

# **Nuclear North Korea: A Predictive Study on Possible Responses by Six-Party Talks Member Countries**

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“Major agreements on the Korean peninsula are like London buses. You wait ages for one, and suddenly two turn up at once.” Jane’s, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007

## **Introduction**

The Korean Peninsula in the modern era has become a place of mistrust, conflict, hostilities, longstanding fears and resentment. Korea was occupied by Japan from 1905-1945. During this occupation, Imperial Japan exploited Korea’s resources and used Korean women as “comfort women” for the Japanese military. At the end of World War II, Korea was divided into North Korea and South Korea. The partitioned Korea fell into the hands of the Cold War’s dominant players a communist-controlled North (the Soviet Union), and a democratic South (the United States). A war of aggression was launched by North Korea from 1950-1953 to reunify the country as a communist state. China became involved militarily in the conflict on the side of its North Korean neighbor and communist counterpart. To this day, the two Koreas remain divided, and although major armed conflict has not resumed, a relative peace is maintained not by treaty but by declaration of a cease-fire agreement. Officially, the war has not ended, and the potential for armed conflict remains high.

Periodically, firefights erupt along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and disputed coastal waters separating the two countries. Numerous border incidents and infiltration attempts have resulted in armed violence. In his 1994 book entitled *North Korea’s Undeclared war: 1953~*, Wayne A. Kirkbride documents that over 50 Americans and

over 500 South Koreans were killed during occasional armed conflicts since the signing of the cease-fire agreement on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1953 (Kirkbride 1994, 11). The maintenance of peaceful coexistence and/or peaceful reunification has never been more critical since North Korea successfully conducted an underground nuclear test in October 2006.

Many reasons can be cited as to why North Korea pursued nuclear weapons. The already isolated North Korea may have felt further isolated as a result of the fall of communism and the end of the Cold War. The impoverished North Korea may have viewed nuclear weapons more as a bargaining chip for international aid and economic assistance than as a strategic defensive measure. Whatever the reasons, it has been confirmed by the international community that North Korea is in possession of nuclear weapons. The other five above mentioned countries, United States, South Korea, Japan, China and Russia, which have had longstanding and influential roles in shaping events on the Korean Peninsula, are now dealing with a nuclear North Korea.

This paper will address the question of whether or not a nuclear North Korea will abandon its policy of isolation and continue to hold high level talks with other countries such as the recent North-South Summit and the Six-Party Talks. More specifically, it will answer the question of whether or not North Korea will dismantle its nuclear weapons program as a way of making concessions for international aid and economic assistance. This issue necessitates study not only due to the longstanding hostilities, mistrust, and potential outbreak of major armed conflict on the Korean Peninsula at any given moment, but mainly due to the fact that North Korea is now in possession of nuclear weapons. The member countries of the Six-Party Talks and the role each one plays will be the focus of this study.

The goal of this study is to conduct a predictive analysis study utilizing the Lockwood Analytical Method for Prediction (LAMP) to determine the most likely alternate future of whether or not North Korea will remain a nuclear armed state. The twelve step LAMP process will allow this researcher to conduct the study based on the perceptions of the actors involved to develop both the major scenarios and all possible alternate futures. North Korea and their decision to abandon or retain their nuclear weapons will be the catalyst that influences the decision making process of the other Six-Party Talks member countries.

The development of the alternate futures is determined by capturing the possible decisions that each actor could potentially make at the present time and is based on publicly available information. A pairwise comparison of the alternate futures will then determine the most likely alternate future. The reactions of the United States, South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia to a nuclear armed North Korea is the focus of the study and the LAMP process will assist this researcher in the attempt to determine whether or not North Korea will remain a nuclear armed state.

The above paragraphs complete the first two steps in the LAMP process which are defining the issue in which one is attempting to predict the most likely alternate future and specifying the actors involved (Lockwood and Lockwood, 1993, 27). The remaining steps will be listed beside their respective headings.

## **Literature Review**

There have been volumes written concerning the centuries old hostilities on the Korean Peninsula covering the occupation by Japan, the Cold War partitioning, the 1950-1953 Korean War, the continuous high level tension, and the periodic outbreak of

armed conflict. Before beginning this study, it is appropriate to review some of the publicly available literature concerning the historical and current issues on the Korean Peninsula, and the role played by the above listed six countries. However, the focus of the literature review is on material that deals directly with this paper's study of a nuclear armed North Korea, and the role played by the member countries of the Six-Party Talks. The selected literature, will present a better understanding of the issue to the reader, prior to digesting the present study.

The most informative and comprehensive source material found by this researcher relating to this study is Yoichi Funabashi's book entitled *The Peninsula Question: A Chronicle of the Second Korean Nuclear Crisis*. Published in 2007, it is a current book focusing on events mainly from 2002 to March 2007, and a unique find considering that the North Korean nuclear test occurred in October 2006.

The book devotes entire chapters to Japan, the United States, Russia, South Korea, and China respectively and their dealings with North Korea over the nuclear dilemma. The chapters are informative and detail meetings and negotiations that were held between representatives of the concerned countries. Finally, chapters ten and eleven are devoted to the convergence of the countries into what is known as the Six-Party Talks. Chapter twelve is devoted entirely to Kim Jong-Il's visit to China. The final chapter covers North Korea's nuclear test in October 2006.

The details of each countries meetings and negotiations are beyond the scope of this literature review. However, the highlight is the fact that the book captures each country's concern over a nuclear North Korea. For example, it is illustrated that China's main concern with North Korea acquiring nuclear weapons was fuelled by a fear of the

reactions of other regional countries such as Japan, and that the relationship between China and the United States might be affected if China did not try to broker a deal to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Michael O'Hanlon and Mike Mochizuki in their book entitled *Crisis on the Korean Peninsula: How to Deal with a Nuclear North Korea* address the issue almost entirely from the perspective of the United States and North Korea. The authors contend that current measures taken by the United States towards the nuclear proliferation issue have been counterproductive. They argue that economic sanctions actually push the totalitarian regime of Kim Jong-Il into further belligerence and isolation. Economic sanctions are actually harming the average North Korean while the regime lives a lavish lifestyle. Likewise, the regime becomes more pressed to sell weapons of mass destruction and other illicit activities to prop up their failing economy.

