“Smart Policy”: Applying Lessons from the Cold War Toward Engaging North Korea

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Abstract
How can the United States more effectively engage North Korea and deter this state from violating international norms? Because the DPRK possesses nuclear weapons, it is a danger to stability on the Korean peninsula, the region, and the world. This essay revisits the traditional model of deterrence theory, and reassess the extent to which it is applicable in a post-Cold War context. Despite recent shifts in U.S. policy toward increased diplomatic engagement, it has not fully taken advantage of a number of deterrent tools. We use these tools to make three proposals "smart policy": (1) that the U.S. increase its nuclear forensics capabilities to establish a more credible means to identify, monitor, and verify nuclear proliferation activity; (2) that the U.S. rigorously engage North Korea with diplomacy; and (3) that the U.S. revitalize Kim Dae Jung’s “sunshine policy” by facilitating codependent energy production and consumption between North and South Korea.

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1 Introduction

The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), or North Korea, remains an enigmatic state in international and regional affairs. Recent behavior—from the nuclear test and ballistic missile launches in April 2009, to the abduction and summary imprisonment of two American journalists—has experts and pundits second-guessing Pyongyang’s latest motives. Some commentators have even been led to surmise that the “Dear Leader” Kim Jong-Il’s end game is outright nuclear war (Myong Chol 2009). Others argue the DPRK is playing the “nuclear card” to test the mettle of the Obama administration and extract economic concessions, just as it had done with the Clinton and Bush administrations (Tobey 2009). Yet others believe that this behavior reflects a power struggle among generals and hardliners in Pyongyang who are signaling to the international community that North Korea poses a serious threat, despite Kim’s death or convalescence (Noerper 2009).

Rather than deconstruct the motivations behind the DPRK’s latest round of nuclear brinksmanship, we believe it is important for the Obama administration to pause and look back some two decades prior to gain its bearings on how to proceed. We find that the deterrent strategies employed by the Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold War provide a wellspring of lessons the Obama administration can tweak and apply to its foreign policy with the DPRK. In particular, we argue the Obama administration should apply a nuanced deterrent architecture that relies on a series of “smart policies” to engage and subsequently deter hostile behavior by the North Korean regime.

We conceptualize smart policy as a tripartite method, which blends the use of both sticks and carrots in interacting with the North Korean regime. More specifically, we argue for the use of: (1) “smart power,” in which the U.S. reopens diplomatic negotiations with the regime, while applying a considered
balance of both inducements and threats to further constructive engagement; (2) “smart technology,” in which the United States more deftly applies nuclear forensic attribution technology to identify precisely the isotopic signatures of nuclear weapons, which in turn can stymie the DPRK’s willingness to use, sell, or transfer nuclear materials; and (3) “smart energy,” in which the U.S. encourages energy-codependence between North and South Korea by linking their energy production capacities, taking advantage of the different economic and security motivations held by each party.

We believe that the use of smart policy will afford the Obama administration greater traction in quelling the North Korean nuclear threat. Importantly, smart policy has the potential to transform the DPRK from its current status as a pariah, rogue state, and bring the DPRK closer toward being a responsible, engaged member of the international system. By emphasizing a more stable, proactive approach toward contingent threats, our approach also offers a way out of the existing stalemate and the current approach, which has dealt with broken commitments and new demands on a reactive basis.

In this paper, we first clarify deterrence theory (Section 2), and then develop a theory of smart policy based on lessons learned from U.S. engagement with the Soviet Union during the Cold War (Section 3). In the second part of the paper, we apply smart policy by delineating a three-fold approach toward engagement with North Korea: the use of “smart power,” “smart technology,” and “smart energy” (Sections 5–7). We conclude by reiterating the underlying principles of this new architecture, which we argue provides the best approach toward engaging and ultimately deterring North Korea from the using and/or transferring its nuclear weapons and technology.

2 Clarifying Deterrence Theory

Deterrence theory traces the conditions under which one actor is able to convince another that the expected costs of pursuing a particular course of action exceed the expected benefits. Put simply, “deterrence is a form of coercion” (Powell 1990, p. 7). Unlike “compellance,” which involves restraining an actor after the fact, deterrence calls for threatening punishment, or denial of any expected gains, such that the action in question becomes unthinkable. During the Cold War, nuclear deterrence theory served as one of the keystones of America’s policy of containment toward the Soviet Union, as the U.S. and USSR engaged in a policy of mutual assured destruction (MAD). Each side possessed enough nuclear weapons not only for a first strike, but also for a second, the certainty of which made war virtually impossible.

