification of the country, which has been divided since 1953. The issue of unification causes both to compete for their version. A sense of distrust and fear is created but is exacerbated when one side falls behind the other side. Nonetheless, it is claimed that unification is no longer an ultimate goal of North Korea nor has it any connection with the regime's pursuit of nuclear weapons (Interview Prof. D. H. Han, 2011; Interview Dr. E. C. Lim, 2011). The possession of nuclear weapons is rather to serve the regime's threat perception. Prof. I. H. Park (2011) says that,

> "North Korea's system is so much different from the ordinary system. The huge gap in terms of political, social, and economic development it has with the

> outside world and with South Korea are so huge. It feels threatened by this fact even though we do not threaten North Korea." (Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011)

The Korean peninsula remains a place where both competitive deterrence strategies and the security dilemma are in practise. In the world of anarchy, it is easy for states to become locked in a cycle of security competition. Fear will drive states to compete with each other, as Booth and Wheeler (2008, p. 1) state:

> "Given the stakes involved, the existence of weapons in hands of one state can provoke at least uncertainty and possibly real fear in others even when those weapons are not intended to be used except for self-protection (following an attack, or in the even to of a threat of an attack)."

Hence, it is possible to assume that the security dilemma occurs naturally as a result of how states seek to secure themselves. Nonetheless, the behaviour of North Korea somehow shows that the security dilemma is sought intentionally. It refers to the tactics of provocations and belligerence, which North Korea has been using since the Cold War period. Bracken (2012, pp. 194-195) says that the motive behind provocations is not war, but rather to send a message to the outside world, for example, to show its dissatisfaction to the international pressure and sanction. Such actions appear irrational as they exceed conventional motivations in maintaining military strength for the purpose of deterrence. In contrast to the fact that it has a large conventional army, North Korea is actually a militarily weak country. Although the international community views North Korea as "the most militarised society on earth", North Korea's military is actually rather weak with outdated military equipment and a low spending per capita caused by the economic problem (H. Smith, 2000, p. 599). The theory of deterrence suggests that an increase in security level is usually for the purpose of deterring an aggressor. In addition, states usually choose not to heighten tensions against its rival, particularly if it is highly likely for them to lose in a situation of war (Lebow & Stein, 1989, p. 211). The behaviour of North Korea shows the opposite. North Korea chooses provocations and belligerence despite the fact it stands a high chance of losing if the war breaks out. Prof. M. Kwon (2011) comments that,

> "Despite nuclear weapons, North Korea's military is smaller and weaker than other countries, say South Korea. Their military spending is far smaller than that of South Korea. They have very poor weapons in term of conventional arms. They cannot afford big conventional army with their low level of GDP. If South Korea decides to develop nuclear weapons, it would take South Korea a year to possess such weapons." (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011)

Both realists and constructivists talk about how the feeling of fear drives states to compete for security. The regional environment plays a significant role in pushing North Korea toward the development of nuclear weapons as seen from the outbreak of the first nuclear crisis right after the fall of the Soviet Union. Nuclear weapons give North Korea the power to protect itself and deter adversaries particularly in the time North Korea is left with no allies (Interview Prof. S. H. Sheen, 2011). On the other hand, the security dilemma is still sought beyond the deterrence level. There appear two explanations on the motive behind North Korea's use of provocations. The first deals with the internal politics of North Korea. Nuclear weapons and belligerence tactics are connected with the issues of internal stability and leadership consolidation. Prof. D. H. Han (2011) says that,

> "Domestic factor plays a role in the decision to belligerence. Both the Cheonan and the Yeonpyeong incidents prove it. The Yeonpyeong shelling in particular made me curious about their intention. When I thought about the peninsula affairs at that time, it was clearly ameliorating. Not only South Korea, but the United States and China also tried to contact or persuade North Korea after the Cheonan incident. The mood was not bad at that time. But North Korea chose to attack Yeonpyeong island. My speculation is the domestic politics outweighs international affairs. I think the North Korean leader tried to satisfy the domestic audience because the political succession process is ongoing and very unstable by their definition. If you have instability in your domestic politics, you need to convert your opposition's attention to outside so that you can solve your domestic problem." (Interview Prof. D. H. Han, 2011)

The second explanation is the use of deterrence to play a game with the United States and the international community. A heightened tension is sought as a means to draw attention from

the United States in particular. It seems that North Korea and the United States are not in the same place in terms of objectives. North Korea's aim is to settle the Korean War issue through a proper treaty, the United States' main focus is the denuclearisation. The situation reaches a deadlock especially if the United States pursues a hardline policy towards North Korea. The US reluctance to negotiate with North Korea, creates a desire to explore tactics to force the United States to the negotiation table. Prof. Paik (2011) considers the North Korea's use of nuclear and missile cards as a policy instrument in order to achieve the regime's policy goal, stating that:

> "North Korea, as I understand, wanted to explore a policy instrument which brings the United States to come to the negotiation table. That was the nuclear card and missile card. It is a policy instrument. The policy goal is to end the Korean War, sign the peace treaty, and normalise the relations with the United States. But you cannot achieve that goal if the United States does not come to the negotiation table. So you decided to use a very forceable means to bring the United States to the negotiation table and they used the nuclear card. So the nuclear card is a policy instrument." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

Whenever there is a dialogue, it appears that North Korea achieves some sort of a deal or concession with it. The first nuclear crisis, the second nuclear crisis, and the series of missile provocations create speculation that North Korea purposefully raises tensions for gaining some benefits from negotiations. Cha (2012a, pp. 227-229) says that North Korea does not find it beneficial living in a state of peace and belligerence is conducted as a means to compensate losses by drawing assistance from others, the so-called "Double or Nothing" strategy. The launch of missiles is one of examples of the use of provocations. Bechtol (2007, p. 53) writes that,

> "The testing and deployment of large numbers of ballistic and other types of missiles can reasonably be seen as a way of "raising the stakes" when North Korea is seeking concessions from the United States. These types of activities can be used in conjunction with provocations such as DMZ violations, harassment of US reconnaissance flights, and other activities as a way of raising tensions – a tactic that North Korea has used in recent years on several occasions. When preparing for a test-launch of the Taepodong 2 in 2006,

> Pyongyang attempted to use the event as a tool for concessions from the United States or others at the Six-Party Talks."

The question of North Korea, its security perception and strategic behaviour both conforms to some of the assumptions of security studies and strategic studies but contradicts others. It conforms to some assumptions of security under anarchy but contradicts others; it conforms to some assumptions of security dilemma but contradicts others; it conforms to some assumptions of deterrence theory but contradicts others. It is hard to say therefore where North Korea stands in relation to rational actor assumptions that play a big part in international relations theory: it is incorrect to say that North Korea's behaviour is entirely rational or entirely irrational (as in the 'rogue state' idea). What this thesis intends to do is evaluate North Korea's security understanding and strategic behaviour to assess the parts of North Korea's behaviour that deserve to be called rational and those to be called irrational. In doing this it also points to some of the limits of applying rational actor assumptions to complex problems in international relations.

2.4 The Establishment of Hypotheses and Research Questions

There seems to be two primary conclusions concerning the case of North Korea as examined through the assumptions of security and strategic studies. The first concerns the external environment which plays a significant part in shaping North Korea's threat perception and level of deterrence activity. The second is about the use of deterrence in a strategic way of covering the regime's weakness and manipulating threats for a wider range of gains. These conclusions lead to the establishment of hypotheses designed to test rationality in North Korea's security understanding and strategic behaviour.

1. North Korea's security perception and strategic behaviour broadly conform to the assumptions of security studies and strategic studies that states leaderships are able to define accurately their security environment and make deterrence responses on a rational calculation of likely gains and losses both in terms of immediate goals and in the ultimate goal of survival. Unable to achieve unification due to internal weakness North Korea's primary goal is maintenance of the status quo and it is prepared to manipulate

the security dilemma if this contributes to short-term gains or the ultimate goal of regime survival. The acquisition of nuclear weapons is a rational choice within this strategy.

2. North Korea's security perception and strategic behaviour contradict many of the assumptions of security and strategic studies. North Korea's understanding of the security environment is distorted by ideology and internal politics; and its deterrence strategy is not a rational response in terms of either short term gains or losses or the ultimate goal of defending the Korean nation. Deliberate provocation of the security dilemma towards South Korea or other neighbours is irrational and cannot provide an exit from the security challenges North Korea faces. North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons is not a deterrence strategy but a blackmail strategy which is likely to increase not reduce other states determination to sanction and isolate North Korea.

These hypotheses will be tested by the following research questions and in the following chapters.

Research Questions

Conceptual Questions:

1. What are the proper criteria for judging whether states are rational or irrational in terms of their security perceptions or deterrence strategies? How should we evaluate and test the relative influence of internal determinants and external environment in shaping security perception and deterrence behaviour?

2. What is an adequate level of deterrence for states? How can states gain security for themselves without making other states feel insecure; and is active provocation of a security dilemma with other states evidence of irrational thinking or behaviour?

Analytical Questions:

1. What are the internal determinants that shape the threat perception of North Korea? To what extent is the high level of threat perception a product North Korea creates in order to keep the legitimacy of its regime and the power of the leader? (Chapter 3)

2. How has the relationship of the two Koreas played an effect on the North Korea's perception? Are all the military and other forms of provocations for deterring South Korea or for purposes not connected to deterrence ?(Chapter 4)

3. How has the interaction of the major powers in the region contributed to the North Korea's decision making on the deterrence level? Why have the major powers not been able to reassure or deter North Korea? (Chapter 5)

4. What have been the primary objectives of the US strategy towards North Korea? How does the US strategy for DPRK interact with broader US objectives for managing its relations in Northeast Asia? Is the US deterrence strategy a cause of the security dilemma in the region or a means of managing it? (Chapter 6)

5. Having failed to either co-opt or deter DPRK from its deterrence strategy on a bilateral basis the regional powers proceeded to a multilateral process - the Six Party Talks - in order to achieve denuclearisation on the peninsula. What does the interaction of the concerned parties in this process tell us about the limits of multilateral diplomacy as a route to normalisation on the peninsula? Is there any prospect that multilateral engagements can persuade DPRK to lower its deterrence threshold? (Chapter 7)

The conclusion to the thesis in Chapter 8 will summarise the answers to the above questions and answer the central question of the thesis: is DPRK deterrence strategy rational or irrational?

Before continuing to the analytical chapters two methodological points should be made. The chapters outlined above have two different timeframes. Chapters 3 and 4 (North Korean regime and inter-Korean relations) take the period from the end of the Second World War to the contemporary era. This is necessary because examination of North Korean internal factors and change on the peninsula must be taken over the whole period since the division of the Korean nation into two states and the struggle for unification that followed. The subsequent chapters on the external environment take the period between the first nuclear crisis on the peninsula 1993-94 and the collapse of the Six Party Talks in 2008. This timeframe is justified because a core argument of the thesis is that the threat environment and deterrence responses

of North Korea changed decisively with the end of the Cold war. The Cold war system and the post-Cold war system are quite different environments for the North Korean regime and its deterrence behaviour changes in consequence. Therefore we should look at the interaction of external environment and strategic behaviour of North Korea only in this period to answer the questions in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

A further methodology problem is studying North Korea as a political science topic. This is difficult for two reasons. The sources of reliable information on North Korea available for analysts are very much lower than for other topics in political science. Also North Korea is still very much an ideological issue for many analysts in both Koreas and internationally. For these two reasons of limited and biased information studying North Korea poses many problems for the researcher. This thesis has done the best it can to work around these problems but it is necessary to be aware of them when considering research conclusions.

Chapter 3: The North Korean Regime

When discussing North Korea, it seems that the international community sees the country in a very negative light. This is reflected in the rhetoric used, with terms such as 'mad', 'dangerous', or 'unpredictable' employed. Not only is North Korea perceived as a socialist country with a very strange authoritarian internal system, but North Korea is also viewed as an aggressor who threatens international peace and stability through its pursuit of nuclear weapons and missile programmes, and frequent belligerence towards its neighbours and other regional actors. North Korea maintains a high level of defence, a reflection of a national insecurity. North Korea's military build-up, in turn, creates a feeling of insecurity among its neighbours, resulting in a security dilemma in the region. The literature usually views states' insecurity as driven by competition among states who live in an anarchical international system in search of their own security. However, with regards to North Korea, it is argued that the regime's threat perception is created by the personal perception of its leader, and this is most evident as a result of the change in the international structure in the post-Cold war period. This threat perception is exploited by the leader in securing his power and position, using threat and insecurity as propaganda and defence mechanisms. It is widely debated if North Korea's deterrence strategy adequately matches the environment in which the country operates, and whether it is rational given that the threat perception and deterrence strategy of the regime are used to serve to secure the regime's leadership in the Kim family.

North Korea is a socialist country. North Korea may not look that much different from other socialist countries, when judged by its internal systems and the fact that it is controlled by a single party – the Korean Workers' Party (KWP). However, it is argued that North Korean socialism should be regarded as socialism's North Korean style (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011). What distinguishes North Korea from other communist countries is its adoption of Juche ideology, which grants the leader a singular power to put the KWP, the state, and the system under his control (Yonhap News Agency, 2003, p. 87). In addition, North Korea's society has roots in Confucianism. Confucianism has never been replaced by socialism, but instead it has been integrated with socialist ideology in the process of constructing the country's socialist system. Concerning this, T. Kang (1979, p. 99) writes:

> "No matter how much change the North Koreans claim their Socialistic or Communistic revolution has wrought in their society, their basic mentality has not changed too much. They have only affected the forms of Communism, but its contents are still of the Korean Confucian tradition. Of course, the contents of Korean Confucianism itself have been changed within its framework. The Korean people's loyalty in the past was expressed in family affairs through Confucian rites such as those for adulthood, ceremonies, marriage, funerals, ancestor's anniversary feast, and worship of family altars. Today some of these rites have become devitalized, but some still survive in an extremely simplified form under the control of the Party."

By claiming that a leader's threat perception has a greater impact on the regime's level of deterrence, rather than external factors, makes it imperative to study the internal dynamics of the regime and their role in contributing to the level of deterrence.

This chapter analyses the historical background, the ideological system, and institutional framing in order to provide some background of the overall internal structure of the North Korean regime, and illustrate how these internal characteristics played a role in supporting the power and perception of its leadership. This will help to analyse the problem of whether North Korea's deterrent strategy is rational or irrational, given the unique internal system as the core structure of the regime; and if the internal determinants are the predominant factors that determine the deterrent strategy, or whether it is the international environment.

3.1 The Regime of North Korea: the History, the Structure and the System

The history of North Korea begins at the end of the Second World War, when an effort by the Allied Powers to liberate Korea from Japanese occupation resulted in the division of the Korean Peninsula into two separate states. The two zones were divided at the 38th Parallel, and the political systems of each zone was shaped and influenced by their two occupiers. Communism was established in North Korea with the arrival of the Soviet army, and the process of Sovietisation began with the appointment of Kim Il Sung, who had been trained in the Soviet Union. Both North and South Korea successfully established their own

governments with the support of their respective occupiers, but the desire to unify the country remained strong in the two countries' leadership, despite differences in their political systems. North Korea held advantages in military capability and internal stability, and took the first move intended to achieve this goal by invading South Korea on 25 June 1950, which led to the Korean War. This was to result in a permanent division of the two Koreas. The War concluded with the Armistice Agreement, signed on 27 July 1953.

After the division into two states North Korea adopted the communist system and ideology. The KWP, with Kim Il Sung as the chairman, became the sole and permanent government of North Korea. The Constitution of North Korea clearly states, in Article 11, that "The DPRK shall conduct all activities under the leadership of the Workers' Party of Korea" (Yonhap News Agency, 2003, p. 1013). As written in the KWP charter, the KWP "is guided by the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung's juche (self-reliance) and revolutionary ideas" (Yonhap News Agency, 2003, p. 87). Kim Il Sung's power in the KWP was evident before the Korean War. As chairman of the party, Kim Il Sung had full control of the Military Committee, which was in charge of preparations for the Korean War, and therefore reflected his consolidated political power (J. K. Park, 1979, p. 117). The years immediately following the Korean War saw Kim Il Sung attempt to consolidate his leadership. Kim purged some party members by charging them with responsibility for the failure of the war, and the purge-process lasted throughout the 1950s and targetted many other political rivals (K. W. Nam, 1974, p. 88).

Kim Il Sung had a vision to rehabilitate North Korea through an economic reconstruction programme. However, such efforts caused dissatisfaction because the programme required the North Korean people to increase their labour output while simultaneously decreasing their rate of consumption (H. S. Lee, 2001, p. 24). In order to secure his leadership amidst opposition and challenges, Kim Il Sung introduced the Juche ideology, which was announced to the public for the first time in December 1955. Juche's principles of self-reliance have three main components: national political independence, economic self-reliance, and national self-defence. These are political tools that influence the internal political structure, and have played a part in the foreign policy of North Korea in the post-Korean War period. Juche also represents Korean nationalism. The self-reliance principle is structured on the idea that "both internal and international affairs of the country should be handled by the North Koreans,

independent of foreign interference, through the policy of self-reliance to the fullest extent possible" (An, 1983, p. 36).

Domestically, Kim Il Sung used the Juche ideology to eliminate his opponents and to establish his power as the one-man dictatorship. Internationally, Juche emphasised the sovereignty and independence of North Korea, and was used as a political tool to escape the pressures that arose with the Sino-Soviet dispute.[1] Juche was settled in North Korea until in 1960s, when there appeared to be an attempt to transform Juche into Kimilsungism, or the leader's Cult of Personality. The new interpretation of Juche elevated Kim Il Sung's status from Nation Leader to Supreme Leader, or "suryong". The basic characteristics of Kimilsungism are described as:

> "The regime presented Kim Il Sung's childhood as an exemplar for self-reliant communists, and introduced justification for this idolization by claiming that the suryong or Kim Il Sung is the entity that enables socio-political life, which is more important than mere physical existence. The so-called suryong theory is clearly the centrepiece of the personality cult, as it posits the suryong, the key driver that leads revolutions and nation-building, as the intellectual leader at the head of the masses." (*Understanding North Korea 2012*, 2012, p. 32)

Since Kimilsungism specifically focuses on the leader, it laid the foundation for the dynastic succession that justified the elevation of Kim Jong Il after the death of his father. The Juche ideology, established by Kim Il Sung, was adopted in practice during the leadership of Kim Jong Il, with some changes to the concept. The Juche of Kim Il Sung emphasised the idea of self-reliance, whereas that of Kim Jong Il focused more on the leader and the relationship between the leader and the masses. Juche started to change in the early 1970s, with a focus on man under the "man-centred philosophy" in justifying Kim Jong Il's succession. In the

[1] Power competition between China and the Soviet Union caused North Korean discomfort, because both were considered North Korea's allies. To avoid taking a side, North Korea referred to Juche and declared that the regime was a politically independent country (Oberdorfer, 2001, p. 20). North Korea successfully manoeuvred around this competition, making it able to secure economic and military assistance from the Soviet Union and sharing the same political ideology with China – for example, promoting the revolution in Third World countries, and opposing detente with Western countries (Armstrong, 2007, p. 91).

1980s, the idea was expanded to include an absolute loyalty of the masses to the leader (Kihl, 2006, p. 9).

The first signs of a change to military doctrine appeared in December 1962, with the adoption of the "Four-Point Military Guidelines". The Guidelines, considered the bedrock of North Korea's military policy, have the four principles of arming the whole population, fortifying the country, upgrading the military, and training military personnel (*Understanding North Korea 2012*, 2012, p. 107). The "Four-Point Military Guidelines" shaped North Korea into a fortress, and influenced North Korea to enhance its strategy and tactics focused on surprise-attacks. This lead to the construction of underground tunnels along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) in the 1970s (Yonhap News Agency, 2003, p. 677). The fundamental idea to Kim Il Sung's militarism came from his personal experience of colonialism, which drove his desire to protect North Korea from foreign influence. This became clearer after South Korea was admitted under the US security umbrella. H. S. Lee (2001, p. 52) interprets the Guidelines as an attempt to militarise in order to achieve the reunification of the two Koreas. The military was given a higher degree of significance in 1964 with Kim Il Sung's declaration of "the Three Revolutionary Forces". The "Three Revolutionary Forces" policy is directed at the reunification of Korea and the efforts of revolutionary forces within both Koreas to achieve this (H. S. Lee, 2001, p. 53). The militarism may originate from the personal desire of Kim, but the military pillar gradually acquired a higher level of significance, becoming the primary pillar of the regime, as a result of the changed international environment North Korea faced. The change started with the rift in the Communist camp between the Soviet Union and China during the Sino-Soviet dispute, the strengthening of the US-ROK military alliance but intensified with the fall of the Soviet Union and the failure of the socialist countries in the Cold War political struggle. A final incident to hit the regime was the sudden death of Kim Il Sung, in 1994. Kim Il Sung's death led to the succession of Kim Jong Il as the new leader of North Korea.

Apart from Juche, the socialism of North Korea is unique due to the succession of power within the Kim family line. A South Korean expert made this comment on the hereditary succession:

> "My analysis of the hereditary succession is that it is the way to ensure the regime's survival. From Kim Il Sung or Kim Jong Il's point of view, the

> succession is the safe way to continue the same policy, to keep the system as it is. It is also the best way to block the power from being overthrown by the lieutenants after the death of the leader." (Interview Anonymous, 2011)

Despite the smooth succession from father to son, the control of the military institution appeared to be a challenging task for Kim Jong Il. It is possible to say that Kim Jong Il's era began in 1998, after the three-year mourning period of the death of Kim Il Sung had ended. Kim Jong Il was declared the chairman of the National Defence Commission, the highest military organ in charge of the military and defence as stated in the Constitution of North Korea (Yonhap News Agency, 2003, p. 1021). The military underwent new reforms, and old officers were replaced by new officers loyal to Kim Jong Il. Kim Jong Il's effort to consolidate his leadership is also visible in the introduction of military-first politics, or "Songun Jeongchi". As a result of this slogan, the military became North Korea's first priority. It emphasised the role and power of the leader over military institutions, and called for absolute devotion of the soldiers to the leader (H. Park, 2007, p. 7). I. Kim (2006, p. 71) writes that Kim Jong Il used the military-first politics to consolidate his leadership and power, because the slogan seeks the dedication and loyalty of the military to the leader. The basic idea of the relationship between the leader and the military is exhibited in an article published in the Rodong Sinmun[2] on 21 March 2003, emphasising that the army is "the powerful political force of the society and the revolution only through the great revolution led by a leader [suryong]." (Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability, 2003). The power of the Korean People's Army (KPA) was elevated to the highest position over the KWP, giving the KPA an authority to involve itself and decide upon non-military issues (S. Snyder, 2009a, p. 43). The focus on the military reduced the level of significance of economic reform, which Jeung (2007, p. 15) interprets as an attempt to deflect the leadership's responsibility for the country's economic hardships during the 1990s. Despite some changes to the internal military institutions, it has been claimed that North Korea's overall system did not undergo much change after Kim Jong Il took control of the country. This is because,

> "North Korea has a unique political system. It is a mixture of Confucianism and Socialism. Most North Korean people believe in Kim Il Sung, even though he is dead. They worship both Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il. They are gods. Without

[2] Rodong Sinmun is the official newspaper of the KWP.

> them, we cannot live. It is a kind of religion. In other words, North Korean leaders successfully brainwashed their people. I think the North Korean regime was based on this kind of indoctrination. Without changing their ideology, the North Korea regime is unchangeable and it is hard to change the core of the North Korean regime." (Interview Prof. D. H. Han, 2011)

As politics prioritised the military, every aspect of the country came to serve the military, even the economic system. As such, the only main source of revenue was the military industry, which exacerbated the country's economic problems. Any change in the economic system, whether liberalisation or reform, including opening to foreign engagement, became highly unlikely as it would have jeopardised the military's control. In foreign affairs, military-first politics was connected to North Korea's threat perception when the regime was faced with external pressures. Nuclear proliferation and provocation by North Korea under the leadership of Kim Jong Il were in part products of the military-first politics. The military was given greatest prominence and it influenced North Korea's choice to rely upon the use of nuclear weapons for coercive bargaining. In return, the military-first politics were strengthened by this policy implementation (DeRochie, 2011, p. 14).

Further to military-first politics, Kim Jong Il also held a vision of turning North Korea into a powerful and prosperous nation, or "kangsong taeguk". The phrase first appeared in January 1999. It was published in the New Year Joint Editorial of the KCNA, which says,

> "As we built a socialist country, independent in politics, self-supporting in the economy and self-reliant in national defence, through the grand march of Chollima on the ruins under the guidance of the great Kim Il Sung, we should push ahead with a second grand march of Chollima under the leadership of the respected Kim Jong Il. 'Let this year mark a turning-point in building a powerful nation' this is a militant slogan that should be held aloft by the Workers' Party and people of Korea. The editorial calls for glorifying the DPRK as an ideologically powerful socialist state and fully demonstrating its invincible might as a militarily powerful socialist state." (KCNA, 1999a)

The core idea of the kangsong taeguk, apart from strengthening the country in all aspects, was about an absolute loyalty the people must have towards the leader, which could

successfully be achieved with the support of the military (B. C. Koh, 2005). The slogan calls for achievements in three major areas – ideology, economy and military – each of which has to be simultaneously developed in order to reach the goal of a strong and powerful nation (Interview Prof. Y. Y. Kim, 2011). Kim Jong Il adopted this slogan as a means to ensure his absolute power as the Supreme Leader, and also to claim his status as the legitimate successor to Kim Il Sung. Prof. Moon (2011) notes that,

> "North Korea's development of nuclear weapons has something to do with the domestic politics. Kim Jong Il has been championing the slogan of strong and prosperous grand nation. The possession of nuclear weapons underscores the strength of North Korea, thereby enhancing political legitimacy of Kim Jong Il." (Interview Prof. Moon, 2011)

According to C. Kenneth Quinones (2005a, pp. 283-284), the kangsong taeguk was launched under a short-term objective of reviving the ailing economy, and a long-term objective of safeguarding the regime by strengthening the military in particular. The kangsong taeguk may be a new slogan, but North Korea continued to commit itself to the idea of Juche and anti-US imperialism as emphasised in the 1999 New Year Joint Editorial (KCNA, 1999a). Anti-US imperialism was also used to support the implementation of the slogan with an emphasis on the US threat to the regime. The KCNA says that the nation must be built on the slogan, because the country needed to protect Korean socialism and end the threat of US imperialism (KCNA, 1999c). The strengthening of the military based on the perception that imperialism is a source of insecurity gave kangsong taeguk credibility in North Korean internal politics.

Despite the fact that both North Korea and the United States were bound to each other under the Agreed Framework of 1994 that aimed to resolve the first Korean nuclear crisis, distrust continued as each side suspected the other of breaching the agreement. This resulted in policy implementation in an opposite direction. This factor gave kangsong taeguk credibility in North Korean internal politics, in which imperialism was referred to as a cause for war, and pushed the regime forward with its nuclear and missile delivery system development.

3.2 North Korea's Threat Perception

In the early stages of the post-Korean War period, there were two major challenges that Kim Il Sung had to overcome. The first was the need to consolidate his power as leader by uniting all the domestic factions inside North Korean society. Secondly, he needed to reconstruct the country's economy after the Korean War. To achieve these objectives, policies mainly focussed on the development of a heavy industry, the implementation of the militarisation programme, and the announcement of the Juche principle of self-reliance.

The Juche policy reflected the security perception of the North Korea leadership, because while Juche is a method of seeking internal stability, it is also a political tool for extracting external security from North Korea's two main allies – China and the Soviet Union. Partial independence is actually the policy North Korea pursued during this period, as the economic and political survival of the regime depended on the external assistance from allies. The Sino-Soviet dispute, as such, was a difficult development for North Korea, because the regime found it hard to maintain its neutrality when any slight shift in position could jeopardise the relationship it had with either of its allies. The Juche ideology helped North Korea maintain alliances with both China and the Soviet Union. It was during this period that Kim Il Sung started to incorporate Juche and patriotism by defining Juche as the principle of one's own efforts (Jo & Marshall, 1979, pp. 169-170). Nevertheless, the dilemma Kim faced was that, at the same time as needing to maintain the alliance partnerships, there was also the need for minimising the level of influence both China and the Soviet Union had on internal North Korean politics, and to consolidate his own power and that of the Korean Workers' Party.

The benefits North Korea received from its allies assisted economic progress and political stability, which also raised hope for Kim Il Sung to fulfil his goal of Korean reunification. Nonetheless, the situation began to change in the mid-1960s, when the country experienced agricultural shortages caused by the policy that gave too much emphasis on the development of heavy industry. The economy of North Korea fell behind that of South Korea. For the first time since the Korean War ended, North Korea perceived South Korea as a threat. Prof. M. Kwon (2011) observed the situation during that period of time, saying,

> "North Korea was far more advanced than South Korea in the 1950s and 1960s but in 1974, the per capita GDP was reverse. South Korea began to go ahead.

> All the socialist countries develop very fast in the first one to two decades but in time they are slow down and stagnated. In Europe or other areas, they are just overthrown. But North Korea, for various reasons, it is continuing its regime. It is like riding on the back of the tiger and it is very difficult to get off the tiger. It is running and you have to run. If you run faster, then all the other countries become more hostile to you and you have to be more hostile towards other countries and the more you have to be secretive. Fundamental fact here is they have become economically fast growing and politically democratic in South Korea. That is the main factor that threatens the existence of North Korea." (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011)

The perception of threat from South Korea lowered the regime's security and, in order to compensate for the feeling of economic insecurity, North Korea shifted its focus to strengthening its military capability. The decision resulted in acts of violence[3] against South Korea and the United States, which reached a peak in the mid-1960s (Bradshaw, 1979, pp. 188-189). The belligerence had two major consequences: a strengthening of the Juche ideology of self-reliance, and the United States was blamed for being a major obstacle in Korean matters. Juche was given a higher degree of significance when China tried to put pressure on North Korea over its acts of aggression. Kim Il Sung reacted strongly to the Chinese pressure. In an attempt to guarantee its own sovereignty, Juche was again emphasised as the main ideology of North Korea (Jo & Marshall, 1979, pp. 176-177).

North Korea's decision to strengthen its military capability, as compensation for its lack of economic security, produced changes in North Korea's neighbours' level of threat perception. South Korea was most affected by North Korean's military build-up, because most of its acts of aggression were aimed at South Korea. By attempting to match its level of security with its level of threat perception, South Korea finally decided to pursue its own military build-up, which led to an arms race on the Korean peninsula in the 1970s. North Korea's military build-up lowered South Korea's sense of security most keenly during the decline in US

[3] Major incidents during this period included an attempted assassination of South Korean President Park Chung Hee, in 1968; the capture of the US intelligence ship Pueblo, in 1968; and the shooting down of a US reconnaissance plane, in 1969. In addition, there were also violent intrusions along the DMZ, which significantly increased in frequency in the mid-1960s (Lerner, 2010).

military assistance to South Korea as part of Richard Nixon's military withdrawal plan[4], in 1969. Although the withdrawal plan was finally suspended after a series of talks and discussions within the US government, it had already had an effect on the South Korean government. South Korea felt uneasy with the US decision, because the South Korean government perceived its security as dependent on the alliance with the United States (Hamm, 1999, pp. 79-80). Unlike the military balance on the peninsula in the 1950s which favoured North Korea by the 1970s and 1980s South Korea was the more advanced economy and military. North Korea may seem to have a large army, but the analysis shows that the manpower and military equipment are of inferior quality, and certainly when compared to that of South Korea (Moon & Lee, 2009).

Apart from the changing relationship with South Korea, North Korea's threat perception was also affected by the changes in the broader international environment of the Cold War. During the 1960s, there were two events that Kim Il Sung exploited for North Korea's own benefit: the Vietnam War and the Chinese Cultural Revolution. The Vietnam War, to Kim Il Sung, was a symbol of Third World resistance against American imperialism. North Korea should have taken this opportunity to adopt a leading role in supporting the worldwide struggle to weaken the power of the United States and to pave the way for a revolution in South Korea (Gills, 1996, pp. 106-109). The Vietnam War took place when China was going through its Cultural Revolution. Kim Il Sung viewed this period as an opportunity to promote himself as the "next leader of the Communist movement among Third World countries", as can be seen in his speeches encouraging nationalist movements in many parts of the world (Cha, 2012a, pp. 47-48). Kim Il Sung's speeches caused some dissatisfaction in both China and Vietnam, but such actions had two major results. The first was the belief Kim Il Sung had in revolutionary power as a means to achieve Korean reunification, and also in becoming the leader of a global Communist movement. The second was the belief in the propaganda campaign in which Kim Il Sung exploited the Vietnam War in order to promote the concept of Third World revolution against the imperialists. It was the strategy North Korea pursued in promoting the dangers of imperialism and the need to construct the socialist state. Bradshaw (1979, p. 185) writes that there tends to be no difference between domestic policy objectives

[4] President Richard Nixon announced in July 1969 the so-called "Nixon Doctrine", which planned to cut the US military expenditures in Asia (J. H. Nam, 1986, p. 63). The doctrine also mentioned the security responsibility the allies should be committed to, making the US security assurance more effective (Hamm, 1999, p. 79).

and foreign policy goals, because North Korea still focused on the concept of the power of the revolution in constructing the nation, and in strengthening the solidarity of the socialist state with world revolutionary forces. To achieve these goals, North Korean security needed to be maximised through economic and defence construction, and the revolution in South Korea needed to be encouraged in order to topple the South Korean government and force US withdrawal. North Korea strengthened opposition to imperialism, by framing its propaganda against South Korea and the United States and criticising South Korea's dependence on US imperialism.

The situation on the Korean peninsula experienced more changes as a result of certain transitions and changes in the international system. During the mid-1970s, the bipolar system began to evolve into a multi-polar system – marked by a decline in US power and influence in Asia, and also the normalisation of relations between China and the United States, and detente between the Soviet Union and the United States. The new international atmosphere created a new impetus for the two Koreas to resolve their own issues without foreign interference (Gills, 1996, p. 121). Korean reunification was still North Korea's main objective, but the strategy to achieve this goal was changed to focus on dialogue and negotiation – this led to the organisation of the first North-South dialogue, in 1971.

North Korea's failing economy may have played a part in changing the country's tactics in the 1970s, as the regime was forced to reduce its defence expenditures. At the same time, the change in the policy and tactics were also a result of the regime's desire to gain international recognition and respect. Zagoria and Kim (1975, pp. 1021-1022) have said that North Korea abandoned the policy of supporting worldwide revolution as a means to indirectly weaken the power of the United States, thereby forcing a withdrawal from East Asia, to focus instead on gaining a broader acceptance from the international community by expanding diplomacy. Nonetheless, belligerence against South Korea continued, and it involved the construction of underground tunnels along the DMZ in the 1970s, and the attempted assassination of President Chun Doo Hwan in 1980s. During the 1980s, North Korea suffered from a heightened sense of insecurity, caused by an internal economic decline that made the country unable to match its level of defence spending with its level of threat perception. The threat perception of North Korea was a reaction to the rapid growth in South Korean arms build-up in light of its economic success, and the introduction of the US Air Land Battle doctrine, in 1983. Such threats moved North Korea closer to the Soviet Union and shifted North Korean

strategy from infiltration to terrorism (Hamm, 1999, pp. 84-85). As North Korea compensated for its increased insecurity by raising its defence level, these changes made other countries perceive North Korea as a threat. North Korea's acts of belligerence encouraged the United States and South Korea to consider that a military response was appropriate, which resulted in a strengthening of the US-ROK alliance through an increase in common military exercises (Cha, 2012a, p. 58).

The situation reached its peak in the 1990s, with the collapse of the Communist bloc and the decision of both Russia and China to extend diplomatic relations to South Korea. North Korea felt insecure and isolated particularly after Russia ended relations with communist countries and joined with Western countries in condemning North Korea for human rights violations (Evgeny Bazhanov, 2003, p. 7). The loss of former allies North Korea had an impact on North Korea's sense of security, on which Prof. Paik (2011) elaborates:

> "It is quite clear that in the absence of the Soviet Union which collapsed in 1991, North Korea had to find a so-called an exit strategy in order to get out of the difficulties it faced when the Soviet Union and Eastern European socialist states were gone. The first thing they thought of was to end the Korean War, to sign the peace treaty and normalise the relationship with the United States and Japan. Those are the key elements they thought of as part of the strategy of survival in a totally new international environment. The nuclear card and missile card are policy instruments to achieve the policy goal" (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

With less Russian engagement, North Korea instead turned more towards self-reliance. The problems North Korea faced in the early 1990s included the regime's lack of confidence and security in the new post-Cold War environment, as well as energy and oil shortages caused by the end of support from China and Russia. Nuclear power increased its appeal as an option for North Korea, because nuclear power can reward a country in terms of both its security and economy. The new post-Cold War environment also forced North Korea to turn itself towards the United States, and an attempt to improve the relationship appeared in the form of dialogue and negotiation between 1992 and 1994. On the one hand, North Korea perceived the United States as the main obstacle to reunification, and advocated withdrawal of US troops from the peninsula; on the other hand, the United States could play an important role

in regime security and regime survival, if it was prepared to offer resources in exchange for restraint. The United States turned out to be an asset in North Korea's strategic calculus. North Korea benefited from the high level talks with the United States, because it raised North Korea's status to coequal with the United States, while at the same time relegated South Korea to a lower status during the negotiations (Koh, 1998, pp. 87-88). However, this did not produce the breakthrough North Korea desired the two sides had different objectives when entering into the dialogue. While the United States sought total nuclear dismantlement, North Korea wanted to a normalisation of relations with the United States. However, North Korea did not believe that the Agreed Framework would help it achieve this aim, and this fact influenced the regime to "have something in reserve in case the Agreed Framework broke down, or was not implemented in a satisfactory fashion" (PBS, 2003).

In addition to the external environment factors that influenced North Korean behaviour in the 1990s, the regime was faced with the new transformation that resulted from the sudden death of Kim Il Sung in 1994. Kim Jong Il, who had been designated the next leader in the 1980s, took control of the country and, under his personal dictatorship, North Korea's internal system underwent some dramatic changes. To begin with, the military was the top priority of the country and its significance was elevated after the announcement of the military-first politics in 1995 (*Understanding North Korea 2012*, 2012, p. 58). The 1995 declaration of military-first politics reflected the perception of threat in North Korea and the need to survive in the post-Cold War environment. From observing the collapse of Communism, North Korea concluded that capitalism was a major cause for the downfall. According to Jeon (2009, p. 183), such understanding pushed North Korea into two things – tighter control of the regime in order to maintain the system, and the strengthening of the military in order to defend the regime against any possible capitalist influence.

Military-first politics became a method for consolidating Kim Jong Il's power. The military was given a certain degree of significance, with changes ranging from Kim's field guidance visit to military units and the replacement of old military officers with new officers loyal to him (H. Park, 2007, p. 5). By implementing the military-first policy, the leader's Cult of Personality was further emphasised, and Kim Jong Il became the political icon of the regime – equal to his father, who first introduced the Juche ideology to North Korea. Kim Jong Il

was promoted as an "eternal chairman of the National Defence Commission of the DPRK[5]", due to his military-first initiative (KCNA, 2012e). Military-first politics may have been implemented for the purpose of preventing the collapse of the regime by using the military to safeguard the country, as well as to divert the attention of the people from economic hardship. However, by implementing this strategy, the military gradually played an ever-more significant role in North Korean foreign-policy making. Given the perception of imperialism, coupled with the military-first politics, Kim Jong Il sought ways to make North Korea a nuclear state.

The development of nuclear weapons was based on both domestic politics and also external factors, including the strength of South Korea and American involvement in the region. Prof. S. H. Sheen (2011) made this comment about the correlation between nuclear weapons and domestic politics:

> "Although the main source of regime's insecurity comes from outside with the isolation North Korea feels after the Cold War, it also comes from inside. That sort of insecurity comes from the nature of the regime itself. The totalitarian nature makes it impossible for North Korea to take a path to reform. They do not want to change their basic systems. This is the fundamental reason why they feel insecure that they seek for the development of nuclear weapons" (Interview Prof. S. H. Sheen, 2011)

Kim Jong Il viewed the United States as posing a threat to North Korea both militarily and economically. Given that the regime was facing these threats, Kim Jong Il considered it imperative to implement military-first politics, and to push forward with a nuclear weapons programme. I. Kim (2009, pp. 88-89) argues that Kim Jong Il aimed to establish diplomatic relations with the United States, and believed the use of tactics with nuclear weapons would help him achieve this goal. North Korea's aggressiveness, to some extent, was also the product of the implementation of military-first politics. The military had the power to intervene in and decide on non-military issues after military institution was elevated to a

[5] The National Defence Commission (NDC) is currently the highest organ that controls and commands all military and defence-related matters. Kim Jong Il amended the North Korea's Constitution in 1998, which lifted the status of the NDC and gave the NDC power and independence in its control over the military.

higher position than other institutions, as part of the military-first politics (S. Snyder, 2009a, p. 43). As a result, the country's foreign policy and diplomacy were also directed by the military (Ra, 2011). Moreover the regime was fully aware that even the military first policy was not closing the gap on the South Korean military capability. The North Korean army was large but could not match South Korea in other ways. Prof. Paik (2011) comments that,

> "Statistically, North Korea is a militarily strong country with the military is ranked fourth in the world. But because of the limited resources and because of their economy, they are experiencing a lot of difficulties in modernising their equipments and weapons. This is the factor influencing North Korea to develop nuclear weapons. Conventional weaponry and the military power have been very much weakened despite statistic number. But if you add nuclear capability to that, its military is powerful. This is the reason why South Korea and other countries try to remove North Korean nuclear weapons." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

North Korea is evidently a state that operates under a high level of threat perception, but also induces high insecurity for other states. This is not only due to its behaviour but because of difficulties in understanding its intentions. Stein (2013, pp. 366-367) writes that the security dilemma usually occurs if the states facing each other are both security seekers, but that threat perception would be problematic if intentions were difficult to read. The nature of the North Korean regime makes it difficult for outsiders to fully understand the objectives and intentions behind its belligerent actions. The secretive nature of North Korea is a result of the regime's sense of insecurity, which has developed since the Korean War. Concerning this, Prof. M. Kwon (2011) observed that,

> "Economically, North Korea feels threatened by South Korea. Militarily, North Korea is so afraid of the United States. During the Korean War, the United States bombed all major cities in North Korea. They were devastated so they began to build the military facilities underground. That is not because they are going to attack South Korea, but because they are so afraid of the US air power." (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011)

From the perspective of Kim Jong Il, the United States posed a serious threat to North Korea. North Korea perceives the US-ROK joint military exercises "an act of invasion of North Korea", during which the country has to be on alert and prepare to counterattack (Wit, Poneman, & Gallucci, 2004, p. 24). Prof. I. H. Park (2011) explains North Korea's threat perception towards the US-ROK joint military exercises thus:

> "North Korea responds very sensitively whenever South Korea and the United States conduct the joint military exercise. This is due to an unsettled maritime territory in the West Sea. It is called the Northern Limit Line. It is a kind of a ceasefire line between North and South Korea. The line is drawn without approval from North Korea. North Korea has opposed and insisted the redrawing of this line." (Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011)

Even after the Cold War North Korea lacked a legally binding assurance, such as a peace treaty, from the United States. The joint military exercises, the deployment of patriot missiles in South Korea, and the sanctions from both the United States and the United Nations were considered to be US efforts to strangle the regime (Martin, 2009, p. 61). It appears clear that North Korea wanted to gain diplomatic recognition from the United States, and that matters related to the Korean peninsula should be settled through bilateral dialogue between North Korea and the United States. Nonetheless, failure to keep to the terms of the Agreed Framework of 1994 not only deteriorated the overall situation, but also destroyed the confidence and trust each side had for the other. While the United States was suspicious of North Korea's secret nuclear programme and believed that it was violating the Agreed Framework, North Korea claimed that the United States was insincere in implementing the agreement, as there appeared to be a delay in supplying North Korea with Light Water Reactors. The problem spiralled, as each side blamed the other for noncompliance. North Korea was bound under the Framework to disclose the location of all undeclared nuclear sites, and to allow inspections of such sites upon the completion of a significant portion of the first Light Water Reactor (LWR). However, the delay in the reactor delivery stopped the process of compliance. In the end, the United States suspected North Korea of conducting uranium enrichment activities, and this accusation deepened North Korea's distrust and belief in America's hostile intentions towards the regime.

