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A REGIONAL DISCUSSION OF THE SIX-PARTY PROCESS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN NORTH KOREA

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C O N T E N T S

P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. PRITCHARD: Good afternoon. I'm Jack Pritchard, a visiting fellow here at the Brookings Institution. I'm also the co-chair of the National Committee on North Korea. I'll be your moderator for this afternoon's event. It's entitled, as you all have handouts, "A Regional Discussion of the Six-Party Process: Challenges and Opportunities in North Korea."

Today's event is a project of the National Committee on North Korea. It is a new organization, the National Committee. It's comprised of a nonpartisan coalition of individuals with extensive expertise and experience in dealing with North Korean issues. Now, there are several handouts in the back as you came in that explain more detail about this new organization. It has bios of our panelists here and about today's events. I invite you pick those up if you don't already have them.

This event, as I mentioned, is co-sponsored by the Brookings Institution and the Friends Committee on National Legislation. And I must mention that doing most of the work in getting today's activities under way, from the Friends Committee, is Karin Lee--and she's here someplace in the audience--and I appreciate that very much. But this event is being made possible by generous support by the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership. We are pleased that Mr. Greg Wong from the New York office of the center is here with us today. Greg, thanks very much for making the trip here.

The format for today's discussion will be an initial presentation by a distinguished U.S. government official. He will talk about the direction of the six-party process, the U.S. objectives about dealing with North Korea. We're going to have short Q&A session following that to take advantage of his presence here before his schedule

requires him to go back to his office and the grind of his duties. Then we'll move directly into our panel discussion. We have a very distinguished panel. As I mentioned, the bios are in front of you. I'll have something more to say about each of our panelists later.

First, let me introduce to you our featured speaker, our lead-off speaker today. He is, in my opinion, a true American patriot. He began his public service career as a noncommissioned officer in the United States Air Force in 1969. From there, he has gone directly up the hill as a career diplomat, serving in a number of challenging positions. Most recently he has been the director of Japanese Affairs at the State Department, director of Korean Affairs. He's been our deputy chief of mission in Seoul. He is the principal deputy assistant secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. And he has been, since the 1st of February, the acting assistant secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. He is a graduate of Princeton University, with honors. It is my distinct pleasure to introduce a man who speaks fluent Japanese, Chinese, Korean. But today, you're stuck; he'll be speaking in English.

Please welcome Evans Revere.

MR. REVERE: I'm glad Jack included the most important element of my bio, that I was an NCO in the Air Force. I learned some of my most important lessons being a sergeant in the ranks. It also helps you be humble in life.

Let me, right off the bat, in addition to thanking Jack for that very, very kind introduction, convey the regrets of Chris Hill, who was slated to be the main hitter here today. Because of some last-minute developments and the fact that he's literally just gotten off an airplane, he is unable to be here today. But he wanted me to convey to you his best wishes and his apologies for not being able to be here.

I realize as I'm standing here that I am a pinch-hitter. The thing that Jack did not mention is that I played baseball for about 12 or 13 years or so. I was always a much better pitcher than I was a hitter. So at the end of my presentation today, I will allow you to make the judgment as to how good a job I did as the pinch-batsman here.

But let me right off the bat thank the National Committee on North Korea, the Brookings Institution, the Friends Committee on National Legislation, and the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership for organizing this very important event there today.

It is really a pleasure to address this very distinguished gathering. I see many friendly and familiar faces out there, people I've worked with for many years. I appreciate your being here today. And it is also really an honor to be on the same program as the eminent panelists that you see before you, who will also speak today.

I look forward, as Jack said, to taking your questions after what I will characterize as a very brief presentation.

The task that Jack assigned me today was to describe the direction of the six-party talks and to speak about U.S. objectives for those talks. And I intend to do that. But in keeping with the main theme of this forum, I will also try to address what I see are the opportunities presented by the six-party talks and, in particular, the opportunities being provided by this process for the DPRK to break out of its growing international isolation.

As the title of this forum also indicates, we are facing some challenges as well as opportunities on the Korean Peninsula. In fact, the challenges that are facing us as we seek to secure true peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula are significant indeed. We were, of course, reminded of this recently, when Pyongyang issued what I

believe was a very unfortunate and troubling statement on February 10th. Yet, if the DPRK, if North Korea follows the path to the peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue that the U.S. and our allies and partners have laid out, the opportunities of the current situation that we're in are also great. The door is open for the DPRK, by addressing the concerns of the international community, to vastly improve the lives of its people, to enhance its own security, to normalize its relations with the United States and others, and in fact to raise its stature in the world.

Unfortunately, in my view, this is a reality and a prospect that the DPRK has yet to recognize. Instead, North Korea has taken steps that only isolate it further from the international community. As I said, on the 10th of February, North Korea issued a Foreign Ministry statement that, among other things, claimed that nuclear weapons are "for self-defense to cope with the Bush administration's ever more undisguised policy to isolate and stifle" the DPRK. It also said that "we are compelled to suspend our participation in the talks for an indefinite period" until the United States abandons its "hostile policy."

In this and other statements, the North Koreans have continued to mischaracterize U.S. policy toward the DPRK by their frequent references to this so-called hostility. One of my tasks today, rather than dwelling on what U.S. policy is not, is to try to convey to you what U.S. policy is. And in this connection, the most senior levels of my government have made very clear what our policy approach is toward the DPRK. The essence of that approach was spelled out by Secretary Rice, who said in her confirmation hearing just a few short weeks ago, "We have made clear to the North Korean regime that the president of the United States has said that the United States has no intention to attack North Korea, to invade North Korea, that multilateral security

assurances would be available to North Korea--to which the United States would be a party--if North Korea is prepared to give up its nuclear weapons program verifiably and irreversibly."

I invite you to contrast that statement with the rather puzzling rhetoric that Pyongyang has used to mischaracterize our approach and our policy. And for any in Pyongyang who are still having trouble understanding the essence of that approach, let me summarize it in even clearer terms: If the DPRK is prepared to abandon its nuclear weapons ambitions, the United States remains ready to work in the context of the six-party talks to resolve the issues between us.

DPRK rhetoric that it needs nuclear weapons because of an alleged hostile policy of this administration ignores, in my view, important historic reality. We know that the DPRK set out to acquire nuclear weapons decades ago. Our estimates have long suggested a North Korean nuclear weapons capability. And previous DPRK statements have hinted that they possess nuclear weapons, and thus the latest claim that you've heard is a troubling but not a surprising development.

I don't need to remind anyone here today that North Korea has not carried out its promises under the nonproliferation treaty. It failed to live up to its obligations under the 1994 Agreed Framework and violated its commitments to the Republic of Korea under the '91-'92 North-South Denuclearization Agreement. Pyongyang began to develop a covert program of uranium enrichment even while promising publicly that it would abandon the pursuit of nuclear weapons and live up to its international obligations. And, after three rounds of six-party talks designed to resolve the nuclear issue once and for all, the DPRK refused to return to negotiations and instead has escalated its rhetoric.

Let me just briefly describe what was on the table when the North Koreans left the table back in June of last year. The proposal that we put on the table was developed in close cooperation and coordination with our allies, the Republic of Korea and Japan. Under that proposal, North Korea would, as a first step, commit to dismantle all of its nuclear programs. The parties would then reach agreement on a detailed implementation plan requiring, at a minimum, the supervised disabling, dismantlement, and elimination of all nuclear-related facilities and materials; the removal of all nuclear weapons and weapons components, centrifuge and other nuclear parts, fissile material and fuel rods; and a long-term monitoring program would be put in place.

The proposal included a short initial preparatory period of perhaps some three months in length to prepare for the dismantlement and removal of the DPRK's nuclear programs. And during that initial period, the DPRK would provide a complete listing of all its nuclear activities and cease operations of all its nuclear activities. It would also permit the securing of all fissile material and the monitoring of all fuel rods. And it would permit the publicly disclosed and observable disablement of all nuclear weapons and weapons components and key centrifuge parts.

These actions by North Korea would be monitored subject to international verification. And for the DPRK's declaration to be credible and for the process to get started, the North would have to include its uranium enrichment program and existing weapons, as well as its plutonium-based program.

Under our proposal, as the DPRK carried out its commitments, the other parties would take some corresponding steps that would be provisional or temporary in nature and would only yield lasting benefits after dismantlement of the nuclear programs

had been completed. Upon agreement of the overall approach, including a DPRK agreement to dismantle all nuclear programs in a permanent, thorough, and transparent manner subject to effective verification, non-U.S. parties would also provide heavy fuel oil to the DPRK to meet its energy needs. And upon acceptance of the DPRK declaration, the other parties would provide provisional multilateral security assurances, which would become more enduring as the process proceeded.

You are probably familiar with some of the DPRK rhetoric on this issue. But that rhetoric notwithstanding, it is reasonable to conclude that security assurances given through the multilateral six-party process would have considerably more weight than bilateral assurances.