Deterrence operates under a number of preconditions, foremost of which is that the deterrer must convince the adversary that the threat is credible. To do so, the deterrer must possess the capabilities—or what we might refer to as “smart technology”—with which to carry out a threat. But capabilities alone are not sufficient. The deterrer must also assure the adversary that it has ample intention or motivation to use such force by coupling capabilities with a
persuasive commitment to use them. Thus, deterrence becomes a psychological phenomenon, in which the deterrer penetrates and manipulates “the thought processes of the opposing leaders so that they draw the ‘proper’ conclusion about the utility of attacking” (Morgan 1989, p. 125).

There are many ways for the deterrer to be convincing. A military leader might burn the bridge behind his own troops to limit the possibility of retreat, which commits the troops to fighting. Much in the same way, political leaders commit themselves diplomatically by publicly obligating themselves to a particular action, where not fulfilling the threat or promise would imply unacceptable international and domestic costs to a state’s honor, image, and reputation. The deterrer is effective because an aggressor takes into account the fact that the deterrer places himself or herself in a position from which it is much more difficult to yield.

Communication is another necessary component of deterrence. If the adversary cannot hear or does not understand the threat that will be imposed if he carries out the unwanted action, then all is for naught. The deterrer must make it very clear what action he wants to deter, and what will happen if the adversary does not comply. For example, the start of the Korean War has been blamed on failed communication between Communist China and the United States (Schelling 1966).

Communication is also important because it provides the opportunity for deterrent diplomacy (Sartori 2005). Although one purpose of diplomacy is to communicate threats to an adversary to influence behavior, deterrent diplomacy at times also includes opportunities for positive engagement. Opening the channels of communication allows the deterrer to not only induce behavior through threats of punishment, but also through promises of rewards if the adversary complies. The importance of communication is underscored by our

Finally, deterrence also requires that the adversary maintain palatable exit options, which assures the adversary that the deterrer will hold up his end of the bargain once the adversary gives in to his demands. For example, this may mean ensuring that there is a path to which the adversary’s troops can withdraw and that the adversary will not simply shoot the soldier in the back if he turns to retreat. The assurances given to the adversary will largely determine his decision to surrender or to hold firm. With nothing of value that can be held hostage, he cannot be certain that giving in will not be reciprocated by a reneging of the original agreement. As we will discuss, an approach that includes “smart energy” may just offer the North Korean regime the assurances it needs to retreat from the brink of its nuclear weapons-related ambitions.

Effective deterrence works through the careful design of incentive mechanisms. Such incentives include, by definition, both sticks as well as carrots. The smart policy that we lay out includes both positive and negative inducements to maximize the possibility of a mutually-beneficial outcome. For example, while reopening diplomatic channels with the DPRK involve an explicit recognition of the status quo regime (a carrot), the diplomatic space also includes the ability to communicate the consequences of continued belligerence (a stick). Likewise, the promise of siting nuclear energy plants in the North encompasses the inducement
3 Applying Deterrent Conditions to the Cold War Environment

The United States successfully applied a full range of deterrent tools against Soviet aggression during the Cold War. The U.S. nuclear threat was credible because the U.S. had a vast nuclear capability (smart technology). The stakes—communist containment—were high enough to convince the Soviets of the willingness to use them. If there was any doubt, the U.S. solidified its commitment by rigging trip wires that would automatically involve U.S. troops. As (Schelling 1966, p. 47) explains, “[t]he garrison in Berlin is a fine collection of soldiers as has ever been assembled, but excruciatingly small. What can 7,000 American troops do? They can die...in a manner that guarantees that the action cannot stop there.”

The Soviets were not only deterred by the use of troop trip wires, but they were also offered palatable exit options (an application of smart power) from nuclear brinkmanship. Nowhere was this more evident than the U.S. response to the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. After U.S. intelligence discovered Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba, the U.S. decision to employ a blockade around Cuba instead of initiating a war allowed Moscow both time, as well as room, to retreat without humiliation (Allison & Zelikow 1999). The U.S. also offered the Soviets security assurances during the crisis by promising to dismantle U.S. intermediate-range ballistic missiles that were based in Turkey and poised to strike Soviet territory. Though the missiles were not the most alarming security threat to the Soviet Union, they were a source of contention, and one its leadership wanted to counterbalance by installing its own missiles close to American territory.

