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## U.S. Foreign Policy Toward North Korea's Nuclear Development: Its Failure and Available Options

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U.S. FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD NORTH KOREA'S NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT:  
ITS FAILURE AND AVAILABLE OPTIONS

By

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This thesis is lovingly dedicated to my wife, Nakeyong Kwon. As her endless encouragement and devotion have supported me through this thesis, her constant love has sustained me whenever I am in difficulty.

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## ABSTRACT

North Korean foreign policy decision process has complexity and differences from that of democratic states. Pyongyang has multiple motivations related to developing nuclear weapons, which are derived by both international and domestic factors. Moreover, North Korean preferences related to the pursuit of the nuclear weapons have also changed according to the circumstance that the country faces. The regime began to build the nuclear weapons because of the external security threats resulting from the geopolitical changes like the disassembly of the Soviet Union. After Pyongyang faced the severe economic stagnation, their priority has moved into economic interests. Moreover, Kim's regime has faced a domestic political legitimacy issue of the authoritarian regime so that the regime has utilized the nuclear development as means to consolidate their power. The characteristics of authoritarian regime also impact the leadership's preferences and rational decision choices.

However, the U.S. foreign policy in the past, based on the security-oriented approaches and a theory focused on economics, failed to understand the regime's systematic complexity. Washington's political changes, following its power transitions, also exaggerate distrust between the United States and North Korea. The shifts in its political strategies also create the credible commitment problems. In addition, its external complexity around North Korea also reduces the effectiveness of the U.S. strategies.

In this regard, the new alternative strategy for Washington should build on a comprehensive understanding of how Kim's regime thinks, what it values, and how it judges its options. In addition, the United States should understand not only Pyongyang's objectives but also how Kim's regime views U.S. objectives and whether they consider U.S. statements credible in order to resolve the issue. Thus, this paper proposes a comprehensive option which is a combination of coercive diplomacy and diplomatic, economic strategies.



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

One often assumes that an event or result has one cause. However, this is rarely true in a complex system. Rather, it is easy to find out that the assumption misdirects one's responding behavior and produces unintended outcomes. It is undoubtable, as most scholars agree, that there is no complex system or decision process more complicated than international relations, which is comprised of multiple actors from all levels and diverse issues (Hudson, 2013). Moreover, the interactions among the diverse actors and issues, linked with the others, deepen the international affairs' complexity. Hence, today's complexity and dynamics in international affairs require leaders and decision makers in the globe to have comprehensive, interdisciplinary approaches. In other words, foreign policies that ignore or fail to understand the complexity in international relations usher their policies into failures easily, as the past U.S. foreign policy failed on Nuclear development issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is the official name of North Korea.

Nuclear development of North Korea has been one of long-unraveled issues for the United States for two and half decades. Since the early 1980s, when North Korea's nuclear program was detected for the first time by United States intelligence, the North Korean nuclear ambitions have posed challenges to the United States' core interests: Maintaining world peace through Nonproliferation of nuclear weapons in general; and securing the U.S. and its allies' security in specific, narrow aspects (The Congressional Report Services [CRS], 2006; The White House, 2018).

Firstly, North Korea's acquisition of these weapons undermines the global nonproliferation regime, which is the general interest of the United States. After the end of two World Wars, the world realizes that the significantly advanced military technology dramatically increases the cost of wars, in particular in terms of its *ex-post* (Fearon, 1999). The advance of military technology significantly has expanded the battlefield size and thus the damages resulting from a war terribly has increased. In particular, the lethality of nuclear weapons used during the World Wars increase the cost of wars and imprint a fear of nuclear wars on the world (Schelling,

1966; Art, 1980). Thus, the world has made multiple efforts to deter countries around the world from waging nuclear wars for international peace and prosperity since the end of the World Wars. For this purpose, many states in the world bind themselves into international agreements to avoid nuclear wars, or at least minimize the likelihood of the war, by establishing international regimes like the United Nations immediately after the termination of the WW II (Baylis & Owens, 2017). The worldwide efforts have extended to preventing states from developing nuclear weapons and the United States, as a superpower state in the world, has played a leading role in achieving the international goal. Hence, preventing nuclear development has been one of the core general interests for the United States (Bermudez 2015). However, the detection that North Korea, which ratified the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), covertly develops nuclear weapons and cheats on NPT, undermines the treaty. Additionally, the foreign political behavior of Pyongyang, carving nuclear arsenal, also gives a rise to concerns about proliferations of the nuclear weapons, which increases the probability of nuclear wars in the world. Pyongyang's nuclear development could spark a nuclear arms race in Asia to respond to North Korea's nuclear threats. There remain concerns that the other countries hoping to have nuclear capabilities could breach on the international efforts, as North Korea did (Zagoria, 1995; the US DOD, 2001; the Congressional Report Services [CRS], 2003).

In addition to threats to the general interests, from the national security or military perspectives, Pyongyang's nuclear arsenals aspirations also pose grave challenges to Washington's specific interests—in that, the adversary state with hostile intent is combined with destructive capability (CRS, 2006). Since the cease-fire of the Korean War in 1953, North Korea has still remained an adversary to the United States and Republic of Korea, which is the official name of South Korea. Even if there has been no resumption of the brutal war, North Korea has conducted several provocative actions against the two countries—the United States and South Korea. For example, Pyongyang attacked the USS Pueblo in 1968 and an unarmed American EC-121M reconnaissance aircraft in 1969, sank ROK battle ship, Cheonan, in 2010, and conducted numerous provocations near the Military Demarcation Line (MDL) and the Northern Limited Line (NLL). Given the North Korean regime's past provocations and hostile intents, not surprisingly, the development of the destructive weapons by the regime becomes potential threats to the U.S. security as well as its ally, South Korea. Furthermore, coupled with the nuclear proliferation, the authoritarian adversary country's acquisition of nuclear technology

raises the other security concerns to the United States, which has faced security threats by terrorist attacks. As the U.S. Congressional Report Services (2006) analyzes, the threats of Pyongyang's nuclear weapons development have the potential nuclear-proliferation transferring to terrorist groups that would use such weapons against states other than the U.S. and transfers to rogue states.

For these general and specific interests related to Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programs, U.S. policymakers have implemented a manifold spectrum of strategies, which ranged from conciliations to containments, so as to convince, or force, the North Korean regime to abandon its nuclear ambitions (Kudracova, 2013). Yet, the past two and half-decade history demonstrates that the U.S. foreign policy failed to accomplish the political goals. Despite the U.S. efforts, Pyongyang has not abandoned their nuclear aspirations to date, rather advanced their nuclear capabilities while conducting the repeated political behavioral pattern of escalation and de-escalation. The White House still faces a daunting challenge in navigating a course toward a resolution of the nuclear issue.

The North Korean nuclear foreign policy over two and half decades has two historical aspects. First is repeatability of a pattern—crisis escalations and de-escalations (Council on Foreign Relations [CFR], 2016). The history has several tensions between the North and the United States, which are escalated into the brink of war by the North Korean regime's threatening actions, such as conducting nuclear and missiles tests, impinging on agreements related to nuclear moratorium with the United States and South Korea as well as International norms, and its declarations of intention to wage wars against South Korea and the United States. However, the heightened crisis comes to be abated by North Korea's acceptances or suggestions of negotiations with the U.S. and South Korea at the very gate of wars or military conflicts. North Korea reneges, however, on the commitment with the U.S. and South Korea by resuming its nuclear development covertly and the temporary peaceful mood between the United States and North Korea are broken and enters a stand-off again. The pattern has repeated for two and half decades and is being repeated at this moment.

In addition to the political pattern cycle, another aspect of the history is that nuclear threats emanating from North Korea have increasingly mounted up with its advance in nuclear development while conducting the repeated behavior pattern related to their nuclear policy. In particular, since Pyongyang's new young leader, Kim Jong Un, took office in 2011, its nuclear

development has achieved unprecedented improvement in terms of both quality and quantity. Given the latest tests on nuclear weapons and long-range missiles, conducted in September and November 2017, the U.S. intelligences and experts estimate that Pyongyang produced between thirty and sixty nuclear bombs extracted from plutonium production reactors and uranium enrichment (Warrick, Nakashima & Fifield, 2017; CIA, 2017), which has a yield of about 140kt, ten times stronger than the United States bomb that dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 (The U.S. Geological Survey, 2017). In addition, the regime also succeeded in developing diverse launchers to carry out its nuclear bombs, including long-range missiles, which have a potential range of 104,000 kilometers (6,500 miles) and could be capable of reaching mainland U.S. territory (Union of Concerned Scientists, 2017). Namely, the threat to the U.S. security has significantly increased.

Considering the two historical aspects of the North Korean nuclear development, pundits view the last two decades as a dismal diplomatic failure of the United States (Moore, 2008; Bennett, 2010; Allison, 2014; Farago, 2016; Sagan, 2017). For one thing, the U.S. policy against Pyongyang's nuclear development threats has failed in terms of achieving its strategic goals. The main function of foreign policy and its strategies is to achieve a desired end that a state has (Kudlacova, 2013). Since the detection of Pyongyang's nuclear development, the core objectives of the U.S. policy on the issue has been to make North Korea relinquish the nuclear aspirations in order to secure its own and the allies' security, and contributing to international peace by nonproliferation, which is enshrined in the chart of the United Nations (US DOD, 2002; 2017). Under the protracted and repeated cycle, America's North Korean nuclear policy has not yielded any fruitful political results, rather it has been revolving around the same position for twenty-five years (Moore, 2008; Allison, 2014; Feng, 2017).

Additionally, the second aspect of the history also points to the failure of the U.S. strategy toward North Korea's nuclear threats. It highlights that the extent of the threats by North Korean nuclear development has significantly increased through the advancement of Pyongyang's nuclear weapons. This also makes pundits conceive the U.S. policy as failure—in that, North Korea's developed nuclear missiles capable of reaching the United States which demands an urgent response (CFR, 2016; Jackson, 2017; Snyder & Park, 2017). Before Pyongyang attained the current remarkable advancements in their nuclear development, the immature nuclear technology that Pyongyang had was only threats to U.S. regional interests –

regional stability in Asia and protecting its allies, like South Korea and Japan in the region. It was not a direct threat to the U.S. homeland security (Congressional Research Services [CRS], 2016). However, with the advanced nuclear weapons capable of reaching the homeland of United States, North Korea's nuclear threats become to pose a grave direct challenge to the U.S. homeland security in spite of the U.S. attempts over two decades (Snyder & Park, 2017). As Sagan Scott (2017) argues, the United States' foreign policy toward the North Korean nuclear development has not eliminated its threats and failed to curtail the extent of its threats. Rather, Washington is facing a more complex and dangerous fear that the catastrophic nuclear attacks could happen in the U.S. soil by the authoritarian hostile state than before.

From the exhausted and dismal history record, two questions arise at this point: 1) despite its range of efforts to achieve its political goals, why has the U.S. foreign policy failed to eliminate, or at least curtail, Pyongyang's nuclear challenge? and 2) Is there no resolution to deter and eliminate the North Korean nuclear threats? If one exists, what would be a pragmatic solution to the long and menacing problem? This paper aims to answer to these questions through lessons learned from the history and theoretical analysis on the U.S. foreign policy.

Although the historical record presented above proved the failure of the past U.S. foreign policy toward North Korea's nuclear program, the repeated political behavior that Pyongyang has conducted to date gives some lessons to help understand the regime's foreign policy decision making features and find out 'the why' of the U.S. foreign policy failures as well. Firstly, coupled with comprehensive understanding on North Korea's international and domestic circumstances, Pyongyang's repeated political behavior pattern around its nuclear developments may signal that the regime has diverse motives regarding developing nuclear weapons and the preference of motivations has changed. In other words, the Pyongyang's decision-making process is also complex and dynamic by diverse motivations. Secondly, apart from the internal complexity, the North Korean nuclear developing issue has an external complexity which builds on the historical circumstance. As will be seen in the next history section, there are many states involved in the North Korean issue from the outset of developing nuclear program to date because of each state's interests around North Korea in the history. This complexity has influenced the effectiveness of the U.S. strategies in the diverse forms. The last lesson from the history is that the long and repeated cycle produces a side-effect, deepened distrust between the United States and North Korea. Although this distrust was mainly considered coming from the

North Korean fluctuating behavior, changes in the U.S. strategies following shifts of presidency also lead to the deepening distrust between two countries and exaggerate the credible commitment problem.

From the historical lessons, this paper deduced some causes of the U.S strategies' failures. The first and foremost cause of its failures is that the United States fails to understand the complexity and unique features of North Korean political decision process. Thus, the failure leads to ineffective strategies. Political decision makers in the United States, since the World War II, have mainly two political grand perspectives—security-oriented approaches and economics-oriented approaches (Ikenberry, 2002). These two perspectives also serve as main basic perspectives for the U.S. strategies toward North Korea's nuclear threats (Kim & Yi, 2005; Nah, 2013). However, the former, security-oriented approaches, do not present a comprehensive interpretation on the diversity of Pyongyang's motives to the U.S. policy makers. Furthermore, the North Korean political motives driving the nuclear weapons development are not fixed, but over time have changed according to the circumstance confronting the regime (George & Smoke, 1989; Little, & Zeitzoff, 2017). However, the security-oriented approaches are inadequate to explain and predict the regime's preferences which have changed. Hence, the approaches are insufficient to explain Pyongyang's foreign political behavior and have logical errors. Whereas the latter, economics-oriented approaches, takes into account more diverse motives for developing nuclear weapons in Pyongyang, the approach based on democratic economic integrations does not consider and offer inside perspective so that fails to understand the North Korean regime's authoritarian institutional characteristics. The understanding in the western ways fails to figure out the regime's authoritarian characteristics, which affects its political preferences. Therefore, the U.S. strategies toward North Korean nuclear development, based on above two grand theoretical approaches are ineffective to stimulate North Korea's core wants and fears, and failed to induce or coerce the Pyongyang's regime to abandon its nuclear program.

The second reason that the U.S. strategies failed is that the external complexity of the North Korean issue hampers to produce fruitful results of the U.S. policies. N-player game in negotiations makes it more complicated because of intensified uncertainty and weakened leverage. Many states—the United States, China, two Koreas, and at times, Russia and Japan—are involved in the North Korean nuclear issue. The multiple actors with their own interests make it complicated to resolve the issue. The N-player situation makes the U.S. threats

uncredible, because of the location of Seoul within the artillery fire range of Pyongyang, and its leverage lower, because of China's incoherent actions. Thus, it also hampers for Washington to bear effective results of its strategies.

Lastly, the deepened distrust between the United States and North Korea causes the credible commitment problem that also prevent resolving the international problem. The changes in the foreign policy of Washington causes the reduction of political credibility on commitment to negotiations. As pundits argue, credible commitment is considerably important to succeed in bargaining (Fearon, 1995; Reiter, 2003). Fearon argues that the credible commitment problem in bargaining process is one of causes of failure of a bargain and to wage wars in international affairs. After signing 1994 Geneva Agreement, two countries had doubted about the other's commitments to the agreement. Eventually, the doubts put them into the mire of the repeated historical cycle again. Although the United States has tried to negotiate with North Korea since the collapse of the agreement, the deepened distrust and doubts on credible commitment hampered the two countries to reach out bargaining.

Given the historical and theoretical analysis, the paper suggests that available options to deter North Korea from having nuclear weapons should be comprehensive options that can cover and stimulate the regime's complex and dynamic wants and fears. Hence, the option developed, after comparing other available options, in this paper is deterrence combined with some supplemental methods: multilateral engagement with China and South Korea to force North Korea; economic sanctions tailored to the authoritarian regime's traits; and inducement.