As part of this acceptance of a declaration, the other parties would also begin a study that would determine the energy requirements of the DPRK and how to meet them by non-nuclear energy programs. And they would also begin a discussion of steps necessary to lift remaining economic sanctions on the DPRK, and would also discuss the steps necessary for the removal of the DPRK from the list of state sponsors of terrorism.

As you will recall, the DPRK never responded formally to this proposal nor have the North Koreans sought to explore it through subsequent contacts since we presented it in Beijing last June.

Despite the North's unwillingness to re-engage, diplomatic contacts among the parties are continuing as we try to find a way forward and find a way to resolve the current impasse. As you know, Ambassador Chris Hill was recently nominated by President Bush to be the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. As the current ambassador to the Republic of Korea and head of our

delegation to the six-party talks, his nomination reaffirms, in our view, in a clear and demonstrable way our commitment to the talks.

You may have seen that Ambassador Hill traveled to Beijing recently for talks with the Chinese. He held talks in Seoul with our allies there as well. He met with Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei and met with ROK and Japanese officials, including during a visit to Japan just a couple of days ago, where he spoke with a number of senior Japanese government officials.

In addition, in highlighting the recent diplomacy, we saw late last month the visit to Pyongyang of Wang Jiarui, the chairman of the Chinese Communist Party International Department. He met with Kim Jong Il, and that visit reflected, in our view, the importance that China places on moving the process forward. We welcome this, of course, even as we continue to ask the PRC to do even more to urge the DPRK to return to the six-party talks.

You will recall that U.S. representatives also met with the North Koreans in New York twice late last year to reiterate our policy and to restate that we remain ready to resume the six-party talks at an early date, without any preconditions. And we urged them to return to the table at that time. We expressed our willingness to respond at the table to any questions the DPRK might have and indicated that we have questions for the DPRK about its proposal. We underscored that we are not prepared to negotiate conditions for a return to the table.

We have also discussed with North Korean counterparts the example of Libya, detailing the benefits that Libya is now receiving from its transformed behavior.

All five parties have sent a common message to the DPRK, a message that the six-party process provides the best mechanism for a peaceful resolution of the

current problem and for assistance with DPRK's integration within the region and, of course, within the international community.

The diplomacy--our diplomacy and that of others--has sought to drive home the message to Pyongyang that its brinkmanship and threats only lead to its further isolation in the international community. Statements from other parties have also encouraged the DPRK to return to the talks and abandon its nuclear ambitions. This individual and collective diplomacy has emphasized that the six-party talks provide a path towards a real solution to the nuclear issue. And as Secretary Rice said recently, the world has given North Korea a way out and we hope they will take that way out.

If the DPRK wishes to demonstrate its declared intent for a relationship based on cooperation and not conflict, and a relationship based on its membership in the international community, then it needs, as Secretary Rice pointed out, to return to the six-party talks and pursue the opportunity that this important forum represents. Multilateral diplomacy, in our view, is the most effective approach to the DPRK nuclear problem. The problem threatens the international community. This multilateral approach is also the best way, in our view, of marshaling the resources and the collective wisdom of the parties in a way that makes a permanent solution possible.

If the DPRK moves to dismantle its nuclear programs, multilateral efforts can provide opportunities for better lives for the people of the DPRK. Resolving the nuclear issue opens the door to improved relations with the United States. But obviously, there are other concerns that must be tackled as part of any such process: missile development and deployment, abductions and past support for terrorism, human rights violations and abuse of refugees, and ongoing illicit activities.

The key to the success of the six-party talks, in our view, has been cooperation. Other than the DPRK, all of the other parties in the six-party talks have reaffirmed their unqualified commitment to this important multilateral process, and each one of the five parties has an important stake in the success of this effort.

For our Japanese ally, Prime Minister Koizumi has expressed his determination to continue Japan's efforts to resolve nuclear and ballistic missile concerns and to normalize Japan-DPRK relations as well as to resolve outstanding questions concerning the abduction of Japanese nationals. As the world's second-largest economy, Japan would be positioned to contribute substantially to assistance programs and regional cooperation with the DPRK as part of an overall settlement.

China and Russia have repeatedly made clear they share the goal of a denuclearized Korean Peninsula. China has used its unique relationship and special access to reinforce the message that the six-party talks are the best vehicle for resolving the nuclear issue.

Our allies in the Republic of Korea recognize that a Korean Peninsula without nuclear weapons is critical to maintaining regional stability and to advancing prosperity and cooperation throughout East Asia, and resolving this concern should be the basis for, and not an obstacle to, improved North-South relations.

Faced with the views of its partners in this process, the DPRK, in my view, needs to understand that it has a choice. North Korea needs to understand that it is increasingly seen as an isolated and out-of-step country that is a threat to regional stability and a threat to peace and prosperity in a region where the trend has been in the opposite direction, that is, to greater democracy, growth, and regional cooperation. Democracy is strengthening throughout the Asia Pacific region. In the past year,

successful elections have taken place in old democracies, such as Japan and Australia; new ones, in Mongolia and Indonesia; and developing ones, such as Hong Kong.

Amid growing prosperity the region is moving toward greater economic openness, lower trade barriers, and regional cooperation and integration. The Asia Pacific region now accounts for over 25 percent of world production and about 23 percent of world trade. Income levels have doubled and redoubled almost everywhere in East Asia. East Asians increasingly look beyond their borders for markets, investment capital, higher education, and ideas. New security initiatives and frameworks through organizations like the ASEAN Regional Forum have accelerated regional cooperation on issues such as maritime security and emergency preparedness. And of course, the recent tsunami showed the region coming together to demonstrate its capacity to work in a cooperative and collective way.

North Korea's nuclear threat and self-generated isolation are clearly at odds with the region's overall trajectory towards cooperation and integration. The six-party talks provide a path back to the international community for the DPRK. It is within North Korea's power to achieve both integration into this dynamic region and a wholly transformed relationship with the United States.

Today I was asked to discuss the challenges and opportunities of the six-party process. I hope that my brief remarks have demonstrated the magnitude of the challenges, but also the promise of the opportunities. The road to peace on the Korean Peninsula leads through the six-party talks and it leads to a future in which the threat of nuclear weapons is gone forever and in which the people of the DPRK are finally able to reap the benefits of a normal relationship with the region and the world.

The path that the DPRK's leadership needs to take is very clear, in my view. I hope that they will have the wisdom to take it.

Thank you very much.

[Applause.]

MR. PRITCHARD: With those opening remarks, I would invite the audience to take advantage of the next several minutes while Secretary Revere will still be with us.

MR. REVERE: While my voice is still working.

MR. PRITCHARD: And your voice is still working. It's working very nicely, thank you. If there are questions, please raise your hand and I will try to get them in the order that I see them.

QUESTION: Nick Berry, Foreign Policy Forum.

The proposal you outline requires North Korea to completely disarm and have it verified before some very vague benefits might accrue. This would surprise the hell out of us that follow the issue whether they'd ever say yes. Why not, with the Chinese and the South Koreans, put on the table a peace treaty ending the Korean War, that includes recognition, that also includes a nonaggression pact, in return for a freeze by the North Koreans on their nuclear program and only to be consummated that it then becomes eliminated? This would provide initiative by the United States and some leadership, which seems to be lacking so far.

MR. REVERE: Thank you for the question. I don't accept the characterization of the phasing of the steps that you have stated in your question. The opening phase of this agreement that we proposed last year requires a commitment on the part of the DPRK to start the process. Then the process begins. And as the

commitment is fulfilled, we would fulfill our part of the deal in terms of providing certain benefits and signing on to certain agreements and understandings with the DPRK. I don't think anyone is asking the DPRK to completely disarm and open itself up and only then will the United States and other members of the six-party process begin the flow of benefits or begin reciprocal steps. That's not the explanation I provided you; that's not the explanation that we provided to the DPRK.

We are not seeking a freeze of this process. We are seeking an end to the DPRK's nuclear weapons program. We want to put in place a process that leads to the complete elimination of that process. Many of us who in the past had worked on negotiations with the DPRK and thought we had achieved some success in freezing their program under the Agreed Framework were more than a bit disappointed to find out that the North Koreans had a surreptitious program through uranium enrichment to develop nuclear weapons. So a freeze is not on, in our view. We need to go further than that. We need to seek the complete and total elimination of their nuclear weapons capability.

In terms of other steps that might be taken, I would like to think that the process of the resolution of the nuclear issue with North Korea could lead to other steps down the line, in which would could consider, perhaps, some of the things that you've thought about there. I think beginning with security guarantees would be a very important and critical confidence-building step on the way there. But I think leaping immediately to the areas that you've discussed is probably a bridge too far at this stage of the process. We need to get North Korea's nuclear programs ended in a credible, verifiable, and irreversible way. We need to build up confidence in this process as we do so. And as we move through this process, ultimately other things become possible.