Throughout not only the Cuban Missile Crisis, but also the Cold War, the superpowers had communication channels extending to the highest levels of government. Despite the fact that both sides routinely vilified the other in public rhetoric—former President Reagan’s “evil empire” speech and Khrushchev’s hammering of his shoe in the United Nations come to mind—the private lines of communication between Moscow and Washington were open and clear. During the Cuban missile crisis, the two leaderships communicated their concerns not only through press statements, but also through private letters, and through ambassadors in each others’ capitals (Allison & Zelikow 1999). The ominous “red telephone,” which linked the White House with the Kremlin directly, was established after the Cuban Missile Crisis. Both leaderships recognized that communication was a critical element in deflating a conflict that might at any time spiral out of control.

The United States understood the conditions that made deterrence function during the Cold War and devised its strategic policies accordingly. Yet, the U.S. has failed to apply its full repertoire of deterrence strategies toward deterring
North Korea’s nuclear ambitions. It has not backed up its commitment to a non-nuclear North Korea with credible capabilities to identify and track nuclear transfers if it were to occur. The U.S. has also at times been taciturn in opening up the appropriate lines of communication—a key component that consistently cushioned U.S.-Soviet brinkmanship even during the chilliest years of the Cold War. And while U.S. policymakers routinely provided the Soviets with security assurances, it has been only recently that Washington uttered such assurances to Pyongyang. Rather, the U.S. and its allies have customarily isolated the DPRK through a battery of military, food, energy and economic sanctions.

The financial stronghold is of particular concern, as it has left North Korea with few economic alternatives to stave off regime collapse, and may have provided an incentive for Pyongyang to sell its nuclear technology as an exit option from financial disaster. In essence, the very tools and methods with which U.S. policymakers predominately sought to contain the North Korean nuclear threat may have actually served to undermine the entire East Asian nonproliferation process.

4 Smart Policy

We believe that there is no need to reinvent the wheel in dealing with North Korea. The extent to which it is possible to deter North Korea from nuclear proliferation depends on Washington’s willingness to rededicate itself to a broader range of deterrent policies, including increasing its level of credibility, while offering the DPRK a wider range of communication and security guarantees. Washington must also take note of those methods that have proven effective in the past when engaging hostile regimes, such as the USSR. Applying lessons learned from the Cold War, we argue in favor of a new deterrent architecture to apply toward the DPRK. We call this approach “smart policy.”

Smart policy combines elements of classical nuclear deterrence theory with advances in nuclear forensics (an application we term “smart technology”), recent insights in the use of power articulated by Joseph Nye and Richard Armitage (what we call “smart power”), and a renewed focus on complex energy interdependence between North and South Korea via programs begun under Kim Dae Jung’s sunshine policy (an example of which is captured by the term “smart energy”).

5 Smart Technology

Effective deterrence requires smart technology, which includes the ability to track a burgeoning number of nuclear transfers, whether legal or illegal, in a reliable and expeditious manner. Although the forensic technology to identify

\footnote{For example, UN Resolution 1874, passed in June 2009, places further economic sanctions on North Korea and calls for all member-states to search North Korean ships suspected of carrying illicit materials. UN sanctions have had a dubious record of success in the DPRK (Noland 2009).}
nuclear weapons material exists (Moody, Hutcheon & Grant 2005), policymakers, nuclear scientists and experts warn that current domestic initiatives and programs designed to meet the attribution challenges of the future have not been adequately staffed or funded.

Vice President Biden warns that “funding for critical nuclear analysis by our National Laboratories remains dangerously low” (Biden 2007). Although official figures are unavailable, an unclassified Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory website estimates that the number of core national experts stands between 30–50 scientists with forensics experience (Heller 2007). The International Atomic Energy Agency points out that even on an international level there are “only a limited number of specialists” with working knowledge of interdicted nuclear material (IAEA 2006; Luongo 2007).