Figuring out everything about the complexity in international issue and finding out proper strategies on the issues must be exhausting works. As the former U.S. president John F. Kennedy said, however, that "When written in Chinese, the word CRISIS is composed of two characters- one represents danger and the other represents opportunity, it is argued that the complexity and dynamics are danger as well as opportunity". In other words, while it is the case that the complexity and changes of the nuclear issue have acted as obstacles to the U.S. foreign policy, it also seems that Washington could find paths to resolve the North Korean nuclear threats from the issue's complexity and dynamics. The complexity means that the North Korean regime has many factors that could influence the regime's calculus. The changes also mean that Pyongyang's fixation on nuclear aspirations is not a problem which does not budge an inch, but an issue which could be resolved and changed in a favor of Washington.

Given the complicated international relations, it is difficult to resolve any international issue by the United States alone. The clever power state should make others on my side and utilize others' capabilities to achieve what I want. This paper will suggest the possibility and way.

## **1.2 Method and Plan of the Thesis**

With the goals of examining why the U.S. foreign policy toward the North Korean nuclear threat failed and available options to the United States, this paper uses qualitative and expository. The paper consults Area studies, Social science, and journalism and also observes primarily historical events on the North Korean nuclear development and the U.S. policy in order to analyze them and suggest findings.

The these consists of three chapters including this chapter 1, introduction. In the Chapter 2, the paper analyzes the failure of the U.S administrations in interpreting on and reacting to North Korea nuclear program through the history context and theoretical underpinnings. Firstly, the chapter provides historical backdrop and overview on the North Korean nuclear development and the U.S. policy toward the issue. The historical contexts would describe its internal and external dynamics over the issue: The North Korean behavior characteristics—its repetitions of the pattern— and the role of other states involved in; and how the U.S. administrations' perceptions and responses has changed. Then, the paper analyzes the problems of Washington's' perception and reactions through historical lessons and theoretical approaches.

The Chapter 3 provides options available to the U.S. by reflecting the lessons from the history and causes of the failure. Before suggesting options, the chapter rethinks the North Korean motives with the theoretical analysis, noted in the chapter 2. Although making sense the North Korean calculus is difficult, cognizance on their rationality and differences in terms of their goals, interests, and the institutional traits make it possible to figure out the regime's calculus. Because of the differences that the North Korean regime has, it is required to assess their nuclear motives and calculus with more comprehensive understanding.

Then, this chapter examines the available, pragmatic, and specific options to the United States. In the conclusion, this paper summarizes the arguments, findings, and suggestions



mentioned in the previous chapters. The implications of this paper may lie in these efforts. This paper distinguishes itself from other scholarship in offering a detailed and comprehensive theoretical analysis to identify Pyongyang's rationales for acquiring nuclear weapons, and specific and pragmatic alternatives available to the United States. Though the analysis and options that the paper provides are not new ones, it is argued that this paper contributes to demonstrate their validation with historical proofs and the theoretical analysis.

## CHAPTER 2

### ASSESSMENT ON U.S. POLICY

#### 2.1 Sketch on the History

This chapter examines a historical backdrop of North Korean nuclear development, the U.S. decision makers' perceptions on and their reactions to the nuclear threats by Pyongyang in the historical context. For North Korea's nuclear program, exogenous and endogenous historical factors appear to have significantly affected the North Korean nuclear ambitions (Cha, 2003; Hecker, 2010). Hence, the historical background would present historical lessons about 'the Why' on both: Why North Korea has fixation on gaining nuclear capability; and Why the United States' foreign policy strategies failed.

##### 2.1.1 Backdrop of North Korea's nuclear program

The North Korea's desires for a nuclear arsenal date back to the mid-1950s in the early Cold War period, following the end of the Korean war, which was fought between two Koreas from 1950 to 1953 (Cumings, 2010; Litwak, 2016). Because the devastating Korean War ceased with an armistice agreement, security concerns henceforth remained a top priority for two Koreas—South and North Korea (Litwak, 2016). With aid from two super-powers during the Cold War—the United States and the Soviet Union—the two Koreas sought to build their military capabilities to respond to the security threats from the other. In the case of South Korea, the United States deployed its troops and tactical nuclear bombs in South Korea to deter the North's attack after the end of the Korean War (CRS, 2013). North Korea also attempted to increase its military strengths by reinforcing its conventional armed forces and fostering special operations forces. However, the fact that the country confronted the United States with destructive nuclear weapons, which proved its devastative power during the World War II, made the regime in Pyongyang turn to interests in developing nuclear weapons (Hecker, 2010). For this reason, North Korea covertly started out a nuclear program with the Soviet Union's assistance from 1956 (CRS, 2013; Choi, 2015). The initial stage is concentrated on accumulating

knowledge on nuclear development and installing its rudimentary nuclear scientific infrastructures with assistance from the Soviet Unions.

While setting off its initial nuclear program clandestinely, North Korea joined the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1974 and the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1985 because of the Soviet's pressure and promise of further assistance for nuclear development (CIA, 1986; CRS, 2013). The Soviet Union forced the North Korean regime to join the international regimes with the goals of involving the United States and its allies into the international nuclear regime to deter them from using and developing the atomic weapons (CIA, 1986).

However, the initial development of North Korean nuclear program, which underwent secretly, became to face some obstacles. The first is the collapse of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and intensified international isolation. The Soviet Union with communism had served as a primary Pyongyang's supporter which provided ideological foundations, funds and technology for development of the nuclear program and protected the North Korean regime from international pressure (Kim & Yi, 2005). In addition to the collapse of the Soviet Union, China, another communism state supporting Pyongyang, unfolded the economic reform by opening their door to the global economic capitalism markets, and thus resumed rapprochement with South Korea in the early 1990s, with pursuit of economic development, in spite of Pyongyang's opposition. The geopolitical changes in the region intensified North Korea's isolation from the international community. In this circumstance, North Korea had covertly continued to develop the nuclear program by one's lone. Some pundits, as will be discussed, argue that the change in international circumstance in the post-Cold War—the intensified isolation and the confrontation against the strongest state—makes the threatened state to be dependent on nuclear weapons for its self-defense (Kang, 2003).

The second obstacle to North Korea's nuclear development is that the clandestine nuclear development that Pyongyang conducted was revealed by U.S. intelligence in the early 1980s. The U.S. satellites detected nuclear plants in Youngbyon and high explosives tests (CRS, 2013; KINU, 2014). Thus, the nuclear development of North Korea, who ratified IAEA, surfaced into an international issue, although North Korea argued that its nuclear program was for research purposes and energy generation (Choi, 2015). Despite of detection and international concerns

that arise, the continued nuclear weapons development by Pyongyang becomes a prelude to the vicious conflicting history between the United States and North Korea.

### **2.1.2 U.S. Strategies Toward North Korea' Nuclear Threats**

Since Washington detected Pyongyang's nuclear development, the first response of the U.S. with South Korea to North Korean nuclear development was an appeasement—a warm and ameliorate way with negotiations (Kudlaova, 2014). The response was based on a perception that Pyongyang's motives for nuclear program results from its security concerns after the collapse of the Soviet Union and isolation from its stronger enemies—the United States and South Korea. After the joint U.S.-South Korea meeting in 1990 to discuss the North Korean issue, two allied states announced that “The United States and South Korea affirm that they are not threats to North Korean security and we seek to improved relations with that country” (KINU, 2014). The United States, in 1989, proposed negotiations to North Korean regime in order to improve relations with the country. North Korea also had shown willingness to accept the negotiations offered by Washington and to halt the nuclear program in exchange for assurance of the regime's security (Kudlaova, 2014). In February 1990, Pyongyang sent message to the IAEA board that “the country will accept IAEA's safeguard inspections when its security is assured from other states' nuclear threats” (KINU, 2014). In response, the United States and South Korea made commitment to remove factors giving security threats to the North Korean regime in order to induce the regime to abandon the nuclear program. On North Korean demands, as a result, the U.S. withdrew their tactical nuclear bombs from South Korea in 1991 and canceled the annual joint military exercises of 1992—the Joint U.S.-ROK Team Spirit exercise (known as Key Resolve exercise)—which North Korea denounced the exercises as aggressive actions threatening the North Korean security. As the consequence of these efforts, two Koreas bear some fruitful results like signing the “1992 Joint Declaration on Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula”, agreeing on not producing, reserving, testing, and employing nuclear weapons for peace on the Peninsula. Furthermore, North Korea began to get IAEA's safeguards inspections in the late 1992, which the country had refused to accept, and to dismantle the nuclear program (KINU, 2014).

In spite of the agreement, however, North Korea concealed some nuclear facilities and those were detected. During IAEA's inspections conducted in 1993, the international institution found significant discrepancy that North Korea is concealing two unreported nuclear facilities. Pyongyang not only strongly refused to acceptance to additional inspections that IAEA required to investigate the suspected nuclear facilities. It also shown aggressive reactions. The North Korean state's newspaper Rodong Sinmun, for example, released in February 1993 that "forcing to get special inspections of the IAEA will cause a war" (KINU, 2014). Since then, North Korea declared a quasi-state of war against the United States urging to take IAEA's inspection and sent the UN an official letter which the country will withdraw from the NPT (Kudlacova, 2014; KINU, 2014). Additionally, the Pyongyang's regime aggravated the situation by conducting test of intermediate-range missiles, Rodong-1, in May 1993. These focusing events triggered the escalation of the tension, a so-called the first North Korean nuclear crisis. Even if various attempts to negotiate with Pyongyang were conducted by the U.S. government and the IAEA in order to resolve the tension, they all failed.

A break in the escalated crisis in a tinderbox came from a meeting between former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and North Korean leader Kim Il-sung in Pyongyang. Carter's trip made a negotiation by Kim Il-sung' acceptance of dismantling their nuclear program in exchange for international economic and energetic aids. The crisis, by virtue of the meeting, came down the de-escalation phase (Litwak, 2016). Two countries—the United States and North Korea—signed the Geneva agreement, officially known as 'the Agreed Framework between the United State of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea', in October 1994. The agreement froze activities at North Korea's nuclear facility in return for the United States' commitment to construct alternate light-water nuclear reactors (LWRs) and provisions of heavy fuel oil and foods, in order to assist to overcome severe economic stagnation that North Korea had faced (KINU, 2014; Stanton, Lee, & Klingner, 2017). At this point, a primary perception that the United States and South Korea had stems from an assumption that Pyongyang has shared interests with Washington and Seoul—economic growth, given its severe economic crisis. Therefore, decision makers, in particular in Seoul, considered that the shared economic interests could enhance economic cooperation between them, usher, further, North Korean regime into international community, and make the country abandon its nuclear ambitions (Sigal, 1999; Baek, 2014). After adopting the Agreed Framework, South Korea had propelled a huge-size of

humanitarian aids to North Korea, known as “the sunshine policy” for a decade (1998-2008), which had offered substantial foods and funds assistance and helped establishing an North Korean industrial complex in Gaeseong region in order to induce North Korean regime to international economic market and abandon its nuclear aspirations (Stanton, Lee, & Klingner, 2017). With the policy, Seoul provided Pyongyang a lot economic and foods aides to help the regime to overcom its economic crisis. As a result, North Korea dismantled its nuclear reactors and packed spent fuel.

Unlike their expectations, however, the mitigated tensions by the Agreement Framework didn't lasted long. Two states—the United States and North Korea—became to face commitment problems in the mid-1990s (Hecker, 2010; Litwak, 2016; Farago, 2016;). For the Clinton administration, the Agreed Framework was opposed immediately by many in Congress who believed that it rewarded bad behavior and prefer a coercive strategy toward North Korean issue to the agreement (Cha, 2003; Litwak, 2016; Farago, 2016). The U.S. Congress failed to agree to pass a bill to provide appropriate funds for key provisions of the pact, causing the United States to fall behind in its commitments almost from the beginning (Hecker, 2010).

North Korea also conducted actions casting doubts on Pyongyang's commitment to abandoning its nuclear weapons development by conducting missiles tests following its power transition from Kim Il-sung into his son, Kim Jong-Il. Although Pyongyang took a gesture to halt its plutonium program after signing the Agreed Framework, the country continued to develop its missile program by conducting a long-range rocket launched over Japan in 1998, with denouncement of the delayed Americans economic helps. In addition to the violent actions, which gave a rise to doubts on the North's commitment, U.S. intelligences found again, in the late 1980s, North Korea's nuclear development in progress covertly. The revelation dimmed the future relations between two countries. An unclassified working paper on North Korea's nuclear weapons and uranium enrichment, made by the CIA in 2002, estimated that North Korea “is constructing a new nuclear plant that could produce enough weapons-grade uranium for two or more nuclear weapons per year” (CRS, 2014). Hence, the Agreed Framework based on interaction and cooperation quickly turned into accusations of non-compliance by both parties. Moreover, with the change in administrations in Washington, hope for a settlement was quickly dashed.

The new Bush administration that adamantly opposed to the Agreed Framework accused Pyongyang of pursuing covertly the alternative High-Enriched Uranium (HEU) path to the bomb, which was detected by United States intelligence. For this reason, the Bush administration made significant changes in its foreign policy toward North Korean nuclear development into more coercive ways. The United States immediately suspended their aids to North Korea, which had conducted under the promises in the Geneva agreement, and exerted much harder diplomatic tools. Moreover, the 9/11 attack in 2001, which caused changes in the concept of US security threats and their strategies, instigated the new Bush administration to take much harder policies such as containment and deterrence strategy (Kudlacova, 2014).

The president Bush also identified Kim's regime as Axis of Evil in the world and designated it as a state sponsors of terrorism in the same year following the accusation of Pyongyang's clandestine uranium enrichment program. Washington also began to implement sanction strategy against the North Korean regime to force the country to give up the nuclear weapons. The Bush administration not only cut off the food and fuel assistance, but also conducted the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) which is intended to form international activities to block North Korea's use of the international markets to bolster its weapons of mass destruction strategic agenda (KINU, 2014; Kudlacova, 2014).

Thus, this altercation of the bottom lines of the U.S. foreign policy caused to the termination of the Agreed Framework by changing Pyongyang's technical and political trajectory into drawing on nuclear arsenal again (Hecker, 2010; Litwak, 2016). In response to the shift in the U.S. policy, Pyongyang denounced that Washington's coercive actions are regarded as proclamation of war against North Korea and declared to resume its nuclear program by preparing to reprocess 8,000 fuel rods that had been packed in December 2002. In January 2003, North Korea, eventually, withdrew from the NPT, which precipitated the second North Korean nuclear crisis. In addition, the tensions became to be escalated again due to North Korean's subsequent missiles tests and the declaration that "North Korea will spur its efforts for developing deterrent nuclear weapons" (KINU, 2014).

However, the Bush administration's coercive foreign strategies didn't draw coherent actions from other main states involved in, in particular China and, at times, South Korea. In other words, involvements of other states in the issue makes it more difficult for Washington to exert effective influence on North Korea (Stangton & Lee & Klingner, 2017). The problem of

the complexity around the North Korea lowered the impact of the U.S. coercive strategies on North Korea.

Firstly, whereas the United States pressed North Korea through sanctions, however, Washington had failed to attract international cooperation from China. For the interests related to North Korea, China continuously and covertly offered economic aids and maintained the trade with North Korea, although Washington struggled to impose pressures against Pyongyang. In terms of international pressure, Beijing had also protected Pyongyang from international containments by exerting their veto on the United Nations Security Council (Stangton & Lee & Klingner, 2017). Even if China opened its economic door to the global capital economic market, led by the United States, Beijing still maintained the communist ruling system and connected with North Korean regime in terms of the communist political ideology. In addition to its bonds from political ideology, China's interests on North Korea, at that time, made Beijing choose a position to protect Pyongyang. China's core interests with respect to North Korea were in China's security interests, which came from increasing the U.S. leverage over the Korean Peninsula (Kampaussen, 2014; Chang, 2016; Mastro, 2018). In terms of security, alliance with North Korea is seen to be important for China because of the North's function as a buffer state between China and South Korea, a key U.S. ally. The existence of North Korea deters the United States from extending their power and clout toward the North and China. In addition, another security interest related to North Korea is the border instability and refugee's problem in China's northeastern border that could happen if a war broke out on the Peninsula. Scholars argue that the cost of managing the huge North Korean refugees and potential instability of China's northeaster border seem to impact the Chinese growing economics, so that China pursues to stabilize North Korea and tries to prevent the regime's collapse (Kampaussen, 2014; Chang, 2016; Mastro, 2018).