QUESTION: Murray Hebert, Asian Wall Street Journal.

As you pointed out, the process seems a little stalled. The North Koreans haven't responded to the proposal that you spelled out that was put on the table in June. Secretary Rice is going to Asia next week. Can you tell us, is she going to bring some ideas of how to possibly jump-start the process and get North Korea back to the table?

MR. REVERE: Thank you. It's certainly stalled. We would like to get the process moving again. Our other partners in this process would like to get the process moving again. We have continued a very active dialogue with all of the other four parties in working together to develop a common approach to urge the DPRK to come back to the table. This issue will obviously be a critical priority for Secretary Rice. She will be meeting with senior officials and senior-level people in all three East Asian capitals that she'll be traveling to and she will have very intensive discussions with all of them to try to seek a way forward. She looks forward to those discussions. I wouldn't want to characterize anything that she might or might not be carrying at this point. I think it's appropriate to say that she's going out there determined to try to get the process restarted and she will be talking foreign ministerial and other counterparts to seek a way forward to do so.

QUESTION: Eric [inaudible], a consultant on East Asian security affairs.

Evans, North Koreans have hard words other than the ones that you cited, some of them spoken much more harshly. I wonder, in that vein, if we have heard even hints for more moderate or more rational, reasonable interlocutors from North Korea. Do we have any evidence of that? Is there hope there?

MR. REVERE: As someone who manages to get by in the Korean language, I am always entertained by some of the utterances that are directed at us, some of the colorful language that's used, and I have managed over the years to expand my

vocabulary considerably in Korean, thanks to some of the rhetoric that I've been privileged to hear.

We have, during some of our exchanges, had what I would describe as proper and civilized dialogue with counterparts, and we have talked through, as I said, the reiteration of our policy, provided them with a very clear understanding of what our policy is and what it's not. And in those conversations, without getting into the details of them, have heard back from those interlocutors things that are spoken sincerely, forthrightly, but certainly are nothing like some of the diatribes that you see on KCNA and other North Korean media.

So the answer to your question is, yes, we have heard from some of our interlocutors things that are somewhat calmer in tone and more productive in tone, but it still has not brought any sort of a result, unfortunately.

QUESTION: Ken Lieberthal, Brookings Institution.

Thank you very much for a very effective set of remarks. It leaves me with one question. The net effect of the current situation is that we are into a long-term process without an identifiable path to a conclusion of that process, given North Korea's position. While that process takes place, North Korea continues its plutonium program full bore. We know they know how to produce plutonium and are producing it now, we believe. That leaves us in a very bad situation--North Korea with an increasing nuclear capability, and we're all engaged in a six-party process that doesn't stop that.

The question is, therefore, why are we so reluctant to negotiate a freeze on the plutonium program as a first step toward the negotiation of a longer-term, more comprehensive effort to have complete and verifiable, irreversible removal of their entire nuclear program? President Bush has said in an age of terrorism we cannot afford to

have states such as North Korea with the capacity to potentially proliferate very dangerous materials, and they seem to be increasing that capacity under our current strategy.

MR. REVERE: Thank you, Ken. You've restated the goal of our effort, which is the complete elimination of their programs. Those of us who have been working on this issue question the ability to monitor and verify a freeze, and that's why we want to go all the way, because the negotiation, the amount of time and the amount of energy that you would devote putting into acquiring an agreement on a freeze that may or may not in fact be a freeze, if you will, because you don't know what's going on under the surface of North Korea, is probably not worth the effort. But the effort to eliminate their program, a negotiation of that sort, is, we believe, certainly possible and worth the effort. A freeze as an intermediate stage is something that people have talked about, but quite frankly, our approach is to focus on the end state that we seek, because we don't find that we have enough confidence in any ability to monitor a freeze, or a claimed freeze, by the DPRK.

Keep in mind that the Agreed Framework was in essence a freeze that was monitored for several years. And while we were watching the things that were under lock and key and frozen and being monitored by the IAEA, there were other activities going on. So what we're trying to achieve here is an agreement that goes beyond that, that gives the United States and the other partners in the international community the sense of comfort that we need that the entire program has been eliminated from the DPRK.

Your point is well taken that, as North Korea pauses, hopefully to come back to the table at some point, we are in a situation where they are continuing, in all

probability, their efforts to develop nuclear weapons. We don't find that a comforting thing, we find that a very serious thing, which is why we and other members of the international community have been pressing so hard for the North Koreans to come back to the table. And we hope they will listen to that. Ultimately, if they don't come back to the table, then obviously you have to think about alternative ways of bringing about the result that you seek. But our emphasis is on the diplomacy and we think that diplomacy can and must resolve this issue.

QUESTION: My name is Maria Angelica. I'm a visiting student at the American University.

You said the U.S. welcomes the continued dialogue between the Chinese and North Korea. I was wondering what kind of pressure or persuasion would the U.S. like to see China use in bringing North Korea back to the table.

MR. REVERE: Thank you. The instruments and the mechanisms and the modes that the PRC chooses to use to convince the DPRK to do the right thing are really a choice for the PRC. The Chinese have more influence over North Korea than any other country. Ultimately North Korea is an independent entity, an independent state and are very proud people. They don't like being squeezed or pushed or pressured. No country likes that. However, that being said, China has a greater ability because of its longstanding relationship, friendship and partnership and treaty relationship, with the DPRK to make a difference. How it chooses to do so is really up to the Chinese, but we continue, as I said in my remarks, to urge them to do everything that they can to bring about the result that we all seek.

QUESTION: I'm [inaudible] and I'm at the Chosun Daily News.

You mentioned today that the multilateral approach is the best way to resolve the North Korean nuclear issues. But recent statements from North Korea that there's a kind of possibility that North Korea would act something like a missile [inaudible]. In that case, do you still think six-party talk is the only way to solve the issues?

MR. REVERE: I think a multilateral process and the process that we've put in place is the best way to go. I saw the statements the other day by the North Koreans. They've made other references to missile moratoria, et cetera, in the past. And interestingly enough, as you know, North Korean missiles, at least at this point, are not capable of reaching the United States but they are capable of reaching all of North Korea's neighbors. That's one of the many reasons why we think other players should be at the table. Japan has concerns, South Korea has concerns, we think Russia and China have concerns about North Korean capabilities in the long run. This is a multilateral problem. It's a multilateral threat that North Korea is posing. North Korea's instability, the instability that North Korea and its actions might bring about is something that would affect all the players in the region. So it's not just a United States issue. We don't live in the neighborhood, so to speak, but others do. Millions of people live within range of North Korea missiles and could be harmed in the event that those systems or others are used.

So for this reason and more, I think, this is an issue that we all need to pull together on and this is an issue that we all need to work cooperatively on. And as I said, it's not just a matter of us all feeling the same threat; it's a matter of all of us being able to pool our resources and our assets in order to solve this problem. It's not just negatives, if you will. There's a positive element to this as well.

QUESTION: Thank you so much, Mr. Secretary. Good to see you here. My name is Masa Alter [ph], which Japanese [inaudible].

I would like to ask you the question on Dr. Rice's remarks, Dr. Rice's testimony on the Hill. You touched an the very positive side of her remarks. She emphasized the non-intention to invade and attack against the North Koreans. But you didn't touch on the other, negative side of her testimony. She clearly singled out North Korea as the outpost of tyranny. Why did she send such a very mixed signal during such a very delicate moment? Thank you.

MR. REVERE: I don't think it will come as a secret to anyone in this room about the nature of the North Korean regime, so I won't get into any further characterizations of it. Especially those of you who have had an opportunity to visit there, you know what we're dealing with here.

Much has been made of North Korean anger or irritation at certain words that have been used. But as I said earlier, if one were to go back and put together a compendium of the language that North Korea has used in characterizing the United States, Japan, South Korea, and others, it would shock most people in the room. There's been some fairly glowing, searing language that they've used in the past.

But getting back to United States rhetoric, it's very interesting that North Korea picks and chooses the things that it wants to be irritated about. I have just given you a rather lengthy list of things that if the North Koreans were inclined to come back to the table that they could point to and use as evidence of goodwill on the part of the United States. Yet time and again they have failed to do that. Both in this administration and previous administrations. We have made statements about our intentions towards North Korea, efforts to improve relations with the DPRK, talking

about a better future and better path that we could go down together in bringing North Korea into the international community. We've said these words publicly, we've said these words directly to the North Koreans. If they were inclined to come back to the table, they could pick any of these phrases and use that as the basis to come back to the talks. So selecting one phrase or one comment by them and using that as an excuse not to come to the table is quite frankly not on, in my view.

QUESTION: My name is Paul Wee, George Washington University.

