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## Introduction

From North Korean perspective, it has been developing the Nuclear Weapon to defend itself from the United States attack.<sup>1</sup> However, North Korea that has Nuclear Weapon would be one of the biggest threats in the international community, being known that it will use nuclear weapon when the situation is developed against North Korea interest.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, if the international community recognized North Korea as a new Nuclear power like Pakistan, it will be the beginning of the nuclear race in the North-East Asia, in other word South Korea, Japan and Taiwan will try to possess nuclear weapon capability to deter the possible nuclear warfare, or to retaliate against an initiate nuclear attacker on them as a self-defense measure.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, in order to solve the nuclear crisis and to prevent a nuclear warfare on the Korean Peninsular, the six- parties negotiation begun in 2003. The Six parties consist of those nations that are interested in the North Korean nuclear ambitions based on the individual nation's interest. Each nation has its own strategy and end states in the negotiation. For instance, South Korea has been trying to bridge the gaps between the

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<sup>1</sup>Daniel A. Pinkson, "Bargaining Failure and the North Korean Nuclear Program's Impact on International Nonproliferation Regimes," *KNDURewiew* 18, no2(December 2003):11.

<sup>2</sup>Dok-Min Yun, "A South Korea's Strategy toward North Korea's WMD," *KRIS Strategic Studies*30, no1(2004):92-93.

<sup>3</sup>Lee Ho-Jin, "US Security Policy Toward Northeast Asia: A Korean Perspective," *IFANsReview* 10, no 1(December 2002):5-7.

United States and North Korea, supporting North Korea in terms of economy base on the reconciliation and prosperity policy on the Korean Peninsula. From the South Korean perspective, there are two end states in the negotiation. The first is to not allow North Korea to having the Nuclear weapon, and the second is to prevent the second Korean War on the Peninsula. Base on the North Korean internal and external circumstance, North Korean end states, which will be discussed in detail later on this paper, could be the protection of its center of gravity, Kim Jung Il regime. From the United States perspective, the end state of the negotiation with North Korean is consistent that forces North Korea completely give up the nuclear weapon ambition, maintaining the North-East Asian regional peace and the United States interest in the region. As a key player in terms of the influence to North Korea in the six-parties talk China has been playing a role as a middleman in the negotiation and a big brother of North Korea.<sup>4</sup> On the one hand China does not want to acknowledge nuclear weaponries North Korea since it will encourage Japan, which considers China as a potential threat, to have nuclear weapon.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand China do not want to see the collapse of North Korea regime, which means South Korea initiated Korean

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<sup>4</sup>Woo Seogji, "Security Triangles on the Korean Peninsula," *IFANSReview* 11, no1(July 2003):16.

<sup>5</sup>Woo Seogji, "Security," ....16.

Peninsula unification.

Base on the each nation's different strategies, goals, and interest in the negotiation about the North Korea Nuclear weapon ambitions, it is not easy to predict the end states of the negotiation. Should the six-nations talk fail to arrive the agreement, it could be developed to the second Korean war which no one wants to face in the this time. However, the reality is that the war on the Korean Peninsula would happen if North Korea and the United States do persist respective negotiation strategy against its adversary. Therefore, in order to avoid nuclear weaponries, North Korea, and the second Korean War, the United States and the South Korea should take a pragmatic course of action that will accomplish favorable end states for them and for the North-East Asia region.

By the way, the pre-emptive attack against North Korea should not be a course of action to clean the North Korea nuclear weapon ambitions. Since the pre-emptive attack would not be able to end the North Korean Nuclear program and regime change, but open the door to the second Korean War that would create mass destruction, civilian casualties and deep animosity. In comparison, the comprehensive engagement strategy should be the most recommendable South Korea and the United States course of action. The comprehensive engagement strategy could be the conducting the soft power to

isolate North Korean leadership, Kim Jung Il, from the North Korean in the long run.

Also the comprehensive engagement strategy could be the acceptance North Korean requests in the negotiation, while reinforcing international verification measure to confirm the North Korean future promise, and warning that should North Korea provide nuclear material or techniques to the international terrorist group, it will see regime change.