The Bush administration's coercive policy didn't also attract a coherent action from the other major actor—South Korea. While Washington was pressing on North Korea, Seoul, though paced with American' strategy, had maintained 'the Sunshine Policy', a program of economic aid and subsidized investment in North Korea (Stangton & Lee & Klingner, 2017). Under the 'Sunshine policy, Seoul provided Pyongyang \$7 billion between 1991 and 2015, often as food and medical assistance with the policy. Seoul poured at least \$7 billion into Pyongyang. Critics



of the policy argue that the sunshine policy provided Kim came just in time to rescue him from a spiraling economic crisis (Stangton & Klingner, 2017; Litwak, 2016).

Whereas the complex relationships in the North Korean issue bear negative impact, the complexity also acted as means to resolve the tension between the United States and North Korea. Namely, it continued to the multilateral negotiations, a so called-the Six Party Talks, in order to defuse the escalated tension of the second North Korean nuclear crisis. The multilateral efforts were implemented by states involving the United States, China, Japan, Russia, and two Koreas, called the Six Part Talks. Notably, China did play a leading role in implementing the multilateral talks. In August 2003, the first round of the Six Party Talks that China hosted took place in Beijing to pursue a diplomatic solution to the North Korean nuclear issue. The six-year multilateral dialogue contributed to bearing fruits. North Korea, as the result of the six rounds of the talks, agreed to dismantle its nuclear facility in Yongbyon in exchange for international aids. In October 2008, North Korea had halted activities regarding nuclear development and released a document about its nuclear history. The Bush administration, in turn, offered fuel aids to North Korea and removed the state from the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism.

However, the United States shown ambivalence about the Six Part process because of its domestic political disputes over the North Korean issue between hard liners and proponents of negotiations. The United States, at the beginning of the Talks, put more coercive economic pressure against the regime in Pyongyang, such as freezing illegal funds which North Koreans had managed through small international banks like Banco Delta Asia. Because of the coercive sanctions, However, Pyongyang refused to participate in the negotiation talks and continued to develop nuclear program with a couple of tests on nuclear and long-range missiles. Many proponents of engagement, which viewed the multilateral talks as the best mechanism to constrain the North's nuclear capabilities, criticized the Bush's coercive policy. Thus, the Bush administration changed into removing the sanctions through Banco Delta to persuade the North Korean regime to the negotiations tables following the first nuclear test by North Korea in October 2006. As Litwak (2017) criticizes, the Bush administration's ambivalence about the Six Party process sent a mixed message to North Korea and widened an opinion gap on resolving the issue between two countries.

Even if the Six round of the Six Party Talks, after the mitigated sanctions by the United States, bear a fruitful agreement that North Korea dismantle its nuclear program again, the

moderated tension reentered to the stand-off due to the continued different stance on denuclearization, which was a product of their trust between two states accumulated throughout their long history. Whereas Washington demanded to first abandon its nuclear weapons Pyongyang already had in November 2008, Pyongyang argued that they first halt its nuclear facilities in exchange for international aids but, abandoning its nuclear weapons will be discussed after normalization of relations and getting international aides. Additionally, the change in the U.S. administration again put the issue on another phase.

Since the U.S. President Obama took office in 2009, the administration proposed negotiations to North Korea's regime in order to solve the standoff of the relations between two states. However, Pyongyang refused to Washington's proposal and committed doing provocations by developing its nuclear programs. North Korea carried out its second nuclear test along with its advanced long-range missile, Kwangmeongsung, in 2009. That was just four months after Obama's inauguration and the proposals. In respond to its test, the UN security council passed the resolution 1874 which reinforces its sanctions on North Korea.

Hence, the President Obama's strategy to react to Pyongyang's provocation changed from negotiations into an attempt to a policy, so-called "strategic patience" which draw on deterrence and waiting. The policy aimed at deterring North Korea through economic sanctions in order to gain diplomatic leverage and possibly to support domestic changes until North Korea to come back to the table (Hecker, 2010; CRS, 2016). Since North Korea's second nuclear test in 2009, international economic sanctions had solidified. However, the sanctions had little effect in force North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons because of two factors. First of all, the sanction was not strong and adequate to influence the North Korea ruling class's mind. Rather, that was used a means for Pyongyang's regime to consolidate power to response to Americans' restriction. The second factor which hinder sanctions' effect was China. Even if China ostensibly agreed the UNSC resolution, China still served as a supporter for North Korea.

North Korea responded to the international restrictions with much more aggressive ways. The country declared to convert all platinum, which they had, into nuclear weapons with an excuse to provide for the U.S. attacks. The tensions on the North Korean issue had escalated again. In order to ease the tensions, the former U.S. President Clinton, as a special embassy, visited to Pyongyang, and the South Korean government also proposed a 'Comprehensive resolution and Grand Bargaining' based on negotiation and cooperation. However, these efforts

had been in vain because of Pyongyang's subsequent military provocations against South Korea, such as an attack on ROK battleship 'Cheonan' (killing 46 sailors), and the shelling of one of South Korea border island – Yeonpyeong. Since those Pyongyang's provocations, Washington and Seoul cut off all aids to and trades with Pyongyang and the situation had been standoff.

Afterward, the tensions between the United States and North Korea have escalated since Washington and Pyongyang all faced shifts in their leadership. The North Korean new and young leader, Kim Jong-un, has accelerated its nuclear program. As of January 2018, since he assumed power, the regime in Pyongyang conducted four nuclear tests and eighty-five missile tests ranged from Submarine launched missiles to long range missiles just for seven years (ROK Ministry of National Defense, 2017). With its attempts, it is estimated that as of September 2017, the North Korean regime has produced between thirty and sixty nuclear bombs extracted from plutonium production reactors and uranium enrichment (Warrick, Nakashima & Fifield, 2017), which has a yield of about 140kt, ten times as the U.S. bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 (The U.S. Geological survey, 2017). Pyongyang also has diverse launchers to carry out nuclear bombs, including long-range missiles which has a potential range of 10,4000 kilometers (6,500 miles) and could be capable of reaching mainland U.S. territory (Union of Concerned Scientists, 2017).

For the United States, since the President Trump took office in 2017, its new administration with a coercive attitude to the North Korean nuclear challenges has increased economic sanctions against North Korean regime. The intensified North Korean nuclear tests also escalated the tension again. Some pundits like Litwak (2017) starts to call the current escalated circumstance as the third nuclear crisis. In the President Trump' speech before 2017 UN general assembly, following North Korea's the sixth nuclear and long-range missiles tests, he mocked the North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un, by calling "a little rocket man" and addressed that the U.S. administration has been considering all options including military options, called 'Bloody nose Operation', to deal with nuclear threat by Pyongyang. In response, Pyongyang argues that any actions, which threaten its sovereignty and security, cannot be tolerated for its security and be responded.

Figure 2.1 schematizes the history with major events. The primary feature in the history is that the history has repeated pattern—de-escalation and escalation of tension—by North Korea's nuclear foreign policy. Furthermore, coupled with comprehensive understanding on North Korea's international and domestic circumstances, Pyongyang's demands on negotiations

table has extended and changed, over time, from security assurance into diverse motivations. In addition, the tension escalated since the collapse of the Six Party Talks has more and more intensified and continued to date.

However, the escalated tension is facing new phase after North Korea's abrupt participation in the 2018 Winter Olympics held in PyeongChang in South Korea. Even if it is too early to assess whether or not the sports and cultural exchange through the Olympics, and summit talks between two Koreas and between the United States and North Korea, could be a foothold to resolve the stalemate, it appears that the North Korea nuclear development issue is entering into the other historical cycle that has been repeated for two and half decades. In order to break the long and dismal historical cycle, it is argued that now is the time to deeply appreciate the past strategies and come up with proper options while the cycle has a pause without more escalation.

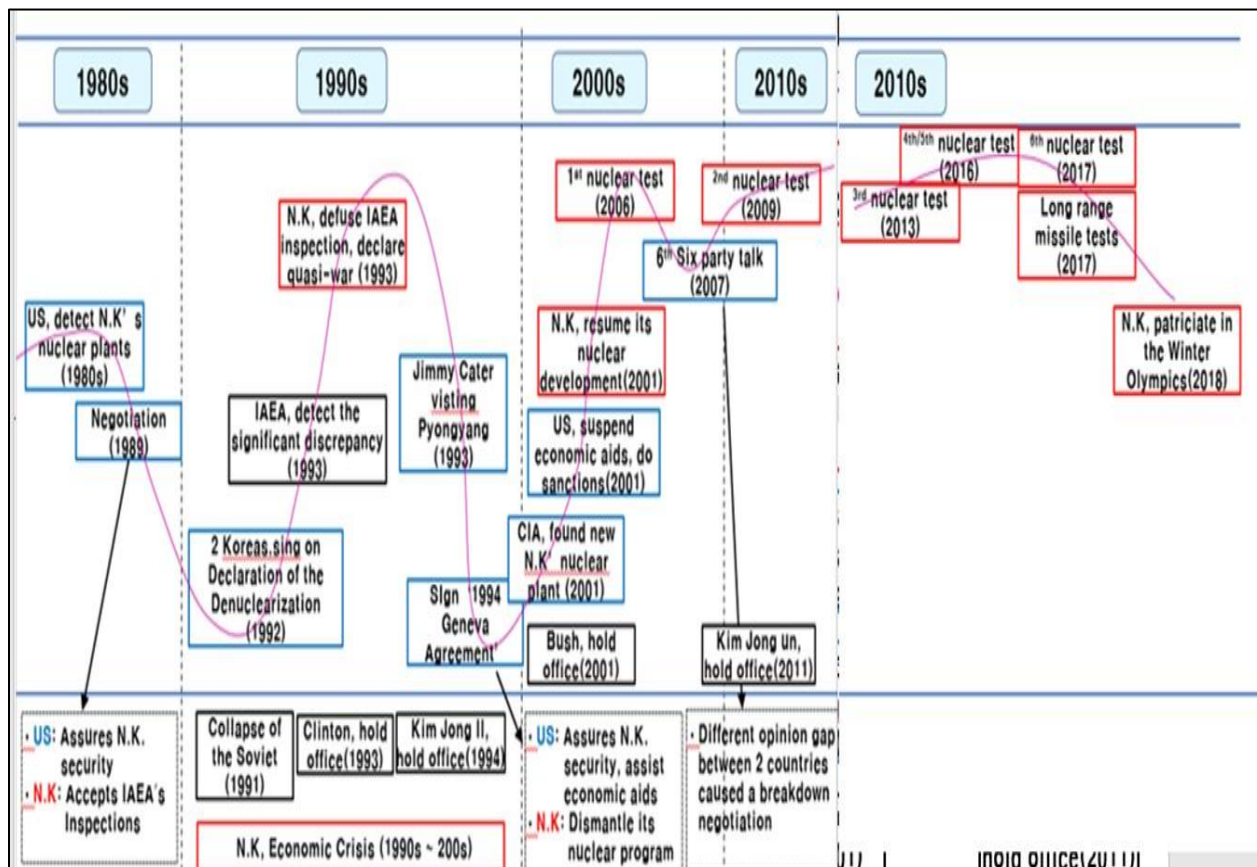


Figure 2.1: Cycle in the History

## 2.2 Assessment of U.S. Policy

Looking back on the history of U.S. foreign policy toward North Korea's nuclear program, it is argued that policies in the past have failed. Over two decades, there have been various attempts by the U.S. administrations to make North Korea abandon its nuclear development desires, but Washington has not achieved the goal—eliminating the nuclear threats by Pyongyang. Why did the policy fail? Where did it go wrong? In this section, the paper seeks to find answers to those questions through historical lessons and theoretical analysis.

### 2.2.1 First Failure: Inadequate Assessment on North Korean Regime's Motivations

A state's foreign policy making process begins with analysis on the target states; Why does the opponent state pursue to the conflicting policy or behavior; What is their goals and motives? (Kudláčová, 2014). In this process, decision makers use perspectives or worldviews as useful tools to help the state to view phenomenon and incidents that are happening. For this reason, the perspectives and theories have a strong impact on policy-making decisions (Singer, 1961; Baylis & Owens, 2017; Viotti & Kauppi, 2012; Waltz, 2001). In this respect, examining 'the why' should start with observing how the United States perceives North Korean interests regarding its nuclear program and, then, how they responded to the nuclear threats from Pyongyang with the perceptions that officials in Washington have. In other words, the analysis on the U.S. strategies toward North Korea's nuclear threats is required to begin with these points: What perspectives affect the U.S. decision makers' perception of the North Korean issue? What are the North Korean regime's interests, perceptions, and objectives that the U.S. politicians identify? Finally, how they respond to the conflicting issue with opponents?

Moreover, the lack of valid information on North Korean foreign policy-decision making process leads U.S. policy makers to depend on assumptions of theoretical frameworks in their policy-making process. North Korea, an opaque, secretive, and hermit state, has not released sources regarding the regime's political decision-making process (Pinkston & Saunders, 2003; Hecker, 2010; Roehrig, 2012). Furthermore, the long diplomatic interruption between two countries since the Korean War makes it more difficult for the United States to collect valid intelligence to understand the regime's motives and goals related to the nuclear program

(Roehrig, 2012). Thus, theoretical frameworks have significantly affected the U.S. strategies toward the North Korean issue.

Since the two World Wars, two theoretical perspectives have primarily been adopted by American foreign policy-decision makers as mainstream strategies (Ikenberry, 2002): one is realist in orientation, organized around security; and the other grand strategy is liberal in orientation, focusing on economy and economic integration among states in international relations. These two theoretical frameworks have also primarily been applied into the problem-solving process related to the North Korean issue, as tools for diagnosis and prescription (Kim & Yi, 2003; Ikenberry, 2002). However, the diagnoses from these two theoretical frameworks are insufficient and inadequate. As a result, the prescriptions based on the two theoretical perspectives are ineffective because the two frameworks fail to understand the complexity and unique authoritarian features of the regime's decision-making process. In the following sections, the paper analyzes how the two theoretical frameworks affect and have been applied in U.S. foreign policies toward North Korean nuclear weapons development. In addition, this section will examine the U.S. foreign policy's analytical and implemental problems, resulting from their theoretical perspectives on North Korea.

**2.2.2.1 Security-Oriented Approach and North Korean Nuclear Ambitions.** Security and wars have been main issues in international relations throughout human history. Particularly, security-oriented theories have sought to explain such international outcomes like the likelihood of major war and aggregate alliance patterns among states (Wagner, 2007). For this reason, the approaches, organized around security, have actively been developed in the international relations field and has been adopted by many policy decision-makers (Viotti & Kauppi, 2012). Although there are many strands of the security-oriented approach, Neo (or Structural)-realism have been applied into the North Korean issue by the US administration (Ikenberry, 2002; Kim & Yi, 2005). Thus, it would be necessary to understand the Structural realism's assumptions to analyze the U.S. strategies.

First of all, the structural realists posit that a structural level of analysis primarily affects interaction of units in international affairs. Thus, they argue through a structural-analytical level can international politics be well understood (Waltz, 1979; Mearsheimer, 2001). Waltz (1979) argues in his book, *Theory of International Politics*, that compared to the other levels of

analysis—individual and state level—, the system level is the most useful and comprehensive level of analysis, encompassing the totality of interactions which take place within the system. Here is the reason that the theory is called as Structural realism.

The international structure which they characterize is anarchic system, which mean there is no central legitimate governance to control conflicts in international relations (Waltz, 1979; Mearsheimer, 2001). That does not mean that it's chaotic system, but rather one that is comprised of sovereign states, which have no central authority above states to mediate and control disputes within the international system. Under the anarchic system, there exists uncertainty of other states' intentions in international relations. No state can be sure that another state will not use its

military capability to attack the first state (Mearsheimer, 2001). Hence, anarchy makes a state put its national security as a top priority issue. In addition, because of the absence of a higher authority than states and the uncertainty in the system, states rely on themselves for their own survival (Waltz, 1979; Mearsheimer, 2001). In other words, the anarchy put states in a self-help system, requiring them to seek its own means by themselves for its survival.