As an alternative to the current policies toward North Korea, the authors present a plan that would be more diplomatic and financially beneficial, similar to what has been accomplished in other hard-line communist countries such as China and Vietnam. It is argued that a policy which emphasizes human rights and economic reform is better than one of isolation and economic sanctions. This could be accomplished by issuing aid packages on conditions of verifying arms reductions and military spending. It is hoped that North Korea would abandon its policies of pursuing nuclear weapons and provoking border incidents as bargaining chips for economic aid and assistance. It is noted that should the policy of aid, economic reform, and infrastructure development fail, all parties would be no worse off than under the present conditions. However, "If the effort at reform succeeds, it will gradually change the nature of North Korean society, making life

better for North Korean citizens while forcing DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) leaders to modify at least some of their ways" (O'Hanlon and Mochizuki 2003, 138).

In *National Security Issues in Science, Law, and Technology*, Thomas A. Johnson authored an article entitled "*Nuclear Capabilities of North Korea: Issues in Intelligence Collection, Analysis, and National Security Policy*". The article provides excellent historical information concerning North Korea's missile and nuclear weapons programs, policy negotiations of the United States and other Six-Party Talks member countries, intelligence collection and verification measures directed at North Korean weapons programs. However, the most relevant section to this study is the "National Security Policy Decision Framework" section. This section was actually authored and presented on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006 by Alejandro Ruiz, the Coordinator for the Weapons of Mass Destruction Task Force. It was outlined that the United States, South Korea, Russia, China, and Japan have three policy options which they need to collectively agree upon and implement. The value of this article is the fact that it provides some policy options that this researcher will consider when exploring and developing alternative futures for this study.

The first policy option is engagement. This option utilizes negotiations, and forms of diplomatic and economic measures as a way of influencing North Korea. Economic aid and assistance would make the provocation of hostilities and/or war an irrational act for the North Korean regime due to the fact that they would view economic development instead of military muscle as beneficial to the survival of the regime.

The second policy option is containment. Under this option, North Korea would be forced to comply with conditions to receive economic aid and assistance. If found not to be in compliance, economic sanctions, coercive diplomacy and the stepping up of military measures would be directed towards North Korea.

The third policy option is preemptive action. This policy option calls for military strikes against North Korea's nuclear weapons facilities. This is probably the least likely to occur and is a last resort method of dismantling North Korea's nuclear weapons capabilities. However, it could be used as a bargaining chip to convey to the North Koreans that the above countries are willing and able to launch a preemptive strike unless compliance is maintained.

Scott Snyder authored an article in the Autumn 2007 edition of *The Washington Quarterly* entitled "Responses to North Korea's Nuclear Test: Capitulation or Collective Action?" which provides an excellent overview of the reactions and changes in policy of the individual Six-Party Talks member countries after the verification of the North Korean nuclear test. However, the downfall of this article is the fact that it only devotes one sentence to Russia which states bluntly that Russia has never been a major player even though they are a Six-Party Talks member country (Snyder 2007, 35).

Snyder points out that most observers previously thought that a nuclear test conducted by North Korea would elicit a harsh response from the Six-Party Talks member countries who would seek further economic sanctions, isolation, or possible military force to overthrow the North Korean regime. However, the North Korean nuclear test has shown that the Six-Party Talks member countries need to be unified in dealing with this issue since failing to prevent it in the first place. Likewise, North Korea

now appears to have a bargaining chip in their favor to extort economic aid and assistance from the international community.

The United States appears to be in a position to do very little other than diplomatic and economic sanctions. Prior to becoming a nuclear weapons state, the United States listed North Korea as one of the three countries on the Axis of Evil list and rhetorically made threats of regime change. Snyder points out that regime change now has the potential to cause loss of command and control of existing nuclear weapons in North Korea.

China viewed the nuclear test as an embarrassment due to the fact that they could not exert enough influence over North Korea to prevent them from acquiring nuclear weapons. China also became uneasy over a possible Japanese response to acquire preemptive strike capabilities and/or nuclear weapons of their own. China therefore sought top-level dialog with North Korea, and was instrumental in not only hosting but restarting the Six-Party Talks.

South Korea continues to seek ways to avoid a military response by any country on North Korea, and views expanding economic aid and infrastructure on condition of compliance as the best strategy. Japan, on the other hand, unilaterally implemented harsher economic sanctions, and continues to debate whether or not they should develop preemptive strike capabilities in response to the threat of a nuclear North Korea.

Collectively, the Six-Party Talks members have agreed on fuel oil assistance to North Korea in exchange for shutting down the nuclear reactor at Yongbyon, declaring any other nuclear production facilities, and establishing working groups on



denuclearization. In essence, the North Korean nuclear test has prompted the Six-Party Talks member countries to move beyond rhetoric which did not prevent the development of nuclear weapons. The article emphasizes the need for multilateral consensus in dealing with a nuclear North Korea as more critical than ever before.

The above sources were chosen due to the fact that the material focuses on the issue of a nuclear armed North Korea and the role played by the Six-Party Talks member countries. The reviewed sources outline not only North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons, but also the concerned countries roles in preventing North Korea from acquiring nuclear weapons and/or strategies for dealing with a nuclear armed North Korea.

### **Step Three: Actors and Perceptions**

It can be argued that nearly every country in the world has either an ulterior interest or fear concerning North Korea's nuclear weapons program. Not only are there regional security dilemmas but also of great concern is that North Korea may transfer nuclear weapons technology and materials to other state and non-state actors such as terrorist groups. However, the member countries to the Six-Party Talks play the greatest role in this issue. The Six-Party Talks member countries have the greatest influence whether diplomatic, economic, or militarily concerning the nuclear issue. The focus of this study is on the six actors which are Six-Party Talks member countries which consist of North Korea, South Korea, Japan, China, Russia, and the United States.

Each actor has unilateral interests in the region and is now collectively involved with the other member countries in dealing with the nuclear crisis. It is appropriate to view this dilemma from the perspective of each actor before any attempt at predicting their

future responses. After analyzing the material in the above literature review and other sources, a snapshot has been developed which reveals each actor's point of view concerning the issue at hand. The following section will outline each actor's perception of the situation as a way of making better predictions concerning their future actions.