3.3 Threat Perception, Nuclear Weapons, and Deterrence

Provocations are a popular tactic North Korea uses in its foreign policy. It started with small-scale provocations along the demilitarized zone against South Korea and the United States, but has grown to encompass large scale military activities directed against its neighbours. On the one hand, North Korea's threat perception is a result of external challenges, such as the US-ROK alliance and also inter-Korean competition. On the other hand, the leader's personal experience and worldview play a key role in shaping the level of the regime's threat perception. A tough childhood taught Kim Il Sung the use of violence as a means of success. This experience influenced Kim Il Sung's personal viewpoint towards threat and that the best solution to counter threats is through violence and conflict (Jo & Marshall, 1979, pp. 180-181). North Korea's pursuit of advanced weapons systems is also designed in part to allow North Korea to conduct confrontation, particularly during times when North Korea is faced with a hostile international environment (Y. Kim, 2011, p. 107). Prof. Y. Y. Kim (2011) says that,

> "North Korea has many difficulties to act freely in the world due to sanctions from outside. From the North Korean perspective, they want to escape from this situation. The testing of missiles and nuclear weapons are to send message to the United States and South Korea that we want to have a dialogue with you. They want to escape from the sanctions and to have diplomatic relations with the United States." (Interview Prof. Y. Y. Kim, 2011)

During the leadership of Kim Il Sung, North Korea was driven by insecurity caused by a fear of the US nuclear threat. Cha (2002, p. 219) writes that Kim Il Sung developed an interest in nuclear weapons after witnessing the destructive power and deterrent potential offered by nuclear weapons during World War II. The logic of nuclear deterrence is the official rationale for North Korea's nuclear ambition. This stems from the North Korean belief that the threat of an American nuclear attack is real, and the US inclusion of North Korea as part of an axis of evil and identification as a rogue state confirmed for North Korea the American threat to the regime (Moon, 2007, p. 28). The leader's perception of the insecurity posed by the US threat led to the creation of propaganda encouraging the upgrading of North Korea's defence power in order to counter the threat from the United States. Kim Il Sung once referred to the

United States as "the most vicious aggressor and biggest robber in the world", and the main obstacle to Korean reunification (I. S. Kim, 1981, pp. 112-125).

Kim Il Sung's personal preference for expanding military strength after the end of the Korean War pushed North Korea to implement the military build-up programme of the 1960s, and also the development of a nuclear weapons programme in the 1970s. The nuclear ambitions started in the early 1960s, after Kim Il Sung sent North Korean scientists to the Soviet Union to research the nuclear fuel cycle. The nuclear research began with the establishment of a nuclear physics laboratory, and developed finally into the creation of the nuclear research complex in Yongbyon, in the mid-1960s. North Korea slowly gained confidence in its nuclear research activity, and it undertook an independent effort to upgrade its nuclear reactor in the 1970s. This lead to speculation that the nuclear weapons programme was secretly launched in the five megawatt reactor in Yongbyon during at this time (Cha, 2012a, pp. 242-243; Zhebin, 2000, p. 31). What arose from this scenario was that, when North Korea built up its military capacity, it created a level of confidence in the regime on both the issues of deterrence against outside threats and also the potential for reunification under North Korean terms. Although it has been recorded that North Korea's military capacity has continued to grow since the mid-1970s, the tactic North Korea would use if a war broke out would be a quick and decisive battle. Part of the explanation comes not only from the fact that North Korea could not afford to sustain a long-term war – a result of its weak economic capacity – but also from the Juche strategy North Korea adopted. To elaborate:

> "North Korea's 'Juche strategy' is a mixed strategy combining Mao's guerrilla tactics with old Soviet military strategies in a way that suits the actual situation on the Korean peninsula. The key essence of this strategy is to combine large-scale regular warfare with guerrilla attacks, which will enable the North Korean forces to engage the enemy from every direction." (*Understanding North Korea 2012*, 2012, p. 123)

Guerrilla warfare is a tactic Kim Il Sung is familiar with from his experiences during his youth as an active nationalist leader of the anti-Japanese guerrilla unit in Manchuria. The construction of underground tunnels along the DMZ was part of guerrilla warfare tactics aimed at facilitating a surprise attack against South Korea. It is a strategy aimed at achieving reunification during a time when North Korea was better off than South Korea (Prof. M.

Kwon, 2011). D. Kang (1995, p. 262) says that North Korea and South Korea tend to compete with each other, and the more South Korea continues to build up its economy and military, the more aggressive North Korea will become, because it wants to gain any opportunity of ensuring victory in a war.

Kim Il Sung's military programme may have been for the purposes of competing with South Korea by giving North Korea the power to achieve the regime's ultimate goal of reunifying the two Koreas under North Korean terms. The strategic logic behind the high level of militarisation came from the North Korean government's desire to defeat the South Korean army in a potential forceful reunification of Korea. However, a vicious cycle has been created by North Korea's struggle to maintain parity with South Korea's military level, which in turn has caused the North Korean economy to weaken, and the slowdown instead prompts the government to increase military budget allocations (Lankov, 2013, pp. 71-72). North Korea's reunification policy turns out to be mere political rhetoric to preserve the leader's power and regime's existence. Dr. E. C. Lim (2011) notes that,

> "North Korea's rhetoric is very different from their real intention. The main objective of North Korea is to maintain current status and to co-exist with South Korea. This is because any reunification would see North Korea absorbed into the South Korean system." (Interview Dr. E. C. Lim, 2011)

North Korea's fear of being absorbed is highlighted every time South Korea mentions the unification of Korea, and is elevated when the South Korean government is run by conservatives. North Korea seemed particularly threatened after President Lee Myung Bak mentioned reunification and his proposed "three-step plan for reunification",[6] including preparing South Korea to bear the burden of the reintegration cost after the collapse of North Korea (Harlan, 2010b). Prof. M. Kwon (2011) comments that,

> "President Lee's speech reflected South Korea's intention to absorb North Korea. The anticipation for the North Korean collapse also threatens North Korea. He implies that North Korea will be overthrown or will go bankrupt

[6] The three-step plan calls for the establishment of a "peace community" and "economic community". While the former refers to the denuclearisation of North Korea, the latter outlines the improvement of North Korea's economy through exchanges. The plan also proposes a so-called "unification tax" to bear the cost of reunification (The Chosun Ilbo, 2010b).

> soon. It will just crumble down then the reunification will occur. What he is looking for is not the dialogue but the North Korea's collapse." (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011)

According to Herz states seek ways to obtain or advance their security, but a desire for security would be higher than usual if states were in search of escaping the impact and influence of the power of others (Herz, 1950, p. 157). North Korea seems to compete with South Korea in almost all aspects, and the more it falls behind South Korea, the more it is faced with the threat and insecurity resulting from a fear of being absorbed by South Korea. Nuclear weapons, as such, function as a means to secure the regime's survival amidst inter-Korean competition, and the change in the international security environment. Nuclear weapons, to North Korea, are not for threatening a nuclear first strike (Huntley, 2009, p. 159) or for war-fighting purposes, because the North's military lacks the proper training in the use of nuclear weapons or nuclear war-fighting (Cha, 2002, pp. 218-219). Instead, they are for deterring a regime overthrow or regime absorption strategy (D. Smith, 2006, p. 84).

The concept of deterrence was clearly displayed during the nuclear proliferation crisis in the 1990s. The level of North Korea's threat perception continued to increase after the Agreed Framework was signed, which made total nuclear disarmament highly unlikely. Nuclear weapons were developed primarily to secure the regime as a means of deterring the United States. However, the negotiation process taught North Korea another important value of nuclear weapons when used in negotiating with the United States. According to Prof. Moon (2011) the uses of North Korea's nuclear weapons programme are as follows:

> "North Korea has been developing nuclear weapons for national survival. They have been developed as a part of nuclear deterrence. They think they can come up with minimum nuclear deterrence against the United States. This is the most important motive. But in the process, North Korea has learnt the value of nuclear weapons in negotiating with the United States. Therefore, nuclear weapons can be effective way of extracting economic concession from the United States and other countries in the region for their economic benefits." (Interview Prof. Moon, 2011)

It turns out that both the United States and North Korea share some responsibility for the failure of the Agreed Framework. The United States was reluctant to implement the Agreed

Framework because it believed that North Korea could soon collapse. North Korea, on the other hand, also raised tensions in the region in 1998 with its launch of a missile over Japan. The discovery of the suspected, secret underground nuclear site at Kumchangri, near North Korea's border with China, also raised some speculation over North Korea's sincerity on nuclear disarmament.

North Korea's threat perception was further elevated with the inauguration of US President George W. Bush, and the adoption of a hardline policy after 9/11, which saw North Korea named as part of an axis of evil. The outbreak of the second nuclear crisis in October 2002 showed that the sense of insecurity has not been lowered, despite the dialogue and negotiation of the Agreed Framework. Prof. Moon (2011) notes the regime's sense of fear and lack of confidence, and says,

> "There is a lack of recognition. In building up North Korea's confidence, you have to recognise North Korea and then engage with North Korea. The United States, Japan and South Korea have always been telling that we are right and North Korea is wrong. But in many cases, it is not true. If you look back to 1994 [first nuclear crisis] up until now, the United States also fail in its mission to deliver the so-called Light-Water nuclear reactors as part of delivery with the Framework. From my point of view, I think the United States breached the promises." (Interview Prof. Moon, 2011)

According to Y. Kim (2011, pp. 113-122), North Korea intentionally projects a belligerent image because a provocative foreign policy is the product of the regime's cost-benefit calculations, using verbal statements to provoke its adversaries whenever it sees that the risks do not place the regime in danger. What makes North Korea successful in applying this strategy is that both North Korea and its adversaries do not want to upset the status quo.

North Korea's provocative strategy appears effective due of two factors: The first is that there is a discrepancy between North Korea's actual behaviour and rhetoric, and the second is the fact that North Korea's adversaries appear to be highly risk-averse. Scholars such as Morgan (2003, p. 44) and Stein (2009, pp. 60-61) say that the best choice for states during a time of conflict is to avoid direct confrontation unless it would bring about benefits based on a rational loss-and-benefit calculation. The United States may not want a war with North

Korea, but it faces challenges in finding an effective approach towards North Korea – ranging from the engagement of the Clinton administration, to the confrontation of the Bush administration. American engagement with North Korea appears on a multilateral platform in the form of the Six-Party Talks, rather than bilateral negotiations, which North Korea has long requested. Multilateral dialogue, in other words, implies an American reluctance to engage with North Korea on its own, the result of which erodes the bilateral relationship and trust.

At present, the internal system of the regime is structured on two main elements: military-first politics and the Juche ideology. Military-first politics continue to be popular in North Korean society, even under the new leadership of Kim Jong Un. The significance of the songun policy was emphasised alongside socialism and the Juche as being key elements of "a far-reaching strategy for final victory of the Korean revolution" during a speech made by Kim Jong Un, at the military parade celebrating the centenary of the birth of Kim Il Sung (KCNA, 2012d).

The implementation of military-first politics reflects two things. The first is the military's control over certain domestic matters which, with the prioritisation of the military institution, shows not only North Korea's insecurity but also its unusual internal systems. Jeung (2007, p. 29) writes the following about the internal system of North Korea after the implementation of the military-first politics:

> "Institutionally, the North Korean authorities are likely to opt for the policies designed to expand the roles and functions of the military. The incumbent members on the National Defense Commission are mostly military leaders, which means that these military leaders will rely on 'military logic' in policy discussions and they are likely to have a significant impact on all policy decisions. Consequently, major security policies, including nuclear and missile issues, as well as inter-Korean military dialogue, which are directly related to military values, will probably be decided in favour of the logic and interest of the military. This will also mean that the independence of the military is being enhanced rather than abridged."

The second point reflects the leader's struggle to hold on to a dictator's role and power, and also in ensuring the regime's survival in the new, post-Cold War environment. External factors, such as the inter-Korean conflict, did not have much influence on North Korea's decision to implement the military-first politics, compared to internal factors/considerations. According to Y. Park (2012, pp. 326-327), it was because of a leader's desire to maintain the dictatorship, particularly under the leadership of Kim Jong Un, who was faced with the challenge of continuing the Kim family's ruling style amidst the risks of economic hardship and international sanction.

Concerning the Juche ideology, Kim Jong Un continued to emphasise the significance of self-reliance – as can be seen in his New Year Address of 1 January, 2013. The issues highlighted in the Address included the Juche as a pillar of Kimilsungism-Kimjongilsim, the songun, the economic growth of the nation, and North-South relations. Kim Jong Un said,

> "The road of Juche is the only path for our Party and people to invariably follow, and great Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism is the ever-victorious banner of our revolution. We should march forward along the road of independence, the road of Songun, and the road of socialism to the end upholding the banner of Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism. Our Party will triumphantly build a thriving socialist nation, the most powerful country, on this land in our own way" (KCNA, 2013b)

Currently, the ideological system of North Korea is composed of both Juche and songun together: the former is the symbol of Kim Il Sung, and the latter of Kim Jong Il. There is an argument that, although North Korea continues to be a Juche state, the significance of Juche ideology has changed over time. South Korea has observed North Korea and raised the issue of the changes to Juche both at the governmental and the public levels. In a book titled "Understanding North Korea 2012", the Ministry of Unification of South Korea claimed that the Juche has been weakening since the 1994 economic crisis, and especially after Kim Jong Un's adoption of Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism (*Understanding North Korea 2012*, 2012, p. 33). The Chosun Ilbo, one of the leading newspapers in South Korea, speculated about the significance of Juche with particular reference to the heavy emphasis on the "principles of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il" the KWP made in the revised regulations (The Chosun Ilbo, 2012b). The Yonhap News Agency also reported that Kim Jong Un, instead of focusing on

the ideology of Juche like his father, spoke more about the idea of reforms and opening in order to catch up with global trends (Yonhap News Agency, 2012a). The KCNA refers to Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism as a reflection of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il's ideas, and it is now been adopted to be "the guiding idea of the Workers' Party of Korea" (KCNA, 2013a). Cha (2012a, pp. 58-59) calls the Juche of Kim Jong Un "the neo-Juche revivalism", which calls for the absolute loyalty of the people to the leader and the strengthening of the military, in the same manner as the propaganda of the 1960s and 1970s.

Kim Jong Un's focus on the economy has been visible since his early days in power. For example his speech of 15 April 2012, and its objective of improving the living standards of the North Korean people (KCNA, 2012d). The goal of improving the economy was highlighted again in the 2013 New Year Address, when he emphasised the need for building up the economy and for boosting science and technology to support this economic development (KCNA, 2013b). Dr. E. C. Lim (2011) made this observation on the correlation between the economy and the Juche ideology:

> "The Juche ideology still exists in North Korea, and still plays a very important role, even though the power and influence of the Juche ideology has been weakened by the economy reform plan." (Interview Dr. E. C. Lim, 2011)

The purge of Jang Song Thaek, in December 2013, raised some concerns of the regime's internal instability and the future of the regime's economic reform, given Jang's rank as the second most powerful man in the country and his record as the greatest supporter of the Chinese-style economic reform. Jang was executed for various charges, but, among the charges, Jang was accused of being too soft when it came to South Korean policy, and Jang was also against expanding military power in North Korea (O'Carroll, 2013). One of the possibilities for Jang's purge is the disagreement he had with Kim Jong Un. Kim Jong Un and others in the Politburo and the Cabinet sought military prioritisation under the so-called "byungjin line", while Jang's economic reform spoke of a plan to open up North Korea, and move the country closer to China (Mansourov, 2013). Kim Jong Un's byungjin line appears to have been rather similar to Kim Il Sung's 1962 byungjin line, which talked about simultaneous development of the economy and military. The byungjin line of Kim Jong Un, however, emphasised defence and deterrent through the development of nuclear weapons (S. Y. Kim, 2013).

Kim Jong Un and other hardliners viewed Jang's policy as a threat to North Korea's socialism, when his policy of reform threatened to fundamentally change the system. Also the public's favourable view of Jang as "an economically-savvy manager who knew a lot about China", was considered detrimental to the leader's own image (Y. H. Kim & Kang, 2013). However, it is argued that, despite the removal of Jang, the policy of economic reform and opening will nevertheless remain a primary focus. It was reported on 8 December, 2013, the day Jang was dismissed from power, that North Korea would continue with the construction of a high-speed railway and express highway in order to connect the cities of Sinuiju and Kaesong with Pyongyang (Paik, 2013). One of the consequences of Jang Song Thaek's execution was the strengthening of the songun. Kim Jong Un's public appearances throughout December 2013 were mostly at military-related activities, and this was believed to be a way to consolidate the leader's power and strengthen the songun, which had been weakened by Jang's economic development [proposals/policies] (Grisafi, 2013).

3.4 Conclusion

Internal determinants have significant impacts on North Korea's threat perception. First of all, one must look at the nature of the regime. North Korea's system is not exactly a socialist system, but rather a combination of socialist ideology with the Asian culture of Confucianism. When Kim Il Sung came to power, he also introduced the idea of nationalism and the cult of personality of the leader, which turned the system into more of a "North Korean-style socialism" (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011). The internal system is formed on various elements but the most important element is the Juche ideology. North Korea takes pride in its Juche principle. Although the Juche may be weakened over time, it is still seen as the bedrock principle of the country. The Juche helps Kim Il Sung consolidate his power and paves the way for the structure of the internal system to centre on the single leadership. This system makes the leadership security become the regime security. This kind of system made the country strong under the tight control of the leader. However, the negative side is the fact that even a slight change in the system would mean the collapse of the state. As such, North Korea is vulnerable, and its vulnerability was clearly seen when the international political structure changed with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the demise of the Communist

bloc. It is the leader's desire to keep the system and the country as it is which makes North Korea unable to reduce its level of military defence, or give up on its development of nuclear weapons (Interview Prof. S. H. Sheen, 2011). The North Korean socialist system, the Juche ideology, the military politics, and the personality cult of the leader all form the identity of the North Korean regime. It is the identity of North Korea which has a high sense of nationalism. Nationalism does not mean unification of Korea but refers instead to the desire to keep the internal system and overall structure without any change despite the trend of globalisation. North Korea does not want to lose its identity. Although there is a possibility for the existence of the North Korean regime after the major reform, the loss of this identity would mean North Korea has turned into a completely new state. This is a scenario that the North Korean leader does not want and it is the reason why North Korea has a succession within the Kim's family line (Interview Dr. E. C. Lim, 2011).

The internal determinants affect the viewpoint of the leader. Vulnerability causes a sense of insecurity and this insecurity is pushed to a higher level by changes in the international political environment. The first nuclear crisis in 1993 showed North Korea's security sensitivity. The search to obtain nuclear weapons is a result of this sense of insecurity. North Korea also fears the spill-over effect that the international environment could have on the regime, which could lead to regime change. The introduction of Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism, songun, and kangsong taeguk was to justify the existing system and leadership amidst the changes of the post-Cold War period. North Korea could not lower its defence. At the same time the military serves a purpose of defending the state, it also uses to secure the leadership power. The leader has a tight control on the military sector in order to ensure that the chance of regime change by the internal revolution is at the minimum (Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011). Therefore, it is possible to see that the North Korean leader is credited every time the military actions are carried out. This is to give the credit to the leader who is the head of state and the leader of the military sector. North Korean leader manipulates the external threat for internal benefit, promoting the legitimacy of the leadership's power and the system.

As discussed in Chapter 2 International Relations Theory speaks of the correlation between a state's identity and its interests. A state's interest is defined by their identity, creating a relationship among states based on their identity. North Korea views and understands the world based on its own perspectives that have not changed greatly since the country was founded. It is a socialistic state with a nationalistic worldview. It is the regime's desire to

preserve itself that shapes North Korea's desire for security and influences its choice of tactics and the way it seeks to secure this interest. As claimed by Legro and Moravcsik (1999, p. 12), states would search for the most effective means to secure their own goals. North Korea chooses to strengthen its defence capacity. It is true that defensive mechanisms North Korea has developed are for state and regime security, but at the same time they also serve to secure North Korea's own identity. The defensive decisions and provocative actions turn out to be more than just for the purpose of security. Nuclear weapons are used beyond the purpose of deterrence. At one point, they were referred to as a result of good leadership. They were used as a means to show the intelligence of the leader in helping the nation survive regardless of the changes in the international political structure. It is this identity that creates the tensions between North Korea and other countries. Wendt (1995, p. 73) stresses the importance of "shared knowledge" among states on the relative security value. In other words, whether one state sees the other as a threat to its security depends on the relationship they have – whether they are friend or foe (Wendt, 1995, p. 73). The case of North Korea shows difficult relations with other regional powers at various times. As a result, mutual threat levels have remained high over time. The unique system that North Korea has is defined in various terms – such as 'authoritarian', 'socialist', 'militaristic'. Other countries may view North Korea's defence level as high, but the defensive measures, however, are developed to serve both the security and interests of the regime. They are developed and adjusted in accordance to the security challenges North Korea faces, both internally and externally, as well as reflecting the needs and ideologies of the regime and its ruling family.

Chapter 4: Inter-Korean Relations

The Korean peninsula was split into two separate states after the United States and the Soviet Union reached an agreement regarding the future of Korea following its liberation from Japanese occupation. The division became starker after the end of the Korean War through the differences in each country's political systems. South Korea adopted a democratic system and experienced several internal changes during the process of democratisation. During the Cold War, the politics of the Korean peninsula were affected by the politics at the international level, as the ideological struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union deepened. The situation became more hostile as the two Koreas saw each other from different political perspectives. A diplomatic breakthrough, in the 1970s, could not lower tensions on the Korean peninsula. It turned out that, as the two countries developed at different rates, the two Koreas become more different and unification as a goal appeared ever harder to achieve. It is noteworthy that, since the division of the Korean peninsula, the two Koreas have been driven by a desire to compete against each other, and to achieve Korean reunification under their own terms.

However, the issue of reunification turned out to be mere policy rhetoric, as the future of Korea will be determined by the factor of economic development. The considerable economic gap makes neither North Korea nor South Korea able to bear the reunification costs. By falling behind South Korea, North Korea is threatened by the possibility that the regime will one day be absorbed by its neighbour. North Korea's threat perception became elevated as time passed, and it became more difficult for the country to secure its communist ideology amidst the changing international political environment. Since the threat perception of North Korea is a creation of the interaction between internal and external determinants, it is worth studying the external factors influencing North Korea's relationships with its neighbours, and with South Korea in particular. Two observations arise from the issue of inter-Korean relations. The first is North Korea's threat perception as driven by South Korea's policies, and how North Korea's impression of the South's intent is reflected in its reaction. The second is North Korea's behaviour, either its provocations or military deterrence, are dictated by purposes other than deterrence, such as coercing South Korea into

reunifying with North Korea. The wider the gap in economic development levels, the more North Korea seeks to achieve reunification in a manner that will avoid its absorption by South Korea.

This chapter will study the relationship between the two Koreas since the end of the Korean War, in order to explore how inter-Korean relations have affected North Korea's threat perception. In particular, it seeks to determine whether North Korea's behaviour towards South Korea, including the military and other forms of provocations, exists in order to deter South Korea or for purposes that cannot be connected to deterrence. It asks whether or not North Korea's provocations towards its southern neighbour fit into a pattern of rational deterrence behaviour.

4.1 South Korea's Policy towards North Korea and the Inter-Korean Relations

The relationship between the two Koreas during the Cold War was generally hostile. The foreign policy of the first Republic of Korea was developed along the anti-Communist policies of President Syngman Rhee, a pro-democratic politician. There were no diplomatic ties established, and each side portrayed the other as an enemy and a "puppet" of either the United States or the Soviet Union (H. J. Kim, 1977, pp. 106-108). Throughout Syngman Rhee's administration, South Korea approached North Korea with a policy of "marching north" or "bukjin tongil" as a means to unite the country through force, a policy born from fervent anti-Communism. Any negotiations with North Korea for reunification would be seen as sympathising with the Communists (K. A. Park & Lee, 1992, p. 430). In the early stages of the post-Korean War period, South Korea struggled to rehabilitate its economy and to make progress in its political development. A failure in democratisation meant the country was faced with internal turmoil in 1960. It began with public demonstrations in big cities in South Korea, such as Seoul and Pusan, and ended with Syngman Rhee's resignation in the same year. The protests not only helped to change the political system in South Korea, but also had an impact on North Korea's perspectives of the North-South dialogue, and US involvement in Korea. According to Shin, Ostermann, and Person (2013):

> "After the April 19 Revolution, the North Korean leaders seemed to have believed that reunification was not only possible, but imminent (with the withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Korea). Moreover, because of North Korea's relative political and economic stability, Kim believed reunification could be achieved on North Korean terms."

These perceptions pushed North Korea to reinforce its plans for building up its defence industries, and the pro-industry development strategy that marked the beginning of North Korea's economic collapse (Shin et al., 2013). The policy of 'marching north' was later abandoned by the government in Seoul, under the leadership of Chang Myon of the second republic. The Chang government, though it continued to express anti-Communist policies, declared its preference for an alternative approach to unification; that of holding free elections in both North and South Korea, under the supervision of the United Nations (H. J. Kim, 1977, p. 179). Despite this positive sign from the Chang government on North Korean policy, which inspired increased mutual exchanges, a level of animosity between the two Koreas persisted. Tension rose particularly after Kim Il Sung's proposal for a federal unification strategy, in which he advocated for replacing the South Korean government with Communist principles.

General Park Chung Hee came to power by making a claim that the parliamentary system of the Chang government had failed to establish social order in light of the fact that South Korea was faced with a growing threat from Communist North Korea (H. K. Lee, 1974, p. 44). Under the presidency of General Park, the Constitution was amended to justify the general's accession to power, and to assist in his seizure of absolute control. The amendment took effect in 1962, reintroducing the presidential system of government. In 1969, it was amended again to allow the president to hold a third consecutive term in office. After acquiring these amendments, President Park went further in his attempt to construct a Korean-style democracy by introducing the Yushin system through a 1972 Constitution amendment. The Yushin system, or the Restoration order, was established with President Park's motive for South Korea to achieve a status of "rich nation and strong army". By implementing this system, President Park gained absolute power over the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the government, which he reassembled as a dictatorial leadership under a democratic system. The Park government focused on three main policies: anti-Communism,

strengthening national power, and building up economic power. North Korea felt threatened by the policies of President Park, particularly after he outlined the necessity for economic and national strength as a prerequisite for a unified Korea. North Korea felt so threatened by this policy that it sought closer security ties with China and the Soviet Union, and increased its own defence capabilities (Koh, 1980, p. 1110).

Inter-Korean relations saw some positive signs of improvement in 1970, with President Park's speech on 15 August 1970, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Korean liberation. The speech had significant details concerning unification, stating clearly South Korea's intention to remove barriers to North-South relations if North Korea renounced the policy of unification by force, and ceased its hostile acts aimed at overthrowing the South Korean government (C. H. Park, 1978, pp. 27-28). However, President Park's speech increased North Korea's level of threat perception because, to North Korea, the proposal had the political objective of forcing unification on South Korean principles (Koh, 1971, p. 492). North Korea continued to denounce President Park as an obstructer, rather than facilitator of unification. Tensions on the peninsula were further heightened when the two Koreas applied for membership in the United Nations. While President Park stated his desire for the two Koreas to join as separate entities, North Korea preferred the two Koreas be entered as a single state under the name of "Confederal Republic of Koryo" (Choi, 2001, p. 96). North Korea still criticises President Park's policy today. The KCNA released on 10 August 2012 a memorandum denouncing President Park Chung Hee's governance and policies, including "the two-Korea policy". The KCNA reported that "the two-Korea policy" announced in June 1973 was an attempt to divide Korea permanently, and that it was a violation of the July 4, 1972 Joint Communique[7] planned for the reunification of Korea under three principles (KCNA, 2012b).

[7] The two Koreas reached a breakthrough in diplomatic relations at the governmental level in 1972. The July 4 South-North Joint Communique was issued outlining three major points towards achieving reunification. The first is the peaceful reunification by solely Korean effort. The second calls for a reduction of tension and military confrontation between the two Koreas. The third point calls for an exchange of the two Koreas in non-military areas, such as economic and cultural. The full text of the July 4 South-North Joint Communique can be found on the Ministry of Unification, Republic of Korea website: http://eng.unikorea.go.kr/content.do?cmsid=1806 (Ministry of Unification).

President Park's speech of 15 August 1970 showed South Korea's belief in a potential military assault from North Korea. South Korea's security concern about a North Korean threat in the 1970s was pushed by two incidents: the fall of Vietnam and the US adoption of the Nixon Doctrine. To ensure South Korea's security, President Park agreed with the establishment of the secret defence project, "the Yulgok Operation" in order to strengthen the military. The result, however, pushed the two Koreas into an arms race (H. A. Kim, 2004, pp. 188-190). The military played a significant role in President Park's political posture. President Park not only used the military to suppress those who opposed his rule, but he also used the military as a tool to pursue a self-defence reliance policy when the US security commitment in Asia started to wane. The threat from North Korea appeared real even though North Korea started to suffer from economic decline. South Korea was prompted to upgrade its defence and weaponry by North Korea's heavy investment in its military, which was in turn inspired by a desire to end US imperialism in South Korea (J. H. Kim, 2011, p. 169).

A security threat from North Korea drove President Park closer to a plan to develop nuclear weapons in late 1974. The acquisition of nuclear weapons was considered a means to improve South Korea's self-defence amidst the decline in the US security commitment as part of the Nixon Doctrine. North Korea's provocations, such as an attempted assassination of President Park in January 1968, the so-called "Blue House raid" incident, were also factors that deepened the nuclear ambitions of President Park (Hayes, Moon, & Bruce, 2011). The nuclear weapons project was launched as a means to compensate for a South Korean sense of insecurity resulting from falling behind North Korea in terms of military capability. Hong (2011, p. 488) writes that South Korea relied on the United States to play a deterrent role against North Korea, particularly when North Korea's military was superior to South Korea's in all aspects. Nuclear weapons, therefore, were considered the answer to fulfil a deterrence strategy, especially when the US role began to decline and the conventional military was seen as not enough to deter North Korea. Park Chung Hee's decision to upgrade the military and go nuclear affected North Korea's sense of insecurity, which was described as,

> "Park Chung Hee wanted to develop nuclear weapons out of security concern by the United States policy to withdraw its forces from South Korea. But Park Chung Hee's effort to have nuclear weapons sent the wrong signal to North Korea that they wanted to expedite the process of acquiring nuclear weapons.

> Certainly, Park Chung Hee played the very important role on North Korea's security." (Interview Prof. Moon, 2011)

During the presidency of Park Chung Hee, inter-Korean dialogue was convened at both the public and the governmental levels. It started with a humanitarian project introduced by the ROK Red Cross Society in 1971, aimed at reuniting families torn apart by the country's division. This led to an exchange of delegates of the two countries to each other's capital. The following year, both sides agreed to sign a joint statement – the July 4 South-North Joint Communique. However, problems arose when the two sides developed different interpretations of the provisions listed in the Joint Communique. This put an end to attempts by each side to manipulate the inter-Korean issue to their benefit. North Korea planned to use the inter-Korean dialogue to undermine President Park's government by encouraging more participation from opposition groups, but the plan failed because the Yushin system helped stabilise South Korea's internal system (Shin, 2012). On the other hand, South Korea viewed the reunification issue as dependent on the level of economic strength of the country, leading to President Park's perception that the more South Korea could develop economically, the faster reunification could be achieved. Cha (2004, p. 142) writes that President Park's desire to unify the two Koreas through peaceful means got twisted by North Korea's provocations, such as the Blue House raid incident, and instead influenced a desire to retaliate militarily against North Korea. Therefore, President Park used the issue of reunification and the country's relative weakness against the threat of communism as means to stimulate the development of South Korea's economic, political, and military strength. In his speech "*Let Us Turn the Joy of Liberation Into Joy of Unification*" of 15 August 1972, President Park said that the only way to achieve peaceful reunification was to strengthen national power, develop a sustained national economy, and maintain substantial growth of the democratic system (C. H. Park, 1975, pp. 19-24). While the policies implemented by the Park government made South Korea more stable, North Korea became less secure (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011).

To North Korea, unification could only happen if there was a socialist revolution in South Korea. Armstrong (2004, pp. 42-44) writes that North Korea had an idea of a revolutionary process called "the United Front Policy", a concept that refers to revolutionary success in one area before another, until the revolutionary reform erupts across an entire country. Since the Korean War failed to unify the country, North Korea moved forward in its attempts to

destabilise the South Korean government through provocations and infiltrations intended to sow public dissatisfaction. North Korea's arms build-up during the 1960s and 1970s did not only serve its deterrence strategy against South Korea, who at the time was enjoying political stability and economic growth, but was also intended to serve North Korea's unification goal. North Korea's use of provocation against and infiltrations of South Korea, including the construction of underground tunnels along the DMZ, were explained thus:

> "The underground tunnels were built in the 1960s and 1970s. At that time, North Korea had a better economy. They built the tunnels in an attempt to unify Korea by invading South Korea. But once South Korea's economy began to exceed North Korea's, then there are no new tunnels being built. They do not have the money." (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011)

The fact that North Korea failed to act during the political turmoil in South Korea in the period between Syngman Rhee's resignation and General Park's military coup, inspired North Korea's military build-up strategy, so that it could take advantage if a similar opportunity were to present itself in the future (Eberstadt, 1998, pp. 241-242).

Since South Korea's economic growth overtook that of North Korea in the 1980s, North Korea has appeared reluctant to enter into a dialogue. Inter-Korean dialogue was deadlocked, particularly when external factors influenced the reunification issue – especially the role played by the United States in Korean affairs. President Jimmy Carter's decision to reverse the withdrawal of US forces from the Korean peninsula in July 1979 ended Kim Il Sung's hope of uniting the whole of Korea under North Korean terms. North Korea has long stressed that the US troops stationed in the Korean peninsula "infringed the sovereignty of Korea" and obstructed Korean reunification (Kihl, 1984, pp. 210-211). This period, instead, saw Kim Il Sung's efforts to engage the United States in order to replace the armistice agreement with a peace treaty. This was a new approach to the US-DPRK dialogue on peace talks in 1973, which was emphasised again in 1977, as a means to avoid a direct confrontation with the United States. The approach hoped to pave the way for the withdrawal of US troops and weapons from South Korea, and to pursue peaceful reunification. However, the change in Carter's withdrawal plan upset Kim Il Sung, and he referred to the decision as "deceitful" and

implemented to serve a US plan to continue military exercises and to import more weapons into South Korea (Oberdorfer, 2001, pp. 99-100).

Both the change in the US troop withdrawal plan and North Korea's failure to engage the United States in bilateral peace talks aggravated North Korea's impression and attitudes towards the United States. This negativity gradually affected the North-South dialogue, particularly with regards to reunification. North Korea set the conditions for the inter-Korean dialogue, that the talks could only resume after the withdrawal of US troops from South Korea and the removal of the government of Chun Doo Hwan, who came to power after Park Chung Hee's death (Kihl, 1984, p. 212). During Chun's government, both sides could not reach an agreement on the formula for reunification. While North Korea preferred the confederation formula of two coexisting political systems, South Korea proposed adoption of a constitution of a unified Korea as a prerequisite to the establishment of a national, unified government of Korea. When both sides clearly articulated their objections towards the other's proposal to solve the reunification issue, the North-South dialogue was again faced with deadlock, and no significant progress was made until the end of the Cold War.

During the 1990s, South Korea underwent the process of democratisation. The government of Roh Tae Woo announced on 29 June 1987 the Declaration of Democratisation and Reform. This consisted of eight major points, including the restoration of basic rights and freedom of the people, the amendment of the Constitution to allow for direct presidential elections, and the promotion of the rule of law and anti-corruption policies (J. K. C. Oh, 1999, pp. 98-101). In an attempt to create his own identity, and to distance himself from the shadow cast by Chun Doo Hwan, Roh Tae Woo carried out a series of foreign policy initiatives that were specifically aimed at enhancing relationships with the Communist states and improving the inter-Korean relations. Roh declared a new foreign policy, Northern Policy or "Nordpolitik", on 7 July 1988. The "Nordpolitik" had six main principles under the name "Special Declaration on National Self-Esteem, Unification, and Prosperity", which focused on improving relations between the two Koreas, and establishing relationships with socialist countries, including China and the Soviet Union (Japan Economic Newswire, 1988).

The Northern Policy was implemented in order to adjust South Korea to the new international trend, a result of Gorbachev's plan to establish ties with countries in Asia. Roh's Northern

Policy enhanced a sense of national self-esteem among the South Korean people, and the focus of reunification shifted so that it would be realised through the concept of a single national community (H. J. Kim, 1993, pp. 257-258). The implementation of the Northern Policy helped lower tensions on the Korean peninsula, because South Korea gradually established diplomatic ties with Russia and China in the post-Cold War period. South Korea's attempt to establish relationships with China and the Soviet Union had a strategic implication, and can be thought of as the method South Korea used to counterbalance the North Korean-Soviet and North Korean-China alliances, and to seek to reduce North Korea's aggressiveness over time (S. S. Park, 1993, pp. 221-223). On the one hand, Roh seems to have believed in the engagement strategy with North Korea as a means to end the diplomatic competition and adversarial relationship between the two Koreas. This can be seen in the July 1988 six-point declaration. On the other hand, it appears that Roh also considered the role of the US-ROK alliance and the significance of a deterrent strategy in achieving Korean reunification. The US-ROK alliance was the top priority of the Roh government. The US deterrent is a defence against any possible future military attack from the North, and is a tool for pressuring North Korea to unify with South Korea under the South's unification formula (Wood, 1993, pp. 215-216). The United States is said to have played a significant role in improving inter-Korean dialogue in the post-Cold War years. The desire to lower tensions on the peninsula drove the United States to adopt the role of facilitator in enhancing contacts and exchanges between the two Koreas. However, Cha (2004, p. 143) says that such a role was actually pushed by a demand from Seoul, who started to feel insecure about being left out after seeing a positive development in the US-DPRK relations. As such, the inter-Korean dialogue in the early post-Cold War years also involved the US-ROK alliance, which South Korea used to engage with North Korea. The issue of North-South relations became more significant and it was listed in the 1994 Agreed Framework as a condition for the implementation of the agreement.

South Korea's democratisation process reached a significant level following the presidential election in 1992, which led to the victory of the first civilian president in thirty-two years, Kim Young Sam. After realising that true democracy could not be achieved with the overwhelming power and influence of the military in politics, Kim Young Sam launched reforms to weaken the power of the military. This included a purge of high-ranking military personnel who were members of a secret organisation within the army called the "One

Association" or "Hanahoe", established in 1961 under Park Chung Hee's initiative to privatise military-political controls.

The democratisation process had a significant impact on South Korea's economy and foreign policy. President Kim Young Sam planned to open up South Korea's economy and also sought to increase dialogue with North Korea. One reason for South Korea's decision to embark upon a policy of engagement with North Korea was a change in South Korean public sentiment. South Korea did not consider a threat from North Korea imminent, but rather "a lifestyle threat" due to the problems presented by an influx of North Korean refugees and the economic burden of reunification that South Korea would face (Levin & Han, 2002, pp. 10-11). Levin and Han (2002, p. 11) says, "together with the dramatic process of democratisation that occurred almost simultaneously in the ROK, such developments reinforced the view in the government and public alike that deterrence – while indispensable – needed to be supplemented by some form of engagement". Prof. I. H. Park (2011) commented on the changes to South Korea's policy on North Korea from the Cold War to the post-Cold War period:

> "South Korea's democratisation in the 1980s makes some interesting change to North Korea's policy. However, it is the structural change from the Cold War to the post-Cold War rather than the factor of the democratisation that makes the South Korea's new approach to North Korea possible. South Korea's approach to North Korea is a kind of balancing between North-South relations and the international perspectives" (Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011)

The atmosphere on the Korean peninsula appeared to be more relaxed during President Kim Young Sam's time in office. The speech President Kim Young Sam made on 15 August 1994, Liberation Day, contained some details about the inter-Korean issue, and focused on enhancing dialogue in order to achieve unification:

> "The Government has already made public a three-stage unification formula for building a single national community. It calls first for reconciliation and cooperation between the South and the North, next for forming a Korean

commonwealth and lastly for completing a single unified nation-state." (Ministry of Unification, 1994).