In this respect, the security-oriented approaches assume that the probability of cooperation among states is little (Waltz, 1979; Mearsheimer, 2001). Waltz (1979) argues that in a self-help system, international politics preclude to cooperation of states since a state worries about a division of possible gains that may favor others more than itself. Mearsheimer (2001) also contends that considerations about relative gains and concerns about cheating inhibit cooperation in international relations. The possibility of a breach of negotiation impedes cooperation among states.

The theory has two major strands—Offensive and Defensive realism—because of disagreement about the means to achieve the goals—surviving. Although the two strands agree about the anarchic system's role in international affairs, they, however, disagree about the logical implication of uncertainty in anarchy system. As a result, the difference leads them to come up with different ways for state's survival. Firstly, Offensive realism argues that the uncertainty in the anarchy system means that no state can be sure that other states do not have offensive intentions to go along with their offensive capabilities. The fear makes states seek to possess more offensive military capability than that of others, which gives them the wherewithal to hurt and possibly destroy each other for survival (Mearsheimer, 2001). In this regard, Offensive

realists contend that power-maximizing behavior is the best option for states to survive in the anarchy system in which uncertainty abound.

On the other hand, Defensive realism considers that the power-maximizing behavior that Offensive realists put forth will cause unintentionally more unstable situation—the so-called ‘Security Dilemma’. They argue that because of uncertainty of others’ intention, attempts by one state to increase its security has the effect of decreasing the security of others, although the state does not have aggressive intentions (Jervis, 1978). As a result, the other states seek to increase their capability with similar measures and these actions by states produce increased tensions that create conflict, ever no side wants it. Jervis (1978) develops and specifies the condition under which security dilemma occur, by Offense-Defense theory. He puts forth that military power, at a certain time, can be categorized as favoring either offense or defense. If defense has a clear advantage over offense, states will have little incentive to use force to gain relative power and rather, will concentrate on protecting what they have because to sustain the status quo is an easier task than to conquer. Alternatively, if offense is easier, states will be tempted to conquer each other, causing many wars in the international system (Jervis, 1978). In international relations, he argues, the case that defensive has advantages over offense is more than the opposed case. Therefore, Defensive realists hold that the states pursue moderate and restrained behavior, which tries to maintain status quo, to ensure their survival and safety, and provides incentives for expansion in only a few select instances. In other words, Defensive realists put forth that maintaining balance of power is the best option to maximize security, and imbalance of power will cause conflicts like preemptive or preventive wars.

One of strands of Defensive realism, which is worth noting, is Deterrence theory because it is assumed, from the security-oriented approaches perspective, to be a main motive for Pyongyang’s nuclear aspiration. Deterrence is defined as a strategy designed to prevent an adversary from doing something through threats of using force (Art, 2003; Schelling, 2008). The theory focuses on changes in states’ behavior by interaction and rational decision process that states conduct. The deterrence theory posits, as Shelling (1960) put, that the increased cost of war, which results from advanced military technology, leads states to consider using their forces the worst resort, or at least the last resort. The option, which breakouts war or nuclear war, is so costly and risky that only an irrational leader could consider it a means of conflict solution (Zagare & Kilgour, 2000).



In this light, the deterrence theorists argue that threatening by using forces as a coercive diplomacy is a way by which other states can manipulate its calculus on disagreement issue between or among them (Schelling, 1960; Levy, 1988). Therefore, the deterrence aims not to use force, but to threaten of using force in order to deter others from doing what they want (Schelling, 1960). This deterrence theory is popularly used and developed to explain the stability during the Cold War era. Theorists from deterrence theory point out that the mutual deterrence by two power countries with nuclear capabilities and equal powers contributed to maintaining the balance of power and stability during the Cold War era. This deterrence theory also produces nuclear deterrence strategy (Schelling, 1960; Sagan, 1997; Powell, 1990). The proponents of the nuclear deterrence strategy perspective argue that one of reasons that a state seeks to build nuclear capabilities is to get the deterrence for its security (Sagan, 1997). They also point out that the nuclear deterrence provides rational actors with stable deterrence due to the weapons' destructive power (Waltz, 1981).

The second major assumption that the security-oriented theorists have is that a state is a main actor in international relations as well as a rational entity. They assume, as mentioned above, that the international system is composed of states seeking for means for self-help. In addition, they posit that their choice is conducted by a rational decision-making process. A country has its goals and objectives and examines considerations of all feasible alternatives and their cost-benefits, which could achieve the goals. With this rational decision-making process, a state selects the alternatives that maximizes utility (Viotti & Kauppi, 2012).

This rational choice models coupled with game-model contributed to supporting the Structural Realism's assumptions and arguments noted above (Ellsberg, 1961; Schelling, 1960, Jervis, 1972). For example, the Prisoner's dilemma model, one of game theory models, supports to explain why uncertainty in anarchy makes states seek to the self-help, instead of corporations. The deterrence theory also utilizes its deterrence game model to support its theoretical logic (Zagare, 2004; Quackenbush; 2011).

With these two main assumptions, Structural realists postulate that under the anarchy system, states are undifferentiated and sameness in terms of the goals and function (Waltz, 1979). All state has same ultimate goal—ensuring their security—and functions, calculating options that it has and choose options that make it possible to achieve its goal through the Rational Choice Model (Levy, 1988; Waltz, 1979; Mearsheimer, 2001; Jervis, 1985).

With the security-oriented approach, many research has analyzed North Korean motives for its nuclear capability. What is common argument of them is that North Korea's nuclear ambitions are motivated by its security concerns coming from perceptions of both vulnerability to superior U.S. and South Korean forces under the deepened international isolation since the fall of communist rule in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union (Kang, 2003; Hwang, 2004; CRS, 2006; Nah, 2013; Roehrig, 2012; Lankov, 2017). They argue that Pyongyang seems to realize that the North Korean position in the military balance of power on the Korean Peninsula lagged behind compared to Seoul as the South Korean economy grew spectacularly since the 1970s, allowing purchase of superior weapons while the U.S. brought its military preponderance to aid the South Korea (CRS, 2006). Furthermore, the reality that Pyongyang confront the most powerful state, the United States, seems to impose grave security concerns, in particular, since the fall of the Soviet Union, Pyongyang's strong patron. Considering some historical facts like American invasion on authoritarian states like Libya and Iraq that are against the United State, as Kang (2002) argues, North Korean leaders also may believe that, without the security guarantee of nuclear weapons, they would be overthrow by outside military intervention. A speech by the chief North Korean nuclear negotiator during the Six Party Talks represents the security concerns. He told his U.S. counterpart, "If we disarm (nuclear weapons) ourselves because of U.S. pressure, then we will become like Yugoslavia or Afghanistan's Taliban, to be eaten to death". This dialogue represents North Korean security concern and motives for its nuclear weapons.

The same point can be found in Kim Jong-Un's speech in 2016 New year address. He argues that "North Korea's nuclear and ballistic programs capable of reaching the United States are meant to establish "equilibrium" with U.S. forces and means to deter the United States from attacking the country". In his eyes, the nuclear option is a necessary means for his and his party's continued rule—indeed, their survival.

Hence, the security-oriented approaches view that North Korea's nuclear development is motivated by its goal—security, threatened by the international structure and isolations. The approaches and developing nuclear weapons is strategies to achieve the goal, either offensively maximizing its military power or defensively maintaining equilibrium by getting deterrent power. Firstly, from the offensive structural realism perspectives, North Korean aspiration for the nuclear weapons is understood as attempts to maximize their military power for survivors

(Nah, 2013). Under the international circumstance, which their allies abandoned Pyongyang and the enemies' threats increase, the North Korean regime seems to regard accelerating the nuclear weapons development as sole means to maximize their power and to respond to the security threats.

Given the regime's inferiority power in both military and economics, deterrence theorists also posit that the motives of Pyongyang's nuclear weapons development are derived from the security concerns and their survival (Kang, 2003; Habib, 2011). However, theorists from deterrence theory put forth different views on strategic objectives of the North's nuclear development. They point out that the regime regards the nuclear weapons as a low-cost strategic equalizer against the United States and South Korean forces, providing a deterrent against attack or invasion from the U.S. (Habib, 2011). They argue that the North's effort for developing nuclear weapons derived not from its hostility, but just its security fear which has been accumulated from the collapse of the Soviet Union (Kang, 2003). David Kang (2003) argues that Pyongyang's behavior is designed to only deter the United States from attacking North Korea for its own survival. Rather, he argues that the mutual nuclear deterrent strategy between the United States and North Korea has effectively contributed to stability on the Korean Peninsula since the end of the Korean War by preventing military conflicts on the Peninsula.

In this respect, the deterrence theorists also predict that North Korean regime will develop a small number of nuclear weapons as a second strike means, or retaliation method, to threaten the United States and South Korea or develop strategic launcher tools like submarine- or ship-launched missiles for strategic deterrence effect (Roehrig, 2012).

These security-oriented theoretical approaches have affected the U.S. policy-decision makers because the security-oriented approach contributes to helping the U.S. decision makers to understand North Korean motives and its behavior in a simple and clear way. Nah (2013) argues that, particularly, by the mid-1990s the North Korean interests in its nuclear program and the U.S. response to the threat have been affected by security-oriented approach. As seen in the history section, when Washington detected Pyongyang's nuclear program for the first time, the strategy that the United States chosen was the assurance, that Washington and Seoul are not security threats to Pyongyang, and appeasement, removing factors threatening Pyongyang's security, like withdrawing U.S. tactical nuclear weapons from Seoul and suspending the annual U.S.-South Korea military exercise (Team Spirit).

Hwang (2004) also asserts that the Bush administration's view of the North Korean nuclear motives is based on the offensive security-oriented approach. He argues that the Bush administration regarded the North Korean regime as evil developing nuclear weapons threaten the international community and viewed that the regime has little intent to cooperate by reciprocating for their conciliatory policy.

It is summarized that given the historical record, U.S. political strategies from the security-oriented approaches are primarily twofold: Conciliation presenting elimination of security concerns to Pyongyang, which was implemented in H.W. Bush administration; and deterrence—threatening of using forces to the regime—implemented in the Bush administration and, partially, in the Obama administration. However, the strategies have not succeeded in accomplishing their goals for following reasons

First and foremost, one level of analysis and the simplification, that Structural realism has, is insufficient to explain Pyongyang's diverse and changing political preference in its decision-making process. The structural level of analysis considers that it does not need to look inside, and the approach focuses on the outside world. Thus, the theory also simplifies the organization of the international system by considering states indifferent actors in terms of their goals and functions. In other words, the theory deliberately omits the other factors which could affect states' decisions and their actions, like domestic factors, adopt intentionally only structural factor for usefulness of explanation, and consider states the entities that have same functions, goals, and interests (Singer, 1961). Thus, the theorists attempt to simplify and formulize with the structural analytical lens to explain international issues. Even if the approaches' simple theoretical model presents a simple, clear, and logical model to help understand international affairs, however, the foreign policy is foreign policy is not simple as may pundits point to (Singer, 1961; Hudson, 2013).

As Keohane and Nye (1977) point out, the world system has complicated because of the increased interactions among multiple actors and intensified linkages of issues. They argue that there are many issues and agenda affecting the political process other than military security issues. Hudson (2013) also points out in his book '*Foreign Policy Analysis*' that a state's foreign policy decision making process cannot be understand with only structure level of analysis because of its complexity. Singer (1961) also points to the problem of using one level of analysis

and puts forth that it is necessary for policy decision makers to use diverse level of analytical lens to understand complexity of international affairs.

The North Korean regime's foreign policy-decision making process is also no exception. Given its repeated behavior cycle in the history, Pyongyang's motives seem to be not limited only to the security concerns. North Korean has periodically shown interests in economic aid and economic cooperation in their behavior pattern as well as security concerns. While the theoretical framework concludes that cooperation among states is difficult to achieve due to their struggle for maximizing its relative gains, Pyongyang accepts economic aids and takes economic cooperative actions with the United States and South Korea through negotiations in order to diffuse the escalated tension. In particular, North Korea took steps to dismantle its nuclear facilities and to pack nuclear bombs that the country had through the cooperative agreement, during President Clinton took office, in 1994. Even the period of the Bush administration which the tension had stayed at its culmination after suspending international aids, Pyongyang left a room to cooperate to solve the issue by participating in multilateral negotiations table—the Six Party Talks. Furthermore, the fact that North Korean requests on negotiations are not only eliminating its security concern but also asking economic aids casts a doubt that North Korean motives for nuclear is not just coming from its insecurity. On negotiation table, Pyongyang has always asked mainly two things: eliminating security threat the regime faces; and economic aids in exchange for abandoning the nuclear program. Namely, North Korean motives for the nuclear weapons are not limited to only security and the interpretation based on security motives is not adequate to explain Pyongyang's behavior.

It is also argued, as some pundits argue, that the regime's political preference related to the pursuit of the nuclear weapons is not fixed, but has changed according to the circumstance that North Korea faces as seen in its repeated historical cycle (George & Smoke, 1988; Little & Zeitzoff, 2017). For example, the regime begun to build the nuclear weapons because of the external security threats resulting from the geopolitical changes like the disassembly of the Soviet Union. While Pyongyang faced the severe economic stagnation, their priority had moved into economic interests. Moreover, the authoritarian regime has faced domestic political legitimacy of Kim's family ruling so that the regime utilizes the nuclear development as means to consolidate their power as Hecker (2010) argues. There is another example to demonstrate the approaches' explanatory limitations.

In sum, the simplification of the security-oriented approaches provides a simple and clear framework to decision makers, but it is insufficient to explain the multiple and changing motives that Pyongyang has. The exclusion of the other factors affecting foreign policy from the explanation of Pyongyang's motives results in insufficient interpretations.

Secondly, the analysis which is preoccupied with security motives also results in a logical inconsistency and thus it causes inaccurate prediction on Pyongyang's future behavior. The theoretical logic of the security-oriented approaches is based on the Rational Model. However, in the same vein with the above first argument, a state could take a rational decision which is affected by other than security at times.

Theorists from the security-oriented theory, especially defensive security lens, view that North Korean nuclear weapons development results from its security fear by the United States and South Korea. Thus, the theorists argue that the Pyongyang's strategic objectives of developing nuclear weapons lies in having a deterrent in order to ensure its security and survival. In other words, for rational actors who know the catastrophic cost of nuclear wars, the aims of developing nuclear capabilities is not to use it, but to threaten opponents with superior military powers, and not to go war, but to maintain the stability in status quo for ensuring its national security. In this respect, pundits like Roehrig (2012) and Kang (2003), as mentioned above, the nuclear strategy that North Korean regime would take in the future is to build a small number of strategic weapons to just deter the United States from attacking the country. Considered the Jervis' theory, with its goals, survival, and the interior power than the United States, North Korea has advantage of defense over offense and the Roehrig's argument also appears to be reasonable.

However, as seen in the history section, their logic and prediction failed to the second trend of Pyongyang's nuclear history, noted in introduction section, which is its continually accumulating and increasing the nuclear power. Besides its number of nuclear weapons estimating over 60 bombs, North Korea achieved a long-range missile technology which can reach and attack on the U.S. homeland. Furthermore, the regime has conducted more aggressive actions—using force, launching long-range missiles over Japan and dropping near the U.S. State of Hawaii. Even if the classic deterrence theory argues that strategies which can make its threats credible is necessary (Quackenbush, 2011), the actions by Pyongyang is not a threat, but of using force. As a result of such violent actions, Washington has posed increasing challenges in North Korea, like increasing sanctions and further security threats. Immediately after the Pyongyang's

missiles tests, the White House also pulled out military options after a 20-year hiatus. Such behavior of North Korea leads proponents of the security-oriented approach to regard the regime as an irrational or mad state in order to defend their theoretical logic (Sigal, 1997, p.7). In other words, the approach, organized around security, faces contradiction between the regime's violent actions and the approaches' logic based on Rational Model, and cannot help but regard the regime as irrational to protect their theoretical logics. To worsen the matter, underestimating the regime as irrational would lead to another side effect such as putting U.S. policy-decision makers into more confusion to understand North Korean foreign policy, in addition to making it difficult to make a policy decision.