### **North Korean intents in developing nuclear weapon**

Generally speaking, in order to arrive on the favorable agreement in a certain negotiation, information about intents of the opposition side is essential. However, in the North Korean case it is not ease to recognize its real intent, since North Korean is one of the most isolated places in terms of information. In addition to the lack of information, there is no its people's opinion, but just government guidance, or propaganda through the central controlled media so that it is very difficult to anticipate its reaction when other parties suggest some initiatives to North Korea in the negotiation. Although only limited information about North Korea has been exposed, the North Korean intents could be assessed from the known economical, political circumstance in both internal and external. The followings are North Korean possible intents in developing the nuclear weapon.

First, from the North Korean perspective, overcoming of the devastating economy could be the first priority to maintain the Kim Jung Il regime.<sup>6</sup> North Korean economy has been suffering from the lack of oil, which forced the factory operation rate be so low since the collapse of the former Soviet Union that supplied or aided oil under the name of communist comrade. The low rate of the factory operation has impacted on the North Korean whole economy. However, because North Korean economy had been developed by its own economy philosophy so called 'self sufficient' so that North Korean did not have enough foreign currency to import oil. To make North Korean economy worse, there were severe repeated droughts and floods in the 1990s. As a result of these natural disasters, about three million North Korean has been dead with starving. Consequently, North Korean regime acknowledged that without economical transformation, it would not be survival in the near future.

North Korea has expressed the tendency to follow the Chinese economy success story in which the Chinese communist regime was able to archive the prosperity in terms of economy in consolidating its political control among its people.<sup>7</sup> Soon after, however, trying to copy the Chinese model, North Korea perceived that the normal

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<sup>6</sup>Daniel A. Pinkson, "Bargaining," ...,7.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, 16-18.

relationships with South Korea, the United States, and Japan are undeniable in order to attract foreign investment, trade and even aid. Accordingly, North Korea intent to exploit the initiative in the nuclear weapon negotiation to remove the foreign investment, trade, and aid restrictions which the united state established during the Cold War period against communist countries. Therefore, an assessment could be deducted that in the condition of giving up its nuclear program, North Korea hopes to receive the economical benefits as much as possible.

Secondly, in order to assess North Korean intents in developing the nuclear weapon its security concerns should be considered. North Korea has been blaming the United States on its attempt to North Korean regime change.<sup>8</sup> In fact, the United States called North Korea one of the axis of evils. Following that the United State invaded Iraq to demonstrate its determination against the evils. From North Korean point of view, it could be reasonable to worry about the potential attack of the United States, being designated as a terrorist supporter. Given the external threat, North Korea has required to protect its territory and people as a inherent right with last resort, nuclear weapon, knowing that the United States has spurious conventional military capability as a super power which permits the United Stated to execute military operation against North

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<sup>8</sup>Derek D. smith, "North Korea and the United States: A Strategic Profile," *the Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 16, no1(spring 2004):30-31.

Korea whenever it wants to. Nuclear weapon could create new situation which force an adversary, who is planning to attack a nuclear weapon possessor, think again and again considering the tragedy once the weapon explosives.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, North Korea believes that nuclear weapon could play a major role as a deterrence measure to prevent the United States from conducting military options, to prevent South Korea and Japan from joining the attacking plans against North Korea. Even if North Korea does not have nuclear weapon, it could be able to accomplish the same effect as the nuclear weapon in pretending or exaggerating its nuclear retaliation capability. Since even the low possibility of nuclear retaliation could make the United States reconsider whether it will attack North Korea.

Thirdly, North Korea intent in developing nuclear weapon could be interpreted as an internal security measure. For instance, Highlighting and exaggerating external threat, Kim Jong Il regime has excused its devastating economy to North Koreans who have been starving. Normally, when people notice external threats as a main concern, they easily and unconsciously press the internal controversy. Therefore, Kim Jong Il regime has enough incentives to enhance the tension around Korean Peninsula by generating and complicating nuclear weapon issues that are obviously producing the

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<sup>9</sup>Peter Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy*(New Jersey:Princeton University Press, 1986), 735.



endless regional crisis.