## **North Korea**

North Korea is obviously the key player in the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula. North Korea's acquisition of nuclear weapons sets the stage to predict the future responses of the five other countries. North Korea views having nuclear weapons as an advantage to their military arsenal as a way of making regime change from other international actors such as the United States a less desirable option. By possessing nuclear weapons, North Korea is almost assured that either the United States or South Korea would not seek regime change in North Korea by military force. Seoul, South Korea would almost surely be destroyed in the process. North Korea seeks a bilateral nonaggression treaty with the United States and views possessing nuclear weapons as a bargaining chip to achieve its fruition. North Korea also views possessing nuclear weapons as a means to extort international aid and assistance to support their failing economy. There have been many deals in which North Korea agreed to abandon their nuclear weapons programs in exchange for foreign economic aid and fuel oil. In every case, shortly after receipt of the aid packages, North Korea would resume production at their nuclear facilities only to garner another deal under similar terms. Likewise, being a rogue state which is listed as a state sponsor of terrorism, involved in narcotics trafficking, kidnapping, and currency counterfeiting, it is feared that North Korea may view nuclear weapons as an economic enterprise by

selling nuclear technology and weapons to other state and non-state actors. This view may be proven if it is verified that North Korea was involved in any technology or weapons transfer to the site in Syria that Israel recently conducted an airstrike against.

### **South Korea**

South Korea views a nuclear North Korea as a threat to their national security. South Korea takes comfort in the fact that they have the backing of the United States, but are unsure of how safe they really are with a hostile nuclear North Korea. South Koreans view the North Koreans as their brothers to the North and that they are only separated by ideological differences. Likewise, South Korea has always been more than willing to provide aid to their counterparts in the North. However, South Korea sees the possession of nuclear weapons by North Korea as a powerful bargaining chip. The request for aid typically centers on giving North Korea aid packages in exchange for the closing of nuclear reactors only for the reactors to either reopen or never have been closed in the first place. South Korea views the issue now as whether or not the North Korean regime will destroy their existing weapons and abandon future production in exchange for aid packages.

### **China**

China is North Korea's best ally. However, China views a nuclear North Korea as a threat to regional stability. Mainly, China fears Japan may also decide to acquire preemptive military capabilities and/or their own nuclear arsenal as a counterbalance to North Korea's. China, like North Korea, has been invaded and exploited by Japan in the past and there remain longstanding hostilities and fears to this day. China also sees the potential for a nuclear North Korea to upset the relationship between China and the

United States. China does not view a nuclear North Korea as a security threat, but deems it necessary to side in with the United States for economic reasons. China has most favored nation status with the United States and desires to not allow North Korea's nuclear weapons program to interfere with that positive economic relationship.

### **Japan**

Japan, more than any other country views a nuclear North Korea as a direct security threat. Japan occupied and exploited Korea for forty years. The Japanese occupation of Korea has resulted in generations of hatred, mistrust, and hostility. Japan is now questioning whether or not they should develop military preemptive capabilities, and/or their own nuclear weapons program due to the fact that North Korea is less likely to use nuclear weapons on their South Korean brothers as they are on Japan.

### **Russia**

Russia views a nuclear North Korea not as a military threat, but as a threat to Russia's role as a superpower and one that will result in a nuclear arms race in Southeast Asia (Funabashi 2007, 175). Russia sees a nuclear North Korea as a threat to its influence in the region. Russia tried to guarantee North Korea's security against a possible threat from the United States through mutual agreements if they abandoned their pursuit of nuclear weapons. Russia tried to convince the North Koreans that their security was guaranteed with the backing of Russia and China and that nuclear weapons were not necessary. With the acquisition of nuclear weapons by North Korea, Russia feels that their influence in the region as well as their role as a superpower is diminished.

### **United States**

The United States views a nuclear North Korea as a security threat. A nuclear armed North Korea in conjunction with their missile technology may have the potential of striking the United States. The United States also views a nuclear North Korea as a security threat to two of its closest allies, South Korea and Japan. With the recent war on terrorism, the United States views North Korea as a rogue state who now has the ability and economic incentive to proliferate nuclear technology and weapons to other hostile countries as well as non-state actors such as terrorist groups.

North Korea and the five other member countries to the Six-Party Talks all have their individual perspectives and agendas concerning the nuclear dilemma. The above listed actors (countries) have all tried to prevent North Korea from developing nuclear weapons. Now that North Korea has acquired nuclear weapons, the other Six-Party Talks member countries must now formulate policies that pressure North Korea to either destroy existing weapons, abandon further research and development, and/or prevent North Korea from selling nuclear technology and weapons to other state and non-state actors. Relying on publicly available literature and the perspectives of the six actors, this study will utilize a predictive analysis methodology to develop possible responses illustrated as alternative future scenarios that each actor may undertake in the near future concerning a nuclear armed North Korea.

#### **Step Four: Possible Courses of Action for Each Actor**

This predictive analysis study has developed possible courses of action for each of the six actors. The possible courses of action have been derived from a thorough examination of each actor's perception of the situation under study. Since North Korea already possesses nuclear weapons, their decisions concerning what they will do with

them, is the catalyst which affects the decisions and possible future courses of actions for the other five actors.

The United States, South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia have two possible courses of action. The first course of action is that they will continue to negotiate peacefully with North Korea in the hopes North Korea will give up their nuclear weapons. Negotiating peacefully does not exclude hostility in negotiations, but only excludes armed conflict. It should also be noted that negotiations include economic aid and assistance, diplomatic pressure, and assistance in developing nuclear reactors for non-military uses such as energy production. The second course of action is member countries to the Six-Party Talks resorting to armed conflict/military force to destroy North Korea's nuclear weapons program. North Korea's course of action will be discussed in step five due to the fact that their decision to possess nuclear weapons is the major scenario for this study.

This researcher has divided the possible courses of action between negotiating peacefully and armed conflict intentionally, though realizing within both peaceful negotiations and armed conflict there are other potential courses of action. The exclusion of other possible avenues that fall within either peaceful means or armed conflict has been removed from the study not because they are improbable, but due to limitations within the LAMP process.

The limitation of LAMP is that each additional possible course of action exponentially increases the total number of alternate futures which must be compared. For example, with five actors and two courses of action, this study will compare 32 alternate futures; however, with the addition of another course of action such as "ending negotiations", the

number increases to 243 alternate futures (see formula for calculating total number of alternate futures in step six). Therefore, this study seeks to make a prediction on two courses of action, one based on peaceful negotiations, and the other based on armed conflict. Due to the overwhelming effort it would take without appropriate LAMP related software to compare such a large number of alternate futures, this researcher realizes that another study must be conducted which analyzes other possible courses of action which may fall to one side or the other of peaceful means or armed conflict.

The above two possible courses of action were developed with as little bias as possible on the part of this researcher. Every attempt has been made to view the situation through the perception of the six actors. Likewise, this researcher made a conscious effort to list every possible course of action regardless of how unlikely to occur they may at first appear. In developing possible courses of action, it is better to evaluate every possible course of action as a way of conducting a more thorough analysis of the situation. However, it is realized that within the two above possible course of action, there are other potential courses of action which would increase the number of possible alternate futures to an overwhelming number. Therefore, the courses of action have been intentionally divided between peaceful negotiation and armed conflict.