Lastly, the U.S. political responses from the security-oriented approaches are also ineffective because its failure of interpreting accurately Pyongyang's interests. If the country's motives for nuclear weapons derived by only its national security purpose, as Habib argues (2011), then the conclusion of negotiations or methods to resolve the nuclear problem should be reasonably straightforward because the best way would be to eliminate security concerns that Pyongyang perceives, particularly, in the initial phase of the issue which dispute was not deepened. However, as the history record shown, the negotiation based on efforts of eliminating the security concerns of the North Korean regime failed in the initial phase, the H.W. Bush administration. At that time, the foreign policy that the US administration implemented was conciliation by removing security concerns that Pyongyang had been feeling. In this vein, Washington, at that time, withdrew tactical nuclear weapons from South Korea, which had deployed since the end of the Korean War, and suspended annual US/ROK military exercise, The Team Spirit. Nevertheless, the North Korean regime had covertly developed the nuclear capability, breaching the agreement to abandon nuclear ambitions in return for its assurance of its security.

Another policy that the United States implemented, resulting from the security-oriented approach is deterrence. However, the deliberate exclusion of domestic traits and factor by the approach results in ineffectiveness of the deterrence policy. How to make deterrence effective will be discussed in the next section. However, it is worth noting here about major points of deterrence. The key to success of deterrence policy lies in that a state implementing deterrent has to stimulate and influence opponent's wants and fears, not relative strength (Schelling, 1966). As noted above, Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions are derived not only by the exogenous security

circumstance facing North Korea, but also by endogenous domestic factors like their economics and characteristics of the regime's institutions, as will be deeply seen in the next chapter. However, the deterrence strategy of Washington, which ignores the role of domestic factors in Pyongyang's decision-making process, is not able to influence the regime's wants or fears. Rather, the strategy, threatening North Korean regime to force to conform Washington's will, results, in this case, in negative, or opposite, results; aggravated Pyongyang's nuclear tests. The Kim' regime in Pyongyang utilized American deterrence as means to gain diplomatic leverage and possibly to support their authoritarian ruling. Under the circumstance of international isolation and pervasive economic stagnation, Kim's family in Pyongyang needs something to legitimate their ruling and to increase their domestic clout to stay in power. Thus, the pursuit of nuclear capability to meet external threats helps to lift up tensions at home and distract people's attention from their daily grievances and the failures of the regime (Sagan, 1997; Hecker, 2010). Since power transition into Kim Jong-un, the young leader, who had no political experience and faced severe economic stagnation, seems to need to consolidate his domestic power (Klingner, 2014; Port, 2016). In addition to huge internal purge that he did since he took office, Kim Jong-un aggressively confronted against the United States by expressing the regime's security threats from Washington and excessively conducted nuclear weapons development by implementing four nuclear tests and eighty-five missiles tests for just seven years (Republic of Korea Ministry of National defense, 2017). The decision to confront the US administration with a missile launch and a nuclear test was more likely an attempt to gain diplomatic leverage and possibly to support domestic changes (Hecker, 2010).

In sum, analysis of North Korean motives for nuclear weapons from the security-oriented and rational model is necessary but insufficient to explain a complex foreign policy process of Pyongyang. While the theoretical approach with one level of analysis helps to perceive North Korean behavior in an easy and clear way, the omission of domestic factors, which could affect foreign policy decision making process, and considering states indifferent actors do not present an accurate explanation over diversity of Pyongyang's nuclear foreign policy.

**2.2.2.2 Economics-Oriented Approach and Pyongyang's Nuclear Motives.** Another mainstream of the study trend on the North Korean nuclear foreign policy is approaches that focus on the country's economy and economic cooperation, which is based on Neo-liberalism. It



is necessary at the outset to figure out the Neo-liberalism's theoretical framework so as to understand the theoretical explanation of the North Korean behavior.

While the theory shares some main preconditions with the Structural realism; the anarchic structural system and the rationality of states, the approach considers that political decisions of states are motivated by their economics as well as their security (Oye, 1985). They note that although the anarchy system hamper to cooperate among states but, often bind themselves to the cooperative actions with other states in international relations in order to have absolute gains from common interests. Hence, supporters of the theory seek to find condition and means to enhance cooperation under the anarchy system, cooperation among states also happens,

There are some preconditions that Neo-liberalism theory has. First of all, theorists from Neo-liberalism posit that states' interest is determined not only their security concerns, but also economic situations that they face (Axelrod & Keohane, 1985). Even if the anarchy system affects states' interactions and their interests, the interests defined by Neo-liberalist perspective varies dependent on the context that actors are put in. Notably, the proponents argue that the globalized world and its increased closeness in many respects lead to expansion of states' interests to economics. Theorists of Neo-liberalism don't doubt that the international system provides important stimuli for states' actions. However, they turn the realist perspective on its head by regarding their actions within the international system as a function of the state-internal and society-internal process of preference formation (Moravcsik, 2008). In this regard, Axelrod and Keohane (1985) argue that the close linkage among issues, which means issues have linkages to and affect other issues, and domestic-international connection put states in a circumstance which favor domestic interests like its economics as well as security interests in their decision-making process

Secondly, the Neo-liberalism posits that states could choose cooperation rather than conflicts in international relations. Hence, theorists of Neo-liberalism attempt to explain where and when cooperation takes place in international relations with various theories. One of them is interdependence theory which explains possibility of cooperation in terms of economic interdependence (Keohane & Nye, 2000). They argue that deepened interdependence by globalization makes cooperation possible. The world has changed into more complex interdependent one. The deepened interdependence among or between states lead to cooperation among them rather than conflicting. In other words, with the linkage of issues and domestic-

international connection, states can find payoff structure which could give benefits to all, so-called a “non-zero-sum-play”. Another explanation about cooperation is presented by Oye (1985). He puts forth the conditions under which cooperation can occur, by using Game-Models, used to underpin structural realist ideas. He views that International affairs is not a single-round game, rather one is repeated game given the linkages of issues and the continuing interactions of actors. As Immanuel Kant put, iterated situations—repeated plays—leads actors in disputes to learn benefits from cooperation to avoid future wars. Under the iterated payoff structure, rational states could cooperate with others rather than choosing conflicts in order to increase their future mutual interests (Oye, 1985; Axelrod & Keohane, 1985). He contends that the circumstance that future payoffs are valued relative to current payoffs makes rational actors put more emphasis on economic issue than military one. For example, Oye (1985) also argues with the Prisoner’s dilemma model that if players have chance to choose their chance repeatedly, or if they have more choice and do not choose independently, then even if their preferences remain the same they may no longer have a single dominant choice, and coordination on a mutually beneficial outcome may be possible. In sum, theorists from the Neo-liberalism argue that states may have incentives to practice reciprocity in a variety of situations that are characterized by mixtures of conflicting and complementary interests. Therefore, reciprocity is a popular strategy in international relations.

Thirdly, the approaches focusing on economics and cooperation among states assume that although there is no central government to resolve conflicts and mediate cooperation in international, the role of international regime could facilitate cooperation (Axelrod & Keohane, 1985). They view that the main obstacle to hamper cooperation among states under the anarchy system is misbelief in cooperation and commitment problems—cheating or defecting after negotiation. However, the principles and rules of international regimes make governments concerned about precedents increasing the likelihood that they will attempt to punish defectors (Axelrod & Keohane, 1985). In addition, the international institutions alter the payoff structures facing actors by disseminating credible information to states and establishing rules, they may lengthen the shadow of the future.

In sum, the Neo-liberalists contend that given the deepened interdependence, common interests, and the lengthened the shadow of the future by iterated play, though they are under anarchy structure, states can get absolute gains that benefits all actors through cooperation.

From the theoretical approach, pundits focus North Korean nuclear motives on its economics. Namely, they argue that economics would be one of interests that Pyongyang's regime has, given the state of the country's economic stagnation (Signal, 1998; Nah, 2013). During the 1950s and 1960s, North Korea's economic output exceeded the South's. By the 1970s, North Korean economics began to stagnate and eventually collapse because of the combined impact of the Soviet Union's collapse, economic mismanagement, natural disasters—drought, and the decline of its modest export market during the global recession in the mid-1970s. Collapse of the Soviet Union caused the shortages on energy resources and food supplies. The lack of resources in Pyongyang had led to low productivities in industry field (Synder, 2010). According to testimony of defectors from North Korea, most factories stopped running due to the shortage of energy since the late of the 1980s. The people in Pyongyang have suffered from disease and starvation due to the lack of foods for several decades (Barbara, 2010). Furthermore, the collapse of the Soviet Union intensified North Korea's isolation from international community as well as global economic markets. The isolation also aggravated North Korea's economic crisis. The second factor which caused the North Korean economic stagnation in is the malfunctional communist distribution system and asymmetric investment on military development. In addition to the lower productivities, international sanctions which the international community afflicted on North Korean regime due to its resume of nuclear weapons development, had led to paralyzing of communist distribution system (Barbara, 2010).

Hence, Neo-liberalists argue that the country's deteriorating economic situation is very key determinants of Pyongyang's decision to put their nuclear weapons program on the negotiating table and initiated a limited opening to the West. For example, North Korean had suffered from severe famine and poverty from the early 1990s, so-called "March of Hardship period". Under the circumstance, pundits view that the North Korean regime cannot help but having interests on the negotiation from the United States (Habib, 2011).

Furthermore, proponents from the approach assert that given its severe long economic stagnations since the early 1990s, the United States and international community can induce the enclosed regime into opening the door to the world through shared interests and perceived gains from economic aids and economic integration with North Korea (Signal, 1998; Rhodes & Shellenberger, 2017; Delury, 2017).

Nah (2013) highlights that North Korea and the United States have shared interests in terms of economics, which enable to participate in economic cooperation. Pyongyang recognizes that international trades and foreign investments are important to improve its national economics in the globalized world and depended interdependence among states. In this vein, Nah (2013) argues that the North Korean motives for nuclear program have resulted from their economic purposes and their foreign nuclear strategy is intend to draw international attentions and economic aids.

Some researchers put forth more specific logics on the arguments focused on Pyongyang's economics. Delury (2017) puts forward economic negotiation to resolve Pyongyang's nuclear aspiration with a focus on their security and economic concerns. He contends that Pyongyang will consider surrendering their nuclear deterrent only once the country feels secure, prosperous and is economically integrated into Northeast Asia. What's more, the world can best help most North Koreans by relieving their deprivation and bringing down the walls that separate them from the outside world. Washington's immediate goal should therefore be to negotiate a freeze of North Korea's nuclear program in return for a U.S. security guarantee and cooperative economic helps, since that is the only measure that could enable Kim to start concentrating on economic development and the belated transformation of North Korea. In addition, considering the malfunction of communist economic system and their pervasive economic depression, Delury adds that that the leader, Kim Jong-un, also appears ready to do business. After taking power in 2012, his new national strategy—called 'Two track policy (*ByongJine* policy)' is that put equal emphasis on security and prosperity. His market-oriented reforms, which carried out market-oriented reforms, to resolve the deepened difficulty of the economics also underpins his interests in economic growth (CRS, 2016; Kim Dong, 2016) So far, however, Kim Jong-un has focused primarily on consolidating his domestic power and building up the country's nuclear arsenal. In this respect, Delury put forth that the United States needs to help the regime in Pyongyang pivot to the economy, as Kim's regime appears to have wanted to do all along.

Rhodes and Shellenberger (2017) also suggest that engagement and gradual integration of the regime would be the best option to convince Pyongyang to dismantle and abandon the pursuit of nuclear weapons. Since the collapse of the Soviet Unions, the regime has been isolated from international society and has not had chance to participate in international trade. Once the regime

concentrates on economic growth, the country would not concern about developing and clinging on the nuclear weapons.

Sigal (1998) also argues that with the chronicles the negotiating track of this period that the United States would have to pursue more serious cooperative engagement with North Korea if it was going to accomplish its non-proliferation goals on the Korean peninsula. Cooperation, or “cooperative threat reduction” is essential in meeting what many consider the most critical foreign policy challenge facing the United States today.

Even if the economics-oriented approach considers more comprehensive motives than security-oriented approach, however, the approach also faces explanatory limitations: presenting inadequate interpretation on North Korean nuclear motives; and offering ineffective prescription to the US policy makers. The cause of the explanatory failure results from the fact that the interpretations and political alternatives from the Neo-liberalism perspective are primarily based on outside perspective. In other words, the theoretical approaches fail to reflect the unique authoritarian regime’s characteristics, since the Neo-liberalism approaches are based on the western view, not inside of the authoritarian regime. The outside perspective precludes to explain accurately Pyongyang’s behavior. Hence, it is also no surprise that the prescription from the diagnosis is ineffective.

Authoritarian regimes have different political institution, and, thereby, have different political preferences from that of Western states. Their political institutions are usually based on undemocratic political systems. Also, the political ruling groups usually put their preferences on maintaining their power, rather than on enhancing their people’s well-being or life quality. It is not saying that which political institution style is better or worse (Hecker, 2010). What it is argued here is that there are significant disparities between Western states and authoritarian regimes in terms of political decision-making process. What is more, the role of the differences is also significant in making policy decision for each state. With the lack of understanding on the disparity, the policy makers in the Western states would be difficult to come up with proper foreign policy toward the authoritarian regimes. However, the Neo-liberalist perspectives seems to overlook the disparity of the institutional traits.

Of course, it would be difficult to perfectly make sense the regime’s institution, given their hermit and enclosed traits. Nonetheless, there are some characteristics that can be observed, affecting their policy decision-making and preferences. Firstly, the regime has a variant of

communism as a ruling system to consolidate its domestic power. As Max Weber, a philosopher in the 19th century, noted that a ruling group needs ideology to justify for its leadership, it was fundamental for a founder of North Korea, Kim-II sung, Kim Jong-un's grandfather, to set up ideology to secure legitimacy (Koh, 1978). Thus, he adopted communism from Marxism-Leninism as the national ideology since the country's inception. However, Kim Il-sung did not just mimic the ideology, but selectively adapt the principal to the condition of North Korea, as the founder of Chinese communism, Mao Zedong, did (Koh, 1978). Namely, Kim coupled communist pure ideology into its traditional cultural condition—Confucianism which consider people's sacrifice for a country as a top virtue required to the People (Agov, 2013). The reason Kim chosen the Confucian is seen that, as Agov (2013) argued, the Confucian morality which demands loyalty to the monarch supported communism ruling system—the One-Party state and the hierarchy ruling structure. He also adds that the basic concept of the Confucian that put emphasis on the People's moralities which are filial piety and loyalty to the ruler is effective to justify the power transition within one Family in North Korea. Namely, Kim's regime adopts the traditional moral ideology as a means to legitimate the Kim's family ruling and the People's sacrifice for the regime

Secondly, another ideological bottom line of the regime's institution is its nationalism which against foreign power and the ruling ideology—a so-called '*Juch*' (self-reliance). Many political leaders throughout human history have utilized it or faced challenges of their nationalism. In the case of North Korean regime, the nationalism, especially hostility to foreign power, has been used as one of main means to consolidate the regime. Before its foundation, the two Koreas had suffered from colonization by Japan for 40 years. Even if the two Koreas regained independent in 1945 following the defeat of Japan in the World War II, the one nation-state was divided into two states under the trusteeship by two power states—the United States and the Soviet Union respectively. Countless people in Korea had to part with their family and friends forever due to the division. The historical backdrop strongly forges the North Korean nationalism—resentments against foreign power and demand for enhancing own power for the self-defense—and develop into its nationalism (Lee, 2000). The founder, Kim-II Sung, utilizes the nationalism as a means for its ruling ideology and made its '*Juch ideology*' (self-reliance), which has been a main ideology of the regime so far (Kim, 2015).