Exasperating the situation is the fact that technological capabilities have not kept pace with the increasing diversity and volume of global nuclear source material. Among other security issues, concerns about global warming and rising oil prices have resulted in renewed interest in the benefits of nuclear power. Aspiring nuclear states are on the rise and some 40 countries already maintain highly enriched uranium in nuclear research reactors, often times with minimal safeguards.2 New nuclear power states, along with growing stocks of nuclear materials, mean that the problem of attribution will likely grow in the years to come, diminishing the credibility of deterrent threats to identify and track any transfer of nuclear material, legal or illegal.

Thus, the lack of an adequate nuclear forensics infrastructure diminishes the credibility with which the U.S. can convey to an adversary that it can successfully pinpoint and detect a nuclear transfer. This inability not only increases the level of uncertainty regarding the origin of nuclear materials, making attribution difficult, but also emboldens rogue states to carry out illicit transfers, knowing there is no reliable means to track them.

Although the details of an international forensics regime lie beyond the scope of this paper,3 we argue that successful deterrence of the DPRK should carry with it some form of credible nuclear forensics regime, supported by both domestic capacity as well as international support. Given the position of the United States at the frontier of nuclear science and technology, it is imperative that its domestic resources be brought to bear on the issue. However, this needs to occur in concert with an international system, because the legitimacy of any forensic results rests on more than scientific results, but also the recognition of these results by what would be regarded as an impartial, international body.

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2 As Bunn & Wier (2004, p. viii) point out, “[i]n many cases, no more than a night watchman and a chain-link fence stand between a terrorist organization and enough nuclear material to devise a radioactive weapon.

3 For a detailed description on how such an international forensics regime might be established, including practical steps to see the proposal through its implementation, see Chivers, Lyles Goldblum, Isselhardt & Snider (2008).
6 Smart Power

Effective deterrence also requires smart power: a repertoire of sanctions and incentives with which the deterrer communicates as clearly as possible to the adversary what behavior is not welcome and exactly what will happen if he does not comply. Smart power means "drawing on both hard and soft power. It is an approach that underscores the necessity of a strong military, but also invests heavily in alliances, partnerships, and institutions at all levels to expand American influence and establish the legitimacy of American action" (Nye & Armitage 2007, p. 7).

Smart power thus relies on a synthesis of carrots—specifically, diplomacy and engagement—and sticks—through sanctions and military force—in deterring an adversary. This mixture is fluid and context dependent. If the adversary desires recognition and respect, then the softer side of smart power (perhaps through a political summit) would be prudent. Conversely, if the adversary seeks hostility, then the harder side of smart power (for example, via a robust display of force) would be appropriate.

Smart power also reduces the financial, political, and military burden typically placed on the U.S. when it acts alone. With multilateral support, Washington can allow its allies to coordinate political and economic sanctions and military missions. Moreover, multilateral cooperation signals to the international community that the U.S. is responsive to resentment against U.S. unilateral action in the war on terror, which has spawned unprecedented levels of anti-Americanism and damaged its soft power (Datta 2009).

At odds with the more comprehensive strategy of smart power, the U.S. predominately relies on hard power in deterring the DPRK. Washington has no formal diplomatic channels with Pyongyang, and hence, no means of direct communication. Rather, officials on either side of the Pacific communicate through public statements made in the press, which risk being taken out of context (Sagan & Suri 2003). During a crisis, misinterpretation or manipulation of a message via a third-party could exact catastrophic consequences on a delicate situation. Moreover, with the possible exception of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter—whose close personal relationship with former president Kim Il Sung facilitated the 1994 Agreed Framework (Sternbold 1994)—the United States has no senior diplomat or head of state in residence who would be in position at a moment’s notice to broker an agreement.

Washington stands to benefit by engaging Pyongyang with a full complement of diplomatic tools, as it did through sustained bilateral engagement with the Soviet Union throughout the Cold War. Recent evidence suggests that when the U.S. has communicated directly with North Korea-countering its long-standing isolationist policy—it has found positive results.