### **Step Five: Major Scenario**

As stated previously, the decisions of North Korea's leaders concerning the future of their nuclear weapons are the driving force or catalyst which influences the decisions of the other five actors. Therefore, North Korea is a special case in the study of this scenario. North Korea ultimately has only one possible course of action relative to this

predictive analysis study. The course of action or major scenario is that North Korea retains possession of their nuclear weapons. The major assumption is that any decision to give up their nuclear weapons falls outside the scope of this study due to the fact that this study seeks to make predictions concerning Six-Party Talks member countries possible reactions to North Korea's nuclear weapons program and whether or not these reactions can influence or force North Korea to abandon their nuclear weapons program.

This single scenario model may seem rather limiting at first, but this researcher has found other LAMP studies based on a single scenario. For an example of a similar two courses of action and single scenario model, see the study entitled "*Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction: Latin America*" submitted by Charles P. Gill in *The Lockwood Analytical Method for Prediction (LAMP): Book of Readings*.

The single scenario derived from North Korea's course of action is the focal point that this study attempts to predict the most likely alternate future. The major scenario therefore is the influencing factor that shapes the future decisions of the other five actors.

#### **Step Six: Number of Permutations of Possible Alternate Futures for the Scenario**

Calculating the total number of permutations of possible alternate futures for the scenario is essential in predicting the most likely alternate future. Determining the total number of permutations of all possible alternate futures for the scenario, then conducting a pairwise comparison analysis (see step seven) assists the researcher in conducting a more thorough study. The researcher is tasked with calculating the total



number of possible alternate futures for the major scenario in step six before comparing them two at a time in step seven.

The formula for determining the total number of alternate futures is  $X^Y=Z$  where X is the number of courses of action for each actor and Y is the number of actors and Z is the total number of alternate futures to be compared (Lockwood and Lockwood 1993, 38).

This study has five actors with two possible courses of action (excluding North Korea whose course of action is the major scenario). Plugging the above information into the formula yields  $2^5=32$ . Or simply stated two courses of action for five actors yield thirty-two alternate futures for the major scenario which need to be compared two at a time in step seven. Therefore, a table was created below to illustrate the resulting thirty-two alternate future permutations. The following abbreviations will be used in the below tables. The first abbreviation is NP for negotiate peacefully and the second is AC for armed conflict.

**Table 1: Alternate Future Permutations for the Scenario**

Alternate Future #	United States	South Korea	Japan	China	Russia
1	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
2	NP	NP	NP	NP	AC
3	NP	NP	NP	AC	NP
4	NP	NP	NP	AC	AC
5	NP	NP	AC	NP	NP
6	NP	NP	AC	NP	AC
7	NP	NP	AC	AC	NP
8	NP	NP	AC	AC	AC
9	NP	AC	NP	NP	NP
10	NP	AC	NP	NP	AC
11	NP	AC	NP	AC	NP
12	NP	AC	NP	AC	AC
13	NP	AC	AC	NP	NP
14	NP	AC	AC	NP	AC
15	NP	AC	AC	AC	NP
16	NP	AC	AC	AC	AC

17	AC	NP	NP	NP	NP
18	AC	NP	NP	NP	AC
19	AC	NP	NP	AC	NP
20	AC	NP	NP	AC	AC
21	AC	NP	AC	NP	NP
22	AC	NP	AC	NP	AC
23	AC	NP	AC	AC	NP
24	AC	NP	AC	AC	AC
25	AC	AC	NP	NP	NP
26	AC	AC	NP	NP	AC
27	AC	AC	NP	AC	NP
28	AC	AC	NP	AC	AC
29	AC	AC	AC	NP	NP
30	AC	AC	AC	NP	AC
31	AC	AC	AC	AC	NP
32	AC	AC	AC	AC	AC

**Step Seven: Pairwise Comparison and Relative Probability of all Alternate Futures**

A pairwise comparison of each alternate future will now be conducted by utilizing the information in Table 1 above. A pairwise comparison is a technique which allows the researcher to analyze the alternate futures two at a time until each alternate future has been compared to every other alternate future. For example, alternate future #1 is compared to alternate future #2, alternate future #3 etc... until all alternate futures have been compared to every other existing alternate future. Each compared alternate future is then voted on as to which one is more likely to occur. The total number of votes is determined as a function of the amount of available alternate futures. This formula can be expressed as  $X=n(n-1)/2$  where n is the total number of available alternate futures and X is the total number of pairwise comparisons (Lockwood, [www.osint.org](http://www.osint.org), no date given).

Plugging the information from Table 1 into the above formula yields  $X=32(32-1)/2$  resulting in 496 necessary pairwise comparisons to be made for the major scenario.

Therefore, the total number of votes in Table 2 below must add up to 496. The alternate futures with higher number of votes are the most likely to occur whereas the alternate futures with the lowest number of votes are the least likely to occur. Table 2 reflects the vote count for each alternate future. The total votes for each alternate future were derived from a pairwise comparison table which is available upon request.

**Table 2: Alternate Futures Table for the Scenario of North Korea Retaining Nuclear Weapons**

Alternate Future #	United States	South Korea	Japan	China	Russia	Votes
1	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	31
2	NP	NP	NP	NP	AC	3
3	NP	NP	NP	AC	NP	17
4	NP	NP	NP	AC	AC	10
5	NP	NP	AC	NP	NP	1
6	NP	NP	AC	NP	AC	6
7	NP	NP	AC	AC	NP	14
8	NP	NP	AC	AC	AC	14
9	NP	AC	NP	NP	NP	6
10	NP	AC	NP	NP	AC	2
11	NP	AC	NP	AC	NP	21
12	NP	AC	NP	AC	AC	17
13	NP	AC	AC	NP	NP	17
14	NP	AC	AC	NP	AC	8
15	NP	AC	AC	AC	NP	16
16	NP	AC	AC	AC	AC	6
17	AC	NP	NP	NP	NP	25
18	AC	NP	NP	NP	AC	9
19	AC	NP	NP	AC	NP	22
20	AC	NP	NP	AC	AC	21
21	AC	NP	AC	NP	NP	19
22	AC	NP	AC	NP	AC	14
23	AC	NP	AC	AC	NP	18
24	AC	NP	AC	AC	AC	11
25	AC	AC	NP	NP	NP	28
26	AC	AC	NP	NP	AC	16
27	AC	AC	NP	AC	NP	24
28	AC	AC	NP	AC	AC	21
29	AC	AC	AC	NP	NP	22
30	AC	AC	AC	NP	AC	8
31	AC	AC	AC	AC	NP	29
32	AC	AC	AC	AC	AC	20

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With the pairwise comparison step complete the next step will be to rank order the alternate futures in terms of their probability to determine which are most likely to occur.