Prior to the dissolution of the Soviet Union, some agreements, like the Helsinki Act on Security and Cooperation in Europe, especially in its so-called Basket 2 on confidence-building measures, allowed a great number of activities carried out by nongovernmental organizations, by churches and others, that really played a tremendous role in creating a climate that brought about major change. Now, there are groups, like the National Council of Churches and others, other NGOs, that have developed a large array of programs to build confidence, and many more are possible. But many of these programs, especially in agricultural development in the DPRK, come head-on into the Trade With the Enemy Act and they are stopped short, and the government has said no to these, although the DPRK has been quite open. Frankly, many more things are possible.

Would it not be possible to, in a phased lifting of the sanctions, to allow some of these confidence-building measures--trade, exchange, development--to take place?

MR. REVERE: If you will look back through the record of steps that have been taken over the years with respect to the DPRK by the United States, you will find that most of the economic sanctions that were in place at one time or another have

been removed. There are very few economically related sanctions on the DPRK at this point. There are a number of proliferation and other related sanctions. But the activities of the sort that you've described actually go on today. There are a number of U.S. NGOs that have worked in the DPRK over the years. I've been there many times. I've seen these people working, whether it's humanitarian food operations, whether it's providing medical care, et cetera. And over the years we have worked very cooperatively with many of these organizations to facilitate their work. I think NGOs have a role to play, a very positive role to play--have played a very positive role over the years. And whether it's in providing humanitarian assistance, medical care, agricultural advice and support, or in confidence-building, I think there's a role to be played for NGOs in this process.

QUESTION: Hello, my name is Conrad Chafee. I'm a graduate student at George Washington University.

I'd like to thank you very much for your remarks today. I think the whole world hopes that the DPRK does join the six-party talks. I know that I do. But there is a possibility that the DPRK will simply refuse to do so. In that case, you mentioned some alternative steps that we could take. Could you just expand on that a little bit?

MR. REVERE: Let's not.

[Laughter.]

MR. REVERE: Seriously, the focus is on diplomacy right now. This is the centerpiece of our effort right now. You never take any option off the table, when you're a negotiator, when you're dealing with such a hard case like this. But clearly, the president's focus, the secretary's focus, the administration's focus and the focus of our parties is on a diplomatic and peaceful resolution of this, and that's where it ought to be

at this point. Let us hope, as I said, that North Korea will have the wisdom to understand that this is the best way to fix this problem.

QUESTION: Paul Eckert from Reuters News Agency.

Despite the efforts of many South Korean diplomats, including some talented people probably sitting in this room today, when you read the remarks over time by the elected officials in Seoul--President Roh Mu Hyun, his unification minister--it's often hard to see the United States and South Korea on the same page with North Korea. Is that concern overblown, or do you think when push comes to shove Seoul and Washington are in accord on this one?

MR. REVERE: Yes.

[Laughter.]

MR. REVERE: Having worked this issue for a number of years and having worked very, very closely and cooperatively with our ROK allies, at every turn when push has come to shove, we are on the same page. The ROK, obviously, looks at this issue from a slightly different perspective. North Korea is on their border. The 23 million or so North Koreans live on their border. Those artillery pieces are pointed at Seoul and front-line ROK troops. The critical concern for many South Koreans is not so much a missile that can fly 1,500 kilometers or 3,000 kilometers, but an artillery shell or a short-range weapon that can fall on Uijeongbu or Seoul or places like that. So there's a slightly different perspective, obviously. The idea of a North Korean collapse is something that weighs very heavily on the minds of many South Koreans because not only of the chaos that it would create, if it were to happen violently, but the burden that it would impose on them economically and socially.

So of course South Koreans tend to look at this from a slightly different perspective, with a slightly different emphasis. But they are no less rigorous than we are in talking about the need for a non-nuclear Korean Peninsula. I remarked at a speech a couple of weeks ago that I remembered very well a comment that President Roh made on the eve of his inauguration and then paraphrased it in his inaugural address, in which he said North Korea has to choose between nuclear weapons and its economic survival. Those are very strong words. He has said some very powerful things about this issue.

Once again, our South Korean friends sometimes look at it through a slightly different lens, as you would understand, but they are with us in terms of the end state that we are seeking here, and we have been working very, very cooperatively and closely with elected and non-elected Korean officials.

MR. PRITCHARD: Evans, thank you very much.

Please join me in thanking Secretary Revere for his this morning.

MR. REVERE: Thank you very much.

[Applause.]

MR. PRITCHARD: This first segment of our panel has gotten off to a terrific start. I'm pleased with the quality of the questions from the audience. I invite you to stay with us as we continue on with the second part of the theme here. Representing the views from the countries involved, with a slight modification which I'll get to in just a second, we're going to go from your left to right, starting with our Chinese colleague, followed by Japanese, Korean, and we've invited a Russian to speak on behalf of the United Nations and their perspective.

But first in this panel is Jing Quan, who is a visiting fellow at the Center for Northeast Asia Policy Studies here at the Brookings Institution. He is the first

Chinese government official to participate in a CNAPS program, a career diplomat with the Chinese Foreign Ministry. We're very pleased that he's here with us. He graduated from Xian University in foreign studies in 1997, and soon thereafter joined the foreign ministry. Without further ado, I turn the stage over to Mr. Jing.

MR. JING: Thank you.

Altogether, I have six points.

First, it is well known that China's basic objectives in the North Korea nuclear issue are a nuclear-free peninsula, a peaceful solution, and stability. With regard to a nuclear-free peninsula, China shares the same objectives and interests with the United States. I don't think China has more independent information on North Korea's nuclear capabilities. But China's position is very clear, that is, any facilities related to nuclear weapons should be completely dismantled. With regard to a peaceful solution and stability, China shares more interests with South Korea. That is that the issue should be solved by negotiation and that there should be no economic sanctions, military options, or regime change.

Second, China will continue to facilitate the six-party talks with great enthusiasm. China tells North Korea very clearly that China opposes North Korea developing nuclear weapons. At the same time, China tells the United States very clearly that China wishes to solve the issue by peaceful means. North Korea and the United States are the two major parties and hold the key on this issue. Only if these two major parties show more sincerity and flexibility can there be a way to solve the issue eventually.

North Korea is also willing to reform and develop its economy, but it needs security guarantee and normalization with the United States. Now the major

problem is still the deep mistrust between North Korea and the United States. Whether the United States has intention to attack North Korea or not, hearing the rhetoric, such as "axis of evil," "regime change," "outpost of tyranny," et cetera, North Korea can only feel being threatened by the United States. Therefore, security guarantee is still their biggest concern. However, it is only at the six-party negotiating table that North Korea can get security assurance and economic aid.

Many observers in China believe it is not North Korea but the United States that is blocking a peaceful settlement by refusing to engage in serious dialogue and focusing on a regime change or collapse. Now North Korea has already shown they are willing to return to the six-party talks and needs more carrots from the United States. If the United States can afford more flexibility and treat North Korea with more respect, the six-party talks will resume sooner or later and it may have some concrete results.

Third, the United States and other nations certainly take it for granted that China could do more to pressure North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions. American observers may overestimate China's influence over North Korea. China's influence is based on the traditional friendly relations with North Korea, but China is not in a position to direct North Korea. And even if China does so, North Korea may not listen. It is true that China provides energy and food supplies to North Korea, but China's experience with North Korea over the past decades tells that sanctions and coercive pressures can only have a counter-productive impact. American analysis of China's changing approach to North Korea tends to focus on the nuclear crisis and the strategic consequences it poses for China, but the Chinese often place more emphasis on North Korea's domestic instability and its impact on China's own interests. Chinese believe that outside pressure is unlikely to force North Korea to change its nuclear

policies and that it might destabilize the situation by driving Pyongyang to desperate measures or by causing the regime to collapse. If China really sides with the United States in a with-us-or-against us approach, it might lose its ability to persuade the North.

Finally, many Chinese would have difficulty accepting that their government helps the United States, the biggest obstacle to China's reunification process, to coercively pressure North Korea, a country for which so many Chinese soldiers spilled their blood. Currently China is kind of stuck in the middle at the six-party talks. No matter how hard China has tried, the United States thinks China has not done enough to pressure North Korea. On the other hand, North Korea is always suspicious that China is taking sides with the United States to the detriment of North Korea's national interests. If the United States can put a package on the table that China believes is sufficient to ask Pyongyang to accept, I think, personally, China may be more willing to use its influence over North Korea.

Fourth, China's North Korea strategy has undergone great change due to China's deep integration into world affairs over the past 20 years and its consequent responsibilities as a great power. Nowadays, China's relations with North Korea can be summarized as: First, inheriting tradition--that is, to cherish and take care of the tradition and let it be further expanded; second, facing the future--let the traditional ties keep abreast of the times, peace and development, so as to assure utility and vigor of the relations; third, good neighborliness and friendship--understanding and mutual support from the two countries, attaching importance to the issues that concern both of them; fourth, strengthening cooperation--to explore the way to deepening and expansion of cooperation, rendering cooperation more diversified. North Korea has started economic reform, and there has been some progress, but not so much. In the long run, China's

priority is to encourage North Korea to reform its economy and open to the outside world, integrate with the South without changing the reality on the ground in the North.