The Kim's regime has used and emphasized these two main characteristics to their people in order to maintain their power when the regime faces its legitimacy-problem and needs to consolidate its power. For example, when the country faced the 'Hardship March', the long economic stagnation, the regime required the people to sacrifice and endure their severe national crisis and to consolidate their power with a excuse achieving its self-reliance military capability. In the case of the nuclear development, the regime's two ideologies also have a leading role to build the nuclear capability under the severe national economic crisis. The follow statement which Pyongyang has proclaimed for its reason for going nuclear represents the role of their ideologies in the nuclear development:

*"The DPRK made nuclear weapons and has strengthened its self-defensive war deterrent to maintain the sovereignty and the right to existence of the nation in the face of the increased aggressive threat by the U.S. Therefore, the people have to throw their heart and into the great work" (Rodong Sinmun, 2010)*

At a first glance, the motives presented in the statement appear to be derived from its security purpose. However, with a detail look, the statement represents the ideology 'Juche (self-reliance)'. The other purpose of the statements is on stimulating, at home, their nationalism against the States United by highlighting 'maintaining the sovereignty and the right as a state'.

The Neo-liberalist approaches, which ignore these traits of Pyongyang's regime, result in limitations in terms of both its diagnosis and prescription for the U.S. foreign policy. First of all, the perspective also, like the security-oriented approach, fails to explain accurately the regime's repeated behavior patter; Cheating and aggressive actions after cooperative agreements. After the 1994 Agreement frame during the Clinton administration, for examples, North Korea dismantled its nuclear facilities in Yongbon and packed nuclear bombs they had in turns for economic aids. However, the economic aids had not developed into the economic trades even if economic growth is one of Pyongyang's interests. Rather than, the regime had secretly developed the nuclear technology, as the US intelligence announced.

Given economic crisis, it is reasonable that the North Korean regime needs economic cooperation from international community. However, considered the regime's goal—regime survival—and their authoritarian regime traits, the failure of evolution for economic cooperation is inevitable because for the Pyongyang's regime, the cooperative actions in economics is a

double-edge. In other words, the deepening economic crisis that Pyongyang faces has necessitated economic reforms to preserve the regime, but the fear that significant changes by democratic economic capitalism could undermine its political control and the Kim regime's persistence (Hecker, 2010; Chang, 2016; Litwak, 2017). Chang's analysis (2016) on North Korean economic policy supports the argument. Chang also views that the economic growth through economic cooperation would be a positively necessary factor for the regime in order to come out from the dire of rampant economic stagnation and to maintain the country's sustainability. However, Chang argues that there appear to exist concern for the regime that the economic growth, which could be accompanied by economic liberalization, will eventually undermine the stability of the regime; the economic liberalization could intimidate the regime's survival. For this reason, the regime's interests in terms of economics is not economic cooperation, but only economic aids from outside in order to build its own economic capability for their self-reliance.

For example, there had been throughout the decades various attempts to make Pyongyang's communist system more flexible. Kim Jong-il, the former leader in North Korea as well as Kim Jong-un's father, had struggled to overcome the rampant economic stagnation through economic reform polices like the five-year national economic plans and building the industrial complex in Gaseong by Seoul's assistances. However, they have all eventually failed because there was no sustained commitment to conduct it. More precisely, there was fears that the economic reform lead to end central control, as seen in the case of the 'Arab Spring', which was a revolutionary wave against authoritarian regimes for requiring a more democratic political system and a brighter economic future in the North Africa and the Middle East.

Although Kim Jong-Un unveiled and has attempted to implemented economic reforms as one of their national strategy, the regime's political priority seems to be still on consolidating his domestic power by nuclear weapons, given Kim's excessive passion for nuclear arsenal development that he has shown since taking office. Even if seven years has passed since his ruling, the specific and pragmatic strategic for economic growth has still not released, but he just follows similar methods as his father did (Yang, 2016).

Hwang Jang yop, a defector who had been the leading theoretician of North Korea's ideology of self-reliance, also affirmed the regime's domestic feature. He said after the defection in 1997 that for the PY regime, the economic crisis and severe famine, which began from the



1990s, led the regime to turn to economics and aids from international community since it could not live without international aids". Nevertheless, "politics (for maintaining the regime's domestic power) still dominates economics in the regime"

In these respects, Kim Jong-un cannot just opt for economic cooperation as his precedents did, because the cooperative strategy is, though, necessary for economic growth in the global era but, simultaneously, could come about by economic liberalization; In other words, it will eventually undermine the stability of the regime. In this regard, it is understandable that North Korean regime has only required economic aids, not economic trades under the situation that other communist states like China and Vietnam have shown significant economic growth through promotion of economic trades. For these reasons, the economic-oriented approach failed to explain North Korea's repeated behavior pattern.

Another explanatory limitation that Neo-liberalism has is the expectation of international regimes' role in the authoritarian regime. The theorists like Keohane and Nye from the Neo-liberalism, especially, International regimes theory put emphasis on the international regime's role for cooperation. They argue, as noted before, that the international regime will acts as a semi-government in international relations, in order to prevent cheating and defecting, and to promote economic coordination. Furthermore, the fact that North Korea joined such international institutions and regime related to nuclear development encourages that the pundits expect the likelihood of economic cooperation and denuclearization through the international regimes (Noland, 1997). However, the theory's major supporting example comes from countries in Europe, in particular the example of the European Union (EU). As many pundits argues, the main success factor of the economic integration in Europe is the similar political system and homogeneous culture that the member states in the EU have (Viotti & Kauppi, 2012). However, North Korea is different from them in all fields. The regime has no a sense of bond to the international regime. Namely, the expectation of economic cooperation on North Korea comes from outside view and does not reflect its inside and authoritarian regime's features.

Furthermore, the fact that international institutions have little enforcement to states also makes the possibility of international cooperation diminished. As seen in the history section, even if there have been international norms, that has not prevented or deter North Korean cheating and developing the nuclear weapons due to their lack of enforcement, as critics point out (Karns &

Mingst, 2004). The authoritarian traits that put top priority on their regime sustainability has not consider the international regime matters

Lastly, thus the prescriptions from the economics-oriented approaches is ineffective. From such Neo-liberalist perspectives, the political prescriptions, which implemented by the US administration, are primarily twofold, given the historical record: the negotiations with cooperative economic aids in the Clinton administration; and the economic negative sanctions conducted since the Bush administration, which impose economic restriction against the North Korean regime. The cooperative economic aids, as noted before, failed to convince the North Korean regime to abandon the nuclear ambitions and to open their doors to the worlds, because the economic cooperation is not the regime's wants, rather the Kim's regime consider that the cooperation with outside intimate the regime's survival.

Another policy based on Pyongyang's economic conditions—economic negative sanctions—is also ineffective and inadequate to achieve the U.S. policy goals because the policy also has been implemented with the lack of understanding on Pyongyang's authoritarian traits. Since the Bush administration, the economic sanction has been used as a main means by Washington because of the desire to avoid the costs of military force. Furthermore, the North Korean economic depressed conditions have made economic sanctions attractive options for Washington states wanting to coerce Pyongyang. The more does North Korea conduct tests for nuclear weapons, the much do the Unites States and international institutions impose economic pressure against Pyongyang. However, these means have still not achieved the political goals. While there have many studies on why the sanctions against North Korea are ineffective, most of them put their focus on China's noncooperative actions (Wu, 2005; Haggard & Noland, 2010; Christensen, 2011). The collective argument from them is that the continued aids and trade from China hamper the effectiveness of economic sanctions. Under the international economic pressure, Beijing's aids make North Korea to breath and prolong their life. They contend that China's interests related to North Korea are the country's stability and sustainability because of China's concerns on their border security and economic stability, and potential increase of Washington's influence on East Asia. In this regard, China has persisted to assist North Korean regime. Although, of course, China's uncooperative attitude has a negative impact on the effectiveness of economic sanctions, it is not sufficient to say that North Korea can prolong their life for about two decades due to only Beijing's aids. Some pundits bring up problems in terms

of the sanction's methodology. Namely, as Stephan Haggard (2016) argue, the sanctions against North Korea have not only been mild. It is also not fit into the authoritarian regime's traits.

Souva and Lektzian (2007) present more specific reasons for the failure of the sanctions regime ignoring the authoritarian regime's characteristics. They point out that characteristics of a state's political institutions affect the success of sanctions. The key to sanctions success is to generate political costs for the target regime's winning coalition. However, different institutions have different size of winning coalition. Thus, when dealing with sanctions against democracy which the winning coalition is large, broad sanctions that impose high economic costs on the population are more likely to produce a policy change. Because the broad population have voices to affect political decision makers, sanctioning population is effective way which can influence the opponent states' leadership calculus. However, for the nondemocratic countries which have small size of ruling class, sanctioning broad population within the countries is not effective because most people in the country are not part of the autocratic leader's winning coalition and have no voice to influence the policy decision makers. In this regard, Souva and Lektzian (2007) contend that narrowly tailored economic sanctions which impose economic costs on the ruling class is required for the effectiveness.

For the authoritarian regime in Pyongyang, which the privileged elite class monopolize the economic interests through the national economic activities and illegal economic activities like money laundry and arms exports, the more tailored and intensive sanctions is required to achieve the strategic goals. The broad economic pressure cannot change or influence the political decision of the regime's elite class.

In sum, the approaches, focused on the regime's economics and the probability of economic cooperation, fail to consider the regime's authoritarian traits. As a result, the approaches also fail to explain the repeated historical behavior pattern that Pyongyang has conducted. Their political prescriptions are not effective against the authoritarian regime.

### **2.2.2 Second Failure: External Complexity Around North Korea (Problem of N-Player)**

As many pundits point to the difficulty of N-player game to resolve disputes in international relations (Oye, 1985; Fearon, 1995), U.S. strategies, which aim to prevent North Korean regime from developing its nuclear weapons, also have not been able to result in the

expected outcome because of the complexity on N-player situation around the North Korean issue. Pyongyang's nuclear program issue at the initial stage begun with four states—South Korea and the United States, and North Korea and the Soviet Union, as seen before. Since the disassembly of the Soviet Union, North Korea's pivot of the foreign policy has transformed into China. Thus, the major actors in the North Korean issue have been the other four countries—South Korea and the United States, and North Korea and China. These multiple actors around the North Korean issues have played mostly negative role in the effectiveness of U.S. strategies for some reasons.

First of all, N-player game in international relations increases uncertainty of identification and realization of common interests that opponents have (Oye, 1985). As mentioned above, states have their own goals, motives, and options to achieve the goals. However, the interaction among states changes their motives and incentives (Doron & Sened, 2001). Hence, the interaction makes it more difficult to assume the others' political intentions and calculations. As Oye (1985) argues, the increase in the number of players rises costs and values of information and transactions in bargaining process, and reduces the possibility to negotiate because of the increased uncertainty. In foreign policy, the problem of uncertainty is often brought up. As seen before, from Structural realism perspective, the uncertainty leads to miscalculations of states and unintended conflicts, as the Security dilemma puts forth. Neo-liberalists also view that uncertainty hampers to conduct corporations in international relations (Keohane, 1984; Oye, 1985).

Secondly, the complexity of N-player game lower leverage of a state and get the state's strategies to have little impacts on its target states. In the similar vein with the first reason, N-player game makes options and incentives of states broaden through the interactions among players. This wider ranges of choices makes leverage of a states on its target states lower because the target states gain interests, that the state wants, from other states and reduce damages, that opponents will exert, by connection with other states involved in a bargaining process. As the number of players increase, as Oye (1985) argues, discount rates and approaches to calculation are to vary across actors, so that the leverage and strategic impact by sanctions, cooperation diminish.

The complexity of multiple players that the North Korean issue has also affects negatively the United States who has little leverage on North Korea. Since the end of Korea War,

Washington has little ties with North Korea in terms of all fields including political and economic trades. The little ties have resulted in the lack of valid information to analyze North Korea's motivations, intentions, and political calculations. It also causes the little economic leverage on North Korea. In addition to the inherent uncertainty and little leverage that the United States has, the problem of N-player situation makes them worse. In particular, China's role has made it more difficult for the United States to identify the Pyongyang's calculations and lower Washington's leverage on North Korea, as many pundits point to, as also seen in the history (Cha, 2003; Bennett, 2010; Bandow, 2016; Chang, 2016). China has sought to prevent collapse of Pyongyang's regime, because of Beijing's security interests, and thus protected North Korea by providing a range of assists in defiance of the U.S. requests. Furthermore, as China significant growth in economics and military powers, its influence on North Korea has extended and the impact of Washington's strategies considerably lower.

In addition to China, the United States, at times, failed to consolidate strategic impacts by the political offbeat with Seoul. As seen in the history section, while the Bush administrations exerted coercive strategies over North Korea, South Korea's administration maintained its 'Sunshine policy' due to Seoul's political objectives to induce peaceful unification with Pyongyang.

### **2.2.3 Third Failure: Credible Commitment Problem**

The last cause why the U.S. foreign policy toward North Korea's nuclear development fails is the credible commitment problem. As Fearon (1995) contends, the credible commitment problem, resulting from uncertainty and distrust on whether each other uphold promise, prevent states from bargaining. For the North Korean issue, the distrust between the United States and North Korea has increased throughout the history and thus the credible commitment problem become a severe obstacle to resolve the standoff over time. Although many hard liners in Washington argues that the distrust results from the rogue states' violent actions like breaching on agreement, it is not fault by one side, but result by both sides' faults, as Farago (2016) contends.

Firstly, the U.S. domestic disputes over North Korea, resulting from the difference in theoretical perspectives, exaggerate the credibility of the U.S. commitment. For example, the Clinton and Bush administration shown non-persistence political actions toward North Korea,

because of domestic disputes between hard liners and soft liners over North Korea. The Clinton administration failed to pass bill to offer economic aids and alternatives nuclear energy plants to Pyongyang, which are states in the 1994 Agreement Framework in turns for Pyongyang's abandon of nuclear weapons. In the Bush administration, Washington sent a mixed message during the Six Party Talks ongoing by changing their policy from coercive ways into conciliation. The interrupted persistence of policy, as pundits point out, intensified confusion and decreased credibility of the U.S. foreign policy (Cha, 2003; Hecker, 2010; Farago, 2016).

In addition, the changes in the bottom-line of the U.S. foreign policy toward North Korea exaggerates the distrust when the power transition occurs in the U.S. government (Cha, 2003; Hecker, 2010; Farago, 2016). For example, since the President Bush took office, his administration changed its foreign policy toward North Korea into the coercive ways, suspending economic aids which were agreed in 'the 1994 Geneva Agreement'. As a result, with the excuse pointing to the U.S. commitment problem, North Korea persisted to develop tests on nuclear and long-range missiles. For these reasons, it is argued that the alternative options for Washington should include means to recovery the credible commitment problems.

This chapter has covered its long history, to deduce lessons which can use for the future options, and assessed causes of U.S. policy's failures through diverse theoretical approaches. In sum, the lessons from the history and analytical approaches to the U.S. foreign policy are as follow. First, the analysis and approaches, based on Structural realism and Neo-liberalism, are insufficient and inadequate to explain the North Korean political preference in its decision-making process. The one level of analysis, Structural realism, is insufficient to explain the diverse and changing North Korean nuclear motives and behavior. The outside view, Neo-liberalism, is also inadequate to understand the authoritarian regime's preference. Thereby, the options conducted by the United States are ineffective, which were unable to influence exactly Pyongyang's wants and fears. Second the complexity around North Korea, N-player game, exaggerates uncertainty and lower Washington's leverage on North Korea. It also affects effectiveness of the U.S. strategies. Lastly, Washington's political changes and domestic political dispute, resulting from different perspectives over the issue, increases distrust between Washington and Pyongyang and causes the credible commitment problems.

Therefore, to come up with effective alternatives for the United States, the United States should understand the North Koran motives with a comprehensive and interdisciplinary manners.