Information about North Korea became more publicly available. South Korea even offered food aid to North Korea when the regime was experiencing an economic crisis. A change in North Korean policy made the public perceived North Korea with a dual image: both as an enemy and a partner (S. Snyder, 2004, p. 24). However, North Korea's decision to pull out of the NPT in 1993 led to the first nuclear crisis, and quashed the hope for any improvement in inter-Korean dialogue.

4.2 South Korea and the North Korea's First Nuclear Crisis in 1994

The first nuclear crisis took place during the presidency of Kim Young Sam. In his first year in office, Kim declared that a foreign policy priority would be to hold a summit meeting between the two Koreas. When the crisis developed, Kim Young Sam announced a plan to solve the problem peacefully. As a means of reconciliation, South Korea repatriated North Korean a war prisoner who was captured during the Korean War and imprisoned in South Korea until 1988 (C. S. Lee & Sohn, 1994, p. 8). However, it turns out that Kim's policy was rather inconsistent. When North Korea threatened to withdraw from the NPT, President Kim adopted a hardline policy, declaring that South Korea would not cooperate with "a partner with nuclear weapons" (Yoon, 1996, p. 513). Throughout his term, Kim Young Sam was faced with domestic criticism regarding the effectiveness of his engagement policy with North Korea. After the engagement policy proclamation at his inauguration in February 1993, North Korea declared its withdrawal from the NPT the following month. This was followed by a series of provocations, some of which were directed at South Korea. The Nodong missile launch and a threat to turn South Korea into "a sea of flames" prompted the South Korean government to resort to a hardline policy in early 1996 (Y. Kim, 2011, pp. 177-178). Some South Korean hardliners also expressed their concern that the US-ROK alliance could be damaged by North Korea's nuclear proliferation[8] (Hayes & Noerper, 1997, pp. 243-244;

[8] Inconsistency in the policy towards North Korea during the time of the crisis made South Korea unable to match pace with the policy of the United States. Kim Young Sam shifted his policy between inter-Korean ties and the US-ROK alliance depending on the situation on the Korean peninsula and

Michishita, 2010, pp. 113-114). In an effort to maintain the US-ROK alliance, the Kim government shifted its focus from engagement with North Korea to maintaining the relationship with the United States. Such a move resulted not only in the delay of an inter-Korean summit, but also led to South Korea increasing its defence budget under the alliance system. Buszynski (2004, p. 98) writes that South Korea's defence spending was for more than self-defence, as it was also aimed at weakening US-DPRK ties which North Korea had been exploiting since the Agreed Framework.

Inter-Korean relations experienced the most progress after Kim Dae Jung took office as the President of the Republic of Korea, in December 1997. Kim Dae Jung believed in the ability of the engagement policy to settle the conflict. He came to this conclusion after witnessing how engagement led to US-Soviet detente in the 1970s (D. J. Kim, 1994, pp. 36-38). On his inauguration day, Kim Dae Jung committed to improving inter-Korean relations through dialogue and cooperation. He said,

> "Inter-Korean relations must be developed on the basis of reconciliation and cooperation as well as the settlement of peace. The Cold-War style of South-North relations for over a half century, during which members of separated families could not confirm whether their own parents and brothers and sisters are alive or dead, let alone carry on dialogue and exchanges, must be liquidated as soon as possible." (Ministry of Unification, 1998)

Kim's engagement policy was called the Sunshine Policy. The basic principles of the Sunshine Policy are outlined as follow:

> "The Sunshine Policy has an exact background with the story by Aesop. It is about a man wearing a heavy coat. Nothing can persuade him to take off his coat, not until the weather turns bright with sunshine. Kim Dae Jung has a vision that engagement not pressure is the only possible way to make North Korea

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public sentiment in South Korea. In addition, Kim Young Sam even showed his resentment towards President Clinton after learning that the United States still had a plan to use force if the negotiation failed to change North Korea.

> open up. This is the way to achieve the normalisation of relations, the denuclearisation of North Korea" (Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011)

The Sunshine Policy brought about the first visit of a South Korean president to North Korea and an Inter-Korean summit was organised in June 2000. At the close of the summit, on June 15, a Joint Declaration was signed, regarding Korean reunification and a commitment to future meetings. Nevertheless, the Sunshine Policy was criticised by some as being ineffective in solving the North Korea's nuclear problem. Concerning this, Prof. I. H. Park (2011) says,

> "Kim Dae Jung's administration believes that social exchanges can lessen tension. Humanitarian assistance and economic assistance to North Korea are implemented in hope that they could support with the security and political issues of the two Koreas. This is a nature problem of the policy. South Korea expects a spillover effect from social, economic, and cultural exchanges to political and security issues but this has never happened. North Korea separates the issues of culture and economic from security and political areas." (Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011)

Moon (2000, p. 7) argues that the Sunshine Policy was not a weak policy. In fact, it was "an extremely offensive and proactive policy", because an engagement reflected South Korea's initiative in leading the inter-Korean relationship, rather than waiting to respond to the policy of North Korea.

North Korea was suspicious of the Sunshine Policy which it saw as an attempt at ending the Juche policy of North Korea (KCNA, 1999d). North Korea responded with a two-sided policy. The two-sided policy proposed extending the relationship with South Korea for economic aid but without decreasing its own defence (Y. J. Han, Kim, & Kim, 2005). Testimony from North Korean defectors reveals that the Sunshine Policy actually strengthened the North Korean army. Upon receiving South Korea's food aid, the military was the first recipient, and some military officers exploited this benefit by selling the food on the civilian market to line their own pockets (Y. J. Han et al., 2005). The Sunshine Policy reduced tensions on the peninsula, as engagement drew North Korea closer to the

international community, and both Koreas could establish bilateral diplomatic and economic ties. Nonetheless, by the time the Agreed Framework was implemented, the international community was faced with new provocations from North Korea – this time in the form of a missile test, of the Taepodong-1 weapon, fired over Japan in August 1998. The missile test pushed North Korea and the United States into a missile negotiation, resulting in an agreement at the Berlin Conference in 1999. North Korea agreed to suspend future missile tests, and in return the United States would lift sanctions on North Korea.

The US-North Korean relationship deteriorated, however, after the US accused North Korea of violating the Agreed Framework by secretly developing a uranium enrichment programme. The Bush administration criticised the Clinton policy of engagement, claiming that the Framework was akin to rewarding an untrustworthy regime, and a policy of containment and isolation was later chosen as an alternative for dealing with North Korea (Samore, 2003, p. 11). The US-ROK alliance was faced with similar difficulties stemming from differences in policy implementation, as had been experienced under the Kim Young Sam government. Kim Dae Jung's government clearly showed its support for the policy of engagement, which was contrary to what the Bush administration favoured. Different perceptions in security interests made the United States and South Korea adopt different policies towards North Korea. While the United States viewed North Korea's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and missiles as major concerns, South Korea focused instead on avoiding a military conflict or any other pressures that could cause North Korea to collapse (S. Sheen, 2003, p. 11). The situation deteriorated further after President Bush applied the term 'Axis of Evil' to North Korea in his State of the Union Address of 29 January 2002.

4.3 South Korea and the North Korea's Second Nuclear Crisis in 2002

After its December 2002 general election, South Korea experienced a shift in domestic politics. The election resulted in the victory of Roh Moo Hyun, who favoured continuing the Sunshine Policy. Roh's victory implied not only the continuation of South Korea's engagement with North Korea, but also reflected the public's support for the policy of engagement over confrontation in inter-Korean relations. Roh stressed during the presidential campaign the need to end the old politics and aim for social reform, and also the need to

maintain the Sunshine Policy (H. Y. Lee, 2003, p. 74). In his inaugural address of 25 February 2003, Roh emphasised solving the North Korean nuclear issue through engagement in order to persuade North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons (BBC News, 2003). Roh's North Korea policy, called 'the Peace and Prosperity Policy', was an expanded version of the Sunshine Policy. The policy was aimed at enhancing the relationship between the two Koreas through dialogue and exchanges. C. N. Kim (2005, p. 13) writes that Roh's policy was structured on the viewpoint that engagement would change North Korea's behaviour because this method would make the regime's survival dependent on assistance from the outside world.

Although Roh's compromise and engagement led to various negotiations between the two Koreas, the progress in inter-Korean relations was minimal. A little progress was made by Roh's government, as a result of how the US-ROK alliance partnership has played on the policy of South Korea:

> "Before the years 2007 and 2008, the Roh Moo Hyun's administration did their best to improve North-South Korean relations but it was meaningless. It was only possible after the Bush administration decided to use positive approach to North Korea in 2007. South Korea is not an independent actor. South Korea's policy cannot do anything. The policy can have an impact on North Korea only when it is combined with international factors such as the US-ROK relations." (Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011)

North Korea continued with its provocations, and South Korea was unable to make any progress in resolving the North Korean nuclear issue. At a first summit meeting between Roh Moo Hyun and George W. Bush, on 14 May 2003, the issue of North Korea was discussed. The two allies agreed to solve the North Korean nuclear problem through peaceful means, but also through multilateral diplomacy in order to achieve "a complete, verifiable and irreversible elimination of North Korea's nuclear weapons programme" (The Chosun Ilbo, 2003). The most striking event that had a negative impact on the improvement of inter-Korean relations during the Roh administration came when a delegation was not sent to Pyongyang on the occasion of the 10th memorial service for the late Kim Il Sung, in 2004. South Korea's failure to recognise the memorial service was a cause for the confrontations

between the two Koreas along the border, and eventually led to the cancellation of the 15th South-North ministerial talks scheduled for 3 August 2004. North-South contacts still existed at the public level, such as at the Kaesong industrial complex,[9] but dialogue at the governmental level ceased (Y. H. Koh, 2005, p. 211). In the Roh period, efforts to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue appeared in the form of the Six-Party Talks in involving all major regional players. The biggest achievement of Roh's government was the organisation of the second Inter-Korean summit, in October 2007. The summit reaffirmed the commitment to implement the June 15th Joint Declaration of the first summit to enhance inter-Korean exchanges and achieve the unification of Korea. The second summit saw huge successes in the economic arena, when the two Koreas agreed to enhance economic cooperation, such as establishing the economic zone and the maritime peace zone (North Korean Economy Watch, 2007). An economic issue discussed at the summit was Roh's vision to turn the Korean peninsula into the Northeast Asian regional hub (Cumings, 2008).

Lee Myung Bak took office in February 2008, after a campaign characterised by the slogan, 'Anything but the Policy of Roh'. Roh's policy was considered a failure in moving the inter-Korean relations forwards and in easing tensions on the peninsula, because North Korea continued to pose a threat – for example, the October 2006 nuclear test. North Korea's provocations and the continuation of nuclear development raised criticisms in South Korean society about the effectiveness of the engagement policy in solving the problem. Lee's adoption of a hardline policy in an opposite direction from the two previous governments reflected inconsistency in the South Korean government's policy, which was affected by the policy choices of different parties in the democratic system (Interview Prof. Y. Y. Kim, 2011; Interview Prof. Paik, 2011).

Lee Myung Bak denounced Roh's engagement policy and undertook instead a 'Mutual Benefit and Common Prosperity' policy. The policy was structured on two main objectives. The first is to eliminate North Korea's fear of "unification by absorption" and assisting North

[9] The Kaesong industrial complex was established in 1998. It is a project initiated by the Hyundai Group, a private South Korean company, who planned to enhance economic cooperation between the two Koreas. The Kaesong industrial complex is situated in North Korean territory across the DMZ. Throughout, the South Korean government has also been involved in supporting and financing the complex (BBC News, 2013; Manyin & Nanto, 2011, pp. 5-6).

Korea developing its economy (Jae Jean Suh, 2009, p. 9). The Lee's administration also came up with the "Vision 3,000 thru Denuclearisation and Openness" or the "Vision 3000" policy. This policy aimed at increasing North Korea's annual per capita income to US$3,000 within ten years by helping North Korea enhance economic cooperation with the international community (Korean Institute for National Unification, p 30-31). The implementation of "Vision 3000" policy did not help with the atmosphere in the peninsula. It created more tensions between the two Koreas. North Korea was suspicious of South Korea's intention to destabilise the regime. It was written on the KCNA that Lee Myung Bak's Vision 3000 policy "proves that he is desperately pursuing the confrontation between the north and the south in ideology" (KCNA, 2008d). Apart from official speech denouncing the Lee's government, North Korea also took another step in protesting South Korea by expelling the South Korean officials out of the Kaesong industrial complex. President Lee also set a condition to North Korea that the Vision 3000 policy will be implemented only if there is a progress in the denuclearisation and human rights issues (Moon, 2008b, p. 127). It is assumed that President Lee structured the North Korean policy in a pragmatic way, with rewards granted only when there were signs of improvement in the nuclear deals or North Korean compliance with agreements. In other words, it refers to the expectation the Lee's administration had on North Korea to comply with their policy and the nature of this policy makes it rather difficult to change North Korea's behaviour (Interview Prof. D. H. Han, 2011). Lee's engagement with conditions lowered the chance for contact between the two Koreas.

The situation on the peninsula worsened with the sinking of the South Korea navy ship, Cheonan, in the Yellow Sea near North Korea, on 26 March 2010. North Korea's denial of any involvement in the Cheonan sinking raised a lot of debate in South Korea on the cause of incident (Interview Prof. Koo, 2011). Despite North Korea's insistence that it was not involved, many South Koreans, including President Lee, linked North Korea to the incident. Although he did not directly mention North Korea, President Lee said at a meeting of South Korea's top military commanders that the Cheonan incident was not an accident, and called for strengthening defences against North Korea (Chick, 2010). Nonetheless, a direct confrontation with North Korea was not a viable choice for Lee's government. In an effort to reduce tensions, President Lee shifted the nation's focus from confrontation to the issue of

unification. He came up with a national security strategy containing details on a long-term strategy for achieving Korean reunification (The Korea Times, 2010).

Inter-Korean relations suffered another blow after the shelling of Yeonpyeong island, in November 2010. South Korea condemned the attack. President Lee gave an address to the nation, vowing to take a strong stance and measures against North Korea because South Korea's "endurance and tolerance will spawn nothing but more serious provocations" (Yonhap News Agency, 2010). As a result of this declaration, South Korea appeared to move towards improving its relations with the United States and also its neighbour, Japan, after a period of strained relations under previous administrations. South Korea continued with its plan to conduct military exercises in the Yellow Sea with the United States, five days after the shelling of Yeonpyeong, despite North Korea's warnings of a counterattack in retaliation to a violation of its maritime borders (BBC News, 2010). The US-South Korea relationship was strengthened after the Cheonan incident, and both leaders issued a joint statement condemning North Korea's aggression. The remarks made by both Lee Myung Bak and Barack Obama were issued during the G-20 Summit in Toronto, Canada, on 26-27 June, 2010. The statement contained a number of significant details: as well as criticising North Korea, it stressed the importance of the US-ROK alliance and relationship, and the need for the United States and South Korea to closely cooperate in ending North Korea's and Iran's nuclear weapons proliferation (The White House, 2010a).

These two major provocations from North Korea, in the same year, raised some speculation about the intentions of North Korea behind the incidents. In the end, it was believed that both internal and external factors influence the decision of North Korea. Prof. D. H. Han (2011) elaborates thus:

> "We should think about two things – international factor and domestic factor. When you think about year 2010, a political succession process was going on. Kim Jong Un had a clear reason to draw some kind of military support for his side. Also, military side has a clear reason to support Kim Jong Un if he is an heir apparent to Kim Jong Il. Probably, some kind of domestic politics caused this kind of assertive North Korea's behaviour." (Interview Prof. D. H. Han, 2011)

Prof. S. H. Sheen (2011) assessed North Korea's intention behind both the Cheonan and Yeonpyeong shelling incidents:

> "[The incidents] may have multiple purposes. One thing could be domestic purpose. Kim Jong Un or his military officers try to stable themselves during the succession. In other word, they try to consolidate their own domestic power bases. At the same time they may want to send a signal to South Korea. They may simply want to punish South Korea for their hardline policy or they want to get attention from the United States against the Obama's ignorant policy or whatever. It could be any of them. It could be a combination of all of those." (Interview Prof. S. H. Sheen, 2011)

Park Geun Hye's general election victory over Moon Jae In, on 19 December 2012, had implications for both inter-Korean relations and the US-ROK alliance. First, despite some slight differences in policy between that of Park Geun Hye and Lee Myung Bak, it appears that South Korea's policy towards North Korea would continue to be a hardline policy. Park is a member of the conservative party – Saenuri – whose North Korean policy is structured on a proactive promotion of mutual development as a means for achieving unification, and also the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula (The Saenuri Party, 2012b). Since the presidential campaign, Park has structured her policy on "Trustpolitik". The policy emphasised the need to strengthen the deterrence strategy while simultaneously enhancing trust between the two Koreas through dialogue and exchange (The Saenuri Party, 2012a). Park's victory came in part because she is the daughter of Park Chung Hee, South Korea's most popular former president. The older generations came out and voted for her, believing that South Korea would be more economically stable and safer from the threat of North Korea (The Chosun Ilbo, 2012a). Secondly, the US-ROK alliance was assured under the leadership of Park Geun Hye. This is because Park's North Korean policy highlights the significance of the deterrence strategy and also solving the problem of nuclear proliferation on the Korean peninsula. South Korea requires the extended deterrence from the United States particularly during times when regional stability is threatened by the problem of a nuclear North Korea (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011). President Parks's policy also implies South Korea's non-tolerance of any future North Korean provocations, and that North

Korea's nuclear development would be a core concern/focus of the Park government. Revere (2012) observed that the US-ROK alliance was strengthened because President Park seemed to share the same perception with the United States, believing that it was highly unlikely that North Korea would give up its nuclear weapons.

President Park's visit to the United States, on 7 May 2013, resulted in a joint declaration in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the US-ROK alliance. Both sides were determined to bring North Korea out of isolation through the trust-building process proposed by President Park, while at the same time reaffirmed the use of extended deterrence to counter threats by North Korea (The White House, 2013a). South Korea was on the same page as the United States on the issue of North Korea. Cha (2013) writes that,

> "Park used very strong words about her willingness to retaliate at any North Korean provocation and President Obama clearly stated that the United States would not give concessions to climb down from any crises created by North Korea. Obama also said that he supported Park's "trustpolitik" which implied that should North Korean behavior moderate in the coming months, then the United States would support any humanitarian assistance that Park might want to provide to the people of North Korea."

4.4 Inter-Korean Relations, Unification, and North Korea's Threat Perception

A part of North Korea's threat perception was developed from the prospect of inter-Korean relations. During the Cold War, it appeared that both North Korea and South Korea sought expansion with the reunification objective. International Relations theorists talk about states existing in a system of anarchy and a sense of competitiveness between states during the search for security. Anarchy makes states rely on one's own effort, and influences states to "identify negatively with each other's security so that ego's gain is seen as alter's loss" (Wendt, 1992, p. 400). As such, states will attempt to manipulate others to satisfy their self-interests. It is possible, in a system of anarchy, that competition occurs between states. According to Mercer (1995, p. 242), states compete for various reasons, ranging from the

basic requirement of security to a need to protect one's own identity, the latter of which influences the belief of states that one is superior to the other.

The two Koreas have been in competition since the division of Korea by the Allied Powers in 1945. The competition began in an effort to be the first to achieve independence and the reunification of Korea. Such strong ambitions led Kim Il Sung to start the Korean War in 1950. Apart from the failure of this first attempt to achieve reunification, the differences in the two Koreas' political systems are also factors that have affected the threat perception of leaders in both Koreas. While Kim Il Sung started the military build-up, and unification was identified as the primary goal of North Korea, South Korea also appeared aggressive particularly through the 'marching north' policy of Syngman Rhee. Because the two states share the same goals, such as unification and also to blunt the power of the other, a sense of competition has been created, and the need of both sides to secure their security is increased. According on Waltz (1997, p. 915), there are two choices states have, when they are weak: either they seek to ally themselves with stronger states, or they can seek to balance against threats on their own by increasing their own strengths. This could explain why both Koreas sought dialogue with their partners in the early stages of the Cold War, with North Korea attempting to maintain good relationships with both China and the Soviet Union, and South Korea with the United States. When South Korea started to sense a weakening of the US-ROK alliance, as a result of the Nixon Doctrine, it turned towards nuclear weapons development as a means to secure itself. This decision pushed the two Koreas into an arms race, as per the upward spiral model. The spiral was apparent after the Cold War ended and North Korea was left with no allies to whom they could turn. This made North Korea depend more on a policy of self-reliance and nuclear weapons as a means to secure itself and to survive in the new post-Cold War international environment. A South Korean expert explains the impact of inter-Korean relations and the change in the international political structure from the Cold War to the post-Cold War on North Korea's threat perception as,

> "I suppose that from the end of the Korean War until the end of 1980s North Korea had thought that South Korea could soon collapse. South Korea's economic development was rather unstable and South Korea's politics was very torment at that time. North Korea did not feel threatened by South Korea until the end of the 1980s. But in the 1990s, North Korea experienced economic

> collapse and has also observed South Korea's rising. Probably from that time on, the North Korean regime feels threatened by South Korea's development." (Interview Anonymous, 2011)

During the 1960s, North Korea suffered considerable economic hardship, which made its economic development fall behind that of South Korea. In an anarchic international system, characterised by uncertainty and distrust, states will seek to ensure their own security. Waltz (1979, p. 105) assumes the correlation between anarchy and behaviour of states, saying, "In any self-help system, units worry about their survival, and the worry conditions their behaviour". In inter-Korean relations, North Korea's level of aggression would increase if it experienced a decrease in its regime's perceived level of security. One source of insecurity comes from the military capacity of South Korea, and this factor has a rather significant impact on North Korea because,

> "South Korea is modernising its forces every year. In North Korea's view, it is threatening. But the conservative South Koreans do not think that the South Korean army is getting more modernising and intimidating the North Korea's army. They do not see their own threat to the others. It is obvious that North Korea has a far smaller in defence budget. Weapons are so outdated. They are no match to South Korea." (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011)

During the Cold War, terrorist activities were seen as a means to compensate for a sense of insecurity. According to Guillaume (2004, pp. 538-540), terrorism is a method that can provide an outcome far greater than its cost. D. Kang (1998, pp. 257-259) says that terrorism is "politically motivated". North Korea uses terrorist tactics to weaken the South Korean government and create political turmoil in South Korea, in the hope that North Korea can take a chance to intervene and achieve reunification on in its own terms (D. Kang, 1998, pp. 257-259; J. Kim, 2008). North Korea's terrorist activities mostly target South Korea, from which we can conclude that they are driven by the regime's need to compete and address the balance of power with South Korea.

During the Cold War, both North and South Korea had a clear objective of achieving reunification under their own terms. However, as a result of internal changes the two Koreas

have experienced since the division, and also the changing international environment since the fall of the Communist bloc, the reunification issue has begun to lose its significance. Prof. Paik (2011) elaborates on the change of the unification policy of North Korea as affected by the internal and external factors:

> "North Korea proposed for the unification formula of federation. In the 1960s and 1970s, North Korea regarded the federal formula a stepping stone to the ultimate unitary state. But in the 1980s, the declaration on the federal formula does not reflect what they had in mind like what many people think North Korea seriously intend to communise South Korea. For the first time, North Korea acknowledged that they have to co-exist with South Korea within the federal state formula. In the early 1990s, Kim Il Sung ratified the federal state formula to accommodate the change in international environment. Kim Il Sung says very clearly that in an effort to unify the country, one side should not devolve or swallow the other side. North Korea is very defensive from recognising the much more powerful South Korea. They are so afraid of being absorbed in the new international environment." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

Reunification may appear in the policy rhetoric of both Koreas, but the more it is mentioned, the greater the feeling of insecurity and distrust that develops between the two countries. Since North Korea has fallen behind South Korea in every aspect, the regime has perceived the reunification issue as a threat to the regime's survival, despite the South Korean government's assurances of peaceful co-existence and non-absorption objectives. Prof. M. Kwon (2011) elaborates on North Korea's sense of insecurity, as affected by the issue of reunification:

> "North Korea is afraid of unification. North Korea is worse off than South Korea and does not have ability to unify South Korea even with nuclear weapons. North Korea is fully aware that unification could happen under the South Korean term. To them, it means the possibility of being absorbed by South Korea." (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011)

North Korea has been talking about reunification since the early years of Kim Il Sung's time in power, and continues under the rule of Kim Jong Un. It is possible to conclude from their speeches that North Korea's ultimate objective is the unification of Korea, and the development of nuclear weapons is meant to serve this goal. In fact, North Korea developed nuclear weapons in order to balance South Korea when it did not have sufficient weapons to protect itself. Nuclear weapons, however, are no longer solely connected to the unification issue – especially when North and South Korea have clear differences in unification policies. Prof. Y. Y. Kim (2011) explains that,

> "North Korea wants to have a unified nation in a socialist style but in my opinion, they have already given up. What North Korea wants is one nation, one people but two systems and two governments. Economically and socially North Korea wants to integrate with South Korea but militarily and diplomatically they want to separate it. The reason why North Korea chooses a nuclear path is to keep their nation, their socialistic system" (Interview Prof. Y. Y. Kim, 2011)

In particular, unification would appear to be a difficult task to accomplish, given the widening gap between the two Koreas. Prof. Koo (2011) says,

> "I sense that the North Korean people always say about a unified Korea. However, I do not think that the North Korean ruling class want to have a unified Korea because there are big gaps between the two Koreas in terms of economy, defence, and political culture. So, I said to you it is just a discourse, not a policy. It is just a saying." (Interview Prof. Koo, 2011)

Considering both the regime's internal weaknesses and external environment, North Korea does not have the capacity to unify the Korean peninsula, even with its possession of nuclear weapons. As such, the possession of nuclear weapons has a defensive purpose unrelated to unification. On the assumptions about the relationship between nuclear weapons and reunification, Prof. S. H. Sheen (2011) concludes,

> "A sense of insecurity drives North Korea to develop nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons are rational choices of North Korea to guarantee its security and

> survival against all the domestic and foreign pressures. Nuclear weapons are not for unification." (Interview Prof. S. H. Sheen, 2011)

Nuclear weapons have become political tools for securing North Korea's sovereignty and security during a time of economic decline, and insecurity resulting from the fall of the Communist bloc. When faced with a more skilful South Korean diplomacy, the possession of nuclear weapons has helped North Korea buy itself time to adapt to the new environment (Bracken, 1993, p. 86). Dr. E. C. Lim (2011) elaborates on the connection between nuclear weapons, international environment, and North Korea's domestic politics thus:

> "After the collapse of the former socialist countries in Eastern Europe, North Korea strongly feels that it needs nuclear weapons to defend their country. Nuclear weapons are to secure their regime survival. They do not have any intention to attack South Korea or Japan. Many defectors I interviewed unanimously said that Kim Jong Il does not want to lose what he has right now. He is enjoying too many things." (Interview Dr. E. C. Lim, 2011)

Kim Jong Un has mentioned reunification in almost every speech since he came to power in December 2011. In his first speech to the public, on 15 April 2012, celebrating the 100th birthday of Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Un emphasised reunification as one objective of the nation. Kim Jong Un said,

> "It is truly heartbreaking that our brethren are suffering the agony of division for nearly 70 years after living for a long time as a single nation in the same land. Our party and the Republic's government will go hand in hand with anyone who truly desires the country's reunification and the nation's peaceful prosperity and will make responsible and patient efforts to accomplish the historic cause of the fatherland's reunification. Comrades. Our cause is just and the might of Korea that is united with truth is infinite." (North Korea Tech, 2012)

Reunification was emphasised again in the 2013 New Year Address. The Address highlighted reunification as "the greatest national task that brooks no further delay", and this objective could only be achieved by Korean efforts through an improvement in inter-Korean relations

(KCNA, 2013b). It is clear that the factor of the economic gap and differences in the reunification model make it highly unlikely that reunification will occur. Nonetheless, reunification continues to be addressed by the leaders of both Koreas. The mention by the North Korean leader, in particular, cast some doubts on the objective of the regime, the connection between the nuclear weapons and reunification, and the attitude of the regime on reunification. Concerning this, Prof. Paik (2011) explains that,

> "The nuclear issue has nothing to do with the unification issue. The hardliners in South Korea are trying to attack North Korea by linking nuclear issue to the unification. In order to reach for unification, the fundamental thing you need is the economy. North Korean economy fails so whatever they say in public or in ceremonial way about unification, actually that does not mean much. In fact, they were defensive as time passes. They recognise the much more powerful South Korea and are afraid of being absorbed in the new international environment. It is a big gap between what they say and what they really thought of in their mind. In politics, you have to take care of some good course, for instances, unify the country, unify the nation. That is something you cannot give up as a politician of divided nation. You have to emphasise the need to unify the country in public speech in all ceremonial things but in your heart and in your mind, you are more realistic." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

North Korea's fear of absorption by South Korea was lessened after the implementation of Kim Dae Jung's Sunshine Policy. Kim structured his Sunshine Policy in an opposite direction from his predecessors, as he called for equal status with North Korea, and rejected the principle of "unification by absorption" (Cumings, 2008).

When Lee Myung Bak took office, the policy of South Korea experienced a dramatic change. Lee refused to continue with the engagement policy, and accused the Sunshine Policy of causing South Korea a decade of economic and diplomatic harm. North Korea had been careful not to criticise Lee Myung Bak during his presidential campaign, but it once again became hostile after the establishment of Lee's administration. According to S. Snyder (2009c, p. 93), what prompted North Korea to begin its criticism of the Lee government are:

> "The first was a statement by Unification Minister Kim Ha Joong in his first policy briefing to the president on March 26 in which he said that "the speed and scope of as well as ways to push for any development in inter-Korean relations will be decided according to progress in the North Korean nuclear issue. .... The second was a statement by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Kim Tae Young at a March parliamentary hearing in which he stated that there were contingency plans for responding to a possible nuclear weapons strike by North Korea ...."

The threat from South Korea came not only from Lee Myung Bak's foreign policy, but also Lee's remarks on the reunification issue. For example, the KCNA of 17 August 2012 heavily criticised Lee Myung Bak's remarks of 15 August 2012, which celebrated the anniversary of Korea's liberation. The address confirmed South Korea's commitment to the "unification through absorption" principle, with Lee's remarks singling out regime change for North Korea before illustrating that a "unified ROK is a greater springboard for a greater ROK" (KCNA, 2012a). Lee's North Korean policy is criticised as,

> "Lee Myung Bak makes speeches on unification on various occasions. He does not only criticise North Korea's choice of going nuclear, but he has a vision that North Korea will soon collapse. He anticipates for a collapse so unification could occur. His speeches and vision threaten North Korea but it seems he does not realise that" (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011)

North Korea's level of threat perception continued to rise after Park Geun Hye came to power. Since her presidential campaign, Park has appeared to structure foreign policy in a similar way to that of Lee Myung Bak. North Korea, therefore, started to attack Park Geun Hye's policy when she was still a candidate. On 5 November 2012, Park Geun Hye announced an outline for North Korean policy. Among issues of Inter-Korean cooperation is a unification plan. The draft unification plan outlined the merger of the two Koreas with a small economic field, before expanding it to include the political field until the two Koreas were completely merged (Yonhap News Agency, 2012d). However, North Korea heavily criticised Park's unification proposal. North Korea voiced its dissatisfaction with Park's unification plan, viewing it as "the commitment to confrontation of the social systems at any

cost" (KCNA, 2012c). It appears that North Korea was cautious with the newly-elected South Korean president. In an unusual manner, North Korea released a short report requesting a clarification from Park Guen Hye on the North Korean policy, and whether it would be structured in line with that of the two former liberal presidents – Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyun (Yonhap News Agency, 2012c). Tensions on the Korean peninsula continued to escalate after South Korea's 2012 presidential election. The nuclear test conducted on 12 February 2013 drew international condemnation of the regime, and the test marked the third attempt by North Korea to become a nuclear state (Chance & Kim, 2013).

It is possible to explain North Korea's decision to conduct the February 2013 nuclear test through the lens of inter-Korean relations. President Park Guen Hye presented her vision and policy on North Korea on her first day in office, 25 February 2013:

> "North Korea's recent nuclear test is a challenge to the survival and future of the Korean people and there should be no mistaking that the biggest victim will be none other than North Korea itself. ... I urge North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions without delay and embark on the path to peace and shared development ... Through a trust-building process on the Korean peninsula I intend to lay the groundwork for an era of harmonious unification... I will move forward step-by-step on the basis of credible deterrence to build trust between the South and the North ... It is my hope that North Korea will abide by international norms and make the right choice so that the trust-building process on the Korean Peninsula can move forward." (Office of the President, 2013a)

President Park's inaugural speech implied two things – the regime's instability from focusing too heavily on the nuclear programme, instead of people's well-being and the peaceful reunification of Korea. In the following month, President Park Guen Hye attended the Joint Commissioning Ceremony of the Military Academies and Reserve Officers' Training Corps Units, at which she gave a speech that mentioned the instability of the North Korean regime. President Park said,

> "North Korea is pushing ahead with nuclear tests and the development of long-range missiles while threatening to nullify the Armistice Agreement ... No

> matter how strong a country's weapons are and no matter how advanced nuclear weapons become, resorting to weapons alone cannot protect a nation. If a country just focuses on building up military might while its people are starving, it will not be able to avoid the fate of self-destruction in the end." (Office of the President, 2013b)

President Park's speech was not well-received by North Korea. The North Korean Ministry of People's Armed Forces issued a statement, without mentioning the name of President Park, saying,

> "How can they say that a country cannot be protected with weapons alone, and that countries that only concentrate on nuclear weapons and other weaponry are sure to collapse, when they themselves are calling on their own people to put all their energy into maintaining battle readiness?" (The Hankyoreh, 2013)

North Korea had a negative attitude to the newly-elected South Korean government. North Korea criticised South Korea for pursuing an "anti-DPRK confrontation policy" in the hopes of bringing down North Korea through political and military means, before calling for the nullification of the North-South non-aggression agreements (KCNA, 2013d). North Korea declared "a state of war" with South Korea on 20 March 2013 (S. Snyder, 2013).

North Korea has become a hot issue on the agenda of every South Korean government, and most presidential candidates have used North Korean policy to gain public support. The majority of the electorate voted for Park Guen Hye not only because she is the daughter of Park Chung Hee, but also because a conservative candidate is usually more favourable when the threat from North Korea appears high (Choe, 2012). Besides, the South Korean media leaked a secret agreement between Roh Moo Hyu and Kim Jong Il on the recognition of the Northern Limit Line (NLL). It was reported that Roh Moo Hyun said, during a closed door meeting between the two leaders at the second inter-Korean summit in 2007, that he did not recognise the NLL as it was "unilaterally drawn by the United States" (Korea JoongAng Daily, 2012). North Korea, aware of South Korea's internal politics, made several comments to the candidate, and the comments reflected North Korea's attempt to intervene in the South

Korean election, to influence the outcome in its favour. Prof. D. H. Han (2011) explained how South Korean domestic politics could have an impact on North Korea:

> "I think North Korea's leader always thinks about domestic politics of South Korea. They are well aware of the political event in South Korea. They are very smart. Probably they try to use the situations or changes in South Korea to support their goals or use them in their favour." (Interview Prof. D. H. Han, 2011)

During the South Korean general election, North Korea clearly showed its preference for Moon Jae In. This was expressed in a statement made by the Secretariat of the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea, on 3 November 2012, that pronounced that inter-Korean relations would suffer if Park Guen Hye came to power (KCNA, 2012f).

An examination of North-South relations reveals that North Korea usually reacts to changes in South Korean politics. In other words, it refers to the way North Korea responds to changes in South Korea's government and policy:

> "Either North Korea be cooperative or confrontational depends on the policy of South Korea. When the previous government adopted the Sunshine policy, North Korea responded quite positively. When the Lee Myung Bak's government adopted more aggressive approach, then North Korea became very negative or belligerence." (Interview Prof. S. H. Sheen, 2011)

Provocations are the tactics North Korea uses in order to test the policy of the newly-elected government. Cha and Snyder (2012) said on PBS that,

> "The North Koreans tend to do provocations within 16 to 18 weeks of every South Korean election, going back to 1992 ... North Korea always tests the new South Korean leader in various forms. They want to figure out what the parameters are of the relationship and, frankly, what they think they can get out of it." (Sagalyn, 2012).

Thus, it is possible to say that the regime's decision to launch the three-stage rocket on 12 December 2012, a week before South Korea's presidential election, was to test not only the new South Korean president's North Korean policy, but also that of the new US president – also re-elected that year. Nonetheless, there are some statements that claim confrontation between the two Koreas along the NLL could easily happen, for two reasons: the US-ROK joint military exercise along the maritime border, and North Korea's long-time non-recognition of the NLL. North Korea considers the NLL "a ghost line", and calls the US-ROK joint military exercises along the NLL an act of war, because the allies are invading North Korea (Yonhap News Agency, 2012b). The shelling of the Yeonpyeong island is connected to the dispute over the NLL, which Prof. Y. Y. Kim (2011) explains thus:

> "The United States and South Korea conducted the joint military exercise near the NLL. North Korea has never accepted this line and tried to have a discussion with South Korea about this line. The military manoeuvre is very near to North Korea's territory and North Korea sees it as a kind of provocation. North Korea warns South Korea many times before not to have such a military drill but we neglect these kinds of warnings. At the end, they attack. I think if this kind of manoeuvre does not exist, they did not attack us. We provoke this kind of action." (Interview Prof. Y. Y. Kim, 2011)

Tensions along the inter-Korean border escalated before the 2012 South Korean election. The number of North Korean intrusions across the NLL is recorded as increasing from October 2012, and it is believed to be a message sent from North Korea to the incoming South Korean government that it did not accept the NLL (S. G. Park & Kim, 2012).

4.5 Conclusion

Inter-Korean relations are among the factors that affect North Korea's threat perception. By reviewing the relationship between North and South Korea, one can see that the two states compete against each other. Based on the assumptions of realists and constructivists, states compete against each other in order to secure their interests. Factors that influence states to

compete can be from security, as argued by realists; or they can include the issue of states' identities, as proposed by constructivists. Competition between the two Koreas is a product of the forced division following the end of World War II. During the Cold War, both sides competed on the assumption that one was better than the other. This perception shaped the leaders' views of policies and system of the other, with the ultimate objective of unification.

The fall of communism highlighted an unequal balance of power between North Korea and South Korea. While South Korea enjoyed the extended deterrence provided by the United States, North Korea lost the support of its allies. Although the internal factor of economic decline influenced the policy of North Korea, the external factor of a changing international political structure pushed and reshaped the interests of North Korea. North Korea's interest shifted from reunification to regime survival. Methods to secure its national interest were also adjusted accordingly. The nuclear crisis, early in the post-Cold War period, showed that North Korea wished to use nuclear deterrence as a strategy to secure its interests. Deterrence was applied based on the concept of retaliatory punishment in order to dissuade South Korea from carrying out any aggressive action (Knopf, 2009, p. 41). North Korea did not want to use nuclear weapons to attack, but rather to deter South Korea from any possible military attack, or to force reunification when it became clear that South Korea was ready and had the ability to achieve it, rather than North Korea. In addition, nuclear deterrence is used to balance against the extended deterrence provided by the US-ROK bilateral relationship.

It is clear that North Korea has used provocations against South Korea since the Cold War period. Provocations are military tactics that serve the regime's interests. During the Cold War, provocations were for reunification purposes. In the post-Cold War world, provocations are conducted for various purposes, as seen in North Korea's desire to test the policy of the South Korean government, or for national security – as seen in the shelling of Yeonpyeong island. The fear and uncertainty North Korea has of the policy of South Korea is clearly illustrated in the new post-Cold War environment. When states feel uncertain, they seek ways to overcome the sense of uncertainty, and usually do so at the expense of other states (Booth & Wheeler, 2008, p. 41). In the case of North Korea, the use of provocations also served the security demand of North Korea and to prepare itself to respond to South Korea's policy.

Competition among states, state interests, and conflict between states are three important factors for analysing international relations, according to both realists and constructivists. As

such, competition and conflict between two Koreas are entirely possible, and even normal and predictable. An increase in the defence capabilities of one can cause an increase in the other's capabilities, based on the assumption that states are uncertain about the level of power they should have in order to secure themselves. Nonetheless, defence build-up in South Korea can have more effect on North Korea than vice versa, because of the power imbalance between the two countries. Nuclear weapons can be used for deterrence purposes, but they still cannot help North Korea reach overall parity with South Korea. Economic weakness and the lack of allies show the inferiority of North Korea compared to South Korea. Competition between North Korea and South Korea in this sense does not only refer to security competition. It can also refer to political, social, and cultural competition, as the two Koreas are considered a divided nation (Interview Dr. E. C. Lim, 2011; Interview Prof. Paik, 2011). States can be made to feel insecure by another state, but it seems the relationship North Korea has with South Korea plays a bigger role in North Korean levels of insecurity, more so than other states. The history of forced division has created a sense of competition and comparison between the two sides. The feeling of threat that has been created by this competition influences North Korean behaviour. Such behaviour appears in the form of nuclear proliferation and provocations as methods by which North Korea chooses to secure itself.

Chapter 5: North Korea and the Great Powers in Northeast Asia

North Korea's geopolitical position is a factor that draws major powers to become involved on the Korean peninsula. During the Cold War, the major powers gained access to the region through two alliance structures: either the Communist camp, or the Western bloc under the US-led system. However, the fall of Communism caused some changes in the structure, as certain players started to lose the power and influence they once enjoyed in the region. Russia, for example, turned out to be a bystander in Korean affairs in the 1990s and struggled to regain its power through involvement in multilateral channels. However, the United States continued to secure its role and power in the region by maintaining good relations with its allies, thereby strengthening its alliance system. The interaction between major powers has an effect on the policy each has in the area, which was particularly evident during North Korea's first nuclear crisis.