Fifth, the United States suggests that the six-party talks can be further developed to institutionalized security and economic fora that can better serve the peace, stability, and development in Northeast Asia. The United States, China, and the other countries really need such regional fora, where they can reduce strategic mistrust and improve security cooperation. But one suspicion China may have is that the United States might play a dominating role in such a forum. From China's perspective, North Korea should not be excluded from this forum. Certainly the priority is to solve the nuclear issue. Human rights, energy, and other issues should be discussed a little; otherwise, it can only complicate the situation.

Sixth, solving the North Korea nuclear issue provides a strategic basis for the development of U.S.-China relations. On the other hand, any setbacks and turbulence in U.S.-China relations may affect the two countries' cooperation and coordination on the regional and security issues. Officially China has never linked the Taiwan issue with the North Korean nuclear issue, but the Taiwan issue is the most important and sensitive issue in U.S.-China relations. This year, Taiwan's Legislative Yuan might approve the arms purchase budget and Taiwan is going to start the process of constitutional reform, which China, Mainland China, considers a virtual step toward legal independence. I'm not sure whether the Taiwan issue may have some impact on the North Korea nuclear issue, but we should pay attention to it and watch closely.

Thank you.

MR. PRITCHARD: Thanks very much. What we're going to do is go through each of our panelists first, to give you a sense of the region as a whole and the U.N. perspective, then I'll open it up again for questions.

Next I would like to call on Dr. Masao Okonogi. He is a professor at the Department of Political Science at Keio University, where he got his doctorate. He was the director for the Center of Asian Studies at the Keio University from 1995 to 1999. And you take a look at his bio, he is a recognized expert on virtually all matters doing with the Korean Peninsula. So with that, let me turn to Dr. Okonogi. Thank you, sir.

MR. OKONOGI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is indeed a great honor to be invited to speak on recent Korean developments on this prestigious occasion.

On the February 10th North Korean Foreign Ministry statement, at present there seem to be two possible mutually non-exclusive interpretations of these claims. The first is as follows: Having anticipated what the Bush administration would have in its policy toward North Korea in its second term in office, Korea has launched a new diplomatic offensive by making the first move. Despite President Bush's relatively moderate speech, North Korea feels threatened. Given the departure of Powell, the former secretary of state, together with new Secretary of State Rice's "outpost of tyranny" remarks, and the visit to Japan, Korea, China by Michael Green, the senior director for Asia on the United States National Security Council, North Korea's remarks about taking measures to increase its nuclear arsenal may indicate that Pyongyang intends stopping its 5-megawatt reactor at the proper time this year and reprocessing the 8,000 spent nuclear fuel rods. If the United States refuses to agree to direct talks, North Korea aims to make it an established fact that it has developed nuclear weapons also,

despite China's attempts at persuasion. It is clear that North Korea is unlikely to join the six-party talks unless it is generously compensated.

The second interpretation is that the North Korean move is merely gamesmanship and the threat to increase its nuclear arsenal is only an [inaudible] action or offering skirmish before the six-party talks. Indeed, if the February 10th statement were a declaration of nuclear position, it would have to come from the ministry a different statement and not from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Clearly, North Korea's goal is to have direct talks with the United States; hence, it's clearly the preconditions before the six-party talks. As for the timing, North Korea aims not only to give psychological shape-up to Japan, the United States, and South Korea, but also to check China's tilt towards the United States before visiting Pyongyang of Wang Jiarui, head of the international liaison department of the Central Committee of China's Communist Party. Nevertheless, by using the phrase "the suspension of participation for an indefinite period," North Korea does not rule out the possibility of using the framework of the six-party talks, which indicates that it will probably return to them sooner or later.

In the end, it is probably immaterial which of these two interpretations you like, because North Korea has already been implementing this nuclear development plan while using it for diplomatic means. In other words, North Korea's development of nuclear weapons and diplomacy have been two sides of the same coin. North Korea's diplomatic priority is, first, to refuse the Libyan method, to have direct U.S.-North Korean negotiation, and finally to return to the Framework Agreement of the Clinton administration era. So one could imagine that if the United States would just promise direct negotiation with North Korea, North Korea would resume the six-party talks and [inaudible] plans for reprocessing the spent nuclear fuel. However, this is easier said

than done, given that negotiation with North Korea was debated during the recent presidential campaign and it has become a bone of contention for the administration since its inauguration. It would now be very difficult for President Bush and Secretary Rice to back down and change their position from non-negotiation.

Regarding the development of nuclear weapons, although the wording used by North Korea was harsher than ever, 8,000 spent nuclear fuel rods have already been reprocessed. For nuclear superpowers like the U.S., China, and Russia, their practical meaning is not so [inaudible]. What the United States is most concerned about is the transfer of nuclear materials abroad. On the other hand, the situation for Japan is very different. If North Korea stops running its nuclear reactor again and if they reopen this reprocessing facility, it will be able to acquire sufficient plutonium to produce a dozen nuclear weapons. This will be a very serious situation for Japan, located within range of North Korea's northern missile and possessing no nuclear weapon of its own.

So what is likely to happen in the future? First, the parties concerned will try to pressure North Korea to return to the talks. And despite the visit to Pyongyang by Wang Jiarui, this is likely to take some time. To date, pressure from the Chinese has not brought about a quick remedy. If China cannot pressure North Korea to cooperate, the five remaining countries in the six-party talks will no doubt consider taking joint action. If the five countries can cooperate, they will be able to bring pressure to bear on North Korea. If they cannot, it will definitely work to North Korea's advantage. If the five ask North Korea to return to the talks but North Korea refuses, the nuclear issue will then be referred to the United Nations Security Council and economic sanctions will be discussed, putting China in a very difficult position. Given the criticism it will receive from the global community, China may not be able to veto such a measure.

The introduction of sanctions will also make things extremely difficult for the South Korean government, as it would now face real threat from North Korea as well a surge of resistance among nationalists at home. South Korean public opinion may be deeply divided over the suspension of humanitarian support to North Korea, and anti-United States demonstrations will occur among supporters of President Roh. Just as Roh Mu Hyun's administration had no choice about dispatching troops to Iraq, the present South Korean government will have no alternative but to take part in any action initiated by the United States.

In the process, however, it is possible Seoul, along with Beijing and Moscow, would request the United States to accept face-to-face talks with North Korea as a kind of compromise by maintaining the framework of the six-party talks. Of course, North Korea is unlikely to surrender quietly even if its nuclear machinations are referred to the United Nations Security Council. On the contrary, tense situations are expected to occur, such as military provocation off the Korean west coast and missile launching experiments. On the other hand, China and South Korea do not want North Korea's system to collapse, and so it is possible that North Korea will take advantage of this and resume North-South talks to obtain economic support from South Korea. It is also unknown how much China will cooperate with economic sanctions.

The Japanese position in all of this is extremely delicate. For Japan, the freezing of the development of a nuclear weapon during the Clinton era was good enough. At that time, the North Koreans had acquired plutonium for only one or two A-bombs. Now they have enough for six or seven. Moreover, at a time when the other countries were calling for the resumption of the six-party talks, it is difficult for Japan to implement unilateral economic sanctions over the issue of the abductions. However,

whether we like it or not, if North Korea does not resume the six-party talks and if the nuclear issue is taken to the United Nations Security Council, Japan has no alternative but to go along with the full-scale economic sanctions, including trade, remittance prohibition. Indeed, considering the antagonistic public response to the North Korea abduction issue, it would be impossible for the government to do otherwise.

Thank you so much for your attention.

MR. PRITCHARD: Thanks very much, Dr. Okonogi. Just as a point of clarification for those of you that are not nuclear experts, what Dr. Okonogi was referring to, currently the North Koreans are operating a 5-megawatt reactor, a nuclear reactor, at Yongbyon. It's been running since January of 2003. Most estimates indicate that the fuel that you put in, after one year's worth of cooking, if you will, there's enough plutonium in that fuel that will become spent fuel to create one more nuclear weapon's worth of plutonium. But you have to stop, you have to shut down the reactor, you have to pull the fuel out and reprocess it. So theoretically it's been running for two years now. One of the positions that Dr. Okonogi was referring to, a concern that if the North Koreans shut it down now, they could extract two years' worth of spent fuel, reprocess it, and add to their arsenal at this point another two bombs' worth of nuclear material. So just as a point of clarification.

With that, let me turn a fellow Brookings person here, Dr. Park Kun Young. He is also a visiting fellow at the Center for Northeast Asia Policy Studies, CNAPS. He is working on--and I need to let you know this because he is also--I read a draft of one of his new papers and I'm waiting for it to be completed and published. I think you will enjoy it as well as I did. But he is working on the policy

recommendations for resolution of the North Korean nuclear dispute and a study of the readjustment of the U.S.-ROK alliance. You're going to find that extremely fascinating.