They need to figure out their external and domestic circumstance and their regime's institutional characteristics affecting the foreign policy decision making calculus. Based on the multidimensional assessment on North Korea, Washington needs to find how to influence the Pyongyang's wants and fears. To increase the success possibility of the alternatives, the United States also has to come up with resolution to overcome the problem of complexity and the credible commitment problem. In the next chapter, these steps would be unfolded to draw the effective options available to the United States.

## CHAPTER 3

### OPTIONS FOR U.S. POLICY TOWARD NORTH KOREA

#### 3.1 Rethinking the Motives

Sagan (2017) views that the North Korean nuclear problem is more complex than that of the Cold War era between two power states because of the complexity of multiple states involved in the issue. In addition, the fact that a state's preferences and interests are not fixed, but varies and changes over time makes the issue more difficult to resolve (George & Smoke, 1988; Little & Zeitzoff, 2017). For these causes, the previous U.S. strategies failed to accurately figure out how Kim's regime thinks, what it values, and how it judges its options. In addition, the United States should understand not only Pyongyang's objectives but also how Kim's regime views U.S. objectives and whether they consider U.S. statements credible in order to resolve the issue.

While the failure of understanding on the regime's complexity results in the long dismal history to Washington, it is, however, the case that figuring out everything regarding the opaque regimes' political preference and calculations process is hard in reality. Then, is North Korea's nuclear issue really conundrum, which cannot resolve permanently for the United States? The answer is No. Fortunately, it seems that there are some clues to resolve the conundrum. The main clue for the issue is, ironically, the complexity and diversity that North Korean regime has. While it is the case that the complexity and changes of the nuclear issue have acted as obstacles to the U.S. foreign policy, it is argued that the complexity and changes make path for Washington to resolve the issue. Viewed the complexity from different sides, that means that the North Korean regime has many factors that could influence and change the regime's calculus. The dynamics and changes of its motives also mean that the fixation on its nuclear capabilities is not an issue which does not budge an inch, but an issue which could be resolved and changed in a Washington's favor. Therefore, the United States should use the complexity and its diverse motives to stimulate the regime wants and fears.

Additionally, there are some reasons to underpin the argument. Firstly, even if Pyongyang's motivations are multiple and complex, their interests related to the nuclear



aspirations are not separated, but closely intertwined surrounding their political ultimate political goals—regime survival. As Keohane (2000) argues, each issue is linked with the other issue and affect them in order to maximize the regime's ultimate goal.

Secondly, unlike some critique of its rationality, the North Korea regime has rational decision process. As seen in the regime's repeated behavior pattern in the historical context, the regime always steps back and suggests, or accept, cooperative negotiation before war occurs. As many pundits argue that the regime has implemented their foreign policy regarding the nuclear weapons in order to maximize their ultimate goal—the Kim regime's survival and continuation (CFR, 2016). Only, the regime has different goals and interests, which formed by their different circumstance and institutional traits, as noted in the previous chapter. By comparing these linkages and cost-benefit of their motives, the North Korean regime purses to their nuclear policy.

In this respect, understanding comprehensively Pyongyang's goals and motives related to its nuclear ambitions through comprehensive understandings would be the first and foremost step for the U.S. policy decision makers to come up with alternatives of the foreign policy toward the North Korean nuclear threats. Several recent works contribute to analyzing the North Korean issue with more comprehensive and interdisciplinary approaches. Litwak (2017) views that North Korea's nuclear arsenals comes from the international and domestic context that Pyongyang faces. In terms of the international factors, nuclear weapons have a deterrent, which prevent the United States from attacking the regime, and act as bargaining chips, which increase the regime's bargaining leverages on the negotiation table. Given the long isolation from international community and economic and military influence which lags behind, Litwak argues that nuclear arsenals are only means to protect their regime's survival and to increase their bargaining leverage. Also, he contends that the nuclear development has used a means to increase the regime's domestic power and to maintain (or justify) their authoritarian regime's ruling.

Hecker (2010) also attempts to explain North Korean interests regarding nuclear development in terms of domestic policy and Norms-model as well as security concern, by applying the Sagan's three model for the nuclear bombs into the North Korean issue. According to Hecker's analysis, nuclear weapons has been developed in pursuit of increasing its security against foreign threats, especially Washington's nuclear threats. In addition, he adds that the

nuclear weapons have served as the bureaucratic or political interests of the regime. In the case of North Korean issue, Kim’s family in Pyongyang has faced legitimacy of their ruling due to the state’s long economic stagnation and international isolation. In this circumstance, the regime uses external threats to consolidate its power during its domestic changes or crisis. The nuclear weapons which can confront against powerful foreign states have served as means to achieve the domestic political objectives of the regime—consolidating its domestic power. Besides, Hecker views nuclear decisions as also serving important symbolic functions externally-both shaping and reflecting a state’s identity. Therefore, even if Pyongyang received numerous security assurance, he puts, from the United States, domestic factors make the regime favor keeping the nuclear bombs in order to increase the regime’s domestic leverage and justify the people’s scarification during the severe economic stagnation period (Hecker, 2010).

Considering the historical context, the theoretical analysis presented above, and some pundits’ insights together, the regime’s motives seem to be categorized into its external and internal factors. The figure 3.1 shows the synthetic motives. Firstly, for its external motives, North Korea develops the nuclear weapons as deterrence, derived from the external security concerns, and as bargaining chips which intended to increase its bargaining leverage on negotiation tables.

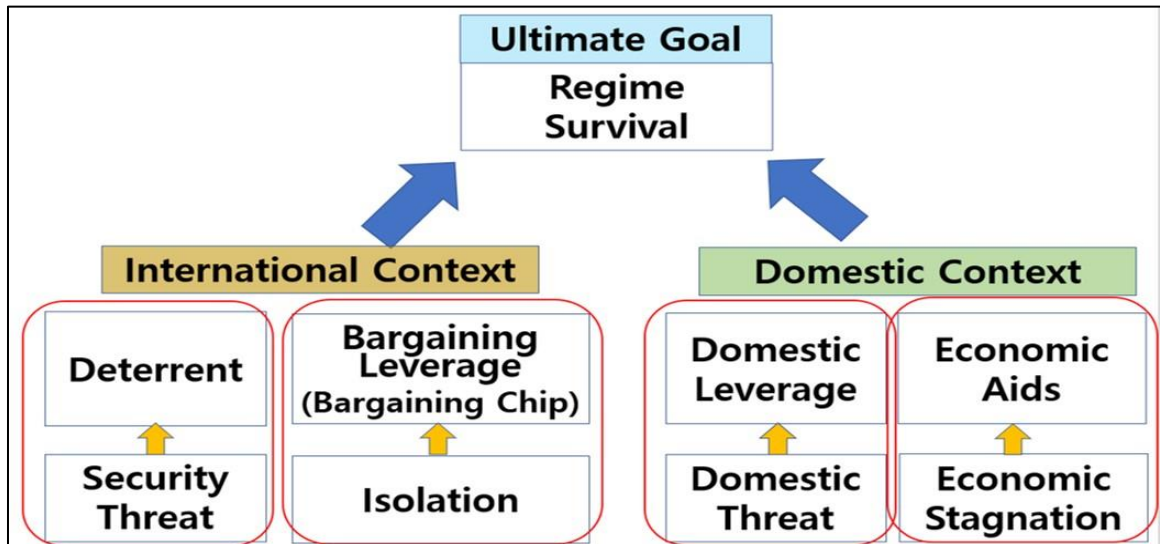


Figure 3.1: North Korean Nuclear Motives

Secondly, in terms of the country’s internal circumstances, the North Korean regime appears to use developing nuclear weapons as means to gain the domestic leverage to respond to the

domestic threats to their regime legitimacy and as tools to gain economic aids for its economics fallen behind.

Given the motives presented in Figure 3.1, the regime’s cost-benefit for its options would be assumed like the Table 3.1. The table compares between the benefits-costs/risks by choosing nuclear weapons and that by abandoning the arsenals that North Korean would have. Assuming the benefit-costs/risks calculus process, as the next step, makes it possible to infer the additional challenges that the United States needs to resolve, at least to consider, in order to force or convince North Korea to abandon the nuclear ambitions. The table 3.1. indicates that If the North Korean regime continues to develop the nuclear capability, the regime could gain means to deter the foreign powers from attacking the country and tools to consolidate the regime’s domestic power. The option to develop nuclear weapons also has the bargaining leverage on the negotiation tables, but the leverage seems to be limited as seen in the recent history. While the nuclear program as means of bargaining chips, for example, was effective and influenced the U.S. administrations’ behavior until the Bush administration era, it seems that the nuclear program has little impact to increase the regime’s bargaining range since the Obama administration. Since Pyongyang’s rebuff to the Obama’s suggestions for negotiations in 2009, Obama’s strategy toward North Korean nuclear issue—deterrent and waiting until Pyongyang comes back to the negotiation table—has continued to date without influence to change the U.S. coercive political behavior.

Table 3.1: North Korea’s assumed Calculus on Nuclear Development

	<b>Do (Developing Nuclear)</b>	<b>Don’t (Abandoning it)</b>	<b>Additional Challenges</b>
<b>Security</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possession of deterrent</li> <li>× Existence or increase in external security pressure/threat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assurance of N.K.’s security stability</li> <li>× Existence of U.S. commitment problems</li> </ul>	* Needs to give credibility on commitment problems
<b>Bargaining Leverage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited leverage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited leverage</li> </ul>	* Needs to increase U.S. leverage on N.K.
<b>Domestic Leverage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the domestic power</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>× Could be decreased</li> </ul>	* Makes nukes means threaten the regime
<b>Economic Growth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>× Impossible due to the block of economic trades</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible due to Economic aids</li> <li>× Existence of U.S. commitment problems</li> </ul>	* Needs to give credibility on commitment problems

When it comes to the regime's economic calculation on the nuclear development choice, the adherence to the nuclear weapons would result in negative impacts. It would block the channel that North Korea can do economic trades with other states, as the country has suffered from. Hence, it can be inferred that North Korea would continually draw on illegal trades like illegal private market for illegal transactions on North Korea-China border, money laundry, and illegal weapons trades (Barbara, 2010; Kong, 2014).

Conversely, if the North Korean regime decided to relinquish the nuclear program, the country would get assurance of their security stability from the United States and economic aids from international community in exchange for the program. The economic aids could be footholds of the country's economic growth in exchange. However, the option gives costs and risks to the authoritarian regime. First of all, doubts on Washington's commitment would keep the regime aloof from abandoning the nuclear program, as noted above. Secondly, Pyongyang would fear about the regime's domestic stability that could be threatened by weaken domestic leverage and economic liberalism, which could be caused by increase in economic trades with other states.

From assuming Pyongyang's calculus, it is also possible to infer some challenges, associated with the causes of U.S. strategies' failures noted in the prior chapter, that Washington has to overcome in order to force, or convince, North Korea to relinquish the nuclear weapons. The first is to restore credibility commitment problems. Given the accumulated distrust between two countries, the doubt on whether or not a negotiation would be kept by opponents remains. The credibility of commitment problem has hampered to make negotiation during the phase of the Six Party Talks. Fearon (1995) highlights the importance of credible commitment problem in negotiations.

Secondly, Washington has little leverage on North Korea. Leverage is defined or called "negotiation's prime mover", which influence other actors' behavior "on one's terms". The reversion outcome determines which side has more bargaining leverage. North Korea views the reversion outcome more positively than the U.S. and consequently has more bargaining leverage. Coercion is an effort to make the reversion outcome less good (Kirgis, 2014). However, the military deterrent and economic sanctions that the United States conducted have the limited influence on North Korean regime because of little leverage resulting from uncredible threats and little economic tides. While the United States would ultimately be successful when a military

conflict against North Korea occur, in all likelihood that victory would come at a horrendous cost because of Pyongyang's nuclear and conventional weapons, which are deployed along with the border between South and North Korea. Pyongyang is well aware of that and does everything it can emphasize the costs of war (Kang, 2003; Kim & Yi, 2005). In terms of economic coercive diplomacy, lack of economic ties between the United States and North Korea makes Washington get little leverage on North Korea, and thus cause little impacts. As noted in the prior chapter, this little leverage fundamentally undermines every attempt to negotiate with North Korea.

In sum, the development of a nuclear weapons strategy in North Korea has occurred within an environment that is based upon a set of overriding strategic motivations for the regime's survival. Therefore, the political means that the United States should implement has a strategic objective; making North Korea consider nuclear weapons not tools to support the regime, but to threaten the regime's survival. That is, Washington's options should be means to influence the regime's ultimate fears—regime's sustainability. Hence, the signal of the Washington's foreign policy against the North Korean elites should be that developing nuclear weapons intimidate the regime's survival. Namely, it is required for U.S. alternative strategy to escalate Pyongyang's costs on developing nuclear weapons. In order to effectively stimulate the regime's fear and multiple interests related to the nuclear aspiration, the alternative options for Washington also should include means to overcome the problems of the little bargaining leverage and the credible commitment problems.

### **3.2 Available Options**

To achieve the alternative options' objectives—signaling that developing nuclear weapons is not means for the North Korean regime's survival, but threatening tools to their regime's sustainability, the U.S. foreign policy should be sharper and subtler. To achieve the objectives, the available options to the United States are: a) using military power; and b) deterrence.

There are some reasons that conciliation ways such as diplomacy and economic cooperation are ruled out as major options. Firstly, as mentioned above, such diplomacy is not appropriate to achieve the strategic objectives that the U.S. political alternative has to achieve. In

other words, such diplomacy and cooperative options are unable to intimidate North Korean ultimate interests and their fears. Rather, the regime would resist to the economic cooperation because they would consider that the international economic cooperation could undermine the authoritarian regime's legitimacy. Secondly, given the current accumulated distrust between the United States and North Korea and Pyongyang's increased nuclear technology, the cheating and defecting problem remain like the repeated history. That is, the conciliation methods would just repeat the North Korean behavior pattern that the history has shown.

In this regard, much shaper ways—using forces or deterrence—are adequate to achieve the U.S. goals and objectives. However, the military options among the shaper ways are not suitable because of its high risks and costs, even if using forces could be the most effective options. The military options, i.e. eliminating directly threats by using forces, can be considered in a range of ways in terms of the extent of military from eliminating regime change into destroying only nuclear facilities. If Pyongyang's regime was changed by the full-scale of using force, Washington immediately could dismantle the nuclear bombs that Pyongyang has. Or otherwise, If Washington succeeded in destroying Pyongyang's nuclear facilities through the small-scale of force, the United States would remove or reduce the regime's nuclear capabilities.

Whatever the extent, however, the military options have considerable risks, costs and negative implications of the consequence. First of all, any move by the United States or North Korea could result in an unpredictable escalation of conflict and produce substantial casualty levels by Pyongyang's military retaliations (CRS, 2016). The report by the Congressional Report Services in 2106 generally assume that the toll of such military options could be immense, given that Seoul—with a population of approximately 23 million people, including American citizens—is within the range of North Korean artillery deployed near the border between the two Koreas. The report adds that Should the DPRK use the nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons, according to some estimates casualty figures could number in the millions. A preemptive strike or limited strike by Washington against North Korea could result in a massive artillery barrage on Seoul, a chemical or biological attack on U.S. forces in South Korea, a nuclear strike against Japan, Hawaii, and the U.S. homeland.

Furthermore, given the complexity of the issue, which have other states involved in the issue, especially, China, there is possibility of Beijing's intervention in the issue, either deterring Washington's military intervention on the Korean Peninsula or preventing usage of nuclear

weapons by two countries near China's border (Litwak, 2017). Furthermore, involvement of South Korea, Japan, and Russia would expand the war into the Third World War, as Litwak (2017) concerns.

Secondly, the option is costly strategy which makes worse U.S. economic interests in the region. In terms of cost, as pundits argue, the *ex-ante* and *ex-post* cost are so high as the U.S. military interventions like the Iraq War has demonstrated over the past decades (CRS, 2016). Furthermore, if the Peninsula was engulfed in war including South Korea, one of major economic actors in the world, the impact on the world economics and politics would be formidable. South Korea is the 11<sup>th</sup> economic power states in the world in terms of GDP and trade rate 6<sup>th</sup> according to the data of the WTO in 2017. The war of the state would cause direct economic damage on the world market and the U.S. economics.