Finally, North Korea may want to have nuclear weapon as a national pride symbol, facing the situation that North Korea has been perceived as a failed state in the international community. From a psychological point of view, a self-esteem and pride are very important element not only in the social life and but also in the international stage to play its role as a person or nation. Therefore, the North Korea shames on itself called as a failed country so that it may try to compromise for devastating economy with nuclear weapon, noticing that having nuclear weapon in the international community made a nation's status different, even though it is poor. For example, Pakistan became main player in India continental, soon after it was recognized as a nuclear power by the United States.<sup>10</sup> Although it was not one reason for Pakistan to be a major power in the region, but possessing the nuclear power was one of the key factors to be.

On the contrary, regardless of whatever North Korea intent or reason, except North Korea no other county wants to see nuclear weaponries North Korea. Consequently, international community has been warning North Korea to discard any nuclear weapon programs, and recommending participating in the six-parties talk to settle the nuclear crisis. However, North Korea has been denying resuming the six-

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<sup>10</sup>The Galen Carpenter, "A Hedging Strategy is Needed Toward North Korea," *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 16, no1(Spring 2004),9.

parties talk since in 2003, after the three rounds of the talk.

### **The Pre-emptive attack against North Korea**

While North Korea is reluctant to discard the nuclear weapon program to accomplish its own intents that are mentioned above, the neo-conservative policy makers in the United States have been advocating the pre-emptive attack against North Korea nuclear weapon related facilities.<sup>11</sup> After the September 11 tragedy, the United States foreign policy was dramatically developed to be an aggressive and pre-emptive way, reflecting the terrorist's characteristics in which it is extremely hard to predict, to detect, and to retaliate a terror.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, the United States concentrated national security efforts on the future threats and made a conclusion that the next most dangerous course of action of the unknown enemy, terrorist group, would be the surprise attack against the United States with weapons of mass destruction including nuclear weapon obtained from so called the rogue countries such as, North Korea, Iran, and Syria.<sup>13</sup>

When it comes to the unimaginable pains, September 11, no one is able to object to the pre-emptive strategy of the United States in protecting its people and properties from the immediate threats, unless the terrorist group is symphonized. In fact

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<sup>11</sup>Triangles on the Korean Peninsula," *IFANSReview* 11,no1(July 2003):20.

<sup>12</sup>Antony J. Blinken, "From Preemption to Engagement," *Survival* 45, no4(Winter 2003-2004):34.

<sup>13</sup>Antony J. Blinken, "From Preemption," ...,44.

the United States invaded Iraq under the name of justice that Iraq had to take a responsibility in supporting international terrorist group, Al-Quida, with weapons of mass destruction. However, unfortunately, it has not been able to show the evidence of the relationships, between Iraq, Al-Quida, and WMD, which means the United States failed to justify the invasion against Iraq.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, the international community has been criticizing the United States unilateral invasion. Moreover, people doubt the pre-emptive strategy of the United States as a legitimacy and effective way to pursuit the international common interest. In addition to that, the pre-emptive strategy of the United States obviously undermined the United Nation's authority in the international conflict, going to the war without an authorized resolution of the United Nation that had been perceived as the useful international process to preventing large conflict on the planet, after the Cold War.<sup>15</sup>

Acknowledging the problems of the United States pre-emptive strategy against Iraq, the followings are the concerns that the United State has to take consider before conduct the pre-emptive strategy against North Korea. First of all, so far there are no direct connections between North Korea, weapons of mass destruction and the

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*,43.

<sup>15</sup> Ju Culki, "The United Nations in the Wake of the Iraq War," *IFANSReview* 11, no1(July 2003). 37-38.

terrorist organization.<sup>16</sup> Without a clear intelligence about the combination of three elements the pre-emptive strategy could cause legitimacy issue as well.

Secondly, should the United States attack against North Korea to eliminate the nuclear weapon related facilities, it could be developed to the unintended result, or the second Korean War. There are several reasons in terms of military perspective, why the second Korean War must be avoided as much as possible. First, Seoul, South Korean Capital, is located just 40km away from the front line where North Korea has deployed long-range artilleries which are able to attack most Seoul in the current location. Seoul is the political, economical and historical South Korean center of gravity so that once it is damaged by North Korea it would take much longer time to reconstruct.<sup>17</sup> Most of all, hundreds of thousands of innocent civilian could be killed by the North Korea retaliation attacks. In fact, North Korea has tremendous chemical weapons that are consisted of 60% of long-range artillery rounds.<sup>18</sup> As one of the course of actions, North Korea may use the chemical weapon once the United States invades it, then its center of gravity, Kim Jung Il regime, is threatened. The damage by the North Korea chemical weapon would be unprecedented in human being history.