What he is involved with now, in addition to his CNAPS visiting fellowship here, he is a professor at the Catholic University, he is an expert advisor to the Korean National Security Council, and he's a member of a consultative committee of the Ministry of Unification. So we are extraordinarily pleased and honored to have him with us today. With that, I'll turn the floor over to Dr. Park.

MR. PARK: Thank you, Jack. I thank sponsors and organizers for this wonderful event.

I've been asked to comment on the six-party talks from the Korean perspective. As you all know, there are two Koreas, but one Korea is missing today. That Korea is the one that we all need to persuade to give up its nuclear programs. And that Korea is the one that we all need to listen to to solve these nuclear disputes. So what I'm going to do today is try to play a dual role of conveying the two perspectives, to the best of my knowledge and capability.

I'm going to be talking briefly about two things, because of the time constraints. One is that if the United States is serious and sincere in its desire to solve the problem, I would ask please do not use inflammatory words toward Kim Jong Il. There is no power struggle in North Korea. Kim Jong Il rules North Korea with absolute power. That's for sure. But it seems to me that there is a struggle over policy between technocrats and the military and intelligence community. Suppose that you are a moderate and pro-negotiation element of the Kim Jong Il regime and that Kim Jong Il has just recently heard that Ms. Rice, a very influential person in the second Bush administration, said Kim Jong Il is a tyrant. And a couple of weeks later, the president

of the United States said the central and ultimate goal of his second administration foreign policy is to remove tyrannies around the world. Suppose you are the moderate. How can you ask Kim Jong Il to send a North Korean delegation to the negotiating talks? If you dare to think about that, that means that you're not within the elite group of Kim Jong Il. You might have to end up in prison in North Korea.

So I think if the United States is interested in solving this problem, please do not use inflammatory words to North Korea. Secretary Revere, before he left, mentioned that North Korea chooses the words that irritate North Korea, and they use that as a pretext for refusing to come to the negotiating table. That's right. But what I'm trying to say is that those kinds of mixed signals create confusion not only in North Korea but also in other countries that are participating in the talks. So that's what I want to emphasize.

Many of us know that Washington is like the lodestar around which all North Korea's international interactions revolve. The foreign policy of North Korea is its U.S. policy. The United States is a large country. It has many nations to manage relations with. And the United States is trying to deal with crises around the world. But North Korea is not like that. They are very, very attentive what the U.S. government officials say about them. So I think this is relatively not known to Americans. It is not a substantive issue, but it is substantially important for moderates in North Korea.

Second thing I want to talk about today is that the United States should remove ambiguities about North Korea's uranium enrichment program. We all know that the U.S. announcement in October 2002 that North Korea had admitted to possessing the highly enriched uranium program started the second nuclear crisis on the peninsula. North Korea denies the existence of such a program in its territory. The U.S.

claims to have "a wealth of clear and compelling evidence" about the program. And most recently, the U.S. was reported to have passed to China classified packets of data intended to convince the Chinese that the North has two weapons programs under way. However, the Chinese foreign minister, Li Zhaoxing, expressed doubts last Sunday about the quality of American intelligence on North Korea's nuclear programs. I don't think the Chinese are challenging the integrity of the U.S. assessment. And I think South Korea understands and supports the U.S. position on this issue.

But what needs to be done, from their perspective, is to define the notion of the uranium enrichment program, in other words in a more concrete way, because if it is at an R&D stage rather than a full-fledged one, the solution of the problem is much easier. If it turns out that what North Korea has is at its R&D stage, the U.S. and other participants will have a right to request that North Korea remove the material, since the North's possession of the material violates at least the spirit of the Agreed Framework and other agreements. North Korea may demand compensation for the removal of such material. But this problem is much easier to solve. I'm positive that other parties to the talks will be more than willing to be cooperative in resolving that smaller issue.

I know there are some reasons why the United States is reluctant to publicly share the information on North Korea uranium enrichment program with other nations, including North Korea. But I think that a bold decision on the part of the United States will bring great and fundamental and substantive benefits to the U.S. and peace-loving countries throughout the world, including South Korea--the nation one of the former U.S. ambassadors to South Korea has called the best equipped and most qualified to be America's most significant Asian ally over the long term.

I have some other things to talk about, but because we are under a time constraint, I will be ready to address questions raised.

MR. PRITCHARD: Thank you, Dr. Park. I appreciate that very much.

Dr. Park indicated that he was going to try to play a dual role here, to give you a perspective from the North Korean point of view and from a South Korean point of view. And clearly, if we're talking about a six-party process, and you count the number of chairs and you exclude the moderator here, we are in fact missing a chair. It is most difficult to arrange for a North Korean to participate in a panel discussion such as this in Washington. Now, that didn't stop us from at least inviting the North Koreans, if nothing else, to submit a statement that we would be happy to share if they chose to do that. And if I had it, I'd read it, but since they didn't provide it, I won't. But just to tell you, we attempted to play as even-handed a role as we could.

With that, let me move on to our final distinguished panelist, Aleksandr Ilitchev. He is the senior advisor to the personal envoy of the United Nations secretary general for the Korean Peninsula. He's been that since January of 2003, a little over two years ago. He also is the senior officer with the Division of Asia and the Pacific, the Department of Political Affairs at the United Nations, and he's been doing that since 1997. A graduate of Moscow State Institute for International Relations, he holds a masters degree there. While he was assigned to the embassy here in Washington, he claimed Brookings as his second home as he did some studies working toward a doctorate then. He is a career diplomat, having served from 1984 through 1992 in a variety of different assignments, to include one in which he was the personal assistant to Foreign Minister Edouard Schevernadze from 1986 to 1990. With that, I will turn the floor over to Aleksandr Ilitchev.

MR. ILITCHEV: Thank you. Thank you, Ambassador. I really feel good to be in this place because I will not hide from you now that, although it was a quarter of a century ago, I met here the people like Michael McGuire [ph], Tom McNoy [ph], Johnston Brenner [ph], and many others, from whom I learned that you have to think, you really have to think, especially when you deal with serious challenges and issues. And that helped a lot, and it has direct relevance to what we are discussing today.

I am grateful for the opportunity to present a perspective of the United Nations, but not as an organization, because it does not exist. Member states are involved in addressing this, what we believe is a unique set of challenges in today's world, probably the most complicated one, on their own, although things brought in a multilateral setting. I am going to talk with you about the specific perspective of the secretary general of the United Nations, because we don't have on this occasion any specific mandate for the Security Council, the General Assembly. The secretary general is exercising his right and duty in this case to try to be of help in a preventive mode.

Just a couple of words to remind what all of us know. This situation and this set of issues was not born yesterday or day before yesterday. This is a case of the only unresolved major conflict of the cold war. And the business that ended in '53 with the armistice agreement was never brought to an end. So it should not surprise that this problem was there all the time. It had its heights and tensions and downs, et cetera, but unfortunately, as the current events show, it had its very intense internal dynamics. And today, the most particular aspect of the dynamics of the situation -- the nuclear one.

I will not hide from you that the international community does not have a ready answer how to resolve this particular situation. The answer simply does not exist.

It has to be found, it has to be built, it has to be constructed. And it has to be done on a collective, joint basis. This is what has been happening since early 2003, when the secretary general decided to intervene into this situation, with tensions starting to rise, which culminated in January 2003 with the first-ever withdrawal of a member party from the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, when the party to that treaty invoked a specific article which cited that right if the party felt that its highest national interests were threatened.

And this is where we are. Now we have a formal claim by the DPRK that they possess nuclear weapons. But at the same time, we have another unique aspect, that this particular country, unlike any other acknowledged nuclear power or a nuclear power de facto, like India, Pakistan, or Israel, this is the only country that publicly states its willingness to give up its nuclear weapon capacity, provided--and then they list a number of conditions or specify the circumstances under which they would implement the goal, as they say, of eventual denuclearization of the peninsula. So this is the good part.

There are other good things, and one of them is--and I believe that the secretary general directly and through his personal envoy, one of the most remarkable people I have had to work with, Morris Strong, a Canadian businessman, but absolutely committed and devoted to the United Nations and multilateralism. [Inaudible.] When we first met, he said, "Aleksandr, I asked the secretary general that for this particular assignment I will need the best. He promised me. Instead, they gave me you." I said, "Ha, I'm sorry. Let's try doing it." The second thing he said, This situation--he said, "You are a U.N. staff, but I am not. And you should not be surprised that we will try to do some things in a non-U.N. way. Because the moment we begin to follow your rules

and regulations, we will not get anywhere." He said it in a joking way, but this is really to confirm that this is a person, like Kofi Annan, I must say, who, when they're committed to something, they're open to ideas, they give everything they can to achieving the result and objective.