Lastly, the using force of the United States would get denouncement from international community. Without any clear justification, the military options of the United States would cause damages on their own reputation, which would have repercussion on international relations with other states.

Because using force is not adequate for high costs and risk, hence, coercive strategies may be optimal as the U.S. strategy toward North Korea. However, as critics argues, the options have not bear a fruitful result so far, though has been implemented for 20 years since the Bush administration (Moor, 2008; Pyon, 2011; Ahn, 2012). As mentioned the chapter 2, the past deterrence policy failed to consider the complexity of the issue and changes of multiple motivations that Pyongyang has. It also lacked the proper understanding on the regime's authoritarian traits. The past policy thus failed to influence the regime's political calculus and deter North Korean aspirations for the nuclear weapons. Furthermore, as seen above, the failure of the deterrence results from the problems of the U.S. little leverage against North Korean regime and distrust between two countries, resulting in the credible commitment problems. Therefore, the political measures should be complemented by diplomatic and economic strategies holistically. In other words, the alternative policy that the United States should conduct deterrence coupled with other supplemental diplomatic methods in order to increase its effectiveness to stimulate Pyongyang's fears and wants and to overcome the problems that the past policy had. In other words, the alternative has to be a deterrence-plus-multilateral engagement with China and South Korea, the tailored economic sections, and inducement.

Firstly, the deterrence should be implemented with multilateral diplomacy with China and South Korea to make up for the flaws noted; little bargaining leverage and credible commitment problem. The United State has little bargaining leverage on North Korea, as seen before, and it seems to be not easy for Washington to increase the leverage, considered the interruption of diplomatic relations and economic ties. Beijing, by contrast, has significant, though limited, influence over North Korea, in many respects. First of all, Beijing has considerable economic influences on Pyongyang because the North Korean trades heavily depend on China. The result of the Soviet Union's collapse caused the dependence on trade with China. The neighboring state accounts for 90% of North Korean trade in 2016 (The United Nations, 2017; ROK Central Bank, 2016). As of 2015, according to figures from the Seoul-based Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency, the bilateral trade increased tenfold compared to that in 2000, peaking in 2014 at \$6.86 billion. With the increased international sanctions, trade between two countries has dampened, but Beijing still acts as the first trade state for Pyongyang (CRS, 2016).

Secondly, China still has political influence on the North Korean elites, since Beijing's communist party has, though reduced than before, the existing strong ties with Pyongyang's ruling class (Chang, 2016). Since the foundation, The North Korean regime has been influenced by the China's community ideology. Pyongyang's major ruling principle—*Juche* ideology—had been established by influences of Maoism (Kim, 2016). After the fall of the Soviet Union, the Chinese community party has supported and maintained strong bonds with North Korean community party.

Lastly, for North Korea, the connection with China, itself, has a vital value because Beijing is a sole continued channel and shield deterring the United States' aggressive actions, like military attack, against North Korea (Litwak, 2017).

In addition to Beijing's high leverage on Pyongyang, China also could play significant role in resolving the credible commitment problems between Washington and Pyongyang. Given the distrust between Washington and Pyongyang, resolving the commitment problem directly is difficult for the United States. Beijing, by contrast, could guarantee the commitment problem through their credibility with Pyongyang, instead of Washington. The United State should encourage China to extend a security guarantee to North Korea such that any attack on North Korea is viewed as an attack on China.



The United States also should reinforce the relations with the rest major actor in the complexity of the issue, South Korea. Washington should not only tighten the relations, it has to support the improving South Korean roles in the North Korea issue. With these diplomacy in Seoul, the United States would lead to positive results in overcoming credibility commitment problem with North Korea and persuasion China to deter North Korean regime. South Korea can be a vital mediator among the four countries because of its unique and close ties with the rest three countries.

Firstly, South Korea shares nationalism with North Korea, which is called as the Korean people. The national sensitive as one nation, sharing long history, culture, language and so forth, has not be split by geopolitics and the historical war, but maintained for over sixty years since the Korean War. Although there have been lots of disputes between two Koreas, the common denominator—the national connection—makes it possible for two Koreas to maintain their connection for the long time. As seen in the case of North Korea's decision to participate into the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics and to make a single inter-Korean team, North Korea, at times, decided to lean toward South Korea in the situation that the United States increasingly impose pressure against North Korea. The South Korea's mediator role would be a key to resolving the commitment problems.

Secondly, improving Seoul's role in the issue would help to induce China into the U.S. strategies. The deepening economic trade between Seoul and Beijing and strong Korean culture power, like K-pop, on China help promote China to follow the United States' foreign policy toward North Korea. As Kydd (2006) argues, mediator's role on negotiation table is important to prevent conflict and to promote cooperation in the way which the United States wants.

Lastly, it is no doubt that South Korea has a strong tie with the United States. The two countries have shared many common interests and a strong ally to each other. In this regard, for the United States, Seoul could be another vital channel between the United States and North Korea that offset and makes up for the commitment problem as well as the United States and China which help convince Beijing.

In sum, North Korean nuclear program, as Hecker (2010) points out, is not a problem that only the United States has to resolve and can resolve. It is but a collective one, requiring collective cooperation. With the multilateral diplomacy with China and South Korea, the United States would easily resolve the complex conundrum of North Korean nuclear issue.

At this point, however, there is another challenge that arise; How to persuade China to participate in the U.S. foreign policy toward North Korea, though one method—supporting South Korean’s relation with China—was mentioned above. The challenge has been another key obstacle for Washington to handle the North Korean nuclear issue to date.

Even though Beijing has served as a major supporter to Pyongyang because of China’s primary interests with respect to North Korea—the maintenance of regional stability for ensuring China’s security—, China has shown changes and signals that it is willing to apply pressure to prevent North Korea’s most dangerous behavior in the last year (Chang, 2016; Mastro, 2016; Babones, 2017; Feng, 2017). The first shift is that China’s interests and calculations with relate to North Korea, or the Korean Peninsula are changing. As pundits like Mastro (2016) observed, the previous security interests, related to North Korean instability—the border instability and refugees problem—, are not China’s interests anymore due to China’s increasing confidence about its capabilities and regional influence. In other words, Chinese political calculus is no longer dominated by fears of Korean instability and a resulting refugee crisis. Over the past 20 years, the Chinese military has evolved into a far more sophisticated force by modernizing its equipment and reforming its organizational structure. As a result, China now has the ability to simultaneously manage instability at its borders and conduct major military operations on the peninsula.

Rather, the North Korean nuclear weapons acts as threats to China’s security more than that from Pyongyang’s instability (Kamphausen, 2013). The development of nuclear program in Pyongyang has the risk that a North Korean nuclear accident spewing radiation across the Chinese border could spell catastrophe in megacities near the North Korean border, such as Shenyang in the Liaoning province. In addition, if North Korea used nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula, the impact of nuclear weapons would cause damages on China soil. These fears dominate China’s security concern (Kamphausen, 2013; Chang, 2016). In these reasons, scholars view that China’s primary interest with respect to N.K changed into the maintenance of regional stability; preventing nuclear wars on the Korean Peninsula (Kamphausen, 2013).

Furthermore, North Korea’s recent increased nuclear tests resulted in the changed China’s attitude toward North Korea, by threatening China’s regional interests—to be a power state in the region (Chang, 2016). China has long provided various forms of support to the North based on their shared history, as Chang (2016) mentions, but the relationship has turned into a

grave obstacle for China, dreaming to be a power state in the global and regional order again. North Korea's uncontrolled violent actions caused damages on China's role as a power state in the region order. Beijing is highly aware of the costs if it continues to keep Pyongyang within its fold (Chang, 2016).

In addition to shifts in Beijing's interests with regard to North Korea, there have been changing opinion on North Korea within China in terms of both scholarship and public. Some prominent Chinese scholars have begun to advocate abandoning Pyongyang in favor of a better relationship with Seoul which has incentives in terms of economic growth (Kamphausen, 2013). The public opinion also has been changing. According to polls conducted by the *Global Times*, a growing number of Chinese citizens also believe that the North is a bad actor that poses a severe threat to China's security interests (Yang, 2016).

Now, China is recalculating interests related to North Korea and the United States should stimulate the shifts in Beijing's political calculation in order to make China to participate in deterring North Korea. Given China's reassessment on North Korea resulting from changing concerns about and perspective on the regime's nuclear program, the two great powers could find a common ground and shared interests with respect to North Korean nuclear threats, which is to eliminate nuclear weapons from North Korea. With the shared interests, as Neo-liberalist argues, United States could encourage China to cooperate with and participate in Washington's foreign policy toward North Korea.

The second change which could force China to deter North Korea is Beijing's downed economic growth—the so-called the middle-income trap—and Beijing's needs for continued economic trades with the United States and its allies like South Korea and Japan under global capitalism. Whereas the United States has little bargaining leverage on North Korea, Washington has strong economic bargaining leverage on China, resulting from the strong economic ties. In this regard, the United States could use the bargaining leverage to persuade China, bogging at the middle-income trap, to deter North Korean regime.

China is the most beneficial from the global world economic markets since their economic reform by the former President Deng Xiaoping in 1978 (Ikenberry, 2008; Beeson, 2015). According to the data from IMF, from 1980 to the present, with the economic reform, China has attained an average GDP of 10% annually since the country opened its economics to the world market. In late 2015, however, China's growth began to diminish as those of other

poorly-governed middle-income countries such as Brazil and Russia. According to the data by IMF, China's GDP decreased to below 6.7 percent from 2016. Given the country's ambitions for a major power state in the region, to overcome the middle-income trap is necessary for China. To overcome the middle-income trap, it is also necessary for China to get foreign investments and economic trades with the United States, the 3<sup>rd</sup> foreign state investing in China, and its allies, South Korea (the 1<sup>st</sup> foreign state) and Japan (the 2<sup>nd</sup> state).

There are some examples to substantiate the argument which the United States can utilize China's economic interests to make the country to participate in coercing North Korea. The first is China's decision to withdraw the suspension of economic trade with South Korea, which resulted from the opposition to Seoul's decision to establish the U.S.'s missile defense weapon system, called the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system (THAAD)--to respond to North Korean missile threats. China who keeps the U.S. in check put economic sanctions on South Korea to deter Seoul from installing the U.S. weapons. However, Beijing eventually suspend the economic retaliation against South Korea due to their own economic interests (Nam, 2017). In the first summit meeting between the President Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping in April 2017, the President Trump dropped China on the list of currency manipulating states in exchange for China's promise to coercively force North Korea (Lange, 2017). Therefore, the United States should engage China to participate in Washington's foreign policy toward North Korea. In sum, the United States has to reinforce the diplomacy with China and South Korea to increase its strategy's effectiveness. When it comes to persuading China to participate in the U.S. strategy, Washington has to stimulate the changing China's changing interests with respect to North Korea and reinforce the shared interests.

The second supplement method for the U.S. strategy is to exert the narrow economic sanctions fitted into the authoritarian regime in Pyongyang. Although the economic sanction is different diplomacy typology from deterrence in terms of exerting material powers, the two options share common objectives—in that, forcing opponent to conform one's wants. Given the common objectives, the economic sanction would increase U.S. bargaining leverage on North Korea because it makes Washington's reversion outcome more positively. Furthermore, given the North Korean severe economic crisis since the early 1990s, economic sanctions are attractive and effective ways for Washington (Litwak, 2017). With the effective economic sanctions, the

United States could make the reversion outcome of Pyongyang less positive, while increasing the U.S. economic bargaining leverage over North Korean regime.

However, to achieve the expected results, it is necessary for the U.S. alternative strategy to be the narrow and tailored methods against the authoritarian Pyongyang's regime, as seen in the case of the Banco Delta Asia bank sanction. From late 2005 to early 2007, The U.S. Treasury Department officials pressed the worldwide banks like Banco Delta Asia to frozen illegal funds from drug dealing, counterfeiting and arms sales, which are major funds for Pyongyang's regime, and transacting in those funds. As Juan Zarate, a former U.S. Treasury official, has explained, the U.S. effort "isolat[ed] Pyongyang from the international financial system to an unprecedented degree." Thus, the narrow economic sanctions would need and increase the efficacy of deterrence.

The last supplement options for U.S. alternative strategy is inducement. There is Korean saying that a rat in a corner bites a cat. Namely, the pressure could result in accidental or unexpected outcomes. Jervice (2018) also argues the importance of combination between threats and inducement for effective coercive strategy toward North Korea. He argues that "a threat only works if it is coupled with a promise not to carry out the threatened action if North Korea complies with a demand." (Jervice, 2018). Thus, the coercive diplomacy by Washington should be accompanied with inducement in order to prevent accidental wars by Pyongyang on the edge of brinks and to effectively change the regime's political choices. While the supplemented methods, noted above, are focused primarily on stimulating Pyongyang's fears, the inducement is way to stimulate the regime's interests and change its calculate. In other words, the inducement would impress the regime on the benefits of abandoning nuclear weapons, which is the way to assure the regime's survival. On a parallel course, its allies also should present restructured negotiations providing incentives for North Korea to participate in substantive talks while increasing pressure while strictly coercing with the United States (Litwak, 2017). In the similar vein, the collective actions would reinforce the credibility of both the threat and the promise.

With such hybrid form of deterrence policy, which coupled with other political methods, the United States would achieve their strategic goals. The alternatives can cover the multiple and flexible motives for Pyongyang's nuclear weapons and stimulate the interests and fears. Furthermore, the alternatives would overcome the past policy's flaws.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSION

While preparing for this paper as Master's thesis for the past two years from 2016 through 2018, there have been many radical and dangerous events with regard to the issue, North Korea's nuclear weapons development. Kim Jong-un's regime has almost reached to the end-state of its nuclear development by conducting unprecedented multiple tests on nuclear bombs and long-ranged missiles. For Washington, the nuclear weapons development by Pyongyang is not indirect threats to Washington's regional security any more, but comes to the grave threats to its homeland security directly. One thing that I recently feel the change of its threats is shifts in public perspectives on North Korea. When I came to the United States in summer, 2016, the majority I met with did not recognize North Korea's nuclear threats. Their perceptions on North Korea is just a rogue and authoritarian state which has been brutally violating human rights. However, most people who I have met recently ask me about the regime's nuclear threats. Throughout human history, such changes in public perceptions have demanded political changes and such demands have developed the human society so far. For example, while the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the U.S. soil gave a severe shocks and fears to the public, the event also causes a range of political changes from Washington's security concepts to its laws, executives organizations, and so forth. The public perception is changing again. As Joshua Stanton and his fellows (2016) argue, the second-tier crisis, North Korea, for the United States as a security priority becomes one of grave threats to the U.S. security, while the past U.S. strategies have been stuck in the repeating historical cycle for two and half decades.

The tension which looks like to escalate up with end since Kim Jong-un took office is facing a new phase by the abrupt decision by Pyongyang's leader, proposing a gesture for negotiations since the regimes' participation in the 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang, South Korea. The United States is standing on the moment whether to break the cycle or to linger the brutal historical cycle. Given the increasing public demands regarding North Korea' nuclear threats, it is the time for the United States to rethink its past strategies and come up with effective alternative. North Korea issue is not simple question, but is a hire order equation. The regime has diverse motivations and has also unique institutional features which affects its political

preference in its decision-making process. Furthermore, the multiple states, which have their own interests, involved in the issue make the problem more complicated. In addition, the deepened distrust between the United States and North Korea hampers to persuade, or coerce, the regime to abandon the nuclear aspirations.

Therefore, the alternative for the United States should be comprehensive. The option should build on understating of the regimes' internal complexity to stimulate its wants and fears. In addition, the alternative strategy should attract other major states' participations. The hire order equation cannot be solved by the United States alone, given the complexity. The multidimensional efforts by all major players involved in the issue are required to resolve the problem.

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## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

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