The crisis created a sense of insecurity in all regional powers, and led them to attempt to solve the problem through diplomatic means and, at the same time, deter any potential future attack from North Korea. The problem of nuclear proliferation on the Korean peninsula is an undesirable factor to all players, but it seems that different actors have different ways of addressing the problem. First of all, China sees the problem as a threat to regional peace and stability, but China prefers to take the role of a mediator in bringing about the meeting of the key players, rather than taking the lead in coercing North Korea to disarm. Russia, on the other hand, having limited influence in matters relating to North Korea, uses instead power at the international level by joining the international community in pressuring North Korea to comply with the obligations of its international agreements, such as the NPT. Lastly, Japan, who has shown concern over North Korea's nuclear proliferation, uses the alliance partnership it has with the United States to support its allies in solving the problem through diplomatic means. It is clear that cooperation, either within the US alliance system or between the major powers, has not lead to the organisation of a collective defence mechanism in the region, nor has it helped to contain North Korea. Instead, interaction between the major powers has elevated North Korea's level of threat perception, because their efforts to solve the problem – which have led to a loose form of cooperation, including the Korean Peninsula

Energy Development Organization (KEDO) or the Six-Party Talks – creates what the regime perceives as international pressure against the regime. North Korea already felt isolated in the new post-Cold War structure, with the loss of its past alliances with Communist allies. The negative perception it has towards the environment in which it is living is worsened, especially when there is a failure by others to meet the terms of the 1994 agreement.

The new post-Cold War political structure caused major changes in the relationships among the regional powers. Firstly, it allowed for the rise of China as a new superpower. This means its involvement in helping to solve the nuclear problem is significant to regional stability, and became a major factor in a new US-Sino relationship. Secondly, there was the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and non-Communist countries, including South Korea, as a means to support China's rise in the post-Cold War period. Thirdly, relations between Russia and South Korea were normalised in 1991, as a result of the Soviet Union's adoption of a pro-Western policy. These three changes indicated a shift in the region's balance of power, and changed North Korea's views of the great powers.

Although there is an effort from each player to engage bilaterally with North Korea, progress in these relations is faced with obstacles presented by North Korea's provocative behaviour. The lack of progress in bilateral relations, to some extent, has an impact on the multilateral dialogue between North Korea and other players, with hostility and distrust shared by all parties. Interaction between the major powers in the region produces structural change to the post-Cold War system, and North Korea considers this interaction among major powers to be a threat to its regime security.

This chapter will examine the three major powers of Northeast Asia – China, Japan, and Russia – in order to ascertain how the bilateral relations these three countries have with North Korea affect North Korea's decision-making on the deterrence level. In addition, the interaction between these three powers in the post-Cold War period will also be explored, in order to find answers to why, despite sharing the same objective of denuclearisation, they fail to deter or reassure North Korea.

5.1 China and the North Korea's First Nuclear Crisis

North Korea's declaration to withdraw from the NPT in 1993 led to the first nuclear crisis on the peninsula, and raised security concerns for China. China considers the nuclear proliferation on the Korean peninsula a threat because there is a possibility that it could cause a nuclear arms race in the region (Bluth, 2011, p. 186). Instability caused by the North Korean nuclear development shifted China's resources and focus from domestic development to solving the problem (B. Yang, 2006, p. 23). What China advocates is peace and stability on the Korean peninsula, because this kind of environment would support China's concentration on its domestic development and establishment of good relations with its neighbouring countries. Nonetheless, the challenge facing China is the search for a suitable solution to persuade North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons programme without risking the collapse of the North Korean regime. According to Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, China's Korean policy during the crisis was based on the desire to have a nuclear-free Korean peninsula, but also that any excessive international pressure to force North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions was not acceptable (Agence France Presse, 1991). The survival of North Korea is a priority to China, because a collapse would bring about a flow of North Korean refugees into China. Instability in the region caused by the downfall of North Korea would open an opportunity for South Korea, the United States, or even Japan to intervene in the Korean peninsula.

China's foreign policy towards its neighbouring countries is generally structured on five core issues: "no instability, no collapse, no nukes, no refugees or defectors, and no conflict escalation" (S. Kim, 2003, p. 12). Denuclearisation may be a main objective of China's; but the role of China in solving the problem of nuclear proliferation is minimal, because China does not involve itself in negotiations with North Korea, nor does it take part in the KEDO. According to S. Kim (2004, pp. 83-84), China wanted to distance itself from the problem "from fear that it might get burned if something went wrong".

There are three things that affected China's North Korean policy during the first nuclear crisis: China's perception of North Korea's nuclear capabilities, US power and involvement in Northeast Asia, and the Sino-ROK relationship. First of all, nuclear proliferation on the

Korean peninsula was considered a threat to regional peace and stability, but China did not consider this problem a priority. Aside from the Taiwan Issue, China concentrates on achieving "comprehensive national strength" to serve China's new role as a great power, and also on compensating for the deficits arising from its internal problems, such as economic and religious conflicts (S. Kim & Lee, 2002, p. 110). The main focus of China was economic development in the pursuit of the modernisation of China (Quansheng Zhao, 1997, p. 115). In addition, Moore (2008b, p. 20) observes China's non-involvement in the 1994 nuclear crisis as coming from China's opinion that it does not have the responsibility to solve the United States problems.

Secondly, it concerns the power of the United States in the region, which is highlighted by the fall of Communism. It seems that China is uncomfortable with the power of the United States, and the possible use of military means to solve the North Korean problem. This affects China's policy addressing the North Korean nuclear issue. During the crisis, China strongly opposed the use of sanctions against North Korea by the UN Security Council (Kristof, 1993). The Clinton administration's adoption of an engagement policy was partly a response to China's and Japan's opposition to sanctions (Hughes, 1996, p. 85). China wants stability on the Korean peninsula. China does not want to do much about North Korea's nuclear problem, because China wants to keep North Korea as a buffer state against the competition it has with the United States (Interview Prof. Chung, 2011).

Thirdly, China's policy towards the two Koreas experienced some changes following the normalisation of relations between China and South Korea, in August 1992. Normalisation benefited China's economy. China's decision to normalise relations with South Korea, and China's view of the regional structure of the post-Cold War are described thus:

> "China's rapprochement with South Korea has helped confirm its role as an Asian superpower. As one of few countries to have diplomatic ties with both Seoul and Pyongyang, Beijing can substantially enhance its clout on the issue of the divided Korean peninsula. China regards post-Cold War Asia as the site of a three-way power game between itself, the U.S. and Japan, say observers. Some see Beijing's new diplomatic ties with Seoul as an effort to keep the growing influence of Japan in check." (Mitsumori, 1992).

China's normalisation with South Korea, nonetheless, created strain in the relationship between China and North Korea. Although China took it rather slow to normalise relations with South Korea, because it wanted North Korea to save face, the final result was considered a loss for North Korea (Interview Prof. Chung, 2011). The normalisation of relations between China and South Korea meant China saw North Korea through a broader strategic perspective rather than adhering to the Sino-DPRK alliance commitment (H. Lee, 2014, p. 102). In an effort to assure North Korea of the bilateral relations, China sent an envoy to Pyongyang to meet with Kim Il Sung. Kim Il Sung's response was rather cool and distant, and some diplomatic customs were skipped when hosting the Chinese envoy (Funabashi, 2007, pp. 265-266). The strained relationship between North Korea and China made it difficult for China to exercise its influence to stop North Korea from withdrawing from the NPT. North Korea commented on the normalisation of China and South Korea by calling it the "unfaithful actions of some traitors of the revolution" (Chandra, 1993). This is because North Korea viewed normalisation as Chinese recognition of the existence of two separate Korean states on the peninsula. In other words, China's support for South Korea, highlighted North Korean fears of being absorbed into the South Korean system during a time when North Korea was weaker than South Korea (Interview Dr. E. C. Lim, 2011). China's new move created a sense of insecurity in North Korea, which is observed as:

> "North Korea has a strong desire to keep the nation and its own system. In the post-Cold War period, the Eastern European countries collapse. Nothing remains. The Soviet Union is changed. China is also changed. North Korea and Cuba are two countries which still have socialistic system. Cuba is very different from that of North Korea. North Korea is the only one country insists its own socialistic system. If you read the works of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il, you can find only one thing. Socialistic system is the most reasonable and the best system. This is why we want to keep the socialistic as our own style. What can they do to keep the nation as socialistic system? They must have to strengthen the military and develop nuclear weapons." (Interview Prof. Y. Y. Kim, 2011)

North Korea's relationship with China worsened after North Korea's decision to go nuclear in 1993. Premier Li Peng explained, in February 1993, China's decision to downgrade its ties

with North Korea by not providing the regime with any advanced military supplies out of its security concern (D. S. Kim, 1994, pp. 40-41). Nonetheless, China realised the need to maintain ties with both Koreas. China tried to maintain the relationship with North Korea for the reason that it views North Korea as a buffer against the United States and wants to assure that, should unification occurr, North Korea would not fall under American or South Korean dominance (Buszynski, 2013a, pp. 27-28). Since a priority of China is to maintain stability on the Korean peninsula, China does not agree with the use of sanctions or any military means to pressure North Korea. S. Kim and Lee (2002, p. 118) write that, "with Chinese help, Pyongyang demonstrated to the entire world that sanctions would be accepted as a declaration of war and, as such, a no-win proposition for all parties concerned".

The relationship may experience some strain, but both China and North Korea are fully aware of the need to maintain a certain level of relations. This is due to the economic benefit both sides expect from the other. The late-1990s was also the period during which North Korea began its economic reform policy. The economic reforms started in 1995, but were accelerated in 1998 after the end of the three-year mourning period following the death of Kim Il Sung. Kim Jong Il called for the economic reform plan under the slogan "the Chollima speed, forced march speed[10]", requesting that the North Korean people double their efforts to advance the country's economic development (KCNA, 1998b). The focus on the economy made North Korea lean towards China for advice. This led to frequent visits by Kim Jong Il to China between 2000-2006, in order to observe and study China's economic model. Apart from food aid, North Korea wanted China to assist it with the development of the special economic zone called "Rajin-Sonbong Economic and Trade Zone[11]," now called "Rason". On the other hand, China also wanted to connect the two provinces in the northeastern part, Jilin and Liaoning, with Rason to gain access to the ports on the East Sea, in order to boost its

[10] Kim Jong Il adopted Kim Il Sung's "the Chollima Movement" idea, launched in 1956. Both Kim Jong Il and Kim Il Sung's Chollima slogans are similar in that they planned for a rapid development of the economy through workers' hard work and dedication (H. S. Lee, 2001, p. 27). Kim Jong Il's adoption of Chollima formed part of his policy objective to achieve the "kangsong taeguk"(K. Oh & Hassig, 2002, p. 87).

[11] The Rason was launched under the initiative of Kim Il Sung, in 1991. Rason is situated in the eastern part of North Korea, close to its borders with China and Russia. Kim Il Sung planned Rason to be a special economic zone to attract foreign investment and foreign capital. However, the project did not progress as much as planned, due to a lack of funding support from the North Korean government and poor infrastructure, which make Rason unattractive to foreign investors.

exports (North Korean Economy Watch, 2014; Stangarone & Hamisevicz, 2011, p. 185). Prof. Paik (2011) explains the China-North Korea economic collaboration in post-Cold War period as:

> "Both China and North Korea are in cooperation on economic zone. North Korea needs Chinese help for economic development and at the same time China needs Rason. China wants to connect Rason with Changjitu economic zone. For North Korea, they want to introduce market element. They know that they have to feed their own people. They cannot stick to socialist economy all through the years in the future." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

5.2 China and the North Korea's Second Nuclear Crisis

China's role in and policy towards North Korea's nuclear problem during the second nuclear crisis was different from that during the first. China took instead the role of a facilitator who actively pushed forward a multilateral initiative as a means to solving the nuclear issue. China's change was affected by the change in the US administration, the election of George W. Bush, and the adoption of a hardline policy towards North Korea. The agreement China had with the United States to fight the war on terror allowed the United States an opportunity to push China for a more active role in responding to the threat of North Korea (S. Snyder, 2003, p. 95). What China sought was the denuclearisation of North Korea through peaceful means, as outlined in the three principles[12] adopted by President Hu Jintao (Funabashi, 2007, p. 276). China was concerned for the stability of the Korean peninsula, particularly after the US adopted a hardline policy and the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. The hardliners in the Bush administration were also inclined to believe that regime change in North Korea would solve the overall problem of North Korea. The US preference for regime change worried China that it might bring about a collapse of North Korea, leading to an increase of US power on the Korean peninsula (Quansheng Zhao, 2006, p. 58). The replacement of North Korea with a

[12] China realised during the crisis that peace and security can only be secured through negotiation. The three principles were outlined as a strategy for how to resolve the conflict, and they are: "the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, the maintenance of peace and stability in Northeast Asia, and the settlement through dialogue and negotiation."

new government set up by South Korean and US forces is a worst case scenario for China, because it invites US forces to advance closer to China (Interview Prof. Chung, 2011). When the crisis erupted, China tried to assure North Korea of the ties the two countries had long had, in order to build up North Korea's confidence (Deng, 2008, p. 206). This was due to a fear of abrupt change that could trigger instability on the Korean peninsula. As such, China decided to take the lead in setting up the proposal for the multilateral dialogue. China adjusted the model several times upon North Korea's request. In the end, the Six-Party Talks were created at the height of the crisis, as a means to correct the failure of the previous forum. It was also a method of reconciliation when the United States refused to have a bilateral dialogue with North Korea, as it did during the first nuclear crisis.

The Six-Party Talks raised China's international profile. China cooperated with the United States on an equal basis, and the two countries sought advice from each other in promoting the forum. The United States always turned to China for help whenever the multilateral talks became stalled after North Korea declared that they would not return to the talks. However, China was reluctant to fully comply with the US request to force North Korea back to the negotiation table after North Korea declared that it would not attend any future talks in February 2005 (Ang, 2005). This is because China was well aware that its leverage over North Korea had been weakened (Yonhap News Agency, 2005). The situation worsened with the missile and nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009. The 2009 missile and nuclear tests, in particular, changed China's attitude towards North Korea. China fully realised that North Korea wanted to become a nuclear-armed state, rather than just attempting to increase its leverage against the United States during the negotiations through the development of nuclear weapons (Nanto & Manyin, 2010, p. 11). China's response to both the 2006 and 2009 missile and nuclear tests was the same: after both incidents, it supported the UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. Despite China's support for the UNSC resolutions, China emphasised the need to achieve the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula through diplomatic means. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PRC said,

> "The Security Council action is not all about sanctions, and political and diplomatic means is the only way to resolve the relevant issues on the Korean Peninsula ... China wishes to reiterate that to bring about denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, oppose nuclear proliferation and safeguard peace and stability

> on the Peninsula and in Northeast Asia is in the common interest of all parties." (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, 2009)

According to B. Glaser (2009, p. 3), China's support for the UNSC resolution 1874, on 12 June 2009, was not to punish, but rather to send a message to North Korea that it should reverse its decision and come back to the negotiation table. North Korea reacted negatively to the UNSC resolution. North Korea considered UNSC resolution 1874 to be a "US-led offensive of international pressure", against which the reprocessing of the newly-extracted plutonium and uranium enrichment were countermeasures (KCNA, 2009b). Prof. Y. Y. Kim (2011) elaborates on China's reluctance to exercise pressure on North Korea:

> "So far, China is not satisfied with North Korea's nuclear and missile tests. But China wants to have an economically good relationship with North Korea. That is why there were meetings between the two leaders in the past. They do not mix the inner politics. They separate the economy and the political issues." (Interview Prof. Y. Y. Kim, 2011)

The Bush administration's hardline policy supported the rise of China as a new superpower in the new post-Cold War structure. China cooperated with South Korea and the United States in order to solve the crisis. The triangular relationship had implications for the progress and success of the multilateral forum of the Six-Party Talks, and played a role in the power of deterrence against North Korea. What worries China in the wake of the North Korea's nuclear crisis is the possibility of an arms race in the region, which could lead to the pursuit of nuclear weapons as a deterrent against North Korea by both South Korea and Japan. China and South Korea seem to share a similar perception of North Korea's nuclear proliferation as a threat to regional peace and stability, but there are many factors that block progress in bilateral cooperation between the two countries. These factors include South Korea's concern over the rise of China as an economic and military power, China's repatriation of North Korean defectors, and the dispute over the air defence zone between the two. Prof. M. Kwon (2011) explains the relationship between China and South Korea and how this relationship has an effect on the US-ROK alliance:

> "South Korea is threatened by the goal of China. Up to one century ago, South Korea was in a sense subject to China. During the Korean War, China joined the North Korean army and also China is not democratic today. So people are worried about China's goals and that South Korea might be in danger by China. In that sense, the alliance with the United States will work to protect South Korea. Many Koreans still believe that South Korea does not have a peaceful environment today which requires the ROK-US alliance." (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011)

North Korea's provocations of 2010, however, brought about Chinese dissatisfaction with the US-ROK alliance. Regarding the Cheonan warship incident, China appeared to side with North Korea. China called for restraint from all parties. China did not consider it unusual that as an incident such as Cheonan would occur given that "an exchange of fire has long occurred between the two, sporadically and accidentally, during the six decades" (S. Lee, 2010a). In addition, there was not enough evidence to prove that North Korea was behind the sinking of the Cheonan (The Chosun Ilbo, 2010a). China did not seem to change its position towards North Korea when they shelled Yeonpyeong Island, in November 2010. China was rather cautious in its response to the Yeonpyeong Island attack. China did not condemn North Korea for the attack, but did express concern for the dispute between the two Koreas. What concerned China most continued to be regional stability, and that the situation might escalate if tensions increased ("Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hong Lei's Regular Press Conference on November 25, 2010," 2010). North Korea's provocations in 2010 led to an attempt by the allies to strengthen their deterrence against North Korea by conducting the joint military exercises. The United States and South Korea usually conducted joint military exercises as a means to strengthen their defence system against any possible future threats from North Korea. China expressed its opposition to the US-ROK joint military exercises, both in July and November 2010, because the activities would escalate tensions in the region ("Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Qin Gang's Remarks on the Announcement of the ROK-US Joint Military Exercises," 2010; Xinhua News Agency, 2010). Prof. Paik (2011) observed the situation on the Korean peninsula and commented that,

> "The United States and China have structured their relations in a confrontation way. One is a rising power and the other is declining hegemony. They are just

> confronting each other, sometimes with military power and sometimes with economic power. The Cheonan incident is one of the cases. The way China and the United States deal with the situation of Cheonan is they both try to intervene in order to make a new international order in East Asia much more favourable for themselves and for their own interest." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

According to Song (2011, p. 1137), China would choose to punish North Korea only if its provocations had a high chance of tempting the United States into responding militarily. To some extent, China's position created a strain in its relationships with other regional powers, because others expect China to exercise leverage over North Korea, or take a strong position in response to provocations. China was aware that North Korea had a high level of insecurity, and this made China unwilling to take concrete action against North Korea (Kleine-Ahlbrandt, 2011).

It is important to note that the conflicts China has with South Korea and the United States do not create a positive environment conducive to resolving North Korea's nuclear escalation, considering that trust and full cooperation are required from all parties in order to implement the Six-Party Talks. S. Snyder (2009b, p. 167) writes that the greater the differences among China, the United States, and South Korea, the greater the opportunity for North Korea to exploit the situation. Besides, China's position is believed to have an effect on North Korea's actions and the ability of other states to use a deterrence strategy against North Korea. China's protection of North Korea by disagreeing to the use of international pressure, and China's attempts to maintain ties with North Korea, reduce the ability of other countries to use deterrence against North Korea (Kleine-Ahlbrandt, 2011). China is faced with the dilemma of how to play the role of a responsible regional power in resolving the North Korean problem without damaging its ties with North Korea, while also meeting the demands of other regional players for concrete action on North Korea.

5.3 Japan and the North Korea's First Nuclear Crisis

At the time of the nuclear crisis, Japan showed strong support for the establishment of multilateral cooperation as a means to achieve peace and stability in the region. Japan views

North Korea as a security threat in terms of its military capability and ability to have an impact on the US-Japan alliance by influencing the policy choices in the problem-solving process (Hughes, 2005, p. 42). The Japanese government preferred diplomacy and negotiation to pressure in dealing with the problem of North Korea. Japan's position affected the decision of the Clinton administration on the use of economic sanctions against North Korea, and so the United States sought UN sanctions (Bowman, Collier, Niksch, & Shinn, 1994). Japan regarded the Agreed Framework to be "a specific framework for the realisation of denuclearisation on the Korean Peninsula through dialogue and consultations" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 1995). Japan's contribution to the KEDO showed Japan's willingness to handle a security responsibility equally with the United States (C. S. E. Kang & Kaseda, 2001, p. 53).

Japan turned out to be a key and enthusiastic player of the KEDO. Japan was willing to host the board meeting of members of the KEDO in May 1997, and it committed to contribute $1 billion to the KEDO, in order to build two light-water nuclear reactors in North Korea. Japan's enthusiasm was based on the opinion that the KEDO could lower tensions and eventually persuade North Korea to disarm (Japan Economic Newswire, 1998). However, Japan's commitment to the KEDO stalled after North Korea test-fired its long-range missile, the Taepodong-1, in August 1998. The incident angered Japan. Japan took some actions in protest against North Korea, including the financial suspension of the KEDO, the postponement of the normalisation talks, and the plan to militarily cooperate with South Korea (Hagstrom & Soderberg, 2006, p. 380; C. S. E. Kang & Kaseda, 2001, p. 54).

With US encouragement, Japan later reversed the decision to suspend financial support for the KEDO. However, North Korea's provocations continued to be a major security threat to Japan. The missile test of 1998 pushed Japan closer to the United States and South Korea. Japan's response to North Korea's 1998 missile launch included trilateral cooperation with the United States and South Korea at all levels, and a review of its defence guidelines (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 1998a). Japan's decision heightened tensions on the Korean peninsula. North Korea pointed out that Japan's and other countries' actions increased the regime's insecurity. The KCNA of 2 September 1998 says,

> "Japan is zealously developing long-distance vehicles and other uptodate weapons and paving the way for overseas aggression, having worked out "guidelines for Japan-U.S. defence cooperation." Many countries around Japan possess or have deployed missiles. Japanese politicians, however, hurl mud only at the DPRK while being unaware of the background. They emanate from the longstanding hostile policy toward the DPRK." (KCNA, 1998a).

In addition to its provocations, the North Korean abduction of Japanese citizens is an issue that greatly affects the process of normalisation of Japan-North Korean relations, and also Japan's contributions to the denuclearisation process. First of all, there is a broad public debate in Japan about the possibility that North Korea is behind the disappearance of certain citizens following an interview a North Korean agent gave to Japanese media, in 1997. Japan's suspicion of North Korea was confirmed by Kim Jong Il himself, during the Kim-Koizumi summit meeting in Pyongyang, on 17 September 2002. Kim Jong Il admitted to North Korea's abduction of 11 Japanese citizens during the 1970s and 1980s, saying "I want to apologise and it will never be allowed to happen again" (Gluck, 2002). The Kim-Koizumi summit ended with a promise by the two leaders to resume normalisation talks, but Kim Jong Il's admission to the abductions angered the Japanese public and caused feelings of hostility towards North Korea, which obstructed progress in the normalisation of relations. Pursuant to the Kim-Koizumi summit, the North Korea-Japan normalisation talks at the ambassador level were organised for 29-30 October 2002, in Kuala Lumpur, but the abduction issue became the main agenda of the talks. Japan demanded explanations from North Korea for the deaths of some of the abductees, and a full investigation of the surviving abductees. Japan even set the abduction and security issues as a precondition for moving forward in the normalisation talks (BBC News, 2002b). The abduction issue slowly took control of Japan's North Korea policy, the more Japan was faced with a lack of progress in settling the issue. Japan even placed the abduction issue on the agenda of the Six-Party Talks in an attempt to marshal international pressure against North Korea. Japan's emphasis on the abduction issue resulted in decreased significance of Japan in the multilateral forum, because it distracted from the main agenda of resolving the nuclear problem. Besides, Japan also placed sanctions on North Korea in order to pressure it into resolving the abduction issue. But, again, the sanctions Japan applied limited the role Japan played in the Six-Party Talks, as Japan showed its

reluctance to participate in providing any aid to North Korea, as required by the Six-Party agreement.

5.4 Japan and the North Korea's Second Nuclear Crisis

North Korea's admission, in October 2002, of the existence of a uranium enrichment programme raised Japan's security concerns to an even higher level, considering it a violation of the 1994 Agreed Framework. This issue affects the normalisation of relations between the two countries. During the second summit meeting between Kim Jong Il and Koizumi in May 2004, the nuclear issue was also one of the agenda items for discussion. Koizumi reiterated that dismantling North Korea's nuclear program was a precondition for the normalisation of relations between the two (Brooke, 2004). However, Kim Jong Il, apart from affirming that the nuclear issue is a bilateral issue between North Korea and the United States, stated,

> "I am of the opinion that nuclear development is good for nothing. We really did not want to engage in nuclear development. But the United States' continuation of hostile policies towards us left us no choice." (cited in Funabashi, 2007, p. 52)

The policy Japan adopted during the second nuclear crisis was a combination of both dialogue and the application of pressure, in line with the policy of the Bush administration. Japan's strong support for the Six-Party Talks upset North Korea, who wished to have a bilateral dialogue with the United States (H. N. Kim, 2006b, p. 13). North Korea accused Japan of supporting the US's hostile policy, which is not in compliance with the provisions stated in the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration[13] (KCNA, 2003a). Japan usually sided with the United States when it was faced with a security threat from North Korea. The

[13] The Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration was a result of a summit meeting between Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Kim Jong Il in Pyongyang, in September 2002. The two sides were bound under the Declaration to take necessary steps in reaching for a normalisation of relations. The Declaration clearly indicates that, "both sides would not commit conducts threatening the security of the other side". The full text of the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration can be found on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan website: http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/n_korea/pmv0209/pyongyang.html (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2002).

strengthened US-Japan security alliance heightened North Korea's sense of insecurity. It appeared on the KCNA as,

> "Abe, secretary general of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, who is ultra right-wing element, let loose sophism in his speech made in Chiba Prefecture on Nov. 2 that the "Japan-U.S. alliance" is aimed to "let the U.S. strike the north Korean missile base when it launches a missile" and protect Japan from it ... There are in Japan huge U.S. forces including many missiles targeted against DPRK. It is a stark reality of Japan that its moves are being stepped up to emerge a military power." (KCNA, 2003c)

However, Japan later exploited the Six-Party Talks for its own benefit in resolving the abduction issue. Not only did Japan raise the abduction issue at the Six-Party Talks forum, Japan also reiterated that "the abduction issue is part of the overall solution of the North Korean issues" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 18 November 2003).

North Korea strongly criticised Japan, saying it was insincere about solving the nuclear problem because the non-related issue of abduction was raised and became the agenda of the Six-Party Talks (KCNA, 2006d). Later, North Korea claimed that Japan was not qualified to be part of the peace talks (Yonhap News Agency, 2007). North Korea's nuclear proliferation and acts of provocation increased Japan's security concerns, which not only inclined Japan towards adopting a hardline policy against North Korea, but also drove Japan closer to the United States in order to increase Japan's security confidence.

In response to the Cheonan sinking, Japan appeared to take sides with South Korea. Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hotoyama issued a statement supporting the investigation's report by South Korea, which confirmed North Korea was behind the attack (Ito, 2010). North Korea referred to the Japanese condemnation as a joint effort by the US and its allies to pursue a hostile policy against the regime (KCNA, 2010b). The shelling of Yeonpyeong Island alarmed Japan. In response, it sought to counter the threat of North Korea by conducting joint military exercises with the United States, under the codename 'Keen Sword'. North Korea perceived the joint US-Japan military exercises "a serious threat to the DPRK", because military cooperation with the United States is evidence of "the Japanese intention for

reinvasion of Korea" (KCNA, 2010c). Further to that, Japan even emphasised the need to cooperate closely with its neighbour, South Korea, and to strengthen ties with its allies under the Japan-US-ROK alliance (Prime Minister's Office of Japan, 2010). The trilateral partnership was formed in order to enhance cooperation and dialogue between the three countries, particularly in relation to security threats caused by North Korea's provocative and belligerent behaviour (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2010). In addition to strengthening the US-Japan alliance, Japan also made an effort to improve its defence system. A ballistic missile defence system and a defence protection plan for the citizenry were implemented in preparation to counter a military threat from North Korea (Michishita, 2012, pp. 103-110). Japan's countermeasures show a steady progress by Japan in improving its military capability.

The North Korean nuclear crisis brought about trilateral cooperation between Japan, South Korea, and the United States in the form of the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG). The TCOG, established in 1999, was a result of a Congressional policy review during the Clinton administration, organised by former Secretary of Defence William Perry. The so-called "Perry Report" emphasises the need for support from Japan and South Korea in order to make "the US policy towards North Korea a success" (Dalton & Snyder, 2004). The United States considered it important that its two allies should share the responsibility of the policy, particularly during a time when the United States wanted to put pressure in isolating North Korea after the Kumchangri incident in 1998 (Schoff, 2005, p. 14). However, differences between the parties' respective North Korean policies gradually affected the overall policy strategy of the TCOG. Another of Japan's priorities, aside from the issue of North Korea's nuclear and missile development, was the abduction issue. The TCOG was later dissolved, as it was undermined by the establishment of the Six-Party Talks.

What was left behind was the significance of Japan's cooperation with its neighbours and allies, both in the form of the US-ROK-Japan trilateral cooperation and also Japan-South Korean relations. First of all, the US-ROK-Japan cooperation was created as a result of North Korea's nuclear proliferation and provocative actions, and because the three countries share the same impression of North Korea as a threat to regional peace and stability. The trilateral cooperation between the United States and its Asian allies reflects an attempt to create a deterrence against North Korea, and to persuade North Korea to comply with its international

obligations. The meeting between the defence ministers of the three countries concluded in strengthening future cooperation in deterring North Korea threats from its nuclear weapons programme, missile development, and provocative acts (U.S. Department of Defense, 2013).

Trilateral cooperation affects North Korea's security and threat perception levels. The cooperation led to joint military exercises between the United States, Japan, and South Korea. North Korea perceived the trilateral military cooperation organised by the US as a "strategy for putting the Asia-Pacific under its control and the strategy toward the DPRK by relying on the triangular alliance" (KCNA, 2012g). To counter the external threat, North Korea must strengthen its deterrent in every possible way with the songun (KCNA, 2012g). The trilateral military exercises also supported a bilateral cooperation between Japan and South Korea, whose relations had been constrained by historical issues (K. J. Kwon, 2012). Secondly, Japanese-South Korean cooperation is considered significant to the peace and stability of the region, particularly when both develop the same policy for North Korea. For example, Japan appears to share South Korea's view on engagement. Following a visit to Japan by President Kim Dae Jung in October 1998, both countries agreed that the solution to the problems of North Korea was to use the dialogue to help North Korea achieve reform and openness (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 1998b). However, North Korea did not perceive the mention of reform and openness by its neighbours as an attempt to help. According to the KCNA,

> "The Japanese reactionaries are talking rubbish about the 'need' for the DPRK to pursue 'reform and liberalization.' ... We have nothing to open and reform ... Hostile forces' attempt to link the DPRK with any 'change' related to 'reform' and 'opening' is prompted by their sinister aim to tarnish the image of the DPRK." (KCNA, 1999b)

In addition, good relations between Japan and South Korea are important for the United States when it pursues a hardline policy towards North Korea, because the support from these two allies would give the United States the opportunity or excuse to increase its defence and deterrence capabilities against North Korea. Japan's wartime legacy has slowly taken control and obstructed progress in bilateral relations. In addition, a territorial dispute relating to the Dokdo/Takeshima islets has also created conflict and a sense of distrust between the two

countries. The current state of Japan-South Korean relations is said to be at an impasse, and President Park Guen Hye has demanded that Japan resolves the issues of comfort women and other war-related compensation before a summit between the two countries can be convened (Nakano, 2013). That Japanese officials and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited the Yasukuni Shrine in October and December 2013, has also cooled relations.

5.5 Russia and the North Korea's First Nuclear Crisis

It appears that Russia shares the same view as other regional powers in viewing the nuclear escalation of North Korea as a threat to regional peace and stability. However, Russia's role on the Korean peninsula was marginalised by the adoption of a pro-Western policy in the 1990s, which made Russia focus on improving its relations with South Korea and begin the normalisation of relations in September 1990. Russia continued to emphasise improvement of its relationship with South Korea for economic purposes, which resulted in weakened ties with North Korea (J. Moltz, 2000, p. 197). North Korea, displeased with the relationship Russia had with South Korea, called it "diplomacy purchased by dollars" (S. Kim, 2007, p. 21). In 1996, Russia also called for an end to the 1961 Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance with North Korea. Instead, Russia proposed a new treaty with North Korea, but with an important condition of the removal of a security commitment in a time of conflict (Agence France Presse, 1996).

Post-Cold War Russia did not see the value in maintaining a relationship with North Korea. The policy of reform Russia undertook in the late 1980s influenced the worldview of Russia, showing that it disagreed with North Korea, who kept emphasising the danger of imperialism (Eugene Bazhanov & Bazhanov, 1991, p. 1128). Russia saw North Korea as a backward country who clung to "a counter-productive strategy" of Juche and cannot take a path to reform (Eugene Bazhanov & Bazhanov, 1991, p. 1127; S. Kim, 2007, p. 21). Russia even expected North Korea to collapse, raising fears in North Korea that Russia would side with South Korea and the United States in an attempt to bring down the regime (Evgeny Bazhanov, 2006, p. 220). During the first nuclear crisis, Russia did not engage in the problem-solving process. Russia lost influence on North Korea and power in the region as a result of the deterioration in its relationship with North Korea. In response to North Korean

nuclear proliferation, Russia joined with the international community in using international pressure to coerce North Korea into complying with its international obligations. For example, President Yeltsin reached an agreement with President Bush, during the Russia-US summit meeting in Washington in June 1992, regarding the issue of North Korea. A joint statement was released with significant details, including the need for North Korea to fully comply with the North-South Joint Declaration on the Denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula[14] and the obligations of the NPT (US-Russian Joint Statement on Korean Nuclear Non-Proliferation, 1992).

Russia also joined the international community in putting pressure on North Korea regarding its nuclear weapons programme. On 1 April 1993, Russia released a joint statement with the United States and the United Kingdom demanding that North Korea reverse its decision on withdrawing from the NPT, and to comply with its obligations under the Safeguards Agreement (BBC News, 1993a). In October 1993, Russia sided with Japan in pressuring North Korea to rejoin the NPT (Agence France Presse, 1993a). North Korea strongly criticised Russia for taking the side of Japan and having "double standards on nonproliferation", given Russia's lack of involvement on the nuclear proliferation issue in Eastern European countries (BBC News, 1993b). The loss of its alliance with North Korea excluded Russia from engaging in Korean affairs. Funabashi (2007, p. 178) writes that North Korea did not want Russia to be involve in the KEDO, nor participate in the talks as it did not want to have a dialogue with Russia "in the same manner as the United States did".

5.6 Russia and the North Korea's Second Nuclear Crisis

The turning point in Russian foreign policy came with Vladimir Putin's rise to the Presidency, in 2000. At this point, Russia started to consider the Asia-Pacific region as equally important as the West was to Russia. Putin realised the significance of a relationship

[14] The two Koreas signed the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearisation on 31 December 1991. The joint declaration prohibited the two Koreas from developing or possessing nuclear weapons other than for peaceful (*Joint Declaration of South and North Korea on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula*, 1992). The declaration came into effect in February 1992, and was intended to "eliminate the danger of nuclear war and ultimately promote peaceful reunification" (B.-K. Kim, 2001, p. 75).

with North Korea after Russia was excluded from several important negotiations, such as the Agreed Framework and the Four-Party Talks.[15] A "balanced policy" was adopted in order to balance out the relationship between the two Koreas (C. Moltz, 2003). Putin adjusted the policy out of his concern on an increase of US influence on the Korean peninsula. A decline in power of Russia from a loss in the partnership with North Korea opened an opportunity for the United States to play a more active role in involving in the Korean affairs (Takeda, 2006, p. 192). It turns out to Russia's awareness also that the possibility of the North Korean regime collapse would not happen easily and that a new strategy towards the Korean peninsula needed to be adjusted as a consequence (Bogaturov, 2004, p. 99).

The renormalisation process between North Korea and Russia began in February 2000, with the signing of the Treaty on Friendship, Good Neighbourliness and Cooperation. The new treaty set a new framework for North Korea-Russia relations. The clause on security during a time of crisis was included in the treaty at the request of Russia, who wished to regain its influence over North Korea (Joo, 2003, p. 149). By balancing its policy towards the two Koreas, Russia became more significant, and President Kim Dae Jung requested Russia to take up the role of a mediator in inter-Korean affairs (Alexander Lukin, 2003, pp. 77-79). Security interests and economic benefits were two factors that drove Russia towards supporting a peaceful and stable Korean peninsula. According to Takeda (2006, p. 197), Russia wished to gain access to Asia with the "iron-silk road[16]" project, which had been outlined during a summit meeting between Putin and Kim Jong Il in July 2000. Kim Jong Il's meeting with Putin was described as a North Korean play to strategically use Russia to balance out the power of the United States, China, and South Korea (Funabashi, 2007, p. 187). Under the new policy of balancing relations with the two Koreas, Russia's attitudes towards North Korea's leadership, national and political structure, and the issue of missile development began to change. Russia stood up for North Korea during the G-8 summit in

[15] The Four-Party Talks were organised between 1997-1999, a result of a proposal made by the United States and South Korea to North Korea in 1996. The four members of the talks were North Korea, South Korea, the United States, and China. The talks were organised to end conflict of the Korean War in the hopes of reaching a new peace agreement (U.S. Department of State, 1997). The Four-Party Talks closed in 1999, after North Korea's refusal to attend.

[16] The iron-silk road project was an economic plan to connect the railways of both Koreas with the Trans-Siberian railway. If successful, the project could boost the economy, as it would reduce the shipment time between South Korea to Europe, and vice versa (Davis, 2003, p. 97).

Okinawa, Japan, in July 2002, by affirming that "North Korea's missile programme has a peaceful purpose", and that it would be worth the effort to negotiate with North Korea (Joo, 2003, p. 155).

The improved Russian-North Korean relations were challenged when the US referred to North Korea as part of an axis of evil, in January 2002, and also the second nuclear crisis in October 2002. Regarding the US identifying North Korea as part of an axis of evil, Russia disagreed, as it viewed the Bush administration as unilateralist, and Bush's statement did not offer any solutions to the non-proliferation issue on the Korean peninsula (Meyer, 2003, pp. 66-67; Takeda, 2006, p. 198). According to S. Kim (2007, p. 24), Putin came up with the so-called "Putin formula" in order to assure North Korea of Russia's commitment to not join in any future hostile acts against North Korea, instigated by either the United States or the international community. Russia's support for North Korea likely came from Russia's need to secure its leverage over North Korea, which was improved after Putin's policy of rapprochement, and also to obtain for Russia economic benefits from the Korean peninsula. North Korea turned to Russia for economic benefits and political purposes, but North Korea was fully aware that Russia did not have much power to help play "the diplomatic game" with the United States and Japan, nor balance them (Joo, 2009, p. 188; The Daily Yomiuri, 2002).

Russia believed Bush's hardline policy towards North Korea created more tension on the peninsula, in a way that would obstruct Russia from realising its economic goals. Although the US's hardline policy brought North Korea closer to Russia, the second nuclear crisis also tested the improved relations of the two countries to some extent. Russia strongly opposed the development of a North Korean nuclear weapons programme, because it would be a threat to regional security. Russia even condemned North Korea when it declared that it would withdraw from the NPT on 10 January 2003. Russia found it difficult to have a nuclear neighbour and, more importantly, to have US forces involved in solving the nuclear issue, because it could create a nuclear catastrophe in the region (Buszynski, 2009, p. 818). However, it turns out that Russia had little leverage over North Korea to make the regime completely dismantle its nuclear weapons programme, and Russia's role was overshadowed by China, who successfully pressured North Korea into attending the Three-Party Talks held in Beijing, on 23-25 April 2003. In an attempt to ensure Russia's involvement in the region

and to block any increase to the United States power, Russia turned to China. The two met and signed the Joint Declaration of the PRC and the Russian Federation on 27 May 2002. The Declaration confirmed an acknowledgement of North Korea's security assurance as an important requirement that could lead to the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula (World News Connection, 2003).

Negotiation and engagement are Russia's preferred methods for dealing with the problem of North Korea's nuclear proliferation. Russia has been an enthusiastic partner of the Six-Party Talks, and also joined with other regional players in an attempt to increase North Korea's security confidence, with the hope of persuading North Korea to return to the NPT. However, Russia failed in its efforts to improve security in the region when North Korea decided to conduct both missile and nuclear tests in 2006. Putin expressed concern over the missile tests, fearing that tension in the region might escalate if the international community chose to respond to the incident with sanctions (Associated Press World Stream, 2006). Later that year, Russia condemned North Korea for their underground nuclear test on 9 October 2006, believing the test "undermined the non-proliferation process" and set in motion a nuclear arms race in Northeast Asia (RIA Novosti, 2006). The April 2009 missile test and the May 2009 nuclear test elevated Russia's concerns for regional peace and stability. Although Russia did not agree with the missile test, and even condemned North Korea for the nuclear test, Russia opposed the use of sanctions against North Korea by the international community. Russia believed that the use of dialogue and negotiation, not sanctions, were the only productive way to solve the problem of a nuclear standoff, because sanctions would create more tensions in the region and would push North Korea more into isolation (Russian Press Digest, 2009). It turned out that Russia developed a different perception of North Korea from that of the Western countries.

Tensions in the peninsula continued to rise and the situation deteriorated following the sinking of the Cheonan warship and the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island. Regarding the Cheonan sinking, in March 2010, Russia did not share the same conclusion – that the Cheonan was sunk by a North Korean torpedo – as the international community. The investigation report by the Russian navy expert team pointed out that the sinking of the Cheonan was an accident, not caused by a torpedo launched by North (The Hankyoreh, 2010). Russia's declaration came as a surprise to the international community, because

Russia was the first country to claim that North Korea was not behind the incident. As such, Russia's report contradicted the assumptions of other countries, such as the United States, Japan, and South Korea, who strongly believed that North Korea was fully responsible for the sinking of the Cheonan. However, Russia reacted differently in response to the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island. In this case, Russia did not take North Korea's side. On 23 November 2010, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov made a statement condemning the attack on Yeonpyeong Island, and urged an end to artillery exchanges between the two Koreas; such actions would only lead to severe damage to the overall situation in the region (Russia & CIS Diplomatic Panorama, 2010). The Yeonpyeong shelling disappointed Russia, because the incident destroyed the hope of resuming the Six-Party Talks. Russia was also concerned that the incident might provoke a military confrontation between the two Koreas. What Russia perceived with regards to the problems of North Korea was that they posed a threat to regional peace and stability, rather than to its own security. Artyom Lukin (2013) writes that missile and nuclear threats posed by North Korea were not considered a serious threat to Russia compared to the missile defence system the United States and its allies had been building to counter North Korea.