During the last two years of the Bush Administration, Christopher R. Hill, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian affairs, served as chief envoy

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4This is what happened in June 2009, in which the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1807, which placed further economic sanctions on North Korea and called for all UN-member states to stop any suspected arms transfers originating from the DPRK.
in the six-party talks aimed at dismantling North Korea’s nuclear program. Secretary Hill played a key role in direct bilateral negotiations and even made a surprise two-day visit to Pyongyang in June, 2007—the first (and only) high-level visit since Secretary of State Albright’s historic visit in 1998. By October 2007, Secretary Hill had personally brokered a deal in which Pyongyang promised to shut-down all of its nuclear program facilities in exchange for 950,000 metric tons of fuel oil or its equivalent in economic aid (Cooper 2007). After several hiccups, concrete action was finally undertaken a year later when, on October 2008, the Yongbyon facility was dismantled and international inspectors were permitted back on the site (Choe & Cooper 2008).

Although the tempo and mood of relations have changed dramatically since then, when institutionalized, diplomatic engagement with the DPRK has enabled the U.S. to convey its messages more clearly, and appears to have lessened tensions. Normalizing diplomatic relations with the DPRK can not only establish clearer communication, but also facilitate routine interactions between previous adversaries, and over time, cooperation.

The first step toward normalizing diplomatic relations calls for the establishment of a permanent U.S. liaison office in Pyongyang. While the details of such a move are subject to diplomatic discourse, one approach would be for Washington to dispatch a permanent U.S. envoy to the Swedish Embassy in Pyongyang, and for Pyongyang to dispatch a North Korean envoy to Washington. One potential North Korean diplomat who fits the bill is Mr. Pak Kil-Yon, who has served as Permanent Representative to the United Nations since 2001, and as ambassador to Canada since 2002.

The second step is for the U.S. to resolve the 1953 Armistice. The U.S. and North Korea are still technically in a state of war. The Korean War ceased hostilities in 1953, but never officially ended. The U.S. and DPRK are literally enemies, per the rules of engagement in a war that has never ceased. This complicates the lack of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries. Here, there may be the possibility that China can play the role of an important intermediary in bringing the two parties to the table, although it is unclear whether doing so would unnecessarily complicate the process of rapprochement.

Some may argue that normalizing diplomatic relations essentially amounts to appeasement—bringing to mind images of America at Munich some decades prior—we believe this analogy to be false. The U.S. dwarfs the DPRK by any tangible measure of power. Given the need for clearer and more open communications between adversaries for traditional models of deterrence to apply, a policy that gradually begins to establish more direct contact appears to be necessary, if not sufficient, first step.

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5On the promise of institutions, and the evolution of cooperation that they can promote, see Axelrod (1984), Keohane & Martin (1995), and Wendt (1992).
7 Smart Energy

Effective deterrence also requires palatable exit options: the ability for the adversary to withdraw from a situation. Given the DPRK’s ailing economy, a powerful exit option would be sustained energy independence, which would coincide with Pyongyang’s longstanding policy of juche, or self-reliance. By facilitating sustained, peaceful energy independence throughout the Korean peninsula, the U.S. can provide a way for the DPRK to refrain from selling illicit nuclear materials for cash and save face.

The intermittent six-party talks have stumbled on the issue of energy provision (Yardley & Sanger 2007). Pyongyang has insisted on energy delivery before complete denuclearization, regarding nuclear capability as the only bargaining chip that can bring the world to the negotiating table. Others have been reluctant to reprise the 1994 Agreed Framework, which allowed Pyongyang to convert much of its spent nuclear fuel into weaponizable material. Not addressing the economic incentive issues is an open invitation for yet another failed round, and any concluded nuclear deals continue to run the risk of reneging down the road.

One long-standing option for economic independence originates from President Eisenhower’s “Atoms for Peace” speech at the height of the Cold War (Eisenhower 1953). Eisenhower envisioned peaceful uses for nuclear technology, involving the transfer of technical know-how concerning nuclear energy production from existing nuclear states to non-nuclear states, in exchange for a commitment to relinquish indigenous efforts to develop such technology. The underlying motivation of the proposal was to discourage the possibility of nuclear weapons proliferation.

We argue instead that North Korea, which currently has no existing capabilities for nuclear energy generation, could host reactors that deliver energy to South Korea. This addresses two concomitant problems: (1) the fear experienced by the North that the South would threaten its energy independence if the reactors were in the South; and (2) the South’s need for assurance that the North not engage in weapons production.