**Step 8: Rank the Alternate Futures from Highest to Lowest Probability**

It should be noted that Dr. Jonathan S. Lockwood (author of the LAMP methodology) has stated that the probability of each alternate future is constantly changing as one progresses into the future due to the infinite possible decisions which are potentially made by each actor (Lockwood and Lockwood 1993, 12). Therefore, a numerical value such as percent is not assigned to the alternate futures, but rather, each alternate future is compared one to the other in the context of the immediate present. Taking this into account, this study does not assign any numerical value to the probability of any given alternate future, but rather, has assessed their relative probability based on the votes each received during the pairwise comparison step. This researcher acknowledges the limitation of step eight and realizes that each decision made tomorrow by a given national actor will affect the decisions of the other national actors thereby influencing the probability of each alternate future.

Table 3 below rank orders the alternate futures from highest probability to lowest probability based on the number of votes that each received in the pairwise comparison step.

**Table 3: Alternate Futures Probability Ranking**

Alternate Future #	United States	South Korea	Japan	China	Russia	Votes
1	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	31
31	AC	AC	AC	AC	NP	29
25	AC	AC	NP	NP	NP	28
17	AC	NP	NP	NP	NP	25
27	AC	AC	NP	AC	NP	24

19	AC	NP	NP	AC	NP	22
29	AC	AC	AC	NP	NP	22
11	NP	AC	NP	AC	NP	21
20	AC	NP	NP	AC	AC	21
28	AC	AC	NP	AC	AC	21
32	AC	AC	AC	AC	AC	20
21	AC	NP	AC	NP	NP	19
23	AC	NP	AC	AC	NP	18
3	NP	NP	NP	AC	NP	17
12	NP	AC	NP	AC	AC	17
13	NP	AC	AC	NP	NP	17
15	NP	AC	AC	AC	NP	16
26	AC	AC	NP	NP	AC	16
7	NP	NP	AC	AC	NP	14
8	NP	NP	AC	AC	AC	14
22	AC	NP	AC	NP	AC	14
24	AC	NP	AC	AC	AC	11
4	NP	NP	NP	AC	AC	10
18	AC	NP	NP	NP	AC	9
14	NP	AC	AC	NP	AC	8
30	AC	AC	AC	NP	AC	8
6	NP	NP	AC	NP	AC	6
9	NP	AC	NP	NP	NP	6
16	NP	AC	AC	AC	AC	6
2	NP	NP	NP	NP	AC	3
10	NP	AC	NP	NP	AC	2
5	NP	NP	AC	NP	NP	1
						496

In the next step, the alternate futures which obtained the most votes or highest probability ranking will be analyzed, assuming they were to occur, in terms of their consequences on the scenario under study. This researcher has decided to analyze the top five alternate futures in step nine below.

**Step 9: Analyze the Alternate Futures Assuming each were to Occur**

The major scenario in this study is the fact that North Korea has acquired nuclear weapons and that their decision to retain nuclear weapons affects the decisions of the other five Six-Party Talks member countries who are trying to influence North Korea to

relinquish these weapons of mass destruction. North Korea's refusal to abandon their nuclear weapons capabilities is the catalyst which influences the other five national actors' decisions.

Every agreement to date has resulted in North Korea missing deadlines to both account for their existing nuclear weapons and halt further nuclear weapons related development and production. North Korea continues to agree to concessions such as closing nuclear reactors in exchange for assistance such as fuel aid only to find another excuse to continue nuclear production after receipt of the agreed upon aid. With this in mind, this study seeks to analyze potential alternate futures based on possible reactions of the other five Six-Party Talks member countries. As stated previously, the alternate futures are centered on two main courses of action by the other national actors; they can continue to negotiate peacefully (NP) or resort to armed conflict (AC).

The decision to analyze only the top five probable alternate futures was made based on the need to establish a cut-off point somewhere in the study. Obviously, it is not worthwhile to spend time analyzing all alternate futures down to the one which received the least amount of votes (alternate future #5 with one vote). To do so would require too much time and space resulting in a lengthy as well as confusing and monotonous study. However, realizing the future holds infinite possibilities based on infinite decisions which in turn affects all other decisions, this researcher admits that alternate future #5 with only one vote in this study, may be the one to occur although at present it appears to be the least likely. "In fact, when someone tells you that something has a 50 percent (or 50/50) chance of happening, he is really telling you that he doesn't have a

clue as to how likely it is to happen, and that you might as well flip a coin.” (Lockwood and Lockwood 1993, 26)

This researcher has made every effort to develop possible alternate futures, conduct an unbiased pairwise comparison, and present for analysis the top five most probable (without assigning a numerical value of probability) based on total votes received under immediate present conditions of the scenario under study. Below is an analysis of the top five probable alternate futures, their consequences and most likely outcome, assuming each were to occur, for the scenario concerning North Korea’s decision to retain nuclear weapons.

**Alternate Future #1:** *The United States, South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia continue to negotiate peacefully with North Korea.* In the pairwise comparison step Alternate Future #1 received the most votes (thirty-one) which deems it the most likely to occur when compared to the other alternate futures. Alternate Future #1 is also the current course of action for the Six-Party Talks member countries in dealing with North Korea’s possession of nuclear weapons. The United States, South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia are opposed to the possession of nuclear weapons by North Korea. However, in this alternate future, none of the actors view the use of armed conflict to destroy North Korea’s nuclear weapons and nuclear production capabilities as a viable option.

Negotiating peacefully through the Six-Party Talks and offering economic aid and assistance as incentives for North Korea to destroy existing nuclear weapons and halt future production allows for the potential that the situation can be resolved without the

use of military force. This is mainly due to the presumption that if any of the actors used military force, South Korea would suffer an attack by North Korea.