5.7 Interaction between the Regional Players and North Korean's Perception

It is clear that all regional players see North Korea's missile and nuclear developments and belligerence as a threat to regional peace and stability. However, different players have different opinions on how serious the problems are to their individual security and to overall regional stability.

First of all, China sees a nuclear-armed North Korea as a problem, but China's policy towards North Korea is likely to be influenced by the reaction of the international community, and also the policy the United States adopts towards North Korea. China does not want to level sanctions or apply pressure on North Korea, because the collapse of North Korea threatens China's security more than having a nuclear-armed neighbour. China is confronted by the expectations of other regional players that it will or should play a larger role in problem-solving – something it believes would negatively affect China's desire to rise as a new superpower. Cha (2012b) says that China faces a tough choice between securing its

national interests and putting pressure on North Korea. Apart from losing an intellectual connection with North Korea, China is also cautious in its role in solving the nuclear problem, because China sees North Korea as a buffer state against the United States. China does not want to use too much pressure on North Korea for fear of a possible regime collapse or regime change (Interview Prof. Chung, 2011). Prof. M. Kwon (2011) explains the relationship between China and North Korea and North Korea's development of nuclear weapons as,

> "So far as North Korea determines to develop nuclear weapons and possess nuclear weapons, there is no forceful way to stop it. North Korea has China who is ready to help North Korea. There is no way to force North Korea not to develop its nuclear weapons." (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011)

China wants to maintain ties with North Korea for economic and strategic reasons. At the same time, North Korea wants to have a close relationship with China based on economic benefits and political gain. Concerning this, Prof. Y. Y. Kim (2011) says,

> "North Korea has three things in its mind that they want to achieve. They are ideological powerful, military powerful, and economic powerful. These three things are to reach for the goal of kangsong taeguk. North Korea always says that they are already strong in terms of military and ideology. The area they face with the most difficulty is the economy. They think that the sanction from outside must be removed to overcome the economic difficulties. That is the reason why they try to keep a close relationship with China. They want to establish an economically good relationship with China and to balance against the US and South Korea." (Interview Prof. Y. Y. Kim, 2011)

Nonetheless, China's inability to exercise its power to dissuade North Korea to dismantle the nuclear weapons also results from the nature of North Korea itself:

> "China has not done much on North Korea's nuclear development. In that sense, China has failed. But North Korea has been an independent country. North

> Korea has tried desperately to block outside influence into its behaviour." (Interview Anonymous, 2011)

Secondly, it appears that the current, main focus of Japan is to resolve the abduction issue with North Korea. The abduction issue is among the factors that affect the relationship between the two countries. Japan does not have the power or leverage over North Korea even considering the economic assistance the country has extended to North Korea. In addition, North Korea clearly separates the security matter from other matters, and clearly shows that it does not want Japan involved in the nuclear problem-solving process. Kim Jong Il told Koizumi during the first summit between the two leaders in September 2002 that, "The nuclear issue is between the US and North Korea. This is not a subject to discuss with Japan" (Wada, 2012). The fact that Japan is constrained by Article 9 of its Constitution makes Japan leave security matters in the hands of the United States, and this relegates Japan to only a supporting role for the United States. These limits mean that Japan follows US policy on North Korea, in an attempt to maintain US-Japan relations, and to secure a security guarantee from the US. Although the abduction issue is Japan's priority, it is highly unlikely that Japan would push for progress on this issue in a way that could cause irreparable damage to the partnership, because Japan needs the support of the United States in order to pressure North Korea on this issue.

Thirdly, Russia views the problems presented by North Korea through the lens of its national interests. In other words, Russia exploits the situation on the Korean peninsula as an way to regain power in the region. Russia prefers a peaceful and stable Korean peninsula with the existence of North Korea. As a result of its support for diplomacy in dealing with the problems, Russia has been an enthusiastic partner in the Six-Party Talks. Russia's involvement in the Six-Party Talks raised Russia's profile, and the United States turned to Russia during the height of tensions for help in pressuring North Korea to adhere to its international obligations, and also to persuade North Korea to cease its provocations (The White House, 2013b).

The problems posed by North Korea led to not only the strengthening of the alliances between the United States, Japan, and South Korea, but also to the creation of further ties and cooperation between the regional powers. The strength and endurance of the relations

between the US and its regional partners has contributed to an increase in North Korea's level of regime insecurity. The new structure creates an imbalance of power between North Korea on the one hand, and South Korea, Japan, and the United States with its allies on the other. Concerning this, Prof. S. H. Sheen (2011) says,

> "One of the main reasons for North Korea's development of missile and nuclear weapons programme is the regime insecurity. Kim Jong Il's insecurity. North Korea feels insecure with the isolation it faces after the Cold War and with increasing gaps between North Korea and South Korea in terms of economy. There are also gaps between North Korea and other powers. North Korea also faces with the US presence in South Korea and Japan. The United States, South Korea, and Japan always say that we have no intention of invading North Korea. But from the North Korea's perspective, it is a kind of serious threat to their national security." (Interview Prof. S. H. Sheen, 2011)

The stronger the ties between the regional powers, the less secure North Korea feels. North Korea considers the US-Japan-South Korean joint military exercises in the West Sea of Japan an attempt to put more pressure on North Korea (KCNA, 2013c). The relationship between the United States and its Asian allies also means the United States is providing security through the form of extended deterrence. The US's extended deterrence emphasised the fear of North Korea of the US, about which Prof. M. Kwon (2011) says,

> "North Korea thinks that they have a hostile environment. They think the United States has a hostile policy towards North Korea. To combine the US with South Korea's military is a very strong force. They say if they do not have hostile environment, why would they have to develop nuclear weapons. This is a big incentive for them to develop nuclear weapons obviously." (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011)

China's own perception of a US threat has also risen as a result of the trilateral partnership, and it is believed to be the cause for a closer and stronger partnership between China and North Korea. The relationship between China and North Korea post-Cold War is not as close as it once was during the Cold War period. Nonetheless, China wants to maintain the ties and

wants to keep North Korea as it is, based on the opinion that it still sees North Korea as an asset to the country (Interview Prof. Chung, 2011). The strengthened trilateral partnership would result in a strengthening of military cooperation and also missile defence system between Japan and South Korea, which targets not only North Korea but also China (Moon, 2013).

The post-Cold War changes in the policy and politics of both China and Russia have left North Korea with no allies. China became more pragmatic in its foreign policy making, rather than focusing on maintaining the historical and ideological ties it had with North Korea (B. Glaser & Billingsley, 2012, p. 6). The result of China's post-Cold War policy pushed North Korea further into isolation. A sense of insecurity and the experience of an imbalance of power push North Korea to attempt to balance the threat and protect itself by acquiring nuclear weapons (Interview Prof. Koo, 2011). Prof. I. H. Park (2011) describes the relations between China and North Korea:

> "If you take a look at the last two decades, please examine carefully the way how China supports North Korea. China never fully supports North Korea. That means China does not want economic growth and rise of North Korea. But at the same time China never gives up North Korea. It means China is supporting North Korea in one sense. China is supporting North Korea under the conditions that North Korea only survives. China would never let a kind of regime collapse or a sudden type of regime change to happen in North Korea." (Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011)

The relationship between North Korea and Russia was also damaged following Russia's decision to normalise relations with South Korea in the early 1990s. North Korea responded to the Soviet Union's decision negatively, and even condemned Gorbachev's visit to South Korea to establish diplomatic ties in June 1990 as "treacherous and unpardonable" (Agence France Presse, 1996). North Korea released a memorandum in 1990 stating that, with the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and South Korea, the USSR-DPRK alliance would effectively discontinue, and North Korea would "have no other choice but to take measures to provide for ourselves some weapons for which we have so far relied on the alliance" (Mack, 1993, p. 342).

Although both China and Russia attempted to restore relations with North Korea for the benefit of their economy and to increase their power and status in the region, their relationships were not restored to the state they had been before. The normalisation of relations with South Korea of both Russia and China, in 1991 and 1992 respectively, caused a reduction in ties North Korea once had with China and Russia (Interview Prof. Chung, 2011). The loss of ties North Korea once has with the two allies, and the change in the international political structure, influence North Korea to take a rather balanced approach towards China and Russia. Concerning this, Prof. Paik (2011) has said,

> "Kim Jong Il makes a visit to both China and Russia in 2010 and 2011. This is a sort of balancing act on politics of North Korea. They want to cooperate with China economically. They need Chinese help but too much dependence on China is not good. Basically they are independent minded people. They try to play both China and Russia's offer against each other. North Korea tries to get benefits from both countries because China and Russia are very much aware that they need North Korea for their own strategic needs. China and Russia are competitors and North Korea is just using their competitiveness. Their competitions are something they can play off against each other for their own interest." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

China was criticised for manipulating the situation with North Korea for its own end, for example China's reluctance to use its power and influence to pressure North Korea (S. Lee, 2010b). China's response to the North Korea's nuclear development has been described as,

> "China's reaction is weak and cautious in dealing with North Korea's nuclear problem. This is because China views North Korea's nuclear development and nuclear test as the matter of North Korea. China cannot and is not in a position to stop the nuclear development of North Korea." (Interview Prof. Y. Y. Kim, 2011).

Both China and Russia share the positive opinion of the use of diplomatic means for solving the North Korean problem, believing that the use of international pressure would risk the loss

of trust and influence both countries have on North Korea, and could trigger a war in the region. For not wanting to apply pressure on North Korea, China and Russia have been criticised for being reluctant players in taking the lead on containing North Korea, and their hesitance has resulted in some of North Korea's aggression, because North Korea is well aware that acts of provocation will go unpunished (Cane, 2013). Concerning Russia's involvement in the peace process, Prof. I. H. Park (2011) has commented,

> "I am not sure how much serious Russia is about North Korea after the end of Cold War. In particular when Putin became the leader of Russia, Russia is more interested in identifying Russia as a European country. I really do not know how much Russia is interested in North Korea's problem." (Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011)

It is important to note that the interaction between the regional powers greatly contributes to North Korea's policy and strategic thinking. North Korea's foreign policy and behaviour are influenced by the interaction of the major powers in the region. Concerning this, Prof. Paik (2011) elaborates,

> "The post-Cold War is a new international order. Nobody is clearly in control in international community. The United States, China, Russia, and Japan try to counterweight each other's influence about Korean affairs. If the United States wants to destroy North Korea, then China would come out and defend North Korea. North Korea has an independent army and is independent from Soviet influence and from Chinese influence as well. The interplay of those four respective states gives an opportunity for North Korea to be independent on its own" (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

This means that North Korea must search for a way to survive in an environment in which four other players are trying to counter each other. In other words, North Korea must try to survive without falling under another nation's influence (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011). One of the ways to secure the objective of regime survival is with nuclear weapons, which have a low cost but high benefit, and the power of deterrence (Interview Prof. Koo, 2011; Interview Prof. Moon, 2011; Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011).

5.8 Conclusion

The issue of North Korea is not about inter-Korean relations alone. It includes also the relationship between North Korea and the regional powers, and the impact of the interaction the regional powers has on North Korea. The fall of Communism created a new international political structure. The structure of the post-Cold War world is no longer shaped by two superpowers confronting each other and representing their own interests. The new system is a rather independent system, in which everyone stands for their own interests. Nonetheless, the interaction between regional powers post-Cold War creates a loose form of confrontation and imbalance of power of the two groups. The first group is the United States and its allies, and this alliance has continued from the Cold-War period. The second group is North Korea and its former-allies, China and Russia. The partnership North Korea has with China and Russia was destroyed and has never been restored to its previous level. China and Russia are interested in the economy and stability of the Korean peninsula, rather than the security of North Korea. China and Russia's ties with North Korea are for economic benefit and political reasons, and the relationship should not be regarded as an alliance. Japan seems to focus on satisfying its domestic interests, while leaving security issues to its alliance with the United States. The structure has become more like an imbalance of power between the two sides.

The structure in Northeast Asia in the post-Cold War world shows not only an imbalance of power, but also an attempt by regional powers to balance against one another. When North Korea uses provocations, their choice in policy to respond also depends on the overall situation. China and Russia lean towards using tough measures on North Korea at the international level, rather than taking their own initiative. Part of this comes from the fact that they both do not have the power to influence North Korea, and another factor is their fear that the situation might become worse. The regional powers try to balance their power against each other by not letting anyone gain more power and influence over the situation. The responses the regional powers had to the Cheonan and Yeonpyeong incidents are among the examples. The Cheonan incident showed the two divided groups between North Korea, China, and Russia on the one hand, and the United States and its allies on the other. On the other hand, the Yeonpyeong incident showed the different approaches China and Russia had towards the incident. They both disagreed with North Korea, and called for restraint and

dialogue to solve the problem. This is because the Yeonpyeong shelling offered a high possibility for destabilising the region, with an exchange of fire between the two Koreas and the strengthening of the US military in the region.

It is clear that regional powers have changed their policies and behaviour in accordance with the changes to the international politics. In the post-Cold War period, China and Russia shifted their focus from political confrontation to reform and their economies. On the other hand, Japan's ties with the United States have been confirmed and strengthened over time with the supporting role Japan plays in the alliance. In light of these changes, North Korea has been left with no allies and is searching to find a way to survive in the new environment. North Korea does not want to change, and is afraid to move itself into a transition period during which external factors could have a greater influence on the regime to change or even collapse, in a similar way to some Eastern European countries. Nuclear weapons are a strategic tool North Korea uses in response to the security challenges it faces. Challenges North Korea faces in the early post-Cold War period include the US nuclear threat, the unequal balance of defence with the United States and its allies, and the loss of its alliances with China and Russia. North Korea acquired nuclear weapons in order to match its security demand and to balance the nuclear threat it faces. They serve the purpose of deterrence, rather than being intended for offensive purposes, like the expansion of North Korean power. The new relationships North Korea has with China and Russia do not help North Korea match the level of external threat it faces, as the relationships are structured on economic rather than security interests. North Korean insecurity is increased by the new political structure, which requires the independence of states. Regional players interact not only to balance each other, but to suit their individual interests. The structure shows the independence of states, and this kind of structure can create a sense of insecurity. As explained by Herz (1962, pp. 39-42) states will never feel secure in a system that allows the strong to destroy the weak. This refers to the need of North Korea to be independent in its search for power and security. The regional powers may acknowledge North Korea as a state based on their preference on the status quo of the Korean peninsula. However, North Korea's security need has not been acknowledged. Regional powers deal with North Korea based on their own interests. The search for security is therefore possible until states find security. The two nuclear crises, one after another, is a reflection of North Korea's insecurity in the new environment.

Chapter 6: North Korea and the United States

The fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s gave rise to a new international political structure, as a unipolar system emerged with the United States as the sole remaining superpower. The transitional period created a sense of insecurity and uncertainty among states, which led some to invest more in defence and turn themselves into nuclear states (Millot, Molader, & Wilson, 1993, p. 1). The new structure raised questions regarding the future role of the US, and the durability of its hegemonic power, in the post-Cold War system. According to Cox (1995, pp. 42-44), what the United States faces in the post-Cold War period is a challenge from major regional powers whose interests are opposite to that of the United States. In defining a new strategy in the new era, the Clinton administration conducted the Bottom-Up Review. The Bottom-Up Review pointed out that there are four dangers facing the United States in the post-Cold War world. They are the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD); aggression by major regional powers; the potential failure of democratic reform in the former Soviet Union and elsewhere; and the potential failure of the US economy (Les Aspin, 1993, pp. 1-107). The Review lists the Korean peninsula as one example of potential dangers given the fact that there is a possibility an arms race could be triggered by North Korea's nuclear ambitions (Les Aspin, 1993, pp. 5-13).

The post-Cold War era also saw increased attention to so-called 'rogue states'. The idea of rogue states is not actually completely new. The term first appeared in the 1970s, and has been used interchangeably with the term 'outlaw state' until acquiring the current meaning of "Third World states who were attempting to acquire weapons of mass destruction" (Miles, 2013, pp. 10-20). During the Clinton administration, foreign policy was structured on a policy of containment focusing specifically on the so-called outlaw states. This was expressed by Anthony Lake, an assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, in a famous article, "Confronting Backlash States". The article talks about need for the United States, as the sole superpower, to take responsibility for dealing with aggressive behaviour of the so-called outlaw states and for transforming them to become part of the international community (Lake, 1994, pp. 45-46). Reducing and limiting the spread of WMD was the focus of the Clinton administration (Walt, 2000, pp. 71-72).

The perception of the rogue states and Clinton's policy of containment were carried over into the George W. Bush administration. The term rogue state appeared more in the wake of the 9/11 incident, referring to states seeking to possess WMD and support international terrorist groups (Tantler, 2003, pp. 16-17). The United States has referred to North Korea as a terrorist state since the Reagan administration, but attempts to contain and counter the challenge posed by rogue states through negotiation appeared during the Clinton administration. Viewing nuclear proliferation as a threat to regional security, the United States under President Clinton made it clear in July 1993 that a nuclear-armed North Korea was unacceptable. US Secretary of Defence William Perry said in May 1994 about the situation of North Korea's nuclear proliferation that, "what the U.S. wants to achieve is a nuclear-free Korean peninsula." (Berry Jr., 1995, p. 41).

After the negotiation and signing of the Agreed Framework in 1994, the Clinton administration continued to face criticism at home that the engagement policy actually encourages North Korea's aggressiveness and brinkmanship. Both the discovery of the secret nuclear underground site at Kumchangri, and the missile test in August 1998, underlined some doubts on the effectiveness of Clinton's policy of engagement. This eventually led to a review of overall US foreign policy towards North Korea by former-Defence Secretary William Perry. The so-called 'Perry Report' highlighted "a two-path approach" of engagement and containment as a strategy for dealing with the problems of North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile programmes (Perry, 1999). Following the Perry Report, the Clinton administration leaned more towards an engagement policy, leading to the visit of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to Pyongyang, in October 2000 (Miles, 2013, p. 73).

US foreign policy experienced some changes following the election of President Bush, in 2001. The new administration appeared reluctant to continue Clinton's engagement policy. President Bush did not appear to trust North Korea, considering that the regime's secretive nature made it difficult to know whether or not it was adhering to all the terms of its agreements (Sanger, 2001). The attacks on 9/11 were a turning point that completely altered the US view of the world and especially with regard to rogue states. The world was clearly divided between the United States on the one hand, and the terrorists or those supporting the terrorists on the other (The White House, 2001). The United States categorised North Korea as part of an axis of evil, and declared that there would be no dialogue with North Korea unless it changed its behaviour (CNN, 2002). The June 1992 accusation that North Korea was

processing uranium put an end to the 1994 Agreed Framework. At the same time, the United States was disappointed by North Korea's decision to move forwards with its nuclear development programme, which the administration referred to as blackmail.

There arose some expectations to see changes in the US approach towards North Korea after the inauguration of Barack Obama and his incoming administration. When he first took office, President Obama declared a policy of engagement with the rogue states, which gave some hope that relations between the United States and North Korea might improve. However, US policy gradually changed in reaction to a series of North Korean provocations, and a policy of strict engagement became the policy of the administration. The strict engagement strategy is based on a priority of bringing about the total nuclear disarmament of North Korea, in order to halt the spread of nuclear weapons, rather than to improve bilateral relations with North Korea (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2014, pp. 7-8; Revere, 2013, p. 11).

When it comes to North Korea's nuclear proliferation and military provocations, it is undeniable that the role and policy of the United States are influential in finding a solution. Since the first nuclear crisis in 1994, the United States has pursued both dialogue and sanctions in order to deal with North Korea, but it seems that none of the policies are effective in reducing tensions on the Korean peninsula. While engagement is considered by some a form of appeasement that encourages North Korea's provocations and blackmail, the US hardline policy is simultaneously criticised for being a cause of heightened tensions, as conflict and confrontation actually result in increase regime insecurity in North Korea.

The concept of deterrence usually refers to the affect one state's behaviour has on another, which would imply that the policy choices of the United States would inevitably affect the policy choices of North Korea. Since the United States is an important player in the region, this chapter will analyse the US's policy and approach towards North Korea since the start of the first nuclear crisis in 1994. The chapter aims to evaluate how US foreign policy affects North Korea's levels of deterrence, threat perception, and regime insecurity, while also attempting to assess whether US foreign policy towards North Korea is a cause or a solution to the overall security dilemma in the region.

6.1 The First Nuclear Crisis and the US Policy during the Clinton Administration (1993-2001)

By the time President Clinton took office in 1993, the IAEA had accused North Korea of reprocessing plutonium and they were in North Korea to inspect its nuclear facilities. The IAEA report was released in President Clinton's first month in office, and contained some discrepancies with what North Korea had previously declared. Tensions on the peninsula began to rise after North Korea decided to refuse the IAEA inspectors any more access to the two sites at Yongbyon, and declared its intention to withdraw from the NPT. Mazarr (1995, p. 92) writes that the United States structured its post-Cold War policy on non-proliferation in an attempt to end the nuclear challenge of North Korea and extend the scope of the NPT. During the early stages of the crisis, the Clinton administration leaned towards preferring a military option as a means to solve the problem. Nonetheless, negotiation was adopted as a preferred option based on the viewpoint that it could yield a high chance of success and could bring the overall situation under control (Miles, 2013, pp. 49-50). Besides, there was a high probability that the situation could deteriorate into conflict, given North Korea's strong insistence that "sanctions are a declaration of war" (Oberdorfer, 2001, p. 306). In 1992, the Clinton administration announced that it would resume the joint military exercises with South Korea, which were suspended during the George H.W. Bush administration, and also that the US would strengthen its alliance with South Korea. All these US actions threatened North Korea's sense of regime security. A spiral model was created during this period, as a sense of insecurity on both sides was pushed to greater levels because of each other side's desire to increase their level of defence. While North Korea chose to counter the joint military exercises with its declaration to withdraw from the NPT, the United States moved itself closer to South Korea and Japan for consultations on ways to solve the problem (Henriksen, 1996, pp. 30-31).

A series of negotiations led to the signing of the Agreed Framework in 1994, which outlined major details about an exchange between North Korea and the United States as a deal in solving the nuclear issue. Significant points of the deal included a security guarantee in which the United States was asked not to employ any nuclear weapons against North Korea, and an assurance from the United States for future political and economic relations. In return, North

Korea had to agree to freeze its nuclear-related activities and also promise not to construct any new graphite nuclear reactors or reprocessing facilities in the future. The Agreement promised North Korea two light water reactors for alternative energy purposes as a replacement for the graphite moderated reactors. The situation may appear to have stabilised after the Framework was signed, but several problems arose afterwards, which gradually led to criticism of the engagement policy. The first concerned the discovery of an underground nuclear facility in Kumchangri by the US intelligence agencies in the second half of 1996. The report released by the Defence Intelligence Agency in 1997 suggested the possibility that the underground site in Kumchangri could be used for "nuclear production and/or storage", and the site could be "a nuclear weapons-related facility by 2003" (Niksch, 2002, p. 3). The US inspection of the site began following a deal in which the United States promised to supply North Korea with food aid and to assist North Korea grow potatoes in a pilot project (Sanger, 1999). After two visits to the site only to find an empty cave, the inspection team claimed that the site was too small to host nuclear facilities (The Chosun Ilbo, 1999).

The consequences of the Kumchangri suspicion were mistrust between the US and North Korea, and also some criticism at home of US policy towards North Korea. The result of the inspections caused a debate among US intelligence experts on the possibility that North Korea could have removed and hidden some equipment away from the site, given that the inspections had been announced too far in advance. Cordesman (2002, p. 121) writes that, although North Korea was banned from conducting all nuclear activities under the Agreed Framework, the agreement did not mention nuclear programme development at other sites in the country, only at Yongbyon. Not long after the Kumchangri incident, the North Korean decision to test fire a three-stage Taepodong missile in August 1998 presented a new security concern for the United States and its Asian allies. The missile test proved North Korea's missile capability and stage of development, about which the US intelligence agencies had been speculating since 1994 (Niksch, 2002, p. 4). The missile test of August 1998, despite North Korean claims that it was for the purpose of sending a satellite into orbit, greatly alarmed Japan whose security was threatened by a missile crossing over its territory. The United States was anxious about the rapid development of North Korea's missile system, and so it decided to not only offer a new round of dialogue to discuss the issue but also to review its overall policy towards North Korea (Vennet, 2002, p. 3).

Former Defence Secretary William Perry was appointed by President Clinton to undertake the review. Perry later released the so-called "Perry Report". The report pointed out the need to build up North Korea's security confidence with engagement, while containment should only be implemented if engagement failed to encourage North Korea to cooperate (Perry, 1999). However, the Perry Report was criticised as rather weak, reflecting only a certain amount of understanding the United States had of North Korea and the overall situation on the Korean peninsula. C. J. Lee (2006, p. 198) criticised the report as being written from the negative perspective the United States held of the regime's nature and ruling system, and took issue with the fact that the words "blackmail, threats, and provocations" were used throughout. Drifte (2001, pp. 56-58), points out that the report did not outline solutions to problems besetting the work of KEDO, nor list disadvantages of overloading negotiations with North Korea with non-nuclear issues.

The US suspicion of the Kumchangri site was a turning point that greatly affected the engagement policy and the level of confidence between the two countries. While the United States felt uncertain about the regime's nuclear capabilities, North Korea perceived the US suspicion as hostile intent, which was supposed to end in accordance with the provisions listed in the Agreed Framework. North Korea criticised the US accusations regarding Kumchangri as "a fiction" created by the hardliners who wished to replace the engagement of the Agreed Framework with a hardline policy (KCNA, 1998c). According to Niksch (2002, p. 8), the Clinton administration aimed to end all of North Korea's nuclear-related activities at not only the Yongbyon site but also at all other nuclear sites throughout the country. The nature of the Agreed Framework was claimed to be a short-term solution, rather than a solution to fully transform relations through diplomatic and economic engagement (Martin, 2002, p. 53). Suspicion and distrust continued, which led to American accusations that North Korea had violated the Agreed Framework, charging them with the development of a uranium enrichment programme. The uranium enrichment was actually not a new project of North Korea, started during the time the regime froze its plutonium production as per the Framework agreement. North Korea's acquisition of uranium enrichment capabilities could be dated back to 1996. Former secretary of the KWP, Hwang Jang Yap, who defected to South Korea in 1997, testified that North Korea had successfully signed a contract in 1996 with Pakistan in order to acquire Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) (Y. H. Kim, 2010). The report by Institute for Science and International Security also assessed North Korea's HEU

project to have begun in the late 1990s, but that the project was accelerated in the early 2000s with the supply of raw aluminium tubes from Pakistan (Albright & Brannan, 2010, p. 3). The Clinton administration acknowledged the existence of North Korea's uranium enrichment project in 1998. However, the administration failed to inform the Congress of North Korea's objective for HEU usage, which raised more criticism of Clinton's policy towards North Korea. In other words, there were some clear differences between the Clinton administration and members of the Congress, especially with the Republican majority, on various issues, including North Korea. While the Clinton administration preferred engagement in the hopes of persuading North Korea to change, the Congress was inclined towards adopting a hardline policy rather than one of appeasement (Hathaway & Tama, 2004, p. 715).

The United States seemed to be certain in summer 2002 of North Korea's uranium activity. Information released by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) confirmed the construction of a centrifuge facility, but claimed that it may take North Korea a couple of years to upgrade the uranium suitable for producing nuclear weapons (CIA, 2002). The report unavoidably degraded America's trust in North Korea. It also led to the US to declare that the North Korean regime was now violating the Agreed Framework. The US accusation on HEU development can be judged as weak and inadequate. Harrison (2005, pp. 103-104) argues that the report lacked solid evidence because it failed to expose "methods and sources" to support its claim that North Korea was "constructing a centrifuge facility". Pollack (2003, p. 31) says that it was too soon to accuse North Korea, because the CIA report of 19 November 2002 overlooked the fact that, at the time, "North Korea had no operational enrichment facility to declare". The CIA report did not take into consideration North Korea's inability to "build and operate a centrifuge plant" of its own, given that the regime faced some obstacles in terms of finance and know-how (Albright & Brannan, 2010, p. 4). Lastly, the centrifuge plant required a considerable amount of electricity to operate, but North Korea did not have the capacity to produce the required amount of electricity (Harrison, 2005, p. 105).

The uranium suspicion alone did not lead to a total failure of the Agreed Framework. To some extent, it was also a result of US delays in supplying North Korea with the promised light water reactors. This delay made North Korea to question the United States's commitment to the agreement. Cossa (1999, p. 6) writes that, since the Agreed Framework was not a formal treaty, it did not require any ratification process from the Congress. The disadvantage of this lies in its lacks of Congressional financial support that was deemed

necessary for the proper implementation of the agreement. It was clear that the United States and North Korea were not on the same track in committing to the agreement. While North Korea made incremental steps towards complying with the agreement, the United States failed to supply North Korea with heavy fuel oil due to problems of a lack of funding and disagreements within its government (C.K Quinones, 2008, p. 6).

The establishment of KEDO could be said to be an attempt by the administration to ensure the implementation of all provisions listed in the Framework. It later turned out that the KEDO was manipulated as the tool for shifting the financial responsibility from the United States to its Asian allies. Martin (1999, p. 37) claims that South Korea and Japan were the main contributors to the KEDO, both providing the necessary financing for the construction of the LWR project, which amounted to US$ 4.6 billion. Since the Framework was a US-DPRK bilateral agreement, there was no guarantee for continuous support from either South Korea or Japan in financing the construction of the LWRs. In addition, they were both not subject to control by the United States. As such, it is possible to see how suspension of the LWR project happened during the late 1990s, in response to North Korea's provocations – for example, in 1998, in response to the Taepodong missile launch over Japan. Domestic politics also obstructed the Clinton administration from fully implementing the Agreed Framework. The political and economic normalisation between North Korea and the United States was listed in the Framework, but the Clinton administration was unable to begin the process as it required Congressional approval (Tan, 2014, p. 105). The United States was also uncertain about North Korea. President Clinton wrote in his memoir that, "North Korea had been saying that it wanted peace, and I believed we had to discover whether they were serious about it." (Clinton, 2005, p. 707).

The US's failure to keep to the proposed schedule was not the only factor that led to a dissolution of the bilateral agreement and a deterioration of trust between the two countries. The United States continued to believe that North Korea had undertaken a covert uranium enrichment programme, and this suspicion was finally articulated in the 2002 charge that North Korea was producing uranium. The US charge arose during an official visit by Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly to North Korea, on 3-5 October 2002. The US State Department released the statement detailing the minutes of the meeting between James Kelly and Kang Sok Ju, First Vice Foreign Minister of North Korea. It stated,

> "Assistant Secretary James Kelly and his delegation advised the North Koreans that we had recently acquired information that indicates that North Korea has a program to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons in violation of the Agreed Framework and other agreements. North Korean officials acknowledged that they have such a program. The North Koreans attempted to blame the United States and said that they considered the Agreed Framework nullified. Assistant Secretary Kelly pointed out that North Korea had been embarked on this program for several years." (Agence France Presse, 2002a)

Kelly's statements caused heated debates amongst North Korean high-ranking officials, and the decision was made the following morning to respond to the US accusations thus:

> "The reclusive nation is 'entitled to have nuclear weapons' to safeguard its security in the face of a growing U.S. threat. After a debate of their own, the Americans interpreted the statement to be an admission that Kelly's charge was true. Now it was the Americans' turn to be stunned by an unexpected declaration and to wonder what to do next." (Oberdorfer, 2002)

North Korea denounced Kelly's accusations. The KCNA referred to the accusations as made with no supporting evidence before pointing out American insincerity to improve relations with North Korea by calling North Korea "part of the Axis of Evil" (KCNA, 2002a). This accusation led to the collapse of the Agreed Framework and, more importantly, it allowed North Korea to use the occasion to push ahead with its nuclear programme (Hecker, Lee, & Braun, 2010). Hersh (2003), a reporter of the *New Yorker* magazine, reported what a former intelligence official said about the Kelly-Kang meeting:

> "The Kelly meeting and the subsequent American statement have tipped the balance in Pyongyang. The North Koreans were already terrifically suspicious of the United States. They saw the Kelly message as 'When you fix this, get back to us.' They were very angry. That, plus the fact that they feel they are next in line after Iraq, made them believe they had to act very quickly to protect themselves."

Albright and Brannan (2010, p. 4) claimed that the United States exaggerated North Korea's statement on HEU because, although they did not deny having a centrifuge programme, North Korea never said that it was building a large-scale plant during the meeting.

6.2 The Second Nuclear Crisis and the US Policy during the Bush Administration (2001-2008)

The feeling of distrust played an important role in shaping US-North Korean relations from 1994 until the total breakdown of the Agreed Framework, following the US's uranium charges in 2002. The US policy towards North Korea has changed, influenced by both US domestic politics and also by an event in international politics in early 2000. George W. Bush's victory in the 2000 presidential election resulted in a change in the US's North Korea policy, in the form of the adoption of a hardline policy that was the opposite to President Clinton's policy. Clinton's policy was criticised as being a policy of appeasement, which "left the United States subject to continued blackmail by North Korea." (Martin, 1999, p. 41). North Korea's image in the eyes of the United States has gradually deteriorated, particularly because of the suspicions about uranium development, which the US government has held since the final years of Clinton's second term. Rozman (2007, p. 603) writes that the United States, both at the governmental and public levels, views North Korea as "the most dangerous state of the twenty-first century", due to it being a dictatorial system equipped with WMD.

When Bush came into office, he began to take an offensive stance towards North Korea. First by identifying North Korea as part of the axis of evil in the 2002 State of the Union address (The White House, 2002c), and also including North Korea among targets of possible nuclear pre-emption in a 2002 Nuclear Posture Review (Payne, 2005, pp. 135-151). The 9/11 incident changed the US perception of North Korea. The Bush administration called North Korea "a primary rogue state", implying that the status of North Korea had been lowered from a negotiation partner to a state that posed a serious threat to the international community and the interests of the United States (Pollack, 2003, p. 27). Regardless of the term used, both the terms 'rogue state' and 'axis of evil' shared the same basic assumption that the target engages in evil behaviour, which reflects the US's negative perception of North Korea (Interview

Anonymous, 2011; Interview Prof. Moon, 2011). Prof. Paik (2011) made the following comment on the US use of the term 'rogue state' in relation to North Korea:

> "The term rogue state is the term used by hardliners in the United States and other places including Seoul and Tokyo. Basically, it is heavily politically-loaded term. We have some aspects of North Korea which can be described as that of rogue state. But if you characterise a state you are trying to deal with in a negotiation or the diplomatic activity with this term, that means you just tend to regard North Korea not as your partner but as the opposite of doing something. For instance, if you call the Axis of Evil by George W. Bush, then North Korea is regarded just as a target of removal not as a partner in the negotiation." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

The situation deteriorated after President Bush's 2002 State of the Union address. North Korea reiterated that the address reflected US hostility towards North Korea, which confirmed that what the regime had been doing – being vigilant and offensive – was the right thing to do (KCNA, 2002c). Since President Bush took office, the United States has viewed North Korea as a threat to its national security, and this perception was expressed throughout 2002. At West Point on 1 June 2002, President Bush delivered a speech – "Prevent Our Enemies from Threatening Us, Our Allies, and Our Friends with Weapons of Mass Destruction" – in which North Korea was mentioned as a rogue state on equal terms as Iraq (U.S. Department of State, 2002). According to the speech, rogue states do not only support terrorism or acquire WMD, but, more importantly, these states have developed a sense of hostility towards the United States (U.S. Department of State, 2002). The speech was included in the National Security Strategy of the United States of America, released in September 2002, which further confirmed that North Korea was a threat to the security of the United States (The White House, 2002a). In December 2002, the United States also released the National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, which was claimed to be an addendum to the National Security Strategy of September 2002 (Fuerth, 2003). The document outlined a strategy to control the spread of WMD and missile programmes among other states and terrorist groups by strengthening the US's defence mechanisms (The White House, 2002b).

The adoption of a hardline policy may be suitable in the new environment the United States was faced with after 9/11, and also in light of the nuclear threat from a rising nuclear state like North Korea. The United States is very sensitive about its security post-9/11, and the use of the terms 'rogue state' or 'axis of evil' to identify some countries reflects the US's understanding of international politics at that time (Interview Prof. D. H. Han, 2011; Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011). The term 'rogue state' also shows the negative impression the United States has of this type of state, without taking into consideration their specific histories or policies (Interview Anonymous, 2011; Interview Prof. D. H. Han, 2011). The United States views North Korea as posing not only a nuclear threat, but also a missile threat with the regime's long history of exporting missiles and missile components for hard currency. Nonetheless, the hardline policy of the Bush administration was partly the result of Bush's personal attitude towards the North Korean leader, Kim Jong Il. In August 2002, President Bush gave an interview with *Washington Post* journalist Bob Woodward, in which Bush responded to a question on North Korea with his own personal dislike of Kim Jong Il:

> "I loathe Kim Jong Il. I've got a visceral reaction to this guy, because he is starving his people. And I have seen intelligence of these prison camps – they're huge – that he uses to break up families, and to torture people." (Agence France Presse, 2002b)

President Bush's personal feelings played a significant role in the formulation of US foreign policy towards North Korea. The policy was drafted by the hardliners who were well aware of the "President's strong personal views" and the hardliners' policy directed Kelly's agenda and his strong reaction to North Korea during his Pyongyang visit in October 2002 (Hersh, 2003). Throughout President Bush's tenure, the United States adopted a hardline policy for dealing with the North Korean nuclear problem. The second nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula began when North Korea admitted that it possessed a highly-enriched uranium programme in October 2002, and the United States' decision to deal with the problem by stating that dialogue could only occur after the abandonment of the enrichment programme.

To some extent, the nuclear crisis originated from different perspectives and the feeling of mistrust the two sides had towards each other. The United States considered North Korea's possession of highly-enriched uranium a breach of the Agreed Framework and other international agreements – including the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the IAEA safeguard

agreement, and the South-North Joint Declaration on the Denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula (Nikitin, 2013, p. 12). On the other hand, North Korea also blamed the United States of violating the Agreed Framework and of pursuing a hostile policy towards North Korea (KCNA, 2002b). Considering the Agreed Framework a failure, the Bush administration leaned towards a policy of isolation and containment in order to deal with the problem of a nuclear standoff with North Korea. Any solution to the problem should be dealt with through multilateral approaches in involving many countries. However, North Korea was clear in pointing out that the nuclear problem can only be settled through a US-DPRK bilateral discussion, not through other channels like the United Nations or the IAEA (BBC News, 2002a).

The second nuclear crisis clearly illustrated differences between both the United States and North Korea in their perspectives of the origin, nature and solution to the nuclear problem. The United States was faced with a dilemma of either appeasing North Korea through engagement, or isolating North Korea by pursuing a hardline policy. The situation worsened after Kelly's visit to North Korea and it did not show any sign of improvement, particularly after North Korea voiced its security concerns stemming from the joint US-ROK annual military exercises. North Korea perceived the joint military exercises as a US attempt "to settle [the nuclear issue] by military means", justifying the defensive measures North Korea has long been taking (KCNA, 2003b).

As a means to resolve the standstill, China stepped in with a proposal for the three-party talks, involving the United States, North Korea, and China. Since each party had different interests and objectives, the trilateral talks did not bring about a substantial outcome. A failure of the three-party talks made China press North Korea harder to attend the next dialogue and influenced China to also believe that other regional powers should be part of the future negotiations (CNN, 2003). North Korea viewed the US's desire for multilateral dialogue as an attempt to use the international community to help achieve "the DPRK's unilateral disarmament, not a peaceful settlement of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula" (KCNA, 2003f). In addition, the United States and North Korea could not agree on the details for disarmament. North Korea proposed "a bold initiative" proposal at the three-party talks, outlining the abandonment of nuclear weapons in four stages coupled with some compensation upon completion of each stage (The International Institute for Strategic

Studies, 2011). The United States was not interested in the proposal, and considered it unacceptable.

This proposal alone did not stall the talks: the responsibility for the failure lies with the North Korean decision to pursue a strategy of brinkmanship. The North Korean delegate, Ri Gun, said during the three-party talks meeting with James Kelly in Beijing that North Korea had not only nuclear weapons but also had 8,000 spent fuel rods completely reprocessed at the Yongbyon nuclear site (Cornwell, 2003). Although it was speculated that the statement was made in order to bluff the United States, Ri Gun's statement worsened the situation. It allowed the United States to charge North Korea with developing a habit for blackmailing. As President Bush said about Ri Gun's statement, North Korea was "back to the old blackmail game." (The New York Times, 2003). C. I. Moon (2012) writes that Ri Gun's statement reflected North Korea's "cheating behaviour" because, in contrast to what he said to James Kelly, Ri Gun denied the existence of nuclear bombs to China.

The three-party talks may have failed in its mission to disarm North Korea, but its failure does not negate the possibility of opportunities for future talks to succeed. The Six-Party Talks, another multilateral forum, were set up in late 2003 through the efforts of both the United States and China, who still share common interests in having a nuclear weapons free Korean peninsula. The role of China as a mediator became clearer when its desire to have a new set of the three-party talks was supported by the United States' suggestion to include more players in the talks. The Six-Party Talks were convened for the first time in August 2003, and also involved the ROK, Japan, and Russia. Substantially, the talks could not bring about a concrete outcome and the more the talks are organised, the more they revealed the feeling of distrust and discrepancies in preferences between the negotiating parties. Wit (2007, p. 55) writes that North Korea skilfully used "a diplomatic strategy" at the Six-Party Talks forum in convincing other countries that the United States was the one to blame for the deteriorated situation, including the fall of the Agreed Framework.