Contrary to the more conventional proposal of locating reactors in the South for transmission of energy to the North, smart energy is more stable. Both North and South Korea have energy needs, but the South’s needs exceed its current generation capacity (Nuclear Energy 2004). While energy generation is possible in either country, the higher price of factor inputs in the South means that it is more economical to generate energy in the North. The North, despite of its cost advantages, does not possess sufficient capital to build additional nuclear power plants on its own.

In effect, each country faces a distinct set of choices. The South has to make its optimal decision on whether to make new investments in power plants located in the North, or to ramp up energy production in its existing plants (which may itself be subject to capacity constraints). The North would then...
be left to decide whether to devote its resources toward energy production or weapons development.

Given these parameters, it is possible to identify scenarios where the North does not find it in its interest to disrupt energy supplies to the South, and where the South is willing to pay the fixed costs of nuclear plant construction, in exchange for a discounted stream of energy supply from the North. The arrangement is one of energy codependency, which guarantees cooperation—hence, "smart energy."

Two conditions must be satisfied for smart energy to work. First, the share of energy produced by the North that is earmarked for delivery to the South should be modest. The amount of energy ultimately generated, of course, must be sufficient to meet its own needs, as well as have enough left over for transfer to the South.

If the North receives a small share of the energy pie, it may view the deal as unfair and renege. Second, the capacity for the North to produce nuclear weapons must be diminished. This is where advances in nuclear power plant design can make a difference. Recent work in compact liquid metal reactor technology offers promise of largely tamper-proof reactors (Fahlen, Kim & Lyles 2007). Importantly, even if the design fails to be completely foolproof, the ability to sufficiently raise the cost of acquiring nuclear raw material for the purposes of enrichment may be enough to deter such action in the first place. By lowering the cost of energy relative to weapons production, smart energy generates conditions that ensure that the system continues to operate as planned.

Smart energy sidesteps the chronic issues of energy aid to the DPRK. Nuclear energy production in North Korea substitutes weapons production with energy production. Thus, there is no immediate need for the delivery of alternative energy, since the plan would endow North Korea with the ability to choose the right amount of energy production to satisfy its needs. Smart energy also captures positive and negative inducements for North Korea to engage in sustained cooperation. If the DPRK is willing to subject itself to a regime of verifiable, international inspections, it will have the clear benefit of energy independence, coupled with indirect economic aid via foreign direct investment in nuclear power plants. However, reneging on this cooperative outcome yields the loss of future investment streams, and a tarnished reputation for future economic assistance.

We acknowledge that the political and security issues involved in such an approach are complex and multifaceted. Nonetheless we conclude that a smart policy approach that includes nuclear energy incentives is achievable. But the success of smart energy policy will depend upon enhanced diplomacy and a willingness among the members of the six-party talks to accept energy codependence along the Korean peninsula. The South currently has almost $1 billion invested in the construction of two light-water reactors located on North Korea’s eastern coast. While this project has been in limbo since late 2003-in part due to the opposition of the United States—there is clearly a precedent for Southern-sponsored civilian nuclear facilities hosted in the North. Since the heyday of Kim Dae Jung’s “sunshine policy,” south Korean venture capitalists have hired
40,000 North Koreans and pumped $40 million annually into the Kaesong Industrial Complex, just north of the DMZ. Economic cooperation may even build trust in other areas, and pave the way for eventual rapprochement.

8 Conclusion

The conceptual approach discussed in this paper was developed before the most recent strand of belligerent behavior by the North Korean regime. Though some adjustments to the approach might be needed, we conclude that a carefully nuanced Cold War model of deterrence should still operate as a useful strategy in dealing with the North Korean regime. To do so, the United States needs to set the stage in advance.

First, the United States needs to improve its capabilities to identify and track nuclear transfers by ramping up U.S. forensics attribution capabilities. Second, the U.S. should officially establish and enhance diplomatic ties with North Korea in order to improve communication lines. Third, the U.S. must provide assurances that regime change is not the goal. By helping establish energy codependency on the Korean peninsula, the U.S. can provide a sustainable exit strategy for North Korea as an alternative to the existing, tenuous, arrangement.

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7For example, in response to South Korea’s participation in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), Kim Jong-Il released a statement in May 2009 negating the validity of the ceasefire agreement ending the 1950–53 Korean War. This might present challenges to an approach that calls for the U.S. to resolve the armistice issue.