Our objective is very simple. This particular situation in the Korean Peninsula does threaten regional peace and security, and maybe more than that under the worst-case scenario. The good part from the U.N. perspective is that, as a result of the efforts by the countries concerned--and I hope we were able to contribute somewhat to it--we have a multilateral diplomatic framework to address these issues. These six-party talks, for me as a professional diplomat in my previous life, is a huge accomplishment and achievement. And I think we should really focus on the positive aspects of this situation, including the absolutely rightful role of China.

These multilateral talks, we are able--this is the second good part--to make some progress, to the stage when the two main parties to the situation exchanged their proposals. The process also was able to achieve sort of a common understanding that the way to go to a consensus among all the six parties--and this is what is driving us at the U.N. and the secretary general, Kofi Annan--is our absolute commitment to nuclear nonproliferation. This is the foundation which is shared by all the six parties participating in the six-party talks. No to nuclear weapons in the peninsula.

I wish there were more consensus and points of agreement. And this probably--the lack of those is probably one of the main reasons why the process has stalled. And it didn't happen yesterday. It didn't happen on the day of February 10th when DPRK made the announcement of suspending their participation and claiming to have nuclear weapons at once. So basically, in our interpretation, DPRK is not satisfied

with the process which, in their view, does not promise to lead to the results they're looking for. The way we understand what they're looking for--clear outline of the circumstances and other things for which they will give up eventually their nuclear capacity.

So they are just trying, in our view, to force, to induce other participants to review what is it that's missing in these six-party talks, what is it that is preventing them from moving forward, despite the hard efforts? We know it first-hand because we are trying to be as close as possible with all the six governments, particularly with China. We know how hard the people are working. The best people in Beijing, in Washington, in Seoul, in Tokyo, in Moscow are dedicated to this challenge. There is no question in my mind. But the fact is the progress is not as much as all of us want it to be. So there must be reasons to be reviewed, at least, and some answers have to be sought: what is it that is missing, what is it that probably should be done differently in order to move ahead?

We at the United Nations Secretariat believe that this, what we call the Beijing process, because the six-party talks is the visible part of it, but given the stakes and the situation we are dealing with, these six-party talks need as wide a support internationally as possible. And this is another reason the secretary general is doing everything we can in a very quiet, low-profile manner, but very intensively, trying to do whatever we can--talking to other people, talking to the parties, listening to them, and so on and so forth.

There is no alternative to the diplomatic approach, the diplomatic approach that would bring, after the talks resume, as we believe they will, that will bring a meaningful negotiating process. North Koreans are not using the term "talks," and I'm

glad that the new head of the U.S. delegation, and hopefully the new assistant secretary of state for Asian affairs, is making this focus these days in his public pronouncements that the administration will focus on negotiating within the six-party talks. Because for diplomats, we know the term "agreement." If you are going to negotiate an agreement, it has a lot of connotations. It means that your concerns have to be addressed -- but also the concerns and interests of the other party--in this case, parties.

It's true that there are two main parties to the story who have already sort of demonstrated that they can block any progress and settlement. It's true that only Pyongyang and Washington can resolve and must resolve, will have to resolve, certain issues. But it's also obvious that this situation goes beyond the bilateral format, that if you really are looking for a durable peace and security in this part of the world, you must have other regional actors there. And thank God, we have them, the governments.

I will not let you know what I think, whether other five participants in the six-party talks, other than DPRK, have done their homework well. But today's presentations by the assistant secretary, the brilliant presentation, I would say, of our Chinese colleague, and the others, already should demonstrate to you in how many ways the countries involved see the situations in different ways. Differently. It may look like small things, but in this case you really have to work hard to work out together how you will get to this one nuclear-free Korean Peninsula. It's easy to say things, but this is the challenge that you will be able to resolve step-by-step only. And it requires as much support as possible, and this is what we are going to continue doing, in absolute close contact and consultation with all the six parties, including DPRK.

We are optimistic, I will not hide from you. We are optimistic not only because this approach does not have an alternative to the maybe disappointment and the

skeptics and the cynics who are plenty everywhere and who, I believe, have a very strong case. Unfortunately, skepticism here does not provide an answer. I wish. But the lessons that we learned as a result of several recent years that there is no other approach to promise the solution all of us are looking for. So we have no choice but to focus on this particular approach.

I will not even mention here how complicated this situation is, but we are lucky to have inter-Korean dimension. There is change going on in North Korea, there is no question about it. Some people are in denial or in their own interpretation of it. But we know for a fact that their leadership is trying to find the way out of the situation they're in. They are going for economic reform. We want this reform to be meaningful so that it would really work. It would help to prepare North Korea for their eventual and unavoidable integration into the global economy and international community. And frankly, they want it. They ask us often, help us with this. Because so far, with all these talks, visit, contacts, discussions, things are not connecting yet. But they will. They will. And that is why I appreciate so much the interest of all of you in this particular set of issues.

Thank you.

MR. PRITCHARD: Aleksandr, thank you very much. Thanks to each of our panelists. We have a few minutes for questions. At the conclusion of that, I would invite all of you to join us in the Zilkha Room off to your right for a short reception there. But at this time, let me open up the floor to continue the questions. We had some excellent ones after Secretary Revere's remarks.

QUESTION: Dan Horner from McGraw-Hill Nuclear Publications.

I would like to ask all the panelists, and Ambassador Pritchard as well if he cares to take the question, under what conditions would it be wise to complete the two nuclear reactors that have been started at the Kumho site in North Korea. And if the answer is "under no conditions," should KEDO be disbanded?

MR. PRITCHARD: Why don't I go ahead and jump in on that one. In my former life as U.S. representative to KEDO, I've got a little bit of stake in this. I've done some testifying before Congress this past summer on that issue.

If you've had an opportunity to visit Kumho and take a look at an extraordinarily professional development of two nuclear reactors, one of which is about 70 percent complete, the project has been suspended for about a year and a half now, meaning that the only work going on is maintenance, preserving what is there. And I'll try not to speak from the U.S. government point of view, but I will give you my impression of the U.S. government point of view, and that is there is little likelihood that the U.S. would support the continued development of nuclear technologies that would go into this that require U.S. licensing, that has to go before the U.S. Congress.

But I for one see the Kumho site as part of an overall solution, part of an energy package that at the end of the day you have--thinking out of the box, as an example--one of two things occurring. One, either it is a project that is completed but under the control and supervision of the ROK, with the electricity being generated, being provided to the North Koreans, or ultimately being preserved to one day at a point in time--and you pick the time--when there is in point of fact a reunified peninsula in which the electrical needs of the ROK are generated through this particular completion of project there. I think it would be a mistake to simply declare the project dead because of the likelihood that the U.S. government would not approve the current policy and plan to

provide the [inaudible] to the North Koreans. There is some cost involved. That's not the only reason. But I think there is some creative thinking that needs to be done before you abandon that project altogether.

With that, I would open it to anyone else that would like to respond to the question. Anyone else on the panel?

Well, then, I apologize for dominating that question. We'll move on to something else and I'll not respond.

QUESTION: My name is [inaudible]. I'm a graduate student at George Washington University.

China has been quite reluctant to exerting any pressure--or lack of, which it asserts, that there isn't much--on North Korea on the nuclear issue. Do you foresee a situation where the Chinese government would draw a line, so to speak, and exert more, quote-unquote, stronger diplomacy, say, for example, verifiably North Korea declaring a nuclear power?

MR. JING: Just now I mentioned that most people argue that China has not played a real pressure, has not pressured North Korea enough to give up its nuclear facilities or nuclear weapons. But I think the influence is overestimated due to--you know, maybe China has some real leverage over North Korea, but the leverage is pretty limited, as I just now mentioned. Just the domestic dynamics, because of Chinese--you know, the emphasis of China on the nuclear issue. China represents a [inaudible] stability. Of course, the primary--China has the objective of a free nuclear peninsula, but, you know, China fears now, is so much frightened by the nuclear weapons as much as the United States. But if China wished to play more pressure to North Korea, China has to--some people say to China, you know, cut off the food and oil supply to North

Korea. But that would be maybe for some counterproductive results. Any disorder or collapse of the regime is the last thing China would wish to see.

So just now I also mentioned if the United States can really put forward a kind of package of the solution on the table which China believes is sufficient to squeeze or require Pyongyang to accept that package, I think under these circumstances China may be willing to play a more important role and be more willing to use its leverage over Pyongyang to persuade Pyongyang to accept that package.

QUESTION: I'm Joe Winder with the Korea Economic Institute. I'd like to follow up on that question, if I might, and ask if China expects the United States to be more forthcoming before the talks resume, or is China prepared to accept Secretary Rice, the consistent position of the U.S. government, that it's willing to be very forthcoming once the talks resume, that there's lots of room for negotiation, that there are packages on the table, let's sit down and talk about them. Is China prepared to accept that and push North Korea to go back to the table and begin the process, or is China insisting that the United States negotiate with itself and put something else on the table before putting any more pressure in North Korea?