The first breakthrough in negotiations came two years after the fourth round of the Six-Party Talks, with the release of the September 19 Joint Statement.[17] The statement did not lead to

[17] The September 19 Joint Statement clearly indicated that North Korea committed to totally dismantle all of its nuclear programmes in a verifiable and peaceful manner. In return for such actions, North Korea received a security guarantee, economic cooperation, and energy assistance from

denuclearisation. Instead, it increased levels of distrust and disagreements between the United States and North Korea, which resulted from the issue of the light water reactors. The statement said,

> "The D.P.R.K. stated that it has the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The other parties expressed their respect and agreed to discuss, at an appropriate time, the subject of the provision of light water reactor to the D.P.R.K." (U.S. Department of State, 2005b)

In other words, this issue was left open for future discussion without any commitment made. Christopher Hill, the chief US negotiator to the Six-Party Talks, actually disagreed with the North Korean request because "it still raises proliferation risks and cannot be a first step in arranging the nuclear disarmament of the country" (Kahn, 2005b). North Korea was dissatisfied with the US refusal to provide a light water reactor, and said it would return to the NPT and sign the IAEA safeguard agreement only if a light water reactor is supplied (KCNA, 2005b).

Since the agreement was concluded on shaky ground, the process of denuclearisation later faced a major setback arising from the issue of Banco Delta Asia (BDA). The Department of Treasury claimed that North Korea was connected to or involved in money laundering activities with the BDA bank located in Macau (U.S. Department of Treasury, 2005). The Bush administration started to take legal action against the BDA on charges that North Korea had used it to facilitate their criminal activities. According to (Hauben, 2007), the legal actions were undertaken to block the international financial activities of North Korea and also to send a warning message to China, who has been doing business with North Korea. The BDA issue stalled progress on denuclearisation. The gap between the United States and North Korea on this issue widened. The United States preferred North Korea to begin the process of total dismantlement of all of its nuclear programmes regardless of financial sanctions on the BDA (Kahn, 2005a). North Korea, on the other hand, tied the sanctions to the nuclear issue, and requested the United States to resolve the BDA issue before it took any first step towards denuclearisation (Kahn & Weisman, 2007). Some debate on the accuracy of

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all parties involved in the talks. The full text of the Joint Statement can be found on the U.S. Department of State website: http://www.state.gov/p/eap/regional/c15455.htm (U.S. Department of State, 2005b).

the US charges against North Korea and the BDA arose following a statement by the BDA's owner, Mr Stanley Au. Mr Au testified that the recent result of an account audit "found insufficient money-laundering controls but no evidence that North Korea used the bank to introduce fake $100 bills" (Hall, 2007). Mr Au's statement contradicted the findings of the Department of Treasury, raising some questions of whether North Korea's financial activities were illegitimate, and if the regime deserved some financial sanctions over activities unrelated to its nuclear weapons development (Hauben, 2007). According to Chinoy (2010), the US hardliners had high hopes that the US financial pressure would push North Korea to experience financial difficulties that could bring about the collapse of the regime. The result, however, was not regime collapse, but rather missile and nuclear tests in 2006.

North Korea conducted a missile test in July 2006. This was followed by an underground nuclear test, which North Korea declared a success on 9 October 2006. Concerning the nuclear test, the regime stated that it was a response to "the policy of sanctions and blockage", which confirmed for North Korea the US threat against the regime (KCNA, 2006b). The 2006 nuclear test had two major consequences. The first was a change in North Korea's policy and status. North Korea declared itself a nuclear state, and that any future dialogue with the United States would be on arms control and not denuclearisation (Hecker, 2010, p. 50). Secondly, the nuclear test indicated the failure of the United States's policy towards North Korea. The Bush administration failed to understand the predictable "tit-for-tat" behaviour of North Korea: that the regime would act in a corresponding to the way the United States structured its policy (Chinoy, 2010). Moore (2008a, pp. 16-18) writes that the Bush administration's North Korea policy was structured by the hardliners, who not only adopted the "Anything But Clinton mentality", but also failed to listen to comments from experts in the field. President Bush condemned the test, calling it a "provocative act", before committing to strengthen the deterrent strategy with its two Asian allies – Japan and South Korea (The White House, 2006). That North Korea has continued with its provocations ever since President Bush came to power raises a question as to how effective the hardline policy is on influencing North Korea's behaviour. Concerning this, Prof. I. H. Park (2011) says,

> "Some people say that the US hardline position makes North Korea more irrational or more aggressive. But according to my opinion, whatever American approaches to North Korea, North Korea is only interested in survival. North Korea's response to the United States could be different but fundamentally and

essentially North Korea is only interested in their own survival." (Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011)

President Bush showed his strong opposition to North Korea especially after the nuclear test. However, leading up to the end of his presidency in January 2009, the United States relaxed its policy and strategy towards North Korea. Evidence of this can be seen in the decision to unfreeze North Korean accounts at the BDA, in April 2007; and also the decision to consider removing North Korea from the list of state sponsors of terrorism, in September 2007. Nonetheless, US-North Korean relations still had not exhibited any signs of improvement. North Korea voiced its dissatisfaction with the US failure to comply with the "action for action" principle[18] – for example, the US delay to remove North Korea from the list of "state sponsor of terrorism" – in exchange for North Korea's submission to the nuclear declaration (KCNA, 2008b).

It is possible to argue that the United States, to some extent, had softened its policy through engagement, implemented through the multilateral negotiation of the Six-Party Talks. The Six-Party Talks are actually a diplomatic tool the United States employs to use the power of other regional actors to pressure North Korea to disarm. Engagement was actually pursued with the aim of coercing North Korea to change, rather than aiming for a regime collapse (Cha, 2012a, pp. 284-285). However, it appears that the possibility for regime change or regime collapse was widely discussed at the beginning of the Bush administration's first term in office. Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld, wrote a memorandum calling for regime collapse in North Korea, brought about through the use of pressure through the US-Sino diplomatic channel (Sanger, 2003). Regime change usually refers to regime collapse, which could be achieved either through a military invasion or internal political reform. Since North Korea exists in a different geopolitical environment from Iraq, the choice of military invasion to force regime change appeared highly unlikely to succeed. The Bush administration, in the end, did not choose this option from fear that the situation might worsen beyond its control.

[18] The September 19 Joint Statement stated that "the Six Parties agreed to take coordinated steps to implement the aforementioned consensus in a phased manner in line with the principle of "commitment for commitment, action for action"" (U.S. Department of State, 2005b). This principle was North Korea's initiative as the regime wanted to see commitments from other parties. It means North Korea would get some compensation for each action it took towards denuclearisation, and North Korea would "reciprocate only after the other party has done so" (Funabashi, 2007, p. 404).

It is important to note that, at the same time that the United States did not wish to use force to bring about regime change, the US did not clearly provide a security assurance to North Korea. In the end, the Bush administration used international pressure and sanctions against North Korea in order to push for denuclearisation and in an attempt to force regime or behavioural changes. On the US's policy towards North Korea, and how the policy has an effect on North Korea's nuclear strategy, Prof. M. Kwon (2011) explains,

> "George W. Bush threatened North Korea, particularly when he invaded Iraq and said that North Korea might probably be the next one. President Bush intimidates North Korea while saying that North Korea should dismantle its nuclear weapons. Basically if the other side has hostility towards you, you would strengthen your own armaments so that you could deter the other. Security of both parties can be guaranteed if there is no hostility between the two sides and then you do not have to develop nuclear weapons. But it is not the case. The United States is very hostile to North Korea which in turn encourages North Korea to develop nuclear weapons." (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011)

The use of international pressure is to force North Korea to make a "cost-benefit analysis" between its choice of going nuclear and the risk of facing deeper diplomatic isolation and economic loss (Schneider, 2010, pp. 47-48). The pressure the Bush administration put on North Korea in order to push for North Korean denuclearisation actually increased North Korea's sense of insecurity. Referring to President Bush's State of the Union Addresses of 2002 and 2005, North Korea declared,

> "In his state of the union address late in January 2002, Bush designated the DPRK as part of an 'axis of evil' and, in March of the same years, listed it as a target of the U.S. preemptive nuclear attack ... In his state of the union address on Feb. 2 [2005] he ... once again vociferated about an 'end to the tyranny,' asserting that the U.S. will force north Korea to abandon its nuclear ambition ... U.S. official figures have not expressed any intention to co-exist with the DPRK or make a switchover in its hostile policy toward the DPRK in any recent remarks made by them." (KCNA, 2005a).

Apart from the issue of nuclear and missile proliferation, the Bush administration also put an emphasis on North Korea's human rights abuses, which later became a challenge to US-North Korean relations. The issue of human rights started to take a role in the bilateral dialogue in 2007, when the Bush administration asserted that the normalisation of diplomatic relations would only take place if North Korea made progress on human rights and other issues (Chanlett-Avery, 2008, p. 2). The ultimate goal of the Bush administration was to create a stable and peaceful Korean peninsula in which issues concerning human rights abuses, uranium enrichment, nuclear and missile programmes were resolved. Multilateral diplomacy was the method the United States deemed most suitable for solving these problems, particularly with regards to North Korea's nuclear problem (BBC News, 2008).

6.3 The US Policy during the Obama Administration (2009-present)

President Bush's presidency ended in January 2009, and he left for his successor the unfinished task of creating a written verification protocol on denuclearisation through the Six-Party Talks. After seeing the need to engage with North Korea, the Obama administration planned to continue with the organisation of the Six-Party Talks, in order to realise the goal of the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula (S. Snyder, 2010, p. 64). A week prior to President Obama's inauguration, North Korea voiced its insecurity based on the US nuclear threat, saying,

> "The nuclear issue surfaced on the Korean Peninsula because of the U.S. hostile policy toward the DPRK and its nuclear threat resulting from it ... When the U.S. nuclear threat is removed and South Korea is cleared of its nuclear umbrella, we will also feel no need to keep its nuclear weapons." (KCNA, 2009e).

The Obama administration's selection of Hillary Clinton as Secretary of State was seen as a positive sign for better relations between the two countries, and the likely adoption of an engagement policy. Hillary Clinton was more inclined to adopt an engagement policy towards North Korea, which was clear in her statement that "smart power requires reaching out to both friends and adversaries, to bolster old alliances and to forge new ones." (Choe, 2009). However, the prospect for engagement was later stalled by the North Korean decision

to conduct a missile test, for the Taepodong-2, on 5 April 2009. North Korea instead claimed that this incident was a launch of a satellite for "a peaceful use of outer space" purpose (KCNA, 2009g). Moon (2009) sees the incident as North Korea's attempt to test the Obama administration's policy and the US perception of North Korea.

The situation worsened in the following month, when North Korea decided to conduct a second nuclear test, which put pressure on the United States and its allies in the region. The incident prompted the Obama administration to switch to a hardline policy instead of the policy of engagement outlined by Obama himself during the presidential campaign (Cha, 2012a, pp. 265-266). In addition, Obama's decision to replace US special envoy to North Korea Christopher Hill with Stephen Bosworth, a scholar from Tufts University and former US ambassador to South Korea, in a part-time position caused some concerns over how serious the Obama administration were about addressing North Korean affairs.

There arose some criticisms of the different styles of these two US negotiators. While Christopher Hill was outspoken and was more diplomatic, Stephen Bosworth was a good listener (The Chosun Ilbo, 2009). The North Korean decision to launch a missile and to conduct a nuclear test may be a response to the appointment of Bosworth, to see if the Obama administration was serious about engaging with the regime. The missile and nuclear tests in 2009 were meant to draw the attention of the Obama administration during a time of inaction (C. I. Moon, 2012). This also reflects North Korea's attempt to achieve the kangsong taeguk, and at the same time to strengthen its bargaining position, as the United States inevitably refocused its attention back towards North Korea (Interview Prof. Y. Y. Kim, 2011; Interview Dr. E. C. Lim, 2011). Nonetheless, North Korea's actions did not have a positive result, as the United States began to question the effectiveness of its overall foreign policy. The United States' reaction, particularly to the missile test of April 5, changed the atmosphere entirely because the United States considered the test a provocative act and strongly condemned it. North Korea claimed that the missile test was actually a satellite launch and tough measures like sanctions reflected the US's hostility towards North Korea (KCNA, 2009c). President Obama once made a comment regarding US policy towards North Korea, that he vowed to break the old pattern of rewarding the regime for its belligerent behaviour (The Economist, 2009).

A series of provocations influenced the Obama administration to alter its foreign policy from one of engagement with North Korea to the so-called 'strategic patience', described as being a strict engagement policy. The strategic patience policy outlines the use of pressure and sanctions on North Korea until North Korea changes its behaviour and returns to the negotiating table (Warren, 2014, p. 147). It is the US's effort of bringing the situation under control, not waiting to react to North Korea's provocations like previous administrations have done (Kessler, 2010). For the policy to be successfully implemented, strategic patience also calls for the help of China and other regional powers in exerting pressure on North Korea (J. Kim, Kim, Kim, Kim, & Lee, 2013). By requiring North Korea to change its behaviour, strategic patience sought to isolate North Korea particularly when it challenged regional security with new provocations. A policy that calls for the isolation of North Korea received broad criticisms. For example, Joel Wit said that, "The strategic patience has only allowed Pyongyang's weapons programme to grow and its political system to get more stable" (C. D. Lee, 2012). In addition, Bruce Cumings states that,

> "The whole idea of 'strategic patience' is based on Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's assumption that there's a power struggle going on in North Korea, and that the regime is destined to crumble. It's now become clear that this is no strategy at all. There were no problems in the process of power being transferred from Kim Jong Il to Kim Jong Un. By just continuing to wait and wait, the US has allowed North Korea to get that much closer to being a nuclear state with strong missile capabilities." (H. Park, 2012).

North Korea's missile test on April 2009 was criticised by the international community, and made the regional powers worried about North Korea's defiance of regional peace and stability. Some, including Japan, wished to see tough punitive actions against North Korea at the UN Security Council level. In response to the missile launch, President Obama called for the strengthening of the US's relationships with the two Asian allies, and to bring this issue to the attention of the United Nations (Obama, 2009). Obama's statement pushed North Korea further into believing in a US threat against the regime (KCNA, 2009a). President Obama did not only confirm the use of pressure as a means to change North Korea, but he also sought to control the spread of nuclear weapons through various forms of international cooperation such as Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) (The White House, 2009). Since the PSI is not under the control of the United Nations, it has the power to act independently with an

objective of preventing "rogue" nations – e.g., North Korea and Iran – from delivering and trading nuclear weapons (Valencia, 2010). The situation on the Korean peninsula deteriorated after the sinking of the Cheonan warship. Despite North Korea's denial, the United States believed North Korea was behind the attack (The White House, 2010c). It was claimed that the US's policy and strategy towards North Korea were not structured on its interests alone, but were also influenced by the interests of its allies. The United States considers a close cooperation with allies as key to achieving success in solving the North Korean problem, particularly when the progress of the Six-Party Talks could only come with good inter-Korean relations (Manyin, Chanlett-Avery, & Nikitin, 2011, p. 11).

The sinking of the Cheonan led to a strengthening of US-ROK military ties and a series of joint military exercises, including some along the coastal line of the Korean peninsula. To North Korea, the exercises were considered provocative; and the North Korean shelling of Yeonpyeong Island, on 23 November 2010, was an inevitable strike in response to South Korea's actions inside the territorial waters of North Korea during the drill. The consequences of the attack also led to closer security ties between the US and ROK, who also conducted military exercises in the Yellow Sea in preparation for any possible North Korean attack in the future. It also led to a collective security pact between Japan, South Korea and the US for defence against future North Korean provocations.

6.4 US Foreign Policy towards North Korea in the Post-Cold War World

North Korea has long been a primary concern of the United States, given the regime's past record of terrorist activities and their pursuit of a nuclear weapons programme. There are two approaches the US has taken in the hopes of solving the North Korean problem. The first is a policy of containment to limit the spread of nuclear weapons from new nuclear states, with a hope of transforming aggressive behaviour into a constructive part of the international community. The second is a US attempt to maintain bilateral ties with its Asian allies, in order to secure its position as a regional leader. The US's post-Cold War policy towards East Asia is structured on the American belief that alliances and other bilateral partnerships

provide the opportunity for the United States to play an active role in the region (Ikenberry, 2008, pp. 30-31).

During the first nuclear crisis, the United States decided to engage with North Korea to solve the problem through diplomatic means. This showed North Korea's successful use of nuclear weapons as a policy instrument, which Prof. Paik (2011) expands on:

> "North Korea uses the nuclear card in the early 1990s and the United States had to come to the negotiation table. There is no other way because of the characters of the nuclear card. If somebody uses a nuclear card against you, then you are not supposed to avoid it. It is a nuclear power. You cannot begin a war. It is impossible to bomb Pyongyang. The only way you can solve the problem is to persuade North Korea to give it up." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

However, it is important to note that engagement was based on the US belief in the possibility of North Korean regime collapse, and this affected the US commitment to the agreements it made with North Korea. The Clinton administration's anticipation of regime collapse was based on two factors.

The first was the international political structure following the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The second was North Korea's internal structure itself after the death of Kim Il Sung and the economic collapse. Prof. Y. Y. Kim (2011) makes the following argument on the issue of regime collapse as a result of internal weakness:

> "I think it is difficult for North Korea to collapse. North Korea has experienced economic difficulties in the last 20 years but the result is not the collapse of North Korea. North Korea continues on. When Kim Il Sung died, we say that it is possible for collapse of North Korea. But Kim Jong Il comes to power and now is Kim Jong Un. The military base of North Korea is very strong. The control system is very strong. I do not believe in the collapse of North Korea." (Interview Prof. Y. Y. Kim, 2011)

Harrison (2002, p. 4) writes that the Clinton administration did not take the LWRs construction seriously, believing that internal problems of economic stagnation and internal instability would soon cause North Korea to collapse. The United States felt rather relieved

when the Agreed Framework was nullified, as it put an end to the proliferation risk posed by the LWRs construction project (Kessler, 2005). The belief in an impending regime collapse, which first appeared during the Clinton administration, only strengthened during the Bush administration. This can be seen in high-level official remarks; for example, from Deputy Defence Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz, who expressed his belief in the possibility of a collapse resulting from the regime's heavy investment in military and defence (Gilmore, 2003). Martin (2007, p. 93) writes that the United States uses the Six-Party Talks to buy time while seeking alternatives to isolate North Korea in the hope of bringing about the total collapse of North Korea. The US expectation of regime collapse also appears in the Obama administration. The report by US think tank the RAND Corporation stated that the collapse of the North Korean regime is inevitable given that North Korea is faced with many challenges, including severe famine and challenges from internal elites (Bennett, 2013). Discussing the possibility of regime collapse as a result of an internal power struggle Prof. Moon (2011) said:

> "It is very unlikely but still the end of Kim Jong Il and Kim Jong Un does not necessarily mean the end of North Korea. Even if Kim Jong Il and Kim Jong Un go, the military can intervene and there could be a military regime or collective leadership between Korean Workers' Party and the military can rule North Korea. I really do not think North Korea would give up its sovereignty. I really do not think the change of regime would necessarily lead to the change of entire sovereign state called the DPRK." (Interview Prof. Moon, 2011)

The Obama administration's adoption of the policy of strategic patience, to some extent, reflected the US wish to see some changes from and in North Korea, or ultimately the collapse of the regime itself. The survival of North Korea, in contrast to the US belief in the possibility of the regime collapse, raises some question about how well the United States understands North Korea, and how possible it is for North Korea to collapse. A South Korean expert on North Korea commented,

> "I do not think that North Korea is so unstable to be collapsed. I think North Korea has been stable and will be stable in 5-10 years. We should manage North Korea rather than expect North Korea to collapse. We should manage North Korea's behaviour." (Interview Anonymous, 2011)

Considering that Clinton's policy of engagement was a failure and could not bind North Korea to its agreements, the Bush administration turned towards a policy of containment. During President Bush's second-term, policy changed slightly from containment to engagement following a change in Secretary of State, when Colin Powell was replaced by Condoleezza Rice. The organisation of the bilateral dialogue with North Korea under the Six-Party Talks Framework was a result of Rice's adoption of an engagement policy (C. Kenneth Quinones, 2005b, p. 35). There also appeared a debate in the United States about the degree of progress North Korea could make in producing weapons-grade uranium, raising doubts about the accuracy of the assessment report in 2002 (Sanger & Broad, 2007). The change in the US position, however, was not enough to lower North Korea's level of threat perception, which increased after the signing of the Agreed Framework. There were a number of factors that contributed to North Korea's raised levels of threat perception. These included the delay in the LWR construction project, the uranium accusation, and a lack of progress in normalising US-North Korean relations. Prof. M. Kwon (2011) notes that both parties share the responsibility for the failure of the agreement, but the fundamental reason for the continuing problems is that both sides do not have confidence in each other (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011).

When the Obama administration took office, there appeared the prospect for engagement with North Korea, a result of the confirmation of Hillary Clinton, and also the change in the position of the special representative to North Korea. Engagement was later reversed as a result of North Korea's provocations and the US perception of North Korea's nuclear problem. S. Snyder (2010, pp. 64-65) writes that, among the focuses the Obama administration has on North Korean policy, was the total nuclear dismantlement of North Korea as influenced by its wish to expand the NPT. Besides, the US policy towards North Korea is constrained by the alliances it has with its Asian allies. At the same time that the Asian allies need the United States for security assurance and deterrence purposes, the United States also seeks to maintain a certain level of partnership with its allies to secure its own interests and power in the region. A series of North Korean provocations – including the missile test, the nuclear test, the sinking of the Cheonan warship, and the attack on Yeonpyeong Island – shifted the policy of the Obama administration to one focussed on the use of deterrence and strengthening its alliances in preparation for preventing any possible future North Korean provocation. The US confirmation of its alliances in response to the

Yeonpyeong incident is one example of this (The White House, 2010b). A statement of condemnation by the United States was released for the benefit of South Korea and Japan, who demanded strength and support when they felt threatened by North Korea's provocations. Prof. Koo (2011) says that,

> "I think the United States and North Korea are sharing the same idea on security issues. Both think that security can be achieved by the might/military power. The United States invests a lot of money to defence sector. North Korea who does not have enough money tries to develop nuclear weapons. So, it is very similar of the two countries' policies for security." (Interview Prof. Koo, 2011)

The change in US policy from engagement to containment to strategic patience reflected an inconsistency in the US's approach to North Korea. This is partly because of US domestic politics and the change in administration after every general election. North Korea is well aware of how the US governance system works. Concerning this, Prof. Paik (2011) elaborates:

> "In the eyes of North Korea, they understand that the Americans change their government through election. They know that the Republicans prefer this and the Democrats prefer that. They understand that any agreement the US government made by far will be reversed by the next government. That is the main difficulty the North Korean negotiators face." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

On the other hand, when looking at the North Korean side, it appears that North Korea's policy was rather consistent, and this is a result of the hereditary succession that helps the regime to continue with the same policy (Interview Anonymous, 2011). Obama's passive and unfriendly policy towards North Korea comes from the government's lack of understanding of North Korea, resulting from the relative lack of experts on Korean affairs in the administration's Asia team (Rogin, 2013).

It is important to note that it is rather difficult for states to totally abandon their nuclear weapons programme once they possess them, particularly if nuclear weapons are a source of security when they are faced with a situation characterised by distrust and misunderstanding. Nuclear weapons provide North Korea with a security guarantee during time when the United States will not recognise the regime (Interview Prof. Moon, 2011). Given the United States

actions and policies, it is rather difficult to see the situation improving. Although there is an argument that North Korea has not changed, even though there is a dialogue between the two countries, it is highly likely that the threat from North Korea will only increase if it is pushed (further) into isolation. Prof. S. H. Sheen (2011) expressed his opinion on the US hardline policy, including strategic patience and its effect on North Korea, as,

> "The practical approach to deal with North Korea is somehow we have got to engage rather than isolate. If we try to isolate or if we try to ignore, North Korea tends to react in very dangerous way. Of course one could say that we can even put more pressure or we can apply even bigger stick to such a kind of reaction. But the problem is that confrontation itself involves a lot of damage and that exactly what North Korea knows. In other words, North Korea has nothing to lose. They create the situation which, despite all their difficulties and weaknesses, North Korea tends to have this leverage in dealing with South Korea, the United States, and even China and others." (Interview Prof. S. H. Sheen, 2011)

6.5 Conclusion

The fall of the Soviet Union changed the overall international political structure. The new pattern of the post-Cold War world was a confrontation between the United States and the small and middle powers with nuclear potential. The policy of the United States in the post-Cold War period is structured on the policy of containing nuclear proliferation, particularly among these new nuclear states. The US approach to North Korea is structured based on this policy. The United States wants to achieve the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, in line with the US preference for nuclear non-proliferation. Nonetheless, the US policy towards North Korea is also influenced by the US perception of the rise of a new type of nuclear state. The use of various terms such as 'rogue' or 'axis of evil' shows the negative mindset of the United States towards North Korea. The United States sees North Korea as a dangerous and immoral state that will soon collapse as a result of various internal problems it is currently facing. The secretive nature of North Korea makes it important that North Korea be fully

disarmed. The United States is a nuclear power. Nuclear weapons provide the United States with the power to deter North Korea and, at the same time, helps the United States play a role of a security guarantor to its Asian allies. The US alliance system is the product of the Cold War period, and the threat posed by North Korea helps justify the continued US role and involvement in the region in the post-Cold War environment.

The emergence of new nuclear states post-Cold War is a result of the structural change away from nuclear bipolarity. The new structure encourages states to be independent and compete among each other for their own security. Since North Korea decided to increase its defence level, the United States has employed various methods in dealing with North Korea since the first nuclear crisis. The change in approach reflected the US decision to explore different methods in its policy but US inconsistency in policy implementation decreased North Korea's trust. Although the United States does not actually use nuclear weapons in the process to denuclearise North Korea, the United States is fully aware of the power it has over North Korea. The methods of either dialogue or confrontation are attempts to manage the problem, but the result turns out to be the opposite. North Korea continues to elevate its defence level instead of disarm. The United States deals with North Korea based on its policy preference and perception, rather than considering the root cause of the problem. Past negotiations show that dialogue does not actually answer North Korean demands. The security dilemma now is created from a sense of insecurity from North Korea's loss of trust in the United States, which in turn results in a decrease in the United States' trust in North Korea. The security dilemma is a common thing that can happen given states' interdependence in security. The security dilemma can be ameliorated if states feel secure enough that they do not seek to increase their defence capabilities. The case of North Korea does not only show a lack of trust, but also a sense of insecurity created by an unequal distribution of power. North Korea fears an American nuclear attack, and the fear is reinforced by the US hardline policy and the expectation of regime change.

International relations theory talks about the search for power as a means to achieve security in a system of anarchy. The United States emerged as the hegemon in the post-Cold War period, but the status of hegemony does not mean the absolute security of the United States. The emergence of small and middle nuclear powers presents a new threat to the United States. These states become more threatening when there is difficulty in reading the predictability of their actions. The 9/11 incident proves that there is no permanent security in

the system, and that insecurity can happen anytime without advance warning. The objective of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the system is among the policies the United States pursues in order to secure itself in the new environment. It is clear that there is an imbalance in the distribution of power between the United States and North Korea. The United States is much more powerful than North Korea but there is no guarantee that security can be permanently assured when North Korea is turning itself into a nuclear power. Realists assume that anarchy makes states feel insecure and this insecurity pushes them to increase their defence or risk being overpowered by others. The situation between the United States and North Korea is that deterrence is successfully functioning in keeping one from attacking the other. Successful deterrence does not necessarily mean a decrease in the sense of insecurity. States will continue in their quests for security because they are concerned about their own security above all others'. The United States deals with North Korea with the policy objective of achieving the total nuclear dismantlement of North Korea. However, the process to achieve such an aim lacks a security assurance. Insecurity influences North Korea to seek better security and increase its defence, in the hope of matching deterrence levels with the United States. When North Korea reaches equal deterrence levels with the United States, it believes it will be able to negotiate its primary demands of peace treaty and regime security.

Chapter 7: The Attempt at Multilateral Settlement

The George W. Bush administration made it clear that the United States would not follow the Clinton policy of engagement, because North Korea had developed a habit for blackmail. Despite the adoption of a hardline policy, President Bush still believed diplomacy would provide a solution to the overall problem, and this is one of the reasons the United States remained engaged with North Korea through multilateral channels. It began with the three party-party talks initiated by China, who attempted to achieve a breakthrough from fear that the situation would worsen with a lack of dialogue. The structure of the multilateral forum was later expanded to include more players. This is because the United States believed that the problem of North Korea's nuclear proliferation is a regional issue that requires the involvement of all parties in order to solve the problem (U.S. Department of State, 2003). In addition, the United States also considered it important to bring its Asian allies into the dialogue, believing that international pressure would be more effective than the United States alone in influencing North Korea to accept the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement (CVID) of its nuclear weapons programme. China, who stepped in and acted as a mediator for the Six-Party Talks, had developed major concerns with regards to the situation on the Korean peninsula at that time. Not only did China fear the outbreak of a war resulting from a US invasion; but it was also concerned about the US's close relations with its two main Asian allies, which might lead to the formation of "an anti-China grouping" in the region (Buszynski, 2013b).

The Six-Party Talks were first convened in late 2003, hosted by China. Unfortunately, several rounds of the talks failed to lower tensions on the Korean peninsula, and did not result in much progress towards denuclearisation. All members shared the same objective of achieving a denuclearised Korean peninsula, but it turned out that each participant used the forum as a means for achieving its own aims. While the United States showed strong support for the total dismantlement of all nuclear programmes, as a prelude to discussing other issues, North Korea required some form of deal or proposal before taking the first step towards denuclearisation. Japan was mainly interested in participating in the multilateral forum due to its fear of being left out of any important regional issue. Japan's enthusiasm for multilateral negotiation grew after a bilateral dialogue between Japan and North Korea failed to make any

progress, especially given Japan's dissatisfaction with North Korea on the abduction issue. The United States considered Japan's participation significant for the proper conduct of the talks, especially given the economic support Japan could contribute after the United States entered into a deal with North Korea. Nevertheless, Japan's participation in the Six-Party Talks was a challenge for the United States. The United States had to compromise between progress on the CVID and Japan's interests in order to secure Japan's economic contribution towards any agreements made with North Korea (Okano-Heijmans, 2008).

South Korea, on the other hand, was enthusiastic for the Six-Party Talks, as the initiative coincided with the engagement policy adopted during Roh Moo Hyun's administration. President Roh Moo Hyun believed in the significance of the dialogue as a way to bring North Korea out of isolation, and in the hope of bringing about the regime's total nuclear disarmament (Ministry of Unification, 2004). South Korea later became an active partner in the talks. President Roh's preference for the use of dialogue resulted from the perception that dialogue is the key path towards a definitive peace on the peninsula (S. W. Park, 2010). Russia was the last to join the Six-Party Talks. The aim of Russia, particularly under Putin's government, is to use the Six-Party Talks to counter the United States in the hopes of regaining its power in this area (S. M. Kang, 2006, pp. 87-94).

To some extent, each party's individual preferences weakened the spirit and objectives of the multilateral platform. Differences between the parties surfaced during the second round of the talks, in 2004. It seemed that members were divided, with the US and its Asian allies on the one side and North Korea on the other, on the issue of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and a uranium enrichment programme. Firstly, North Korea, in contrast to the United States, Japan and South Korea who sought CVID, insisted on pursuing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and that the dismantlement should be limited to its nuclear weapons development programme. The demand for CVID as a prerequisite to other commitments increased North Korea's concern for other actors' levels of sincerity and commitment to the dialogue, particularly that of the United States (KCNA, 2004). Secondly, North Korea's denial of the existence of a uranium enrichment programme was counter to what the United States, Japan, and South Korea had believed (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2004).

The Six-Party Talks relate to the concept of collective security, which is viewed as being one of the ways that can ameliorate the security dilemma. Collective security usually results in

the formation of a coalition, which wields more power than other mechanisms in balancing and deterring an aggressor (Kupchan & Kupchan, 1991, p. 118). Kupchan and Kupchan (1995, pp. 52-59) elaborate further, that cooperation would create stability when states share the same objective and seek to secure absolute gains for all members, rather than relative gains of their own, which helps reduce the spirals of hostility between states. However, cooperation under the Six-Party Talks failed to stop aggression and create stability in the region. The failure of the Talks to encourage North Korea to disarm raises some questions on the effectiveness of collective security as a means to deter an aggressor, or as a way to ameliorate the security dilemma.

As the Six-Party Talks continued, the members appeared to be ever more concerned with the relative gains for themselves, rather than the absolute gains of the forum, which results in a lack of trust and cooperation between the parties. The talks were eventually faced with a major obstacle, after North Korea declared in 2009 that it would no longer participate in any future dialogue. Since the Six-Party Talks are claimed to be an appropriate solution to the problems on the Korean peninsula, the little progress made raises certain doubts of the effectiveness of multilateral cooperation and, at the same time, challenges the concept of collective security.

This chapter aims to explore the interaction of concerned parties in the context of the Six-Party Talks, before seeking to answer the question of what the limits of multilateral diplomacy are in solving the North Korean nuclear problem. The chapter also seeks to assess whether there is any prospect that the forum can persuade North Korea to lower its deterrence threshold.

7.1 The Failure of the Six-Party Talks

In order to evaluate the failure of the Six-Party Talks, it is best to begin by assessing each party's policy, and the role each contributes to the multilateral forum.

China

China's decision to expand the multilateral forum from three to six parties came from its strong desire for a peaceful regional environment. China facilitates with the organisation of the Six-Party Talks, knowing full well that it is not the main actor of the issue. The Six-Party Talks need to be a continuous process in order to achieve the objective of denuclearisation (Xinhua News Agency, 2004). Although China considers it undesirable that North Korea has a nuclear weapons programme, it is not considered to be the main factor for considering North Korea a major threat to China's security. China's main concerns are the possibility of regime collapse, which could lead to a flood of North Korean refugees into China; and also the possibility of armed conflict between North Korea and the United States, which could provide an opportunity for the United States to move its forces on the peninsula up to the Chinese border.

North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons is considered undesirable, but not a major threat to China's security. To China, North Korea poses a "symbolic threat" not an "actual threat" to international security, because North Korea lacks some resources needed to make its nuclear weapons programme a credible threat (J. Park, 2005, p. 82). However, North Korea's nuclear test in 2006 challenged China's policy and belief. China strongly condemned the test, as it was "flagrantly conducted in disregard of the common opposition of the international community" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, 9 October 2006). Based on China's wish to maintain peace and stability in the region, diplomacy is regarded as the most effective way to deal with North Korea, and China's diplomatic efforts have manifested through both bilateral and multilateral approaches to managing the crisis. Immediately after the nuclear test, China sent a special envoy, Tang Jiaxuan, to meet with Kim Jong Il to discuss the matter. However, the meeting could not secure a commitment from North Korea on the future nuclear test. Kim Jong Il said that he could not guarantee that North Korea would not "take further action if it faces bigger and more unfair pressure from outside" (The Chosun Ilbo, 2006). China was able to mediate between North Korea and the United States, and the meeting between the two sides was organised not too long after the test.

There seem to be two things that need to be taken into consideration: China's preference for playing the role of a mediator, and China's priority of preserving the peace and stability of the Korean peninsula. China plays the role of a mediator in balancing the demands of North

Korea and the United States. For example, in an effort to buy North Korea's confidence in the talks, China offered economic assistance and a shipment of a heavy fuel oil to North Korea, with an estimated value of US$50 million, in February 2004 (Cody & Faiola, 2004). China also attempted to tone down the US's hardline policy on North Korea, as evidenced by China's efforts to convince the United States to put aside the missile issue during the first round of the Six-Party Talks, in August 2003 (Funabashi, 2007, p. 346). China is faced with some constraints in exercising its leverage over North Korea, for example the fear that too much pressure could lead to it losing influence over North Korea, and therefore risk damaging the Sino-DPRK relationship. At the same time that China regarded dialogue and negotiation as the best solution, China also strongly supported the imposition of tougher methods against North Korea, via the United Nations. China approved the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1718, condemning North Korea's nuclear test of 2006. This reflected the international community's shared opposition to the test. However, China clearly opposed the use of force or any other tactic that might worsen the situation, and China still believed that diplomatic means were the best method for solving the North Korean nuclear issue (The United Nations, 2006). Nonetheless, the passage of UN Resolution 1718 angered North Korea. North Korea responded harshly, referring to it as "a declaration of war" caused by US hostility, regardless of North Korea's commitment to not using nuclear weapons in a first strike capacity, nor in its promise to not transfer nuclear technology to others (KCNA, 2006c). Kleine-Ahlbrandt (2013) writes that China's support for the UN sanctions were merely rhetorical, because China hoped the use of sanctions would bring North Korea back to the negotiation table, not undermine or weaken the regime. As such, the sanctions implemented must be proportional and moderate. With this kind of policy and perception, China was unable to fully exercise its leverage over North Korea and, at the same time, it was unable to fully commit to bolstering North Korea's security confidence. China views the North Korean nuclear issue as a matter between the United States and North Korea, and improved US-DPRK relations are key to the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula (B. Yang, 2006, pp. 24-25).

Another important aspect of China's policy worth taking into consideration is that of US-Sino relations, which play a significant role in shaping China's policy towards the two Koreas, the North Korean problem, and the Six-Party Talks. Both China and the United States are concerned about and cautious of each other. At the same time that the rise of China as a

major power in the region is a concern for the United States, China has also developed a sense of anxiety about the US's increased power and influence in the region – a consequence of US efforts in dealing with the North Korea problem.

China's effort to resume the Six-Party Talks in 2005, following the US invasion of Iraq, is a good example to illustrate China's concerns. China seeks to use the Six-Party Talks to encourage the United States to not opt for a military invasion, as it did with Iraq, or applying the Libyan model in solving the problem of North Korea (J. Park, 2005, pp. 84-85). The United States leans towards the Libyan model for North Korea, as a result of its experience in the successful use of "the reciprocal unilateral measures[19]" in persuading Libya to denuclearise (Goodby & Gross, 2004; Reuters, 2007). North Korea was strongly opposed to the Libya model, because such a model was considered to be the US's pursuit of North Korean CVID.

The third round of the Six-Party Talks, in June 2004, concluded with the need for all parties to adopt "the principle of words for words, and action for action" as method to achieve denuclearisation. However, differences between the United States and North Korea started to show. While the United States showed its preference for the CVID principle, North Korea offered a "reward for freeze" proposal. The KCNA released a statement saying that,

> "[Kelly] insisted on the U.S. assertion that the DPRK dismantle its nuclear programme first, thus rejecting the principles of 'words for words' and 'action for action'. He also totally denied the principle of 'reward for freeze' when he said that the U.S. has no intention to negotiate with North Koreans, there can be no reward for North Korea and the U.S. will not bring any benefit to it ... Since the start of its second term, the Bush administration has not made any trustworthy sincere effort to create conditions for the talks, persistently insisting on the assertion that the DPRK dismantle its nuclear programme first on the basis of CVID." (KCNA, 2005a)

[19] The reciprocal unilateral measures require a commitment from all parties to carry out step-by-step actions according to the process of negotiation, until the final step of denuclearisation is reached. The United States successfully negotiated with Libya, and applied this method in persuading Libya to dismantle its nuclear programmes.

North Korea, as such, appeared to lose faith and confidence in the Six-Party Talks early in the negotiations. Although China could persuade North Korea to return for the fourth round of talks in September 2005, which resulted in the release of the September 19 Joint Statement, North Korea still held a negative opinion of the multilateral forum. North Korea reiterated that the talks had not yielded productive results thus far due to differences the members had about the steps to achieve denuclearisation (KCNA, 2005b). China was to be credited for bringing about the first breakthrough of the Six-Party Talks, in September 2005. The United States and North Korea agreed to sign the September 19 Joint Statement, even though they were not content with its contents (Kahn & Sanger, 2005). This was an attempt by China to include North Korea's "word for word, action for action" phrase in the text, and convince the United States to sign on the grounds that it had a group consensus (Kan, 2014, p. 30; S. Kim, 2005, p. 124).

The Six-Party Talks were criticised as ineffective when the talks could not bring about substantive progress on the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula. Considering that dialogue and consultation are the most pragmatic approaches to achieve a solution to the nuclear issue, China insisted on pushing ahead with the resumption of the talks. President Xi Jinping reaffirmed China's commitment to the use of dialogue in order to achieve the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula (Zhang, 2013). The significance of the Six-Party Talks lies not only in relation to security matters, but the Talks also play a role in US-Sino relations. At the same time that China used the Talks to contain the US reaction to the nuclear issue, China also considers the Talks an important tool for maintaining a good relationship with the United States. Progress in the Six-Party Talks is significant as the Talks support China's rise by allowing it to adopt the role of a contributor to regional stability (Thompson & Matthews, 2011, pp. 188-189).

Japan

Japan has long been involved in North Korea's denuclearisation process. Since signing the 1994 Agreed Framework, Japan has become one of the largest financiers of the KEDO. According to Auslin (2011, p. 199), there are three main issues that influence Japan's foreign policy: participation in the multilateral dialogue, the abduction issue, and the denuclearisation

issue. When the idea of the Six-Party Talks was first proposed, Japan strongly supported it. One of the reasons for this was because Japan wanted to continue the US-Japan-South Korean trilateral relations, strengthened as a result of the TCOG (Hughes, 2006, p. 165). The United States also counted the inclusion of Japan in the Six-Party Talks as important, because of its perception that the path to striking a deal with North Korea on denuclearisation required Japan's financial contribution (Niksch & Perl, 2007, p. 6).

Japan's role in the region, nonetheless, is said to have been sidelined. Japan was not a member of the Three-Party Talks, nor did Japan take a front seat in the Six-Party Talks. Japan was constrained by domestic pressure to see progress made on the abduction issue. The abduction issue became a priority of Japan after the DNA testing incident[20], in November 2004. The policy of the Koizumi government was influenced by the Japanese public, who agreed that the issue of Japanese abduction, *not* North Korea's nuclear development was what they were most concerned about (H. N. Kim, 2006a, p. 174). The Japanese government started to raise the abduction issue at the Six-Party Talks because it wanted to ease the anger and anxiety of the Japanese public (S. M. Kang, 2006, p. 88). Koizumi's North Korean policy was a combination of engagement through the multilateral platform, and the "tougher measures" of pressure and sanctions, which was in line with the Bush administration's policy (Bloomberg, 2003). Japan's actions raised some criticisms from other members of the talks. Delegates from other nations expressed their dissatisfaction with Japan at the Six-Party Talks, in July 2005, on the grounds that the Talks were bound to fail because the abduction issue distracted from the primary focus (Xinhua News Agency, 2005). The abduction issue has played a considerable role in shaping Japan's North Korea policy. Japan's active push for progress on this issue has affected the role Japan can play in the multilateral forum. Japan does not want to lift sanctions on North Korea and implement the agreement of the Six-Party Talks, because no concrete solution to the abduction issue has been presented (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2007).