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<sup>16</sup>Antony J. Blinken, "From Preemption,"...,44.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*,51

<sup>18</sup>The Ministry if National Defense, The Republic of Korea, *Defense White Paper*(Seoul, 2000), 57-58.

Thirdly, in addition to South Korean damage, should the United States conduct the pre-emptive strategy it could ironically contribute to consolidate Kim Jong Il regime in facilitating loyalty of North Koreans who are ready to sacrifice their life to protect national pride and its leader. North Koreans have been educated to respect its leader in any circumstance, and to believe national pride is one of the most important objectives.<sup>19</sup> Therefore the United States pre-emptive attack could activate North Korean patriot.

Fourth, There is essential problem in the intelligence side to guarantee the success of the pre-emptive attack. Although the United State all source intelligence assets have been trying to detect the location North Korea Nuclear weapon related facilities, it have been failed to locate the weapon storage so that it would be not enough to end the North Korean nuclear weapon ambition, even if the United State destroyed all known facilities.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, it is assessed that North Korea hide the nuclear weapon related key elements including the warheads in the unknown military facility, such as deep underground bunkers behind mountains, to protect them from the

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<sup>19</sup>The Ministry of National Defense, The Republic of Korea, *Defense White Paper*...,42-43.

<sup>20</sup>Derek D. Smith, "*North Korea*," ...,37-38.

preside guided missiles.<sup>21</sup> Consequently, the attack against North Korea nuclear weapon related facility, base on the current limited information, will not guarantee the end of the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula.

The last concern on the United States pre-emptive strategy would be no consensus in the international community. Particularly, without the invitation of the host nation, South Korea, the United States would have to face legitimacy challenges from the law of armed conflict and the conventional law.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, if South Korea is reluctant to cooperate with the United States' unilateral pre-emptive attack against North Korea, the United States will not conduct the attack efficiently and effectively since it will not be able to synchronize its military elements without South Korea. South Korea and the United States have established the combined joint forces command in Seoul since the Korea War. It means that the United States should work together with South Korea to maximize its military capability and to minimize expected damage from the military operation against North Korea.

### **The comprehensive engagement policy**

Following the previous concerns of the pre-emptive strategy, the alternative

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>22</sup> Mikael f. Nabati, "Anticipatory Self-defense: The terrorism exception," *Current History* 102(May 2003):7.

strategy that would satisfy all nations involving in the six-parties negotiation, and would make the Korean Peninsula nuclear free area, should be considered. The alternative strategy could be the comprehensive engagement in the process of the negotiation with North Korea such as soft power and the bold approach.<sup>23</sup>

Generally speaking, soft power, instead of the hard power, could be more effective to persuade negotiation partner in the bargaining table depend on the related circumstance. Soft power in the North Korean situation could be the increasing the economical cooperation and the cultural exchange. North Korea regime seems to recognize that the only way to maintain the regime is to solve the devastating economy, as mentioned at the beginning, by transforming its economy to the free market amid consolidating political control like China. Therefore, Kim Jung Il regime is desperation to attract a foreign investment and aid. In fact, as the result of the several economy reforms, many North Korean believe that pursuing the personal interest is natural and right, which was perceived as a common enemy of the communism in the past.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, regardless of Kim Jung Il regime's intent in the economy transformation, in the near future the regimen could face people's resist against the dictatorship unmatched

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<sup>23</sup>Antony J. Blinken, "from Preemption,"...,38.

<sup>24</sup>The Christian Science Monitor, "*North Korea's border trade getting busier*," April 4, 2005.

with free market. Since free market society could unnoticeably change average North Koreans fundamental attitudes to its given terrible circumstance. In this manner, the possibility of the North Korean challenge against its leadership will be higher, if the economy cooperation is increased. The Kim Jung Il regime's critical capability comes from the people's heart and mind. Therefore, one of the best ways to force the North Korea regime to be changed could be the separation the regime from its people. In order to facilitate the separation the regime, the economic cooperation should be more encouraged. On the other hand, there is another reason why the economic cooperation is so valuable. Once the North Korea faces the severe economy situation where the regime is not able to maintain the regime, the regime could select the most dangerous course of action, for instance it would enhance the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula, and it would proliferate the nuclear weapon capability to the international terrorist organizations.