South Korea, though facing the greatest threat from North Korea's nuclear weapons is the strongest advocate of using diplomatic and economic aid to resolve the situation. The other actor facing a direct threat from North Korea's nuclear weapons is Japan. Japan also advocates policies of peaceful negotiation over a military strike, however, there is great debate in Japan concerning whether or not they should beef up their defensive countermeasures, acquire preemptive strike capabilities, or develop nuclear weapons of their own to counter the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons. China is adamantly opposed to North Korea being a nuclear state not due to feeling threatened, but due to the fact that they realize the economic consequences that would result if their relationship with the United States was shattered if they did not join the effort in opposing North Korea's status as a nuclear state. China advocates peaceful negotiations also due to the fact that armed conflict would send thousands of refugees from North Korea into China. Russia advocates peaceful negotiations for similar reasons as China but are opposed to North Korea's nuclear weapons due to the fact that a nuclear armed North Korea limits Russia's influence as a superpower. The United States rhetorically speaks of regime change in North Korea, but realizes the consequences that South Korea would suffer through the use of armed conflict.

Ultimately, there is great international concern that North Korea will sell nuclear technology and weapons to prop up their failing economy. Economic aid and infrastructure development in exchange for destroying existing nuclear weapons and halting future nuclear weapons production is in the best interest of all involved actors.



The most likely outcome of this alternate future is that North Korea will continue to use their nuclear weapons as bargaining chips for further economic aid and assistance. Even if aid is withheld until compliance is verified, North Korea will continue to make threats of resuming production as a way of bargaining for more aid and assistance. Until North Korea makes economic reform similar to China who embraces both communism and capitalism, this scenario will likely continue to repeat itself in the negotiations with North Korea. The consequences of this alternate future is minimal as long as the other five actors can prevent North Korea from proliferating nuclear technology and weapons and the best route appears to be to limit the economic need for North Korea to do so. Another consequence is that this alternate future has the potential to accelerate an arms race in the region as South Korea and Japan seeks ways to counter the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons.

**Alternate Future #31:** *The United States, South Korea, Japan, and China resort to armed conflict while Russia continues to negotiate peacefully.* Alternate Future #31 received the second highest number of vote counts (twenty-nine) making it the second most likely alternate future to occur. Alternate Future #31 has all actors except Russia resorting to armed conflict to destroy North Korea's nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons production capabilities. This scenario could come about if one of the countries advocated or initiated armed conflict. For example, if the United States initiated an armed strike against North Korea's nuclear weapons program, South Korea and Japan would more than likely feel threatened by a North Korean counterattack and China would join the effort as a way of maintaining positive relations with the United States and as a way of getting the war over quickly to prevent the flood of refugees into their

country. Russia would stay out of the armed conflict because they are not really threatened by North Korea's nuclear weapons and would have their status as a superpower elevated by the other countries effort to destroy North Korea's nuclear weapons.

The likely outcome of this scenario is that North Korea's nuclear weapons capabilities would be destroyed but at a cost of a North Korean counterattack on South Korea, Japan, and possibly China. However, if the initial use of armed conflict is unified by the United States, South Korea, Japan, and China, North Korea would have very little second strike capabilities to strike back. A quick unified strike utilizing superior technology and intelligence could potentially take out North Korea's nuclear capabilities and overwhelm them to the point that they would have little military resistance left to pose a counterattack.

The consequence of this alternate future is that North Korea would be further crippled economically unless regime change also came about. With regime change, the allied forces could, as they typically do, take steps to rebuild North Korea's infrastructure and economic development. This would be similar to the United State's effort at rebuilding Japan at the end of World War II. North Korea's nuclear weapons capabilities would be destroyed but the consequence would be the rebuilding efforts which would be necessary to maintain stability in North Korea as well as the region. The final consequence is the potential for North Korea to launch at least a minimal counterattack on South Korea, Japan, and possibly China.

**Alternate Future #25:** *The United States and South Korea resort to armed conflict while Japan, China, and Russia continue to negotiate peacefully.* Coming in third as the

most likely alternate future is Alternate Future #25 with twenty-nine votes. This alternate future is very similar to Alternate Future #31 above in its cause, consequences, and outcomes. The difference is Japan and China would not advocate or more especially, be drawn into armed conflict. This alternate future involves both the United States and South Korea resorting to armed conflict. As in the alternate futures above, any armed conflict would almost surely involve South Korea. South Korea who advocates peaceful negotiations would decide to resort to armed conflict only if they felt an imminent threat from North Korea or if the United States decided to use force. South Korea would follow the United States' decision to use military force, as a way of limiting a North Korean counterattack on their country which is almost assured to happen if armed conflict breaks out. If South Korea felt an imminent danger and initiated a preemptive strike on North Korea's nuclear capabilities, the United States would become involved in the armed conflict not only as a way of protecting their ally, but also to protect the thousands of military personnel they have stationed there.

Russia, as in the previous alternate futures, would not advocate or be drawn into the armed conflict. North Korea in this alternate future would not counterattack Japan or China as a way of limiting the military force used against them, and would probably appeal to Japan and China that they are all neighbors and that the South Korean regime is a puppet to the United States' imperialistic desires.

The outcome for this alternate future is the destruction of North Korea's nuclear capabilities. The consequences would probably be more severe for South Korea due to the lack of military support in the armed conflict by both Japan and China. China would have more refugees coming across the border since they are not involved in the armed

conflict. The economic and infrastructure damage would also be more severe in South Korea as it was in the previous example due to the presumed greater damage in South Korea by North Korea from the lack of military support in the armed conflict by both Japan and China.

**Alternate Future #17:** *The United States resorts to armed conflict while South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia continue to negotiate peacefully.* The fourth most probable alternate future is Alternate Future #17 with twenty-five votes. In this alternate future, the United States moves beyond the rhetoric of calling for regime change in North Korea and resorts to the use armed conflict. The United States has placed North Korea on the Axis of Evil list, and as a state sponsor of terrorism. Fearing that the tyrannical North Korean regime may have or develop the capability to strike the United States with nuclear weapons and proliferate nuclear technology and weapons to other state and non-state entities such as terrorist groups, the United States decides to preemptively destroy North Korea's nuclear capabilities.

In this alternate future, North Korea may or may not counterattack South Korea. North Korea may decide not to attack South Korea as a way of garnering international support. North Korea would make the appeal that South Koreans are their brothers to the south and that they are only separated due to the "occupation" of South Korea by the United States. If North Korea counterattacks South Korea, South Korea in this alternate future would forgo the use of military force. This would be similar to Israel staying out of the conflict during Operation Desert Storm even after suffering Scud Missile attacks by Iraq.

The outcome for this alternate future would be the destruction of North Korea's nuclear weapons capabilities. The consequences would be further dependent on whether or not South Korea suffered a counterattack. China would be left to contend with a flood of North Korean refugees. Finally, the United States and possibly South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia would assist in rebuilding North Korea's infrastructure.