MR. JING: I think in China, you know, China's role is to facilitate and mediate the six-party talks. And from the Chinese perspective, the two major parties involved are the United States and North Korea. And the solution depends on the North Korean and the United States attitudes. If the United States puts forward some package solution, then China has to see the response from North Korea. And to say that China, of course, will have its own judgment. Whether this package solution will be sufficient or whether it's rational or reasonable, China will have its own judgment. If China can accept that one, I think China will play a more important role to persuade North Korea to

accept that one. And if North Korea does not accept that one, I think China and the other parties can cooperate and may exert more pressures--but not, I don't think, cut out supplies, energy and oil, food supplies to North Korea, because China does not want to see any turbulence in the North.

QUESTION: Richard Shen [ph] with LECG.

With the six-party talks, what kind of implication for unification of Korea and whether or not, for example, Dr. Park, whether South Korea's position might depend on what the eventual outcome or implication for unification might be based on these talks? And how would that influence China's position at these talks?

MR. PARK: Before I address your question, let me just briefly mention that, as Jack said, [inaudible] project has a security symbolism and it is related to North Korea's initial demand for a nonaggression pact with the United States. North Korea has a peculiar political system ruled by one very, very powerful man. Kim Jong Il called the sun of the nation. Let me just say I had a conversation with Ambassador Gregg last week. He met with General Ri Chan Bok, and he asked Mr. Gregg why Mr. Bush hates so much Mr. Clinton, even though they are the president. And Mr. Gregg said, Well, because Mr. Bush may hate Clinton because Clinton beat his father. And Ri Chan Bok didn't quite understand. Because, you know, presidents are the same from the North Korean perspective.

So when the Bush administration refused to continue to accept what the previous administration had promised North Korea, then they didn't understand and they wanted any agreement promised ratified by the Congress. That's the reason, I think, that they want more continuity in terms of U.S. policies and attitude toward North Korea. That's why, I think, [inaudible] project needs to be continued, to reassure that North

Korea will be benefited from cooperating with the United States. And it will build up the confidence and trust between the two nations.

Talking about the unification of Korea, the six-party talks, I think, can be developed into a format like OSCE. You can have two threads. One is to concentrate on nuclear issues and other issues that relate--the gentleman, in fact, just mentioned it a minute ago, about peace treaties between North and South Korea involving China and the United States. So in a sense, if we can create a security community out of these six-party talks, that will have a very significant positive impact on, for example, disarmament trends in Northeast Asia. That will have, I think, a positive impact on the unification road for Korea.

MR. JING: His first question, I think there is a little bit difference between China and the United States, you know, and the objective of the free nuclear peninsula. China says that any facilities related to nuclear weapons should be dismantled. I think many Americans believe facilities, other nuclear facilities should be stopped, for instance, or dismantled. So China's objective is to persuade North Korea to give up their nuclear weapons, but for some facilities, maybe for generating electricity, maybe they can [inaudible] they can still cooperate with the United States to better serve for their national interests.

For the second question, the implication for the unification, I think nowadays in China less and less people really think North Korea is a buffer zone for China. China may be not so willing to savor the unification of the peninsula, but China wishes eventual integration between South and North. And also, if we can develop the six-party talks, it's going to institutionalize the forum. Some people are talking about the five parties. I don't think China can agree with that, because you can never exclude

North Korea from that forum. But there's really a lack of security forum and economic forum in the peninsula or in Northeast Asia region, different from other regions. So we really should bid up or develop the six-party talks to institutionalize the forum, that we can talk about the economy, we can talk about the HIV/AIDS, and we can talk about human rights--all other issues and where we also can, you know, China and the United States, there is a lack between China and the United States of strategic trust. Actually, they don't trust each other strategy.

[Laughter.]

MR. JING: To be frank. To be frank. So maybe such a forum can provide a basis for China and other countries and the United States to improve their strategic trust and to cooperate [inaudible] on those regional security issues and economy issues.

Of course, there are some implications for China if the peninsula really can achieve reunification. I think nowadays more and more of China's people, we wish to see that outcome, you know, less than the last people talking about the [inaudible]. A very stable unified peninsula is also in the interests of China. But there are also other different--nowadays in China the voices are also very different.

There are also many, many arguments about China's approach on the North Korea nuclear issue. For example, inside the policymaking community and inside academic circles there are some arguments that whether we should give the United States a free hand, you know, to help the United States to stabilize the situation and let the United States focus itself on the Middle East, and let the United--you know, if we don't have any bargaining chip, how can we persuade the United States to stop Taiwan from moving toward independence. So we should increase our bargaining chip on this

issue. But the consensus is we have--you know, the North Korean nuclear issue is in our national interest and our strategic interest and our security interest. We should keep the six-party talks progress and we should facilitate and try our best to bring the two parties back to the table and reach some concrete results. That really serves our national interests. Of course, there are some arguments, different voices; but the consensus is we have to let the six-party talks go. And I think that is also the consensus of Chinese leadership.

MR. PRITCHARD: We are rapidly running out of time. I'm going to take the last question here in the front and then we're just going to have to call it quits. You've been a terrific audience, but we've gone over our time.

QUESTION: Thank you very much. My name is [inaudible] and I'm currently staying as a senior associate at the CSIS. Originally I am from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Korea.

Well, I think briefly it has been already answered by Mr. Jing. But there is a very interesting statement in your presentation--No. 6, talking about the possibility of linking/de-linking these issues with U.S.-China relations. Yesterday I attended the hearings at the subcommittee of the House, and there were link/de-link issues very much often heard. My question is, in your opinion there could be three interpretations. The first: No matter what, like or dislike, there would be a link. That is number one interpretation. Second interpretation is China might want linking this issue, North Korean nuclear issue, with some other Chinese concerns. Number three, the United States might want to link North Korean issue with other American interests, such as trade or Taiwan issue.

So which interpretations would you choose, if you should?

MR. JING: You know, for this there are three possibilities. It depends. Things in the situation are changing very quickly.

For the first one, that is why I say I'm not sure whether there will be a link between the North Korea issue and the Taiwan issue. Because, you know, China is going to enact the anti-secession law and we'll formalize and legalize China's determination, China's resolve to deter Taiwan from going to independence. And maybe in the first half of this year, Taiwan's legislative Yuan is going to pass the arms purchase budget. You know, for the last whole year China protested very strongly, and China said we're going to react very strongly if you implement the arms sales, you will sell arms to Taiwan. That will cost 18.2 billion U.S. dollars. And the United States postponed its notification to the Congress. And this year, if the budget is approved by the Legislative Yuan, I think maybe the United States is going to notify the Congress what China is going to do. And this May, Taiwan is going to set up a commission to implement its constitutional reform. And China, you know, firmly believes that by changing the definition of sovereignty, cutting off relations with Mainland China --[flip tape]-- independence.

So what is the reaction of China? We don't know. Whether China is going to link these two issues together, we don't know. But I think North Korea issue is a very important, also a very sensitive issue for China. It's in China's strategic interest, China's security interest. It's not so suitable for China to link these two issues together. But as I just now mentioned, if there is a bad Sino-U.S. relations, if there is a quick deterioration of U.S.-China relations, how can people expect China can cooperate or coordinate very well with the United States?

The second possibility, China might want to link. I think officially, so far as I know, I have never heard, I've never known that China officially, [inaudible] directly linked these two issues together. They separate these issues. But whether there's any thinking in policymakers' minds, I'm not sure. Maybe they think about this. Maybe some policymaker will argue about this. But as I told you, the consensus is we should try our best to facilitate the six-party talks. We have to try to solve this issue.

For the third one, the United States might want to link these issues. Just as at yesterday's hearing the congressmen said can we use Sino-U.S. bilateral trade relations to pressure China to play a more important role or exert more pressure on North Korea. I don't think that is a very good idea. Trade relations, you know, are mutually beneficial. It's a different issue. And China has already tried its best to facilitate the six-party talks. You know, immediately after North Korea declared they already have nuclear weapons, China sent Wang Jiarui to North Korea. And in recent days, China sent an envoy [?] here, and it wasn't in D.C. It was negotiated with the United States to try to find a way to resume the talks. I think it is very unnecessary to link trade relations.

You know, yesterday you attended the meeting, and Ambassador [inaudible] said over the past 10 years the United States tried to link the issue with China's human rights. [Inaudible.] So it is not suitable for the United States to link that issue.

Thank you.

MR. PRITCHARD: Well, ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much. What we tried to do today is to give you a public insight into the six-party process, to allow you to hear from the parties involved, from their different perspectives, and for you to be able to draw and to learn some similarities and some of the differences. We'll

put this together and we'll provide this to both the governments and to others to help them have a better understanding down the path towards a resolution.

I would like to reiterate our thanks to the National Committee North Korea. Thanks to the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership for its generous support. I absolutely thank our panelists and our speakers today. And most importantly, I thank you, the audience, for a terrific set of questions and for your participation.

With that, I invite you to join us at the reception. Thank you very much.

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