[20] In December 2004, North Korea returned the remains of one of the abductees to Japan. However, DNA testing showed that the remains belonged to a different person. The incident angered Japan, who accused North Korea of being insincere about solving the issue.

The Six-Party Talks of 3 October 2007 concluded with the Second-Phase Actions of the Joint Statement. The statement outlined the "action for action" principle[21], through which North Korea receives something in return for taking action towards dismantling its nuclear programmes (U.S. Department of State, 2007). It turns out that Japan was not party to the commitment. Japan refused to take part in providing energy assistance until North Korea made progress in resolving the abduction issue (Manyin & Nikitin, 2013, pp. 5-6). North Korea showed its dissatisfaction for the other members' lack of commitment to the implementation of the October 3 Agreement, as announced through the KCNA:

> "It is beyond Dec. 31, 2007, the deadline set in the Oct. 3 agreement. It is regrettable that points agreed there remain unimplemented except the disablement of the DPRK's nuclear facilities. The disablement started early in November last year and all the operations were completed within the 'technologically possible scope' as of Dec. 31. At present, the unloading of spent fuel rods scheduled to be completed in about 100 days is underway as the last process. However, the delivery of heavy fuel oil and energy-related equipment and materials to the DPRK, commitments of other participating nations, has not been done even 50 per cent." (KCNA, 2008a)

The delay to act in time showed that the action for action principle had lost its value, which made it unlikely that North Korea would commit to dismantling its nuclear programme as agreed during the Talks.

Japan's use of sanctions as a means to pressure North Korea on abductions upset North Korea. Japan's refusal to provide North Korea with energy assistance (as promised under the Six-Party framework) made North Korea criticise Japan for being a bad actor in the multilateral forum. Japan's emphasis on the abduction issue in its affairs with North Korea greatly affected North Korea's perception of Japan, and the Six-Party Talks framework as a whole. As part of the February 2007 Six-Party agreement, the United States would take North Korea off "the U.S. list of terrorism-supporting countries" (Niksch & Perl, 2007, p. 4).

[21] The October 3 Agreement, or "the Second-Phase Actions for the Implementation of the September 2005 Joint Statement", was issued on 3 October, 2007. North Korea is compelled by the Statement to declare all of its nuclear programmes by 31 December 2007. In return, North Korea receives heavy fuel oil, and a commitment from the United States and Japan to begin the process of normalisation of relations.

However, Japan was strongly opposed to North Korea being taken off the list, believing that it would undermine attempts to make North Korea account for the abductions (Alford, 2008). Nevertheless, North Korea was taken off the list. This decision by the United States had an impact on the US-Japan alliance, because the Japanese government was disappointed with the United States for failing to cooperate on solving the abduction issue.

The abduction issue also affects the progress of the Six-Party Talks. The inclusion of the abduction issue in the Six-Party Talks overloads the agenda, and also draws the forum's attention away from its main objective (Interview Prof. Chung, 2011). Japan upholds its position by linking the abduction issue and North Korea's nuclear disarmament. Prime Minister Taro Aso said that, "unless progress is made in Japan-North Korea relations, including on the abductees issue, then we will not participate in the economic and energy aid under the Six-Party Talks, and there is no change in that stance" (The China Post, 2008). The refusal to take part is an attempt by Japan to increase international pressure on North Korea, because, without Japan's economic commitment, the other four nations would have to shoulder Japan's portion of the financial burden (Izumikawa, 2011, p. 41). North Korea voiced its dissatisfaction in return, stating that not only had Japan never tried to implement the agreed-upon actions, but also that it used the Six-Party Talks as a platform to realise its own objectives (KCNA, 2008c). Japan's role in the multilateral forum is increasingly questioned, especially when there appeared to be the possibility for a breakthrough in restarting the Talks after a long break in 2008. It is assumed that Japan may follow United States policy in dealing with North Korea through the multilateral framework. But, with the priority Japan gives to the abduction issue, Japan's role will be diminished. It is said that Japan is constrained by its public's strong reaction to the abduction issue, and that Japan would find it difficult to provide any aid to North Korea if a deal is not reached at the Six-Party Talks.

South Korea

By the time of the second nuclear crisis, in 2002, Roh Moo Hyun was president of South Korea. His administration adopted the Sunshine Policy of his predecessor, Kim Dae Jung, and renamed it the Policy for Peace and Prosperity. Roh aimed to use dialogue to solve the

North Korean nuclear issue, and also to build a peaceful environment on the Korean peninsula. The Policy for Peace and Prosperity was structured on the perception that it was more likely for North Korea to change its behaviour as it was drawn closer to the international community (BBC News, 2003). The policy played a significant role in shaping South Korea's strategy towards North Korea, both in the bilateral dialogue of North-South relations and also the multilateral dialogue of the Six-Party Talks. The Roh government planned to extend invitations for further dialogue with North Korea, believing that inter-Korean relations held the key to reaching denuclearisation. The more relaxed the atmosphere, the easier it could be to convince North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons (H. N. Kim, 2006c, pp. 42-43).

President Roh's strong belief in dialogue and engagement to some extent caused some difficulties for the role South Korea played in contributing to the goal of nuclear disarmament, as outlined in the Six-Party Talks, and also caused some strain on the US-ROK alliance. In contrast to the US's objective of CVID, South Korea supported North Korea's request for a peaceful use of nuclear energy. The Roh government pointed out that CVID was "unfair" to North Korea, given that the use of nuclear power for peaceful activities, such as in the medical and agricultural fields, was rather useful and that, as a result, it should not be banned (Moon, 2008a, p. 86). President Roh expressed his belief that North Korea developed nuclear weapons solely as a result of its security concerns, and that the regime would fully comply with the denuclearisation plan only when it was granted with a security guarantee (Korea JoongAng Daily, 2004). Roh's statement was criticised at home, and also raised concerns that it might jeopardise the US-ROK alliance, which had weakened as a result of Roh's opposition to the US's tough stance and sanctions against North Korea. Armstrong (2009, p. 237) criticised Roh's policy as appeasing North Korea, and that the Roh government's core concern was for maintaining engagement with North Korea rather than focusing on resolving the North Korean nuclear problem. The policy constrained South Korea to act promptly in responding to the missile test of 2006 (BBC News, 2006). Although President Roh condemned the missile launch, he stressed his disapproval for the use of pressure and sanctions imposed on North Korea by other parties (B. M. Lim, 2006). The Roh government structured its policy towards North Korea on the prospect for improved inter-Korean relations, and the belief that inter-Korean relations could play a beneficial role, contributing to a resolution to the nuclear crisis (H. J. Park, 2006, pp. 110-111). Roh's policy

created a gap in the US-ROK relations, because the United States at the time preferred the use of pressure and sanctions.

South Korea provided North Korea with half a million tons of rice and other aid in 2003 and 2004. The assistance was supplied as part of a deal to convince North Korea to commit to nuclear disarmament and stay in the Six-Party Talks. The between-the-lines meaning of this action was that the Roh administration wanted to create leverage over North Korea, by making North Korea reliant on South Korea (C. N. Kim, 2005, pp. 15-16). South Korea's provision of energy supplies to North Korea in 2005 was believed to prolong the Six-Party Talks. North Korea agreed to attend the fourth round in July 2005. The Talks continued, and reached a breakthrough in September 2005.

For President Roh, inter-Korean relations and the Six-Party Talks were connected. The problem of North Korea can be solved through the Six-Party Talks, he believed, but it needed inter-Korean dialogue as a supplement to make it function more effectively (Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs of South Korea, 2007). In attempting to reach for peace, South Korea played the role of a facilitator in bridging the gap between the United States and North Korea; and the role of a mediator in assuaging the differences between members of the Talks. However, this particular role of South Korea's disappeared after President Lee Myung Bak came to power and adopted a policy of conditional engagement, under the so-called "De-nuke, Open 3,000 initiative". Lee Myung Bak's policy destroyed the positive atmosphere of inter-Korean relations encouraged by the previous administration. North Korea was suspicious of South Korea's intentions, particularly after the Lee administration announced its strategy of grand bargaining, which outlined the condition that economic assistance would only come after nuclear dismantlement (Armstrong, 2010, p. 173). The Lee government also did not play an active role in the Six-Party Talks, and instead passively followed the lead of the United States (C. I. Moon, 2012). Lee Myung Bak's belief was that the involvement of the international community was essential in promoting and achieving the process of denuclearisation (S. U. Nam, 2007). Structured on this vision, the Lee government persuaded the United States not to compromise by taking North Korea off "the U.S. list of terrorism-supporting countries", and also approached Japan to cooperate in increasing pressure on North Korea (S. W. Park, 2010). The hardline policy of Lee Myung Bak damaged the Six-Party Talks. The policy of no-compromise prevented the conditions for the resumption of the Six-Party Talks, as seen after the Cheonan sinking incident when South Korea demanded an

apology as a precondition to dialogue (BBC News, 2011b). The precondition did not bring about a positive outcome for the future of the Talks. Although North Korea regarded dialogue and negotiation as effective ways to end confrontation and solve some difficulties, it insisted that the talks should be organised without any conditions (KCNA, 2011).

Russia

The role of Russia on the Korean peninsula has been minimal, as it was not involved in the denuclearisation process from the 1994 Agreed Framework to the early stages of the multilateral negotiations of the Three-Party peace talks. In addition, Russian exclusion from the Four-Party talks, held between November 1997 and August 1999, was a bitter experience that Russia did not want repeated. This made the Putin government attempt to approach both China and the United States during the groundwork stages for Russian inclusion in the Six-Party Talks.

Russia considered the multilateral framework conducive to its national interests at a time when Russia's power was in decline. Russia entered the Six-Party Talks with the "honest broker strategy" with the hope that, by supporting the multilateral framework on nuclear non-proliferation, it could return to the front of the stage at some point in the future (Funabashi, 2007, pp. 187-188). What Russia preferred was that the Korean peninsula be a nuclear-free zone and that the North Korean nuclear issue should be peacefully resolved through the use of dialogue and negotiation. By engaging all regional players, the Six-Party Talks would also prevent any single regional player from gaining more power and influence and from dominating the Korean peninsula (Joo, 2007, pp. 134-135).

According to S. Kim (2007, p. 25), Russia believed that the multilateral forum would boost North Korea's confidence during a time when the regime did not feel at ease living in an environment occupied by multiple, powerful regional players. As such, Russia appeared to play an active role in the Six-Party Talks, and the forum served a Russian strategic interest of attempting to secure the peace and stability of the region. The result of this was not only to differentiate Russia's position towards North Korea from that of the United States, but Russia's stance is sometimes viewed as appeasing North Korea. Russia made it clear through an official statement at the Six-Party Talks held in February 2004 that Russia would "do

everything necessary for solving the nuclear problem along with ensuring the security of the DPRK" (Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability, 2004). In addition, and in contrast to the US preference for CVID, Russia supported North Korea's demand for "compensation for freezing the nuclear programmes", referred to by the Russians as "corresponding measures" (The Korea Times, 2004). Russia emphasised that compensation was important to North Korea, whose economy and society were in need of development (Takeda, 2006, p. 202). Nonetheless, Russia did not totally agree with North Korea's request for peaceful nuclear energy development. Since the September 19 Joint Statement lacked a clear description of a specific timeline, it offered Russia an opportunity to set the conditions regarding this request. Sergei Lavrov, Russian Foreign Minister, said two days after the September 19 Joint Statement was signed, that the LWR would be provided to North Korea only after there was a total dismantlement of its nuclear weapons programme (RIA Novosti, 2005).

Russia strongly supported the Six-Party Talks, believing that the forum would bring about peace and stability in Northeast Asia. Sanctions and pressure were options that Russia was against, believing that the more North Korea was pushed, the higher the chance North Korea would strengthen its military capability to counter any external threat (Vorontsov, 2011). Russia prefers the use of negotiation in solving the North Korean problem, knowing well that North Korea's primary focus is to have bilateral talks with the United States. Although Russia was an enthusiastic partner in the Six-Party Talks, its role was marginalised. Russia wants to achieve the denuclearisation of North Korea through peaceful means. This desire influences Russia's policy on North Korea, and the role Russia plays in the Six-Party Talks. Russia's disagreement over the use of sanctions and pressure against North Korea is criticised as being "supportive" of North Korea (Blank & Kim, 2012, p. 265). President Putin once voiced his concern that the Six-Party Talks would likely be undermined if North Korea is "provoked" to withdraw from the negotiations, or chooses to "respond in an inappropriate manner" (Russia & CIS Diplomatic Panorama, 2006). Ha and Shin (2006, p. 25) say that Russia plays a "buffering role" in preventing the United States from launching a military attack against North Korea in order to bring about a change in the North Korean regime. However, Russia's policy has changed over time, especially when the situation starts to show signs of becoming worse, including increases in tension from both the international community and also North Korea. For example, regarding North Korea's request for LWRs:

Russia's reluctance to comply with North Korea's request for the LWR was later changed from fear that the progress of the Six-Party Talks would be undermined. Russia admitted that commitment by all parties was key to the success of the Talks before committing to the LWR request, saying it "conforms to the agreements reached by the sides and they must be implemented" (BBC News, 2005).

Russia clearly understood North Korea's security concerns. A security assurance was the first step towards denuclearisation, particularly when North Korea developed some fear after observing what happened to Gaddafi of Libya (Toloraya, 2011). Russia also wanted the Six-Party Talks to resume after a long break, since 2009. In 2011, Russia secured a positive response from North Korea on future attendance at the Six-Party Talks during a summit meeting between Kim Jong Il and Dmitry Medvedev. However, the resumption of the Six-Party Talks was beyond Russia's control. Russia was unable to convince North Korea to drop its preconditions and return to the Talks, or the United States and South Korea to drop their suspicions of North Korea's sincerity in denuclearisation. Regardless, a summit meeting between the two leaders was organised with the main focus on economic aspects, because Russia wanted to push ahead with a gas pipeline project, which would connect the economies of the two Koreas with Russia's (BBC News, 2011a). The role of Russia continues to be sidelined, despite its enthusiasm for engaging through the talks.

7.2 North Korea's Threat Perception and the Six-Party Talks

Bilateral dialogue with the United States is the main policy goal of North Korea. North Korea entered the Six-Party Talks with the hope of having a bilateral dialogue with the United States on the side, within the framework (KCNA, 2003e). It turned out that the Six-Party Talks could not lower North Korea's threat perception. North Korea revealed its suspicions of the United States in the first round of the talks, in August 2003. North Korea reiterated that, "we can dismantle our nuclear programme if the U.S. makes a switchover in its hostile policy towards us and does not pose any threat to us" (KCNA, 2003d). The September 19 Joint Statement is considered one of the major achievements of the denuclearisation process, but a problem later arose when there were discrepancies in how the parties went about

implementing the statement's provisions. The failure mainly stemmed from the differences between North Korea's and the United States' interpretation of "total dismantlement" in relation to North Korea's nuclear programme. While the United States defined this phrase as CVID, North Korea demanded delivery of a LWR from the international community, claiming that it has the right to use nuclear power and technology for peaceful purposes (Kahn, 2005b). Niksch (2005, pp. 15-18) considers North Korea's demand for a LWR "a stalemate strategy" in order to buy time for itself to denuclearise.

By the end of the fourth round of the Six-Party Talks, in September 2005, no progress had been made on the LWR issue. The issue became more complicated after the United States suggested each country should interpret the Joint Statement's LWR provision clause[22] in their own way (Kahn & Sanger, 2005). The Joint Statement did not specify the timeframe for the provision of the LWR. The lack of clarity in the statement made both North Korea and the United States issue their own statements after the Talks were concluded. The United States' chief negotiator, Christopher Hill, declared in Beijing on 19 September 2005 that, "the appropriate time will only come when the DPRK has promptly eliminated all nuclear weapons and all nuclear programmes" (U.S. Department of State, 2005a).

Despite the involvement of all players in the region, the Six-Party Talks are mainly driven by the United States and North Korea, and a failure to reach a compromise between the two greatly affects the future of the forum. It is clear that the two have different agendas when attending the talks, as has been observed by Prof. Paik (2011):

> "North Korea presses hard for the agenda of peace settlement and how to get diplomatic normalisation with the United States. These problems are just part of the North Korean nuclear problem. The Americans recognise North Korea's need and objectively speaking they try to press North Korea for something in return. The United States says that North Korea should show seriousness that they are denuclearising because there is a repetition of things that already

[22] From the September 19 Joint Statement: "The other parties expressed their respect and agreed to discuss, at an appropriate time, the subject of the provision of light water reactor to the D.P.R.K." (U.S. Department of State, 2005b). This clause was included in the Statement, against the US's wishes, by China who wished to achieve a breakthrough. The word "appropriate" used in this clause was China's effort to find a compromise between the United States and North Korea (Funabashi, 2007, p. 401).

> discussed. This is the American kind of understanding. But North Korea understands that the process fails because of the US government's failure to implement it faithfully." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

In a 19 September 2005 statement issued by Christopher Hill, the United States set conditions for the normalisation of relations with North Korea, including progresses on several non-nuclear-related issues. Instead of resolving the problem in a manner preferred by the hardliners in Washington, Hill's statement influenced North Korea to continue with its nuclear development, which lead to a nuclear test in 2006 (Chinoy, 2011).

The nuclear test of 2006 was "a tactical success" for North Korea, as it resulted in a more flexible US position, and American willingness to hold a bilateral negotiation before the next round of the Six-Party Talks (S. Snyder, 2007, p. 165). Nonetheless, the Six-Party Talks in December 2006 made little progress and did not produce any substantive outcome. One of the causes for the lack of progress was the BDA issue. The BDA issue was a serious concern for North Korea. The US sanctions against the BDA can be considered effective. The sanctions not only blocked the financial activities of the BDA, but also influenced other financial institutions in other countries to stop their financial dealings with North Korea from fear of reprisals (Lague & Greenlees, 2007). North Korea connected the BDA sanctions to its nuclear weapons. Kim Gye Gwan, North Korea's chief negotiator, demanded the United States lift the sanctions before any discussion on the nuclear dismantlement:

> "The U.S. is using a tactic of both dialogue and pressure, carrots and sticks. We are responding with dialogue and a shield, and by a shield we are saying we will further improve our deterrent." (Kahn, 2006)

The United States and North Korea continued with bilateral talks in January 2007, in Berlin. The Berlin talks showed the US's willingness to hold bilateral negotiations with North Korea. The Berlin talks also changed the pattern of the Six-Party Talks, because the bilateral negotiations came before, not during or after, the Six-Party Talks. Prof. Paik (2011) elaborates on the pattern of negotiation, saying,

> "We are interested in whether how soon the Six-Party Talks would be resumed. But what is more important is what is going to take place before between the United States and North Korea. There are two steps of negotiation. The

> breakthrough or the agreement between the United States and North Korea will be approved or endorsed by the Six-Party Talks. Then we have full official agreement over there. That is the process of it." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

This pattern makes the Six-Party Talks more effective, because the talks can further discuss the details agreed upon during the bilateral negotiations, rather than seeking to resolve the deadlock from previous meetings (Buszynski, 2013a, p. 131). The new approach was rather "realistic", as the United States dealt with North Korea on its own terms, rather than because of the US's position on denuclearisation (Kwak & Joo, 2007, p. 6). Prof. I. H. Park (2011) says that,

> "The best solution is a kind of simultaneous progress between multilateral approach such as the Six-Party Talks and North Korea-US bilateral approach. I am not saying that the Six-Party Talks is the best option but it is the only option to continue communication between North Korea and the United States and the international society. What happened insides of the Six-Party Talks is a kind of bilateral negotiation between the United States and North Korea." (Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011)

The Agreement reached in Berlin facilitated the organisation of the Six-Party Talks in February 2007. The outcome then was the release of one of the more significant statements in the history of the talks, the Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement or the February 13 Agreement[23] (The Washington Post, 2007). Although the February 13 Agreement set out a specific timeframe for each step of action, it did not provide clear details on the type of nuclear projects to be verified and dismantled (C. I. Moon, 2012).

After the February 13 Agreement was signed, North Korea's threat perception still had not lowered, and North Korea remained committed to strict adherence to the term "actions for actions" as a precondition for denuclearisation. President Bush started to adopt a more flexible approach towards North Korea, particularly after the February 13 Agreement. The

[23] The February 13 Agreement outlines two phases for denuclearisation. The first phase required North Korea to close its nuclear facility in Yongbyon. In return, North Korea would receive heavy fuel oil and other economic assistance. The actions must be completed within 60 days. The second phase stated that North Korea must disable the Yongbyon nuclear site and declare all of its nuclear programmes. Other members would provide North Korea with heavy fuel oil in exchange.

United States not only agreed to lift the sanctions on the BDA, but also sent Christopher Hill to North Korea, which showed that the United States recognised North Korea as a negotiating partner (Choe, 2007b). Nonetheless, the implementation of the February 13 Agreement was criticised as progressing at a slow pace. There was a delay from North Korea in shutting down the Yongbyon nuclear site within the timeframe, because North Korea demanded the settlement of the BDA issue first (J. A. Yang, 2007). In addition, difficulties in implementing the agreement arose from the US's and North Korea's differences in interpretation of the term used. While North Korea understood that it had to temporarily suspend its nuclear facilities, the United States stressed that the term "disablement" in the agreement referred to a total dismantlement (Choe, 2007a).

Regardless of the progress and breakthrough, the Six-Party Talks were later affected by a change in the administrations of both the United States and South Korea. In addition, progress in the Six-Party Talks were stalled by Japan's refusal not to take part in implementing the Agreement, and Japan's strong request for progress on the abduction issue. North Korea also needed to take some responsibility for the failure of the Six-Party Talks. North Korea failed to submit a full declaration of all of its nuclear programmes by the deadline stipulated in the October 3 Agreement (I. Kim, 2009, p. 93). North Korea's delay was caused by technical problems and for political reasons. S. Y. Kim (2008, p. 109) says that, although there was a technical issue involved in the process of disablement, the delay was mainly motivated by North Korea's dissatisfaction with other parties for not delivering heavy fuel oil within the schedule. Prof. Koo (2011) had this to say about the failure of the Six-Party Talks:

> "The US government argues that North Korea has critical responsibility in cancelling the agreement between the two countries. However, North Korea argues that the United States has been false in implementing the Agreed Framework and the September 19 Joint Statement, which is made by the Six-Party Talks in 2005. And by looking at a lot of agreements between the United States and North Korea and also amongst the six parties; however, any agreements have not been abided by the six parties. So, usually western people think that only North Korea violates the agreements. I do not agree with that." (Interview Prof. Koo, 2011)

North Korea's nuclear ambitions grew at the beginning of 2009, when they conducted a missile test in April, followed by an underground nuclear test in May. In response to the UN Security Council's condemnation of North Korea's missile test launch, North Korea declared,

> "The DPRK will never participate in such Six-Party Talks nor will it be bound any longer to any agreement of the talks as they have been reduced to a platform for encroaching upon its sovereignty and forcing it to disarm itself and bringing down its system" (KCNA, 2009d)

Despite China's efforts to resume the talks, the Six-Party Talks were at a standstill. Obstacles to the resumption of the talks included the policies of each member state. The Obama administration adopted a policy of strategic patience, waiting for North Korea to return to the table. Japan prioritised the abduction issue over denuclearisation. South Korea's policy was conditional engagement with denuclearisation as a prerequisite for engagement. Lastly, Russia's main focus was the economy and, at the same time, it lacked the political power to influence North Korea.

7.3 Future Prospects for the Six-Party Talks

With the lack of progress in inter-Korean dialogue and in US-North Korean bilateral relations, the Six-Party Talks turned out to be the only available diplomatic channel. Prof. Moon (2011) said of the Six-Party Talks as a means for solving the North Korean nuclear problem,

> "The Six-Party Talks is the most effective way in solving the problem of North Korea. This is because since the Second World War, it is for the first time that the United States, Russia, China, and North-South Korea to sit together and call for some kind of negotiation mechanism. The United States alone does not have any finance and resources to revert North Korea. Therefore, the United States needs help from South Korea, China, Japan, and Russia." (Interview Prof. Moon, 2011)

China showed its enthusiasm for reviving the Six-Party Talks, especially with rising tensions in the peninsula following the Cheonan incident in March 2010. The resumption of the Six-Party Talks was on the agenda for meetings between Kim Jong Il and Hu Jintao during Kim's two visits to China, in May and August 2010. Kim Jong Il affirmed the significance of the Six-Party Talks (KCNA, 2010a). Fully aware of North Korea's demands, China proposed a plan to organise a US-DPRK bilateral meeting before the Six-Party Talks were convened (Harlan, 2010a). China sees engagement as a method to realise denuclearisation without a sudden change to North Korea, and also a platform that could help China improve its own bilateral relations with the United States (Thompson & Matthews, 2011, pp. 187-188). However, China's efforts failed to revive the Six-Party Talks, and China was criticised for its inability to use leverage to influence North Korea to return to the negotiating table. It was clear that the main players of the talks – namely the United States, South Korea, and North Korea – could not reach a compromise on how best to resume the Talks, particularly when tensions ran high because of North Korea's provocations. South Korea connected the provocations with the resumption of the Six-Party Talks, demanding an apology from North Korea for sinking the Cheonan prior to the talks (S. Kim, 2010). Although the demand was later toned down, South Korea remained tough, and vowed to push back the Six-Party Talks until concrete results were reached (McDonald, 2010). Prof. D. H. Han (2011) expressed his opinion on the prospects of the Six-Party Talks solving the North Korean nuclear problem thus:

> "I think the resumption of the Six-Party Talks itself does not change anything. The more important thing is main content. For example, the United States says North Korea should resolve the uranium enrichment programme before the resumption of the Six-Party Talks. But North Korea says the issue should be discussed at the Six-Party Talks. Originally the Six-Party Talks is based on the plutonium nuclear weapons not the uranium." (Interview Prof. D. H. Han, 2011)

Following the Yeonpyeong shelling incident, the United States and Japan joined South Korea in pressuring for a substantial concessions from North Korea (BBC News, 2012). North Korea had requested that the Talks resume without preconditions, but North Korea continued to face demands from the United States for a commitment on nuclear disarmament first. The trilateral cooperation between the United States, Japan, and South Korea was created as a result of the denuclearisation process. It turns out that the allies shared the same perspective

as the United States. The three countries affirmed the need for North Korea to take the talks seriously, to make them an effective negotiation forum (G. L. Moon, 2012).

The Six-Party Talks may fail in their mission to denuclearise the Korean peninsula, but the Talks have yielded some substantive progress towards the peace and security of the region. First, the talks function as a platform for the organisation of bilateral negotiations between the United States and North Korea, as a sideline within the Six-Party framework. Without the Six-Party Talks, it seems unlikely that US-North Korean bilateral dialogue could be convened, particularly with the Obama administration's adoption of the policy of strategic patience. Secondly, the Six-Party Talks also brought China closer to the United States, as both cooperated in attempting to achieve the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula. Thirdly, the United States plays the role of mediator by connecting South Korea and Japan as part of US-ROK-Japan trilateral relations.

South Korean-Japanese relations were considered the weakest among the bilateral relations in the region, and they had been constrained mainly by Japan's wartime legacy, and also by the dispute over the possession of islets in the Sea of Japan. Nonetheless, it is claimed that the key to reviving the Six-Party Talks lies in two things: Inter-Korean dialogue and US-North Korean bilateral relations. Inter-Korean dialogue, which has lacked any form of progress since 2008, could lead to a breakthrough in the stalemate. Inter-Korean relations are just one of the ways to ease regional tensions because, as the regional atmosphere relaxes, so the chances for resuming the Six-Party Talks would improve (Interview Prof. Y. Y. Kim, 2011). The adoption of the Lee Myung Bak government's policy of grand bargaining pushed North Korea further into isolation. The grand bargaining initiative was structured on the "action for action" principle, and outlined the steps North Korea must take in order to receive compensation from the other five regional powers until it achieves a complete denuclearisation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea, 2010). Although the policy outlines the benefits North Korea would receive if it takes steps towards denuclearisation, it also showed a tougher approach for dealing with North Korea. Since the process requires close discussions and consultations among the five participants, it means stronger cooperation between all five parties. Besides, North Korea is also required to make the first move in dismantling its projects before receiving any concessions (The National Institute for Defense Studies, 2010, p. 89). North Korea strongly criticised the grand bargaining policy because it shares the same principles as the "Vision 3000" policy, which sought the end of

the North Korean regime (KCNA, 2009f). The grand bargaining did not help in reducing North Korea's sense of insecurity. This is because the policy clearly outlines that North Korea's bilateral relations with the United States will not be part of the concessions (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea, 2010).

On the other hand, the relationship between the United States and North Korea also played a considerable role in contributing to the progress of the Six-Party Talks. It is clear that the policy adopted by the Obama administration does not facilitate the denuclearisation of the peninsula. The United States was rather "sceptical" of North Korea, as seen in its demand to first see a commitment from North Korea before any steps would be taken in pushing ahead with dialogue (Bosworth & Gullucci, 2013). Obama's passive diplomacy greatly affects the progress of the Six-Party Talks, when the United States makes it clear that it will no longer use concessions as incentives for encouraging North Korea to return to the negotiation table (C. I. Moon, 2012). Prof. Paik (2011) explains the effect the Obama administration's policy has on the Six-Party Talks thus:

> "If you put pressure on North Korea, North Korea will not come to negotiation table easily. They rather strengthen defence capability but at the same time North Korea will see the need to come to the negotiation table with the United States and solve the problem so that it can receive less threat from the United States. During the presidential campaign, President Obama promised to have even summit talk to solve the nuclear issue. But Obama did not take a positive step to make his promise true. North Korea was dissatisfied and does not see the need to come to the negotiation table." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

The Six-Party Talks could be resumed if the parties agreed, first, to drop the preconditions they each have set, because they reflect the feelings of distrust between the parties. North Korea in particular believed that the preconditions set by the United States and South Korea are in violation of the spirit of the September 19 Joint Statement. Efforts by China alone might not be enough to persuade North Korea to return to the talks. The current circumstances do not facilitate the resumption of the Six-Party Talks, with the lack of progress in both inter-Korean dialogue and US-North Korea bilateral relations. The Six-Party Talks had already made significant progress towards denuclearisation with the release of the September 19 Joint Statement, which is widely regarded as a major breakthrough that

articulates concrete steps for disarmament. The fundamental question is how best to make all parties commit to implement the provisions listed in the Statement if the Six-Party Talks once again resume.

7.4 Conclusion

The Six-Party Talks cannot persuade North Korea to lower its deterrence level. All parties share the same impression of regional insecurity as caused by North Korea, but their interaction in the forum shows the overlap of individual national interests over the agenda of the forum. The Six-Party Talks show that there are internal structures within the main framework. They are inter-Korean relations, US-DPRK relations, and the US's alliance relationships. These are the result of the national interests that come into play when states try to interact at the international level. National interest can refer to security interest, economic interest, political interest, and identity interest. States do not want to drop their national interests during the times when they cooperate with other states. This is because there is no guarantee that national interests can be secured when the system of anarchy pushes states to act independently. The inability to overcome individual interests leads to the forum becoming ineffective. Regional powers approach the Six-Party Talks in accordance to their interests. The United States' main focus is the total nuclear disarmament of North Korea. The Japanese government wants to see progress on the abduction issue over denuclearisation, because its security is guaranteed through its alliance with the US. South Korea agrees with the need for denuclearisation, but the prospects for handling the issue depends on the policy adopted by each government. China's concern is that denuclearisation should be resolved without altering the status quo. Russia sees the Six-Party Talks as a road to regain power in the region.

The unclearly written clause about the provision of a LWR in the September 19 Joint Statement shows an inability to compromise security among members. The realists assume that there is unequal distribution of power, which causes states to compete out of their security concerns. Although cooperation has formed among the regional powers under the framework of the Six-Party Talks, their behaviour is influenced by the distribution of power. This refers to attempts by both China and Russia to prevent the United States from

dominating the denuclearisation process. This partly explains China's and Russia's emphasis on the use of dialogue and their support for the LWR request, which has led them to be criticised as appeasing North Korea. The United States is also concerned about the power of North Korea. The US preference for CVID shows its security concern. Failure to unanimously interpret the clauses in the September 19 Joint Statement and to implement the February 13 Agreement has given North Korea the opportunity to continue developing a nuclear weapons programme.

The Six-Party Talks are an effort to solve the nuclear problem at the international level. However, the forum does not actually address the security needs of North Korea. What North Korea wants is bilateral negotiations with the United States, and diplomatic recognition from the United States is a condition for denuclearisation. The inclusion of other players in the forum means that the power of the United States is diminished. The multilateral platform means other players share the same responsibilities as the United States for dealing and negotiating with North Korea. Although cooperation is assumed possible when confronting an aggressor, the method does not guarantee success when there is the possibility that conflict between states could arise during their interactions (Mearsheimer, 2007, p. 80). The six parties each have different interests. The Six-Party Talks, in the end, are a platform to manage rather than solve the North Korean nuclear problem (Interview Anonymous, 2011). North Korea allows the talks to collapse because it does not see the value of attending. In order to resume the Six-Party Talks, the use of either bilateral dialogue between the US and North Korea, or inter-Korean dialogue to kick-start engagement and trust-building. The assumption of anarchy and insecurity explains states' need for power. It may be impossible for states to fully abandon their defence, but it is more likely that states would lower their defences when their security is assured at a certain level.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

The chapters in this thesis have explored both the internal and external determinants surrounding the North Korean question with the primary objective of finding answers to the problem of whether North Korea's deterrence strategy can be called rational or irrational as international security studies and international strategic studies understands these terms. This concluding chapter has three purposes as set out at the end of Chapter 2: it will summarise the answers to the five analytical questions; it will evaluate the two conceptual questions; and finally it will evaluate the two hypotheses.

Analytical Questions

In an attempt to develop answers for the hypotheses of the thesis, the following analytical questions were proposed:

1. What are the internal determinants that shape the threat perception of North Korea? To what extent is the high level of threat perception a product North Korea creates in order to keep the legitimacy of its regime and the power of the leader?

2. How has the relationship of the two Koreas played an effect on the North Korea's perception? Are all the military and other forms of provocations for deterring South Korea or for purposes not connected to deterrence?

3. How has the interaction of the major powers in the region contributed to the North Korea's decision making on the deterrence level? Why have the major powers not been able to reassure or deter North Korea?

4. What have been the primary objectives of the US strategy towards North Korea? How does the US strategy for DPRK interact with broader US objectives for managing its

relations in Northeast Asia? Is the US deterrence strategy a cause of the security dilemma in the region or a means of managing it?

5. Having failed to either co-opt or deter DPRK from its deterrence strategy on a bilateral basis the regional powers proceeded to a multilateral process - the Six Party Talks - in order to achieve denuclearisation on the peninsula. What does the interaction of the concerned parties in this process tell us about the limits of multilateral diplomacy as a route to normalisation on the peninsula? Is there any prospect that multilateral engagements can persuade DPRK to lower its deterrence threshold?

Having concluded a theoretical and empirical examination of the North Korean question this thesis would answer these questions in the following ways:

Question 1

Chapter 3 reviewed North Korea's background, regime structure, ideology and political system. The review showed a connection between the internal characteristics of the regime, its change over time and the deterrence level. In the early stage of the Cold War the first leader of the DPRK Kim Il Sung focused on building up the nation. Kim Il Sung introduced communism into North Korea while maintaining features of the traditional structure of Confucianism. Although Confucianism talks about the respect the younger should pay to the older, the introduction of the Juche ideology and the personality cult of the leader enhanced the strength of Kim Il Sung's leadership role and power. The combination of communism and the leadership cult of personality form the unique system of North Korea so that the leadership's security and the regime's security are united. The connection of these two things makes it very difficult for North Korea to adjust its internal structure when change could possibly lead to a total collapse of the overall system. The political system of North Korea becomes fused with the national identity of North Korea.

North Korea has from the very beginning a security concern about its future survival. The fear of being attacked by the United States and being overtaken by South Korea remains throughout the post-Cold War period. The loss of a primary ally with the fall of the Soviet Union influences North Korea to strive to maintain independence on its own. A sense of nationalism is highlighted because North Korea wants to keep its own identity against all changes in the international system. This identity demand of North Korea influences the behaviour of the state. North Korea remains highly defensive and the nuclear strategy reflects the defensive mechanism of North Korea. Identity also plays a role in structuring the relationship North Korea has with other countries. The mixture of various kinds of political elements makes North Korea has a rather unique behaviour that is different even from the other socialist countries. Some of the elements such as the dictatorship system and the authoritarianism produce the irrational actor image in the eyes of the international community (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011). So North Korea's identity forms part of the relationship structure it has with other countries.

North Korea is sensitive whenever its security is challenged. The post-Cold War structure clearly shows an imbalance of power between North Korea and other countries, which is especially affected by the failure of its ally the Soviet Union. Nuclear weapons become one of the possible ways that help North Korea secure itself and rebalance the defence level with other countries. The political system of North Korea makes it rather unique but at the same time increases its vulnerability. A high threat perception results from how North Korea wants to keep its unique system and its position in the international structure as they are. The system of one-man rule requires the continuous justification of the leadership by maintaining the leader's power and dominance in the ruling system. It is usually seen that the leader is credited whenever the defensive actions are carried out. This is the way North Korea manipulates external threat for internal stability. The use of political ideology and military policy such as Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism, songun, kangsong taeguk are methods to protect the leader, the system, and the nation from challenges of internal change through power transition and external change from the new international political structure. North Korea fears external threat because it has a higher potential than the internal factor in causing change to the internal system. The strengthening of the power and influence of the military sector is for security reasons but at the same time it supports the legitimacy of the leader and the justification of the system. The level of defence operated by the regime cannot be lowered

as long as the leadership feels insecure due to the possibility of change to the overall structure of the regime from outside threats. It also ties together the political leadership of the ruling family and the military leadership of the country in the same survival strategy.

Question 2

The review of the inter-Korean relations shows the entrenched competition of the two Koreas since 1950. The security dilemma arising from the competition in inter-Korean relations plays an impact on the behaviour of both countries even more than the influence of other states. This is due to the historical factor of the forced division that makes Korea a divided nation and the resulting competition to achieve reunification by different systems. Competition between the two countries is not about security alone but includes also the elimination of one state by the other under reunification. In the Cold War period both sides sought to undermine the other and competed in reaching for reunification. Although the struggle for reunification is toned down over the course of the Cold war because the United States and the Soviet Union provided guarantees against forced reunification, the issue still affects the policy and perception of the two countries. North Korea is highly affected by this issue. North Korea feels insecure because the disparity it has with South Korea in terms of economic and social developments increases in later decades. The security dilemma between the two Koreas exists throughout the Cold War period but intensifies as the power imbalance between the two countries increases. The change in international politics with the fall of the Soviet Union shifts the balance of power further between North Korea and South Korea. North Korea loses a key ally, while South Korea continues to secure its alliance partnership with the United States and even gains a new relationship with China. Inter-Korean relations and particularly the reunification issue proves a source of fear and insecurity for North Korea. North Korea fears the reunification by absorption as it becomes clear that South Korea has an advantage over North Korea in all aspects in realising the unification objective.

The post-Cold War period shows that North Korea develops a sense of fear from two factors – the reunification by absorption and the US-ROK alliance. The wide development gap North Korea has with South Korea influences North Korea's perception and state's interest. North Korea shifts its focus from achieving reunification to maintaining the status quo. The development of nuclear weapons is part of the strategy to secure these threats - resisting absorption and deterring the US-ROK alliance. Nuclear weapons provide North Korea with

the power of defence and the power to deter. Provocations are also used tactically to serve various objectives ranging from reunification to security and deterrence. Most provocations in the Cold War period are progressive moves North Korea makes in reaching for reunification. Provocations in the post-Cold War are conducted for purposes other than reunification. Some of them are to deter the US-ROK military attack as seen from the shelling of Yeonpyeong island. Some of them such as the missile launch of 2012 are to test the policy of the new South Korean government in preparing its responses. Provocations in the current period serve the security interest of North Korea but do not reflect a desire for expansion or to overturn the status quo. To achieve unification under the North Korean terms has become policy rhetoric rather than policy implementation. North Korea prefers co-existence with South Korea. Provocations sustain the security dilemma but the security dilemma has not resulted in war because the strategy of deterrence, including by nuclear weapons, has worked. As such, North Korea sees the value of provocations as making gains without changing the status quo. Provocations can lead to a result of concessions from the international community but main objective of all actions is for security and survival (Interview Dr. E. C. Lim, 2011). Provocations are conducted as a response to the security demand North Korea has with South Korea, especially during the time of an imbalance of power between the two sides.

Question 3

Chapter 5 reviews the bilateral relations between North Korea and the regional powers in the post-Cold war period and the interaction among the regional powers that influence the Korean affairs. The reviews show an impact of the politics at the regional level on North Korea's perception and decision-making. North Korea has relations with all the regional powers at the bilateral level. However, each player has different interests and objectives in their relations with North Korea. This individual interest plays a role in affecting their perception and interaction among each other when dealing with the question of North Korea. While China and Russia's interest are in economy and regional stability, Japan's interest is to settle the abduction issue. When assessing the defence level, Japan is the weakest among the three regional powers. However, Japan's security is guaranteed under the US alliance partnership and this framework indicates how the role of the United States in the region

shapes the way the regional powers view Korean affairs and drives their efforts at balancing against each other.