**Alternate Future #27:** *The United States, South Korea, and China resort to armed conflict while Japan and Russia continue to negotiate peacefully.* The fifth and final alternate future to be analyzed is Alternate Future #27 with twenty-four votes. In this alternate future, the United States, South Korea, and China resort to armed conflict to destroy North Korea's nuclear weapons capabilities. If one of the three above countries advocated or initiated armed conflict, the other two would follow suit. The United States would protect its troops stationed in the region as well as South Korea. South Korea would resort to armed conflict to follow the United State's lead or to limit a possible North Korean counterattack. China would become involved in the armed conflict as a way of appeasing the United States and to end the war quickly to stem the flood of North Korean refugees. Japan who only has a limited self defense oriented military would stay out of the conflict. Russia would again see no real incentive to become involved militarily.

To avoid repetition, the causes, outcomes, and consequences would be nearly identical to the alternate futures above with the exception of Alternate Future #1 due to the fact that it did not involve the use of armed conflict.

After analyzing the above five most probable alternate futures for the major scenario, some patterns have emerged. The United States would be involved in any armed

conflict while Russia does not get involved in any armed conflict. South Korea with one exception would be involved in any armed conflict. South Korea may act preemptively under the fear of an imminent danger, or follow the other countries into armed conflict as a way of limiting a North Korean counterattack. South Korea may also suffer a counterattack and not respond back with military force. The only exception for South Korea to stay out of the armed conflict is if North Korea does not attack South Korea based on the actions of the other countries. In every instance of armed conflict North Korea's nuclear weapons capabilities will be destroyed.

Alternate Future #1 is an exception amongst the other four alternate futures. It is the only alternate future without the use of armed conflict. Likewise, it is the only alternate future that has the United States, South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia in agreeing to a course of action. This is the only alternate future with a unified effort and is the current course of action for the Six-Party Talks member countries. However, in this alternate future, North Korea retains their nuclear weapons as bargaining chips for economic aid and assistance. Even if North Korea gives up their nuclear weapons and programs for short term aid and assistance, there is no guarantee that they will not threaten to resume nuclear production as a bargaining measure for future aid packages.

In the next two steps (ten and eleven), a listing of focal events and indicators for the five most probable alternate futures has been developed.

### **Steps Ten and Eleven: Focal Events and Indicators for the Alternate Futures**

To present the material in a less confusing manner, steps ten and eleven have been combined under the heading of each alternate future. Lists of focal events and indicators have been developed for each alternate future. Before analyzing the five

most probable alternate futures, it is appropriate to define for the reader the terms “focal events” and “indicators” as they relate to the LAMP process.

“A “focal event” is an occurrence of sufficient magnitude that it changes the relative probability of the universe of alternate futures.” (Lockwood and Lockwood 1993, 55) In essence, focal events are occurrences which change the present conditions of the situation under study and bring about a given alternate future. For an alternate future to occur, at least one focal event must bring it into being. The most likely alternate future requires the least amount of focal events while the least likely alternate future requires the greatest number of focal events (Lockwood and Lockwood 1993, 56).

An indicator is datum that correlates to a focal event signifying that a focal event has occurred or is about to occur (Lockwood and Lockwood 1993, 56). Likewise, a single indicator has the potential to change the probability of every alternate future associated with the given focal event (Lockwood and Lockwood 1993, 57).

**Alternate Future #1:** *The United States, South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia continue to negotiate peacefully with North Korea.* Alternate Future #1 is not only the most likely alternate future to occur, but represents the present conditions of the scenario under study. Therefore, focal events are not necessary to bring about the occurrence of Alternate Future #1. Focal events and indicators that occur in the future would be occurrences that change the status quo and bring about change in the present condition.

**Alternate Future #31:** *The United States, South Korea, Japan, and China resort to armed conflict while Russia continues to negotiate peacefully.*

## **Focal Events**

- The Six-Party Talks are viewed as fruitless and never resume
- Japan develops defensive countermeasures and/or nuclear weapons
- North Korea attempts to sell nuclear technology or weapons to state and non-state actors
- Border incidents between the two Koreas escalate resulting in war
- The current or future U.S. administration seeks regime change in North Korea

### **Indicators**

- North Korea continues to use nuclear weapons as bargaining chips for aid
- North Korea threatens and/or deploys nuclear weapons in a threatening manner toward South Korea and/or Japan
- An increase in rhetoric by North Korea directed at South Korea and/or Japan
- North Korean nuclear weapons moved or deployed
- It is proven that North Korea sold nuclear technology and/or weapons to Syria
- Increase in border incidents which result in violence between the two Koreas or U.S. forces.
- Any increase in the U.S. war on terrorism and nuclear armed Axis of Evil countries such as Iran's nuclear weapons program, the big unknown is the upcoming U.S. presidential elections and the foreign policy priorities of the new U.S. administration

**Alternate Future #25:** *The United States and South Korea resort to armed conflict*

*while Japan, China, and Russia continue to negotiate peacefully.*

### **Focal Events**

- The Six-Party Talks are viewed as fruitless and never resume
- North Korea threatens and/or deploys nuclear weapons in a threatening manner toward South Korea
- North Korea attempts to sell nuclear technology or weapons to state and non-state actors
- Border incidents between the two Koreas escalate resulting in war



- The current or future U.S. administration seeks regime change in North Korea

### **Indicators**

- An increase in tension between North Korea and South Korea
- North Korean nuclear weapons moved or deployed
- Attempt to change the North Korean regime from within or externally
- Increase in border incidents which result in violence between the two Koreas or U.S. forces.
- Any increase in the U.S. war on terrorism and nuclear armed Axis of Evil countries such as Iran, the big unknown is the upcoming U.S. presidential elections and the foreign policy priorities of the new U.S. administration

**Alternate Future #17:** *The United States resorts to armed conflict while South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia continue to negotiate peacefully.*

### **Focal Events**

- The Six-Party Talks are viewed as fruitless and never resume
- North Korea threatens and/or deploys nuclear weapons in a threatening manner toward South Korea
- North Korea attempts to sell nuclear technology or weapons to state and non-state actors
- The current or future U.S. administration seeks regime change in North Korea
- North Korea develops the capability to strike the U.S. with nuclear weapons

### **Indicators**

- North Korean nuclear weapons moved or deployed
- It is proven that North Korea sold nuclear technology and/or weapons to Syria
- Increase in border incidents which result in violence between the two Koreas or U.S. forces.