In order to prevent North Korean regime from taking the most dangerous course of action cultural exchange could be another soft power. Two Koreas has been separated not only by geotropically but also by culturally for half a century so that, even though cultural common grounds are shared, the cultural gaps between South and North Korea are so considerable. However, these days South Korean pop culture, such as pop



sung, TV drama, and movies, has been smuggled through the North Korea and China border.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, regardless of North Korea generation and social rank, the popularity of the South Korea pop culture beyond the imagination so that it seems to be out of control to prevent North Korea from recognizing the South Korean advanced economy and dynamic culture. This social phenomenon in North Korea could be interpreted that South Korea successfully has infiltrated to the North Korean mind and heart with soft power. The North Korean who acknowledged the South Korean reality began to doubt the credibility of the Kim Jung Il regime controlled propaganda which has been conducted for half a century. The doubt for the propaganda is a positive signal in separating Kim Jung Il regime from its people, and it will facilitate the regime change in the end. If the end state is achievable without any physical conflict, it should be the best course of action.

On the other hand, North Korea has been refusing to resume the six-parties talk since 2003 blaming the United States on taking hostile policy against North Korea. To break through the installed negotiation, the United States should take so-called the bold approach in the negotiation as one of the comprehensive policy, taking the North Korean requests. North Korea is consistently demanding its regime safety by the paper

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<sup>25</sup>The Christian Science Monitor, "North Korea's border trade getting busier," April 4, 2005.

that the United States President signed.<sup>26</sup> Besides, North Korea wants to change the armistice threat to the peace threat that will be interpreted as the official end of the Korean War.<sup>27</sup> While exchanging taking the North Korean requests, such as the official document and the peace threat, with the completed discard of the nuclear weapon program, the United State has to force North Korean to sign up the much more reinforced international verification process. Since, one of the biggest obstacles to arrive on the consensus is a deep mutual distrust between the United States and North Korea.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, in order to prevent repeated broken promised by North Korea, the reinforcement international verification is essential in addition to the agreement on the dismantling of the North Korea nuclear weapons.

### **Conclusion**

The end states of the nuclear crisis, which is initiated by North Korea, on the Korean Peninsula should be the end of the North Korean nuclear weapon program in the short term, and could be the end of the Kim Jung Il regime in the long run. In order to accomplish the end states, North Korean real intents in developing nuclear weapon should be identified. Through the nuclear weapon program, North Korea has been trying

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<sup>26</sup> Antony J. blinken, "From Preemption,"...,41.

<sup>27</sup> Lee Ho Jin, "US Security, "....,10.

<sup>28</sup> Ted Galen Carpenter, "A Hedging," ...,16-17.

to extract economical benefits from other countries that do not want to recognize North Korea as a nuclear Power. Also North Korea is trying to deter the United States attack, announcing it has nuclear weapons that are ready to launch as a self-defense measure. Moreover, Kim Jung Il is using the nuclear crisis to excuse its poor economy and dictatorship.

Confronting North Korean typical brinkman ship negotiation tactics, the United States is getting impatient so that some hard liner insists that it is time to conduct pre-emptive strategy to eliminate North Korean nuclear capability that will encourage the nuclear weapon race in the North East Asia. However, the pre-emptive strategy against North Korea could be developed to a total war, the second Korean War. Should the war break out, the South Korean civilian casualties and the destruction of infrastructures will be beyond description.

Therefore, in steady of executing the pre-emptive strategy, the United States should conduct the comprehensive engagement policy, soft power and the bold approach. For instance, as soft power the economic cooperation, the cultural exchange should be considered to facilitate the separation the Kim Jung Il regime from the its people, which could be developed to the regime change in the long run. In addition, the United States should take so called the bold approach to force North Korea to

completely discard the unclear ambition with the reinforce verification measure, accepting the North Korean requests including the official document in which guarantees the Kim Jung Il regime's safety, and the peace threat.

Also, the United States and South Korea should send a clear message to North Korea that if it supplies the nuclear weapon related material or techniques to terrorist group, it will see its regime change with any cost.

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