The interaction of the regional powers with the objective of balancing shows that they operate independent from each other: any cooperation they may have does not alter their main objective of balancing each other's influence. This independence of action was further highlighted by the new structure of the post-Cold War. China and Russia adjusted themselves to the new environment abandoning the alliance partnership with North Korea. Efforts of Russia and China to revive the relationship have not restored it to the previous level. North Korea lost the support from the allies resulting in an imbalance of power between North Korea on the one hand and the United States and its allies on the other. The new political structure forced North Korea to maintain its independence by its own effort. Nuclear weapons and other defensive measures are developed for this purpose. Although the regional players share the same viewpoint on the level of insecurity in the region arising from the nuclear problem of North Korea, cooperation among them does not reflect their ability to manage the issue at the root cause level. North Korea has long emphasised its focus on security assurances from the United States, beginning with a Peace Treaty. The regional powers may not be the main actors who can respond to this request but their interaction in counterbalancing against each other does not help to move the regional structure in the right direction. Each individual player has their own interest and different views on the level of insecurity the problem of North Korea's weapons programme has caused. As influenced by their own interest, the regional powers manage the situation to prevent it from worsening rather than solving the problem through answering the security needs of North Korea. As such, the regional powers' behaviour of counterbalancing and the shifts of policy towards Korean affairs could not be considered a sign of security assurance. North Korea could not rely on any state particularly during the time when its security has not been assured. The interaction among the regional powers makes the regional environment even more unpredictable for North Korea. North Korea struggles to survive among the interaction of regional power relations and the result of the struggle is an increase in the regime's sense of distrust. The search for independence in the hostile environment is among the rationale for the high level of deterrence of North Korea.

Question 4

Most analysts agree the United States is the key player in the problem of North Korea. The review of the US policy towards North Korea reveals the policy priority of the United States which is the containment of North Korea and the total dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear weapons. Methods to achieve this objective vary from administration to administration. The power of the United States in Northeast Asia is maintained after the fall of Communism through the alliance partnership the United States has with its Asian allies. The US security guarantee is considered essential to Asian allies particularly during the time of threat and insecurity. This is because the military capacity of the countries in Asia in the US alliance system relies heavily on the United States. An example is the military structure of South Korea, which is described as:

> "The US security guarantee is still important to South Korea. Historically speaking, South Korea is hugely dependent on the US forces. The United States invest their air and naval powers on the Korean peninsula. Instead we have invested our manpower and army powers. Military structure itself reflects this kind of imbalance of US-Korea relationship." (Interview Prof. D. H. Han, 2011)

The post-Cold War structure influences the policy and perception of the United States. The new structure sees the rise of new nuclear states which the United States perceives as posing a threat to its own position and the system of regimes such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty that it operates. There are various terms used in describing these states but the term 'rogue state' is often used after 2000. Rogue state refers to states that have connections to terrorism or attempt to develop weapons of mass destruction and North Korea is categorised in this group according to the US standard (Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011). This perception affects the way the United States approaches and deals with the problem of North Korea. It refers to the US judgement without taking into consideration the background or the situation of North Korea (Interview Prof. D. H. Han, 2011; Interview Prof. Y. Y. Kim, 2011). The United States views North Korea from this perspective of seeing North Korea as an irrational and dangerous country. The unique political system and the characteristics of the regime make it difficult for the United States and the international community to clearly understand North Korea and its behaviour. This gap in understanding of the North Korean regime and the

negative perception from the idea of rogue state form part of explanation for the failure to achieve effective negotiations.

The United States approaches and deals with North Korea through its own understanding and policy preference. Regardless of the methods in achieving total nuclear dismantlement, the United States bases its longterm policy for the North Korean on regime collapse. The anticipation of the regime collapse is a prediction that rather lacks credibility and also shows a lack of knowledge of the United States on the system and nature of North Korea (Interview Prof. Y. Y. Kim, 2011; Interview Prof. Paik, 2011). The US perception of North Korea is further changed by the events of September 11 2001 which heightened the United States concern with the potential of rogue states to mount attacks on the US. After 9/11 the United States named North Korea as part of an axis of evil. The axis of evil term is an extension of the idea of rogue states and shows the evil nature of North Korea by claiming the regime's association with global terrorism (Interview Prof. Moon, 2011; Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011). References to North Korea as either rogue state or axis of evil shows the negativity of the United States to North Korea and indicates the US objective of removing the North Korean problem through regime change. The US hardline policy elevates the sense of insecurity of North Korea. North Korea fears an immediate US attack for the first time since the end of the Cold War period and North Korea's demands for security assurances are further away than ever. North Korea perceives the US extended deterrence to its Asian allies as a security threat and the security dilemma between North Korea and the United States is very intense in the years after 9/11. North Korea seeks to reach some equilibrium with the United States through nuclear development in the hope of gaining the power of deterring attack and forcing the United States to negotiate.

Question 5

The Six-Party Talks are the multilateral formula set up as an alternative to solving the North Korean nuclear problem. The forum is initiated on the US belief in the failure of the bilateral negotiation. The involvement of the regional powers in the negotiation process is the way the United States aims to share its responsibility and to use the international cooperation in pressuring North Korea to denuclearise. The regional powers share the same view that the North Korean nuclear problem causes regional instability. However, their cooperation in the

Six-Party Talks could not bring about the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula. The Six-Party Talks clearly show differences of interest among the members. Each individual has their own interest that they want to secure and it turns out that members concern is with their own national interest rather than the agenda of the talks. In other words, the regional members see the Six-Party Talks as a platform to resolve bilateral issues and secure their national interest. The inclusion of the abduction issue in the agenda of the forum is among the examples of how the Six-Party Talks are manipulated. A failure to reach consensus in interpreting and implementing the agreements causes an ineffectiveness of the Six-Party Talks in dealing with the problem of North Korea. The Six-Party Talks have too many players who do not only fail to reconcile their national interest but also fail to search for an alternative in light of the failure of the forum (Interview Anonymous, 2011; Interview Prof. Chung, 2011).

The progress of the Six-Party Talks is also affected by the relations the regional members have between or among each other. The relationship and interaction the regional members have at the bilateral level are introduced at the multilateral level within the structure of the Six-Party Talks. The Six-Party Talks can be implemented or resumed dependent on the bilateral relations of the members rather than the structure or the agenda of the forum per se. The multilateral negotiation does not help the United States achieve the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula. The expansion of bilateral to multilateral negotiation by engaging more players complicates the diplomatic effort in solving the nuclear problem. The nature of the nuclear problem requires the bilateral negotiation between North Korea and the United States. The unsettled Korean War issue is the main objective for North Korea because this issue is the bottom line that obstructs the diplomatic normalisation between the United States and North Korea to happen (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011). North Korea does not see the Six-Party Talks as useful because the multilateral forum does not answer the regime's objective of bilateral negotiations with the United States. China is fully aware of North Korea's desire for the direct talks with the United States (C. I. Moon, 2012). However, China does not have power or leverage to influence the United States to have the required dialogue with North Korea. North Korea is not interested in the Six-Party Talks from the beginning and slowly loses trust in the forum particularly after the agreements are not implemented in the time schedule. The Six-Party Talks become a forum that manages but does not solve the North Korea's nuclear problem. This is because of the factor of differences of interest all six

members have. The Six-Party Talks do not provide any security guarantees to North Korea. In addition, the Six-Party Talks need the US-DPRK and the inter-Korean relations to support and complement each other. The North-South relations can help ease tensions in the Korean peninsula but the key to the progress of the Six-Party Talks is the US-DPRK bilateral relations. The regional powers should be involved in the peace process to support the normalisation of DPRK-US relations rather than taking the leading role in solving the nuclear problem. The Six-Party Talks have been widely criticised for their ineffectiveness to denuclearise North Korea. Nonetheless, the forum is a method of engagement that prevents further nuclear proliferation if North Korea is pushed into isolation. The Six-Party Talks, if resumed, require full cooperation and consensus of all parties in implementing all agreements agreed upon in the previous talks, and in realising the denuclearisation goal.

Conclusion to the analytical questions

The review of the North Korean regime and its relations with the regional powers both at the bilateral and multilateral levels shows that the internal and external determinants play a role in the North Korea's deterrence level. First of all, the primary internal determinant is the national identity of North Korea. North Korea has a unique political system with a combination of various elements. The internal system of North Korea was set up by Kim Il Sung after the end of the Korean War and has not experienced much change in decades after. Although there is an effort to launch an economic reform initiative more recently, the reform is implemented at a rather slow pace and in a small scale. North Korea fears major change because it is highly likely that it could bring about the total collapse of the overall system. When the international political structure changed following the fall of Communism, North Korea did not adjust itself to the new environment but sought to maintain its own political, social, and economic systems. A desire to keep its identity amidst all changes makes North Korea feel vulnerable towards the international environment. Insecurity leads to the pursuit of all possible defensive mechanisms including the pursuit of nuclear weapons. The outbreak of the nuclear crisis in the post-Cold War period indicates the insecurity of North Korea but when the United States decided to enter into the bilateral dialogue with North Korea, it also showed the successful use of the proliferation issue in drawing attention from the United States. Concerning this, Prof. Paik (2011) says that,

> "North Korea wanted to officially end the Korean War and to normalise the relationship with the United States, Japan, and South Korea. The problem was that the United States was not willing to come to the negotiation table. We have to understand the special characters of nuclear weapons development programme and nuclear weapons itself. In other words, if you want to denuclearise North Korea, you are not supposed to begin a war or avoid it. If you avoid, you cannot achieve your security goals and security interest. If you allow North Korea to go nuclear then how the United States can achieve the goal of the world without nuclear weapons. There is no other way if you are trying to take care of security interest of your own. You have to come to negotiation table to deal with all nuclear problems. That is the basic thing the negotiation took place two decades in the past. North Korea used the nuclear card in early 1990s and the United States had to come to negotiation table. So we have 1994 Agreed Framework in Geneva. North Korea used another nuclear card in 2000 and that we have the September 19 Joint Statement." (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011)

The internal determinant of national identity of North Korea plays a role in the perception between North Korea and the international community. The United States in particular has developed a negative viewpoint on North Korea as influenced by the fact that North Korea continues to be a socialistic and dictatorial country despite the change in the international political structure (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011). North Korea is also a human rights abuser according to the western standard and judgment (Interview Prof. D. H. Han, 2011). On the other hand, North Korea understands the world based on its viewpoint as influenced by its own national and political backgrounds. North Korea is structured on a combination between the western idea of Communism and the eastern idea of Confucianism. The combination leads to the unique internal structure under tight control of a single leader drawn from one family. The one-man dictatorship system is the factor that connects the leadership security with the regime security. Prof. I. H. Park (2011) explains that,

> "National security is a kind of broad concept based on the agreement and demand of general public. According to western criteria, government supposes to provide a secure condition to their citizens in the name of national security. If the people are not satisfied with condition of national security, they may choose different government, different political leadership and so on. This is the normal

> way of the national society. But in the case of North Korea, there is no national security. What is going on in North Korea, they only have leadership security and regime security. They identify leadership security or regime security identical to national security. Since they identify national security to leadership security, whenever North Korea has different leadership or different political power group, they assume such a kind of happening is a loss to their national security. There is no public opinion and there is no ordinary people's demand the way how they define national security. That is why Kim Il Sung chose his son and that is why Kim Jong Il decided to choose his son. North Korea's national security is only possible under the assumption of Kim's family leadership security." (Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011)

As such, sustainability of the North Korean regime is assumed under the condition of the leadership security. In other words, a sense of insecurity is caused by the nature of North Korea itself. The regime nature is considered the weakness of North Korea because it makes it difficult for North Korea to take a path to reform in changing its basic system (Interview Prof. S. H. Sheen, 2011). The system and the regime nature form the identity of North Korea. The factor of identity influences the threat perception of North Korea as based on the desire to secure their nation and their system.

Insecurity by the internal factor is pushed further by the international factor. The fall of Communism shifts a sense of insecurity of North Korea from South Korea to the United States. In the Cold War period, North Korea is driven by the desire to achieve unification during the time North Korea is stronger than South Korea. In the post-Cold War period, the desire for unification is overtaken by the desire for regime survival. An imbalance of power between North Korea and the United States is highlighted when the new structure deprives North Korea of allies. North Korea feels uncomfortable with the US presence in Asia and is made insecure by the US power from the alliance system. North Korea develops a belief in the scenario of the US invasion in bringing down its socialist regime following the collapse of the socialist bloc and this is the logic for the development of nuclear weapons to defend their country (Interview Dr. E. C. Lim, 2011). A sense of insecurity towards the United States becomes more apparent following the US adoption of a hardline policy in categorising North Korea as a rogue state and a part of an axis of evil. The US reluctance to have a dialogue with

North Korea also shows the US non-recognition of the legitimacy of North Korea (Bluth, 2008, p. 182).

The post-Cold War structure also shows the independence of states. The interplay of regional powers on the Korean affairs to counterbalance power and influence among one another is rather clear when the new international political structure is not directed and shaped by confrontation of the two superpowers. The new structure instead shows a hegemonic power of the United States in the region to which China and Russia offer resistance. The relationship the United States has with the Asian allies also underlines its power and influence in the region. China and Russia's participation in the multilateral negotiation platform does not come from an objective of solving the North Korea's nuclear proliferation alone. They both also see an opportunity the forum can provide in balancing the power of the United States and also in fulfilling their national interest. In addition, South Korea and Japan also see the need to be involved in the peace process despite the fact that their security is guaranteed under the US alliance system. The nuclear problem of North Korea relates strongly to the security of South Korea. The two Koreas are connected by history and identity and this is the factor which makes the security dilemma between the two so intense. There is asymmetrical level of defence between the two countries. According to the statistics, South Korea's military is smaller than North Korea. However, economic capability and technology know-how make it easier and likely for South Korea to upgrade their military and modernise their weapons (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011). The asymmetrical level is clear when taking the issue of nuclear weapons into consideration. Concerning this, Prof. M. Kwon (2011) elaborates that,

> "North Korea has around 1.2 or 1.3 million armed forces but I would say in terms of conventional military, it is not a strong country. Their military spending is far smaller than South Korean military spending. North Korea's GDP is 150th of South Korea's. They have about 20 billion dollars but South Korea's GDP is almost 1 trillion. It is a very small economy and they cannot afford big conventional army. I mean not only in term of soldiers. They have very poor weapons and conventional arms. They are not strong country. However, North Korea tested nuclear devices twice but South Korea does not have one. In that sense, that is what we call asymmetrical in the development of weaponry. In that aspect, North Korea is a strong country. So far as North Korea develops nuclear

> weapons and South Korea does not, that makes the US-ROK alliance important because of the extended deterrence." (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011)

Lastly, Japan engages in the nuclear problem from the US desire for the Japan's financial support. Japan later sees an opportunity within the multilateral forum for resolving the abduction issue.

The regional powers interact in counterweighing the power of one another to ensure the status quo in the region. The seeking for status quo plays an effect on North Korea's nuclear development also. In other words, it refers to the desire for regime survival of North Korea which involves with the issue of unification. An internal problem North Korea is experiencing may point out to an inefficiency of North Korea to achieve the unification on its own term. However, an international politics by the interplay of the regional powers is among the factors to the possibility of the unification of Korea. North Korea is fully aware of how the international politics can determine the future of the two Koreas, which Prof. I. H. Park (2011) explains as:

> "If anyone asks me what is the most important characteristic factor regarding Korean problem, I would say that Korean problem is a kind of combination between North and South Korea relations and international relations. Unification is only possible under agreements of the United States, Japan, China, and Russia. Unified Korea with nuclear capability is impossible. North Korea knows that as long as they do not give up nuclear capability, unification is impossible." (Interview Prof. I. H. Park, 2011)

The interplay of regional powers on the Korean affairs makes North Korea realise the need to be independent on its own. Independence is rather clear under the condition that North Korea has no allies, has to counter the US military threat, and has to defend itself against the possibility of South Korea's forced unification. The interplay of regional powers together with the hostile policy from the United States and South Korea creates the foreign pressure on North Korea which pushes for a search for defensive mechanisms in guaranteeing its survival in the hostile environment.

It is possible to say that the external determinant has an edge over the internal determinant in influencing the threat perception of North Korea. An increase of North Korea's deterrence

level corresponds to the way North Korea perceives threat. First of all, it is apparent that North Korea faces with an increased threat to its security since the Cold War period. It begins with the nuclear threat from the United States to the threat of unification by absorption from South Korea from the late Cold War period onwards. The new political structure of the post-Cold War underlines the threat perception of North Korea with an imbalance of power between North Korea on the one hand and the United States and South Korea on the other hand. The outbreak of the two nuclear crises one after the other shows North Korea's search for a high level of deterrence which does not lower after the negotiations. The failure of negotiation is based on the reason that it does not directly answer the need of North Korea which is the recognition of its sovereignty and the assurance of its regime security. Negotiation in both bilateral and multilateral models turns out to be the way to manage rather than solve the problem of North Korea. The insecurity North Korea has towards the United States and the regional environment influences North Korea to seek for methods of securing itself. Nuclear weapons turn out to be the effective and cost-cutting methods in helping North Korea reach the balance of power with the United States (Interview Prof. Koo, 2011). Although the development of nuclear weapons for the deterrence purpose is the most important motive of North Korea, a sense of regime survival is also connected with the domestic politics (Interview Prof. Moon, 2011). While the external determinant affects North Korea's threat perception, the internal determinant is the factor that often changes the level of deterrence of North Korea. The unique internal structure distinguishes North Korea from other states. The socialist system which is run by the dictator projects a rogue state image and in the viewpoint of the international community North Korea could soon collapse because it is unable to take a path to reform (Interview Prof. S. H. Sheen, 2011). The negativity North Korea receives from the international community elevates a sense of insecurity for the regime. A desire to survive without changing the regime's nature and identity makes it difficult for North Korea to lower its deterrence level. The deterrence level is likely to increase especially during the time the regime is faced with a hardline policy from the United States.

Before testing the hypotheses and reaching the final conclusion of whether the deterrence strategy of North Korea is rational or irrational under the assumptions of security and strategic studies, the following conceptual questions will be answered:

Conceptual Questions

1. What are the proper criteria for judging whether states are rational or irrational in terms of their security perceptions or deterrence strategies? How should we evaluate and test the relative influence of internal determinants and external environment in shaping security perception and deterrence behaviour?

2. What is an adequate level of deterrence for states? How can states gain security for themselves without making other states feel insecure; and is active provocation of a security dilemma with other states evidence of irrational thinking or behaviour?

Question 1

The realists and constructivists assume security as the most important thing states seek for in living in the system of anarchy. A desire for security pushes states to search for ways to secure themselves. When states strive for power, it raises the question of the relationship between the security perception and the deterrence strategy of states, and how rational the states are in their choice of increasing the deterrence level. First of all, it is important to take a note on the connection between anarchy, security competition, and power. Realists and constructivists have their own categories in defining the meaning of anarchy but both schools point out that the system of anarchy is the factor that influences states to seek to guarantee their survival. As based on the assumption of anarchy and insecurity, the security dilemma is a common thing that can happen. Booth and Wheeler (2008, p. 12) write that,

> "Believing that insecurity is an inescapable feature of the interstate condition, the 'logic of anarchy' is to strive to maximise power, and particularly military power. Sovereign states are seen as the only political organisations that can offer security, and the growth or maintenance of state power is seen as the only sure way to achieve it."

Anarchy conditions states to compete for security. However, the security dilemma can play an impact in influencing the level of threat perception of one state as determined by the structure of interstate relations and the individual background that the state has. As such, the

threat perception is subjective and the strategy to serve the threat perception is a choice of the individual state. It is possible to say that states have two choices when faced with what they perceive as an increased capacity of another state and they are either choosing to increase its defence levels or to assume benign intentions. Waltz (2001, p. 188) inclines towards believing in the first choice as "in the absence of a supreme authority, there is then constant possibility that conflicts will be settled by force". Jervis (2001, p. 36) confirms the need for states to increase its own defence levels in time of conflict because,

> "The core argument in time of security dilemma is that, in the absence of a supranational authority that can enforce binding agreements, many of the steps pursued by states to bolster their security have the effect – often unintended and unforeseen – of making other states less secure. The anarchic nature of the international system imposes constraints on states' behaviour. Even if they can be certain that the current intentions of other states are benign, they can neither neglect the possibility that the others will become aggressive in the future nor credibly guarantee that they themselves will remain peaceful."

There arises in consequence the debate on how rational states are in their decision to increase efforts to maintain their security. The theory of deterrence does not rule out the possibility of the outbreak of war among states. The theory instead suggests that this option, if it is chosen, should yield the highest outcome. As such, it is possible to say that rationality and irrationality in the decision-making depends on how well states evaluate all variables constituted to the choice and how well states calculate the policy preference of the other side in responding to its choice (Zagare, 1990, p. 239). Rationality in this sense means the final decision states choose should comply with the choice of positive prediction (Lebow & Stein, 1989, p. 211).

The assumption of anarchy suggests that environment as external determinant plays an important role in shaping the security perception and deterrence behaviour of states. Nonetheless, theorists such as Sagan (1996, p. 55) and Bracken (2012, pp. 106-108) point out the internal determinants of domestic politics and a sense of nationalism that could play an effect on the deterrence strategy of states. While Sagan (1996, pp. 63-65) claims the role of general public in influencing the nuclear acquisition of states, Bracken (2012, pp. 115-116)

stresses on the correlation between nationalism and nuclear ambition. According to Bracken (2012, pp. 116-117),

> "Nationalism and nuclear weapons are potentially a toxic mixture. The bomb may be viewed as a horrific weapon, but it's also a national accomplishment ... Nationalism can drive regional tensions and rivalry."

The context of domestic politics also plays a major part in the state's identity. Identity is the factor that defines the interests of states and the way states perceive threat (Hopf, 2002, pp. 16-17). Threat perception is varied based on individual background of states as well as external determinants. Stein (2013, pp. 367-368) says that states who have a high sense of nationalism are likely to have a high level of threat perception as they are defensive of their nation and national identity. Although the theory assumes the role of external determinant on the deterrence level and the security perception of states, there is the likelihood that states are influenced by the internal determinant also. Brooks (1997, p. 471) writes that the domestic politics can play a role in influencing the behaviour of states under some circumstances,

> "Systemic constraints will often cause states to discern a clear strategy to advance their overriding objectives; this will especially be the case when the international influences on states are very strong and/or when the state is relatively susceptible to these systemic factors. At other times, the strategy to pursue the state's primary objectives may be more ambiguous. In circumstance where the preferred strategy is unclear, the mechanism by which particular policies are selected may be significantly influenced by domestic-level bargaining."

Nonetheless, theorists such as Mearsheimer (2009, p. 246) and Sagan (1996, p. 65) tend to argue that the domestic factor can influence national security and foreign policy of states only at a marginal level. Therefore, the external determinant of environment is the factor that affects the security perception and deterrence behaviour as based on the conception of distribution of power among states within the system of anarchy. The domestic factor has several definitions based on the assumption and understanding of each theorist. The issue of national identity is among the factors that has the highest potential in influencing the behaviour of states. This is based on the assumption of constructivists that identity structures

the relationship of states on the basis of shared knowledge and this is the factor that organises material resources to serve a purpose beyond security assurance.

Question 2

The concept of deterrence talks about the search to balance the security level between states in the system of anarchy. States, when faced with the problem of insecurity, usually incline towards choosing an increase to their own security. The assumption of the correlation between anarchy, states, and power leads to the idea of the security dilemma. The security dilemma occurs when an attempt to increase the security of one state decreases security of another state which tempts the latter to follow the same path in choosing to balance the security level. States would choose to gain rather than to lose security. This is because states are driven by a sense of insecurity that makes them compete for security even without any desire of expansion (Posen, 1993, p. 28). The system of uncertainty influences states to assume the worst by overestimating the hostility of other states and feeling mistrust about intention of other states (Booth & Wheeler, 2008, p. 264; Jervis, 1988, p. 688). Jervis (1978, p. 174) assumes that the higher the degree states value their security, the higher the likelihood that states will incline towards demanding higher levels of deterrence. As such, it is possible for the spiral model of the security dilemma to escalate and eventually results in war.

This raises the question of what the adequate level of deterrence of one state should be. Since the theory assumes insecurity to be the main motivator of states, it is possible to say that the adequate level of deterrence would be at the point when states feel secure. The problem is that states have great difficulty deciding what is the point at which security is assured. Uncertainty about the level of security and insecurity often makes the security dilemma inescapable. The system of anarchy makes states feel uncertain of other states' intentions and this is part of the explanation why states choose to increase their security. According to J. Snyder (1985, pp. 154-155), states would be at risk the more they acknowledge the security of the other because it means "accepting one's own insecurity." Although the security dilemma is a common experience that is inescapable in the system of anarchy, it is argued that the security dilemma can be ameliorated. C. Glaser (1997, p. 181) claims that tension can be eased if there is a communication between states in showing one another that there is no hostile intent. An understanding between states on each other's security could create the

status quo. Concerning this, Jervis (2001, p. 55) elaborates by referring to the competition between the two superpowers during the Cold War,

> "The arms competition may also have constituted a security dilemma, at least after the Soviet Union achieved a second-strike capability in the mid-1960s. Security dilemma analysis would be misleading if we found that either side was willing to pay a high price to gain superiority in order to coerce the other into changing the status quo ... Mutual security came within reach only when leaders on both sides became willing to give up the hope for superiority in return for arrangements that precluded the other side from achieving it and that lowered tensions and reduced spending (at least in principle)."

J. Snyder (1985, pp. 154-155), despite his agreement with Jervis on the idea of status quo, also supports the assumption that the security dilemma cannot be resolved. He says,

> "Neither deterrent nor spiral axioms can resolve this kind of security dilemma. Unyielding, "deterrent" policies may be stabilising when they defend a balanced status quo, because they induce caution in those who would overturn the balance" (J. Snyder, 1985, pp. 154-155)

As such, it is possible to say that the only possibility for a state to feel secure during the time one state increases its security is when the two sides clearly understand the intention behind such action. A failure to understand and interpret the intention will heighten the security dilemma between the two sides (Jervis, 1978, p. 181).

States seek for security and this is when defensive mechanisms come into play. Defensive mechanisms such as military force development are described by Schelling (2008, p. 2) as having not only "the power of defence" but also "the power to hurt" in which the latter serves the purpose of deterrence. Strategy used to create the means of deterrence includes both conventional arms and nuclear weapons (T.V. Paul, 2009, p. 7). However, there arises some scenario where states use also the method of provocation. This raises a question about the justification of this method because the provocation can easily escalate the security dilemma. The theory of deterrence usually talks about the use of nuclear and conventional weapons as a means to deter. The theory, however, does not rule out the possibility of the use of other defensive means, as Knopf (2009, p. 41) says that "the deterrence can involve anything". The

new environment of the post-Cold War shows the hegemonic power of the United States and the rise of new nuclear states which are small and middle powers. The deterrence is created on an unequal balance between the two sides. Under this circumstance, there is a possibility that provocation is employed. T.V. Paul (2009, pp. 8-9) writes,

> "In today's near-unipolar international system, multiple layers of interactions and interconnectedness have emerged. Weak states no longer are all that weak, as asymmetric capabilities and strategies are becoming effective in many situations in constraining the great powers, most prominently the United States."

Provocations can create the security dilemma. At the same time that the security dilemma suggests a sense of insecurity, it can refer to the manipulation of threat for security purposes. According to this, Booth and Wheeler (2008, p. 7) write,

> "Security dilemma sensitivity is an actor's intention and capacity to perceive the motives behind, and to show responsiveness towards, the potential complexity of the military intentions of others. In particular, it refers to the ability to understand the role that fear might play in their attitudes and behaviour, including, crucially, the role that one's own actions may play in provoking that fear"

The security dilemma can be the result of how states want to fulfil a security interest. When the security dilemma is set off, the deterrence strategy usually comes into play. The security dilemma and deterrence strategies are structured on the assumption of rationality of states. This is because when states want to increase their security, states usually carefully make a judgement on not only the method to use but also the end result if the decision is taken (Bull, 1968, p. 597). The security dilemma does not usually escalate to the point of war. States hesitate to respond in conflict knowing well the destructive nature of war (Jervis, 1978, p. 177). As such, the strategy states employ in time of threat inclines towards preserving rather than changing the status quo.

Conclusion and the testing of hypotheses

The study of North Korea and its behaviour shows the practice of both deterrence and the security dilemma. North Korea uses deterrence in various forms, which are the conventional forces, nuclear weapons, and provocations. The use of deterrence is influenced by both the internal and external determinants. The internal determinant is the nature of the regime, while the external determinant is the regional environment which is a result of the relationship North Korea has with the regional powers and the interaction among the regional powers on the issue of Korea. When looking at both determinants, the external determinant plays a higher role in affecting North Korea's deterrence. The use of nuclear weapons as a strategy starts in the post-Cold War period. The nuclear strategy shows how North Korea adjusts itself to the new environment in particular an imbalance of power between North Korea and the United States. The role of the United States as a hegemonic power made North Korea believe in the possibility of the US attack on the regime, influencing it to consider obtaining nuclear weapons (Interview Dr. E. C. Lim, 2011). North Korea develops nuclear weapons as part of a strategy of deterrence against the United States. When nuclear strategy is achieved, they provide North Korea with the power to deter. Kim Il Sung said in the 1993 New Year Address that,

> "Pressure or threat will have no effect on us. Such an attempt may invite catastrophe. Therefore, the nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula must on any account be settled through Korea-U.S. talks." (Agence France Presse, 1993b)

The situation on the Korean peninsula remains in a state of ceasefire. The change in the international political structure influences North Korea with the need to settle the Korean War issue with the United States so that it could overcome all difficulties including the reunification issue (Interview Prof. Paik, 2011). When looking at the nature of the problem, it derives from a sense of insecurity of North Korea. Negotiation in both bilateral and multilateral patterns do not bring about the security guarantee North Korea seeks for. North Korea continues to be faced with a nuclear threat from the United States, a competition with South Korea, and an insecure environment arising from the interplay of the regional powers.

The nuclear strategy provides North Korea with some concessions on various occasions. It is the destructive nature of nuclear weapons that draws the United States to negotiation and to provide North Korea with some concessions. Although North Korea learns the value of

nuclear weapons in the negotiation, the main use of nuclear strategy is not for receiving concessions or overturning the status quo. Dr. E. C. Lim (2011) says that,

> "It will not be easy to get a sustainable economic assistance from foreign countries as North Korea intend. North Korea themselves do not believe nuclear weapons will be very useful to get more aid/economic aid from foreign countries. They started to admit clear limitations of using nuclear weapons. Even though they have some intention to use nuclear weapons as leverage to get more help, it does not work as they intend anyway." (Interview Dr. E. C. Lim, 2011)

North Korea actually wants to escape the security dilemma with the United States. Ambassador Charles L. Pritchard[24] recalled the meeting between Kim Jong Il and Madeleine Albright in Pyongyang in October 2000,

> "I am struck by what Kim Jong Il, North Korea's leader, said to Madeleine Albright, former US secretary of state, in October 2000. He told her that in the 1970s, Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese leader, was able to conclude that China faced no external security threat and could accordingly refocus its resources on economic development. With the appropriate security assurances, Mr Kim said, he would be able to convince his military that the US was no longer a threat and then be in a similar position to refocus his country's resources." (Pritchard, 2003a)

As earlier outlined, Kim Il Sung often mentioned the reunification of Korea and the strategy he pursued was to achieve this aim. However, it seems highly unlikely that reunification is a major objective of the regime given the situation of economic crisis the country is experiencing (Interview Prof. M. Kwon, 2011). It is believed that the objective of North Korea changed when Kim Jong Il came to power to focus more on achieving the normalisation of relations with the United States. North Korea considered the negotiation during the first nuclear crisis of 1993 a part of a strategy to achieve this aim (Pardo, 2014, p. 25). Kim Jong Il stresses in his writing in August 1997 that the aim of North Korea is the

[24] Ambassador Charles L. Pritchard was the US envoy for negotiation with North Korea in the Bush administration. He accompanied Madeleine Albright to visit North Korea and meet with Kim Jong Il in October 2000.

normalisation of relations with the United States and "we do not intend to view the United States as our eternal sworn enemy" (International Business Publications, 2003, p. 58)

Nuclear weapons have become important assets to North Korea. The second nuclear crisis was the period when the threat perception of North Korea was pushed highest by the external factor. President Bush's hardline policy and the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 raised North Korea's insecurity and convinced North Korea to believe in the value of the nuclear deterrent. Hecker (2010, p. 46) notes that this was the period when "Pyongyang was eager to have Washington believe it had the bomb". North Korea learnt from the first nuclear crisis the use of brinkmanship tactics in drawing the United States to the negotiation table and achieved some benefits after the agreement was made. In the second nuclear crisis of 2002 North Korea's showed more confidence in negotiation and used brinkmanship tactics in the multilateral negotiation. For example, North Korea offered to exchange the nuclear dismantlement with the US offer to establish the diplomatic relations with North Korea at the first round of the Six-Party Talks in 2003. In addition, from time to time, North Korea threatened not to attend the Six-Party Talks if the negotiation would not result in its objectives.

Overall, what can be concluded from the case of North Korea as based on the security and strategic studies are the use of nuclear deterrence as a strategy, an influence of history and identity on the deterrence strategy, and an impact of the inter-state system on the deterrence strategy. The deterrence strategy and the security dilemma are results of the insecurity of states. The situation of the Korean peninsula shows that there is a lack of recognition of the security needs of the Korean states. The security needs of North Korea are mentioned during the negotiation process but it has never been acknowledged to the point of reaching a proper Peace Treaty. It is the feeling of fear that influences the behaviour and deterrence strategy of North Korea. The security studies focuses on the security of states, while the strategic studies talks about how states seek to secure their security. Nuclear weapons and all defensive measures are developed as a strategy in response to the insecurity North Korea feels. The deterrence strategy of North Korea is a response to the security dilemma but does not refer to a desire to expand. It refers to how states seek to secure their own objective, which in the case of North Korea is the leadership survival, regime survival and national survival.

The concept of deterrence means how threat is manipulated in order to influence the thinking and behaviour of the other side. North Korea's deterrence strategy is not limited to the use of nuclear weapons but includes also conventional weapons and the use of provocations. The deterrence strategy is driven by an unequal balance of power that makes North Korea want to achieve the same deterrence level as the United States. The missile firing has an objective of testing the policy of the United States and South Korea but at the same time it is for a purpose of deterrence. North Korea has reiterated that the missile firing is intended for the peaceful satellite launch. However, whether the claim can convince the international community or not, the missile firing incident has served the deterrence objective. Bracken (2012, p. 191) comments on the North Korea's missile firing of 2006 as having the deterrence objective,

> "The message sent was that a U.S. attack on North Korea would trigger an immediate attack on South Korea and Japan. This hostage strategy says to the United States: "Don't even think about doing something your allies will regret."

The concept of deterrence and the security dilemma do not exactly indicate what the adequate level of deterrence is for a state. The main point that can be concluded from the concept of deterrence is how the national security can be secured at the highest level possible and with a minimum chance that a direct conflict will occur. However, what can be assumed to be the best outcome is a mutual recognition of security which could influence states to value the status quo without seeking to elevate their defence level. The security dilemma will be ameliorated at this point despite the inevitable fact that states have different viewpoints on threat and insecurity. The way states see threat depends on individual perception as influenced by the background and political condition of each state. As such, the way North Korea values its security is different from other states. A high level of deterrence that one state pursues does not necessarily mean that the state in question is irrational. The theory of deterrence and the security dilemma do not suggest a high level of deterrence is connected to irrationality. The theory points out that deterrence occurs in a situation of intense uncertainty about conflict and the role that deterrence has in making states value the status quo. This is when the calculation of gain and loss comes into play. Irrationality can possibly occur under this circumstance if states choose to fight despite knowing that they have a low chance of winning. However, the Korean peninsula shows a high level of security dilemma but the overall situation is rather stable. This is because the mutual deterrence has been in function for several decades and the status quo has been maintained.

These conclusions tend to support Hypothesis One in suggesting that the security perception and strategic behaviour of North Korea conforms to the assumptions of security studies and strategic studies. What North Korea values the most is national security. The use of the deterrence strategy is for a security purpose in response to threats the regime believes it is facing. The case of North Korea shows that a sense of nationalism in the identity of the state is also an important factor. Nationalism makes states value the identity factor in defining their national security but it is not the key factor influencing deterrence strategy. The deterrence strategy is developed to counter the external threats and nationalism shapes the deterrence behaviour to be a symbol of national pride. This allows an opportunity for the manipulation of threat for domestic purposes. The dictatorship system of North Korea shapes the way the leadership security equates to regime security. North Korea does not have the desire to attack its enemies knowing well that nuclear weapons, if used, would mean the start of a comprehensive war (Interview Dr. E. C. Lim, 2011). Nuclear weapons are developed for the purpose of deterrence in maintaining the status quo on the Korean peninsula. North Korea adjusts its objective from unification to regime survival to suit the internal and external conditions the regime faces, especially in the change from the Cold War international structure to the post-Cold War structure. The security dilemma is heightened in this change but does not bring about a total loss to North Korea. The high level of security dilemma North Korea has with the US, South Korea, and other regional powers means that the security of the regime is guaranteed, provided it can sustain deterrence levels. Therefore, the deterrence strategy has served the main objectives of delivering security and maintaining the status quo, which leads to a conclusion that the deterrence strategy of North Korea is rational in accordance with the theory of security studies and strategic studies.

Appendix 1: List of Interviewees

Name	Institution	Date of Interview
Anonymous	Korea Institute for National Unification	16 September 2011
Prof. Chung Jae Ho	Seoul National University	15 September 2011
Prof. Han Dong Ho	Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade	2 September 2011
Prof. Kim Young Yoon	Korea Institute for National Unification	20 September 2011
Prof. Koo Kab Woo	University of the North Korean Studies	9 September 2011
Prof. Kwon Man Hak	Kyung Hee University	8 September 2011
Dr. Lim Eul Chul	The Institute for Far Eastern Studies, Kyungnam University, The Center for International Cooperation for North Korean Development	9 September 2011
Prof. Moon Chung In	Yonsei University	8 September 2011
Prof. Paik Hak Soon	Sejong Institute	1 September 2011
Prof. Park Ihn Hwi	Ewha Womans University	30 August 2011
Prof. Sheen Seong Ho	Seoul National University	31 August 2011

Appendix 2: Note to the Interviewees

Interviewees	Expertise of the Interviewees
Anonymous at Korea Institute for National Unification	The Korea Institute for National Unification is a research institute under the Ministry of Unification, South Korea. The interviewee works as a senior research fellow in this institute and has experience conducting research in areas of North Korean politics, inter-Korean relations, and the US-ROK relations.
Prof. Chung Jae Ho	Prof. Chung Jae Ho teaches at Department of International Relations, Seoul National University. His research expertise is China and US-China relations. He was once a visiting fellow at the Brooking Institution in the Brookings Center in East Asia Policy Studies conducting research on South Korea-China relations. The questions interviewed with Prof. Chung focuses on China's policy and relations with the two Koreas and the US-China-North Korea relations.
Prof. Han Dong Ho	Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security is a research institute under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, South Korea. Prof. Han Dong Ho works under this institute and his position is a visiting professor. Prof. Han's expertise is the inter-Korean relations and unification issue.
Prof. Kim Young Yoon	Prof. Kim Young Yoon works as a senior research fellow at the Korea Institute for National Unification, the Ministry of Unification, South Korea. His expertise includes the economy, the inter-Korean relations, and North Korean politics.
Prof. Koo Kab Woo	Prof. Koo Woo Kab works as a professor at the University of the North Korean Studies. The University of the North Korean Studies focuses on the study of North Korea. Prof. Koo's expertise is the inter-Korean relations and international politics. Apart from academic publications, Prof. Koo contributes his analysis on Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability.

Prof. Kwon Man Hak	Prof. Kwon Man Hak is a professor at the College of International Studies, Kyung Hee University. His expertise is the inter-Korean relations and Northeast Asian security. Apart from academic publications, Prof. Kwon's opinion and analysis on North Korea and peninsula affairs are also referred in the media websites. Among examples are "North Korean Society Matches Chosun Dynasty" appeared on the Daily NK website on 28 March 2011. Prof. Kwon also contributes his analysis on the US foreign policy and Northeast Asia titled "Where does Northeast Asia Fit in the Bush Administration Foreign Policy?". This publication appears on the Korea Economic Institute of America in the publication series titled "Joint U.S.- Korea Academic Studies 2006" and it is available online via the website.
Dr. Lim Eul Chul	Dr. Lim Eul Chul is a director of the Center for International Cooperation for North Korean Development at Kyungnam University. The Center deals with the issue of the North Korean affairs. Dr. Lim's expertise includes the North Korean politics and economy, and the inter-Korean relations. Dr. Lim has an in-depth knowledge on North Korea from his experience interviewing with the North Korean defectors.
Prof. Moon Chung In	Prof. Moon Chung In is a professor at the Department of Political Science, Yonsei University. Prof. Moon's past experience included his positions as an advisor to the President of the Republic of Korea, an advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, an advisor to the Ministry of National Defense. Prof. Moon accompanied President Kim Dae Jung to Pyongyang in an inter-Korean summit meeting in 2000. Prof. Moon publishes various books and journal articles and contributes his analysis on North Korea on 38 North, Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability, NK News, the Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus, etc. His publications and analysis are also referred in this thesis.

Prof. Paik Hak Soon	Prof. Paik Hak Soon works as a senior fellow at the Department of the Unification Strategy Studies, Sejong Institute, one of the leading research institutes of South Korea. Prof. Paik also works as a policy advisor for Ministry of Unification, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the National Assembly. Prof. Paik's expertise includes the inter-Korean relations, the North Korean politics, the US-North Korean relations, North Korea's nuclear issue. Prof. Paik also publishes his analyses on North Korea on the 38 North website which some of it is referred in the thesis.
Prof. Park Ihn Hwi	Prof. Park Ihn Hwi is an associate professor of international relations at the Ewha Womans University. His expertise is the US foreign policy, the US-ROK relations, and Northeast Asian international relations. Prof. Park also takes a position of a member of the advisory committee of the Ministry of Unification.
Prof. Sheen Seong Ho	Prof. Sheen Seong Ho is a professor of international security at Seoul National University. Prof. Sheen's expertise is the US foreign policy, Northeast Asian politics and the Korean peninsula. Prof. Sheen was an advisor to the Ministry of Unification and Committee on Foreign Affairs and Unification.

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