- Any increase in the U.S. war on terrorism and nuclear armed Axis of Evil countries such as Iran, the big unknown is the upcoming U.S. presidential elections and the foreign policy priorities of the new U.S. administration

**Alternate Future #27:** *The United States, South Korea, and China resort to armed conflict while Japan and Russia continue to negotiate peacefully.*

### **Focal Events**

- The Six-Party Talks are viewed as fruitless and never resume
- North Korea threatens and/or deploys nuclear weapons in a threatening manner toward South Korea, and/or China
- North Korea attempts to sell nuclear technology or weapons to state and non-state actors
- Border incidents between the two Koreas escalate resulting in war
- The current or future U.S. administration seeks regime change in North Korea
- The United States threatens to scale-back economic relations with China unless China puts more pressure on North Korea

### **Indicators**

- North Korea continues to use nuclear weapons as bargaining chips for aid
- North Korean nuclear weapons moved or deployed
- North Korean instability results in significant increase in refugees into China
- It is proven that North Korea sold nuclear technology and/or weapons to Syria
- Increase in border incidents which result in violence between the two Koreas or U.S. forces.
- Any increase in the U.S. war on terrorism and nuclear armed Axis of Evil countries such as Iran, the big unknown is the upcoming U.S. presidential elections and the foreign policy priorities of the new U.S. administration

The alternate futures listed above have some consistent focal events and indicators.

The consistent focal events are the discontinuation of the Six-Party Talks, the handling of nuclear technology and weapons by North Korea, border incidents between North Korea and South Korea resulting in increased hostilities, and regime change in North Korea. The consistent indicators are North Korea using nuclear weapons as bargaining chips for aid or threatening other countries, increase in tensions between North Korea and South Korea, and the United State's expansion on the war on terrorism and the Axis of Evil nuclear states. In the final step, an analysis will be conducted to determine the potential of the alternate futures to transpose into another alternate future.

### **Step Twelve: Potential of Alternate Futures to Transpose into Other Alternate Futures**

As stated previously, Alternate Future #1 not only received the most votes in the pairwise comparison step but is also the status quo of the current scenario. For Alternate Future #1 to transpose into another alternate future, the Six-Party Talks would have to be abandoned as a course of action for at least one of the actors involved. If this were to occur, it would potentially change the course of action for the other remaining actors. The possibility of Alternate Future #1 transposing into another alternate future increases as the number of actors abandons the Six-Party Talks. Likewise, Alternate Future #1 would be transposed into another alternate future if at least one of the actors adopted a policy of armed conflict.

Alternate Future #1 has the greatest potential to transpose into Alternate Future #31 if at least one of the listed focal events were to occur. If at least one of the focal events occurred and at least one of the actors resorted to armed conflict, it is very probable that the armed conflict would involve all of the actors except Russia. It has been stated previously that Russia does not have an interest in resorting to armed conflict and that

North Korea is less likely to counterattack them than South Korea and/or Japan. The United States is almost assured to enter the armed conflict to protect their deployed military personnel and allies. China would enter the armed conflict to maintain relations with the United States and to end the war quickly to limit the number of refugees streaming into their country. Japan, even if not attacked, would at least provide some military support to the effort.

Alternate Future #1 could transpose into Alternate Future #25 for the above reasons except for the fact that Japan is not threatened and China is not pressured into supporting the war effort. Any decision to resort to armed conflict that involves either the United States or South Korea would drag the other into the armed conflict for the reasons stated above.

The only way that Alternate Future #1 could transpose into alternate Future #17 is if the United States sought to destroy North Korea's nuclear weapons and/or regime change and the conflict was quick, decisive, and did not result in a counterattack by North Korea on South Korea. However, this has very little possibility to occur not only because North Korea would probably attack South Korea, but also due to the fact that South Korea would follow the United State's decision to resort to armed conflict as a way of preventing or limiting a mass counterattack.

Alternate Future #1 could transpose into Alternate Future #27 for the same reasons as stated in Alternate Future #31 except Japan does not suffer a counterattack or does not feel threatened by North Korea.

After analyzing the possibility of Alternate Future #1 transposing into another alternate future, it appears that the most likely transposition would be into Alternate

Future #31. If the Six-Party Talks broke down, more than likely all actors would back out of the negotiation talks with North Korea. Any armed conflict by one actor would more than likely drag the other actors except Russia into the conflict.

### **Conclusion**

The Korean Peninsula has been a place of occupation, tension, and armed conflict for over one-hundred years. With North Korea in possession of nuclear weapons, the possibility of the historical tensions resulting in mass devastation is greater now than ever before. The United States, South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia have united in the effort to counter North Korea's acquisition of nuclear weapons. Failing to prevent North Korea from acquiring nuclear weapons, they are now faced in dealing with a nuclear armed North Korea.

This paper has utilized the LAMP methodology to conduct a predictive analysis on possible Six-Party Talks member countries reaction to a nuclear armed North Korea. This study has determined through the LAMP process that the most likely reactions by the other Six-Party Talks member countries is Alternate Future #1 which is also the current status quo. However, a factor not covered in this study is the fact that North Korea is probably monitoring the international community's reaction to the Iranian nuclear weapons program. Any armed conflict unleashed to destroy Iran's nuclear capabilities will influence North Korea's decisions on how they handle their nuclear weapons program. However, the Iranian factor is left for another study.

The other alternate futures developed in this study all involve armed conflict. The cost of armed conflict in terms of mass devastation appears to be too great unless North Korea directly threatens South Korea or one of the other countries. In this case, a

preemptive strike by either the United States or another country is possible. Likewise, the possibility of armed conflict exists if North Korea sells nuclear technology or weapons to other state or non-state actors.

As a final analysis, there is little evidence that either the current or future United States administration would move beyond the rhetoric of calling for regime change in North Korea. With the current war on terrorism, an additional military strike on North Korea would garner very little public support unless a major focal event was to occur. Such a focal event would have to entail North Korea developing the technology to strike the United States with nuclear weapons and threatening to do so, or to sell nuclear technology, material, and/or weapons to hostile state or non-state actors.

It appears that at least in the short term, the Six-Party Talks will continue. The actors in this study will likewise continue their current course of action which is to negotiate peacefully with North Korea. However, the focal events that can change the current scenario into one of armed conflict are the decisions North Korea makes in handling their nuclear technology and weapons. Unless North Korea directly threatens another country or sells nuclear technology, materials, and technology, the current status quo will be upheld. This is especially so if the Six-Party Talks member countries withhold aid until compliance by North Korea on conditions for aid is verified.

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