



How Should the ROK and the US Stabilize a Peace Regime in the Korean Peninsula and Build a Stable Security Environment in Northeast Asia in order to Promote and Shape the Satisfactory Unification of the Korean Peninsula?

Chaesung Chun

(Professor of Political Science and International Relations at Seoul National University)

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Abstract

In South Korea, concerns for unification are rapidly growing. Understandably, execution of Jang Sung Taek addressed the question of North Korean domestic political stability for outside watchers. The event of Jang's execution itself does not tell if this will contribute to the

* This paper is presented to the 2nd KRIS-Brookings Joint Conference on "Security and Diplomatic Cooperation between ROK and US for the Unification of the Korean Peninsula" on January 21, 2014.

unification. Kim Jung Un's power may have been consolidated by this action. Roughly speaking, there are two scenarios of unification, if that happens. One is the unification by absorption following systemic collapse of North Korea. The second scenario is the process of gradual unification. In both scenarios, what is essential is that to confirm deterrence to military provocations and the development of nuclear programs. The cooperation with the United States is essential here and to continue strategic dialogue with China is also necessary.

What is to be noted is that North Korean contingency will not automatically lead to unification. To facilitate the unification, not only strong military preparedness, but also long-term perspective on the new governance on the Korean Peninsula is crucial. If South Korea tries to unify the North, or set up a new form of governance and peace regime on the Korean Peninsula, the pace or schedule for economic integration, political coordination, and finally uniting the sovereignty should be predetermined and those schedule should be closely connected to the contingency plan. China will not consent to the idea of unification unless there is a clear picture of unified Korea's foreign policy which will not harm Chinese national interests. Also many forces in North Korea, most of all North Korean people, will embrace South Korea's initiative for unification.

Apart from the case of unification after contingency, South Korea needs to prepare overall, long-term North Korea policy and strategy of unification. Unification by absorption is based on the prediction which may not be fulfilled. Unfortunately we do not possess appropriate data to precisely evaluate North Korea's resilience and durability. Then, the core of South Korea's North Korea policy needs to be based upon long-term engagement plan and unification formula.

I . Introduction: Unification Comes Closer now?

It is almost impossible to predict how the unification will come true. What we can figure out is which factors will or will not contribute to the process of unification. In South Korea, expectations for unification are rapidly growing. Understandably, execution of Jang Sung Taek addressed the question of North Korean domestic political stability for outside watchers. Possible power struggle and ostensibly the inability of Kim Jung Un to control his uncle's political challenges are implied in this detestable purge. Worse, there is also speculation that Kim Jung Un was not completely willing to execute his uncle who has been a formidable supporter, but he was under serious pressure from the military which was stolen of the prerogatives to extort the resources inside North Korea. All these clues indicate weakening political ground of Kim Jung Un who is supposed to be the only leader, which raises the hope of sudden unification of the Korean Peninsula for South Koreans.

The event of Jang's execution itself does not tell if this will contribute to the unification. Kim Jung Un's power may have been consolidated by this action, or he himself might have worked his own undoing. We need to be watchful of the degree of North Korea's political stability and try to cope with any contingency that might happen.

This paper will discuss South Korea's strategy to realize unification under current situation and integral components for this process, with policy suggestions.

II . Scenarios for Unification

Roughly speaking, there are two scenarios of unification, if that happens. One is the unification by absorption following systemic collapse of North Korea. This collapse scenario will materialize by several factors; Kim Jung Un's failure of governability leading to political confusion and severe factional strife which may cause North Koreans' massive flee to South Korea and China; Kim Jung Un's failure in economic performance which brought severe distress to North Korean people, leading to popular uprising or more possibly escape; severe civil war situation due to domestic instability which may bring outside intervention, probably from the United Nations, or outside powers, then leading to unification by South Korea.

The second scenario is the process of gradual unification. Realizing that nuclear weapons do not help North Korea's national strategy of survival and that nuclear programs hinder North Korea's economic survival threatening regime survival, Kim Jung Un may decide the complete dismantlement of nuclear programs and go for economic reform and opening. Gradual but determined changes will create the situation where both Koreas plan for step-by-step unification.

Both scenarios call for high level of preparedness, especially military and defense readiness. Only by having formidable deterrence, South Korea can handle any contingent situations. Also as the unification is a significant event changing Northeast Asian power balance, sincere consent and support from outside powers are essential. South Korea, in both scenarios, needs to set up a long-term plan for unification and even the process of integration after unification which will be beneficial to outside powers.

III. Any Possibility of Unification by Absorption?

1. Thinking about North Korean Contingency

It is true that Jang's execution has been interpreted to signal domestic instability or lack of leadership cohesion and that expectation has grown for unification by absorption after North Korean system collapse. Since the mid-1990s, extensive study has been done on North Korea's contingencies. The collapse of the communist countries including the former Soviet Union, and the transformation of Chinese system seemed to predict the subsequent change and contingencies of North Korea, combined with its collapse of economic system and diplomacy of nuclear brinkmanship which only accelerated its isolation. Causes, scenarios, and possible changes of, and external interventions over North Korea have been predicted by scholars, policy makers, military specialists, which still bring about far more complicated controversy.

Some argue that North Korea, as a "failing", "fragile", or even "failed" state, is already in the process of collapse. To them, the question of "whether" North Korea will collapse is a stupid one: "how" and "when" would be the right question. Contrary to them, others claim that North Korea, under the totalitarian leadership of Kim Jong-Il, is still firm in its dominance over its territory and people, defying any prediction of possible collapse. Here we need to be precise in the meaning of "collapse" or "contingency" of North Korea.

We can distinguish among "state collapse (or failure)" "system collapse" "regime or leadership failure." Even though there may happen leadership failure, the system and the state may continue. Moreover, in the events of leadership failure and system collapse, the state as a political entity with its dominance over the territory and people, may stand still.

As of now, North Korea suffers from economic hardships, diplomatic isolation, and right allocation of its resources. However, it seems highly controversial to claim that North Korea as a state, so-called “our own socialist system” and the totalitarian regime led by Kim Jong Un are in peril. When we argue the possibility of North Korean collapse, we need to consider the following points.

First, North Korean watchers suffer from serious lack of information on various aspects of North Korean politics, economy, and society. For example, regarding the event of Jang’s fall, as we accumulate more information, it becomes harder to evaluate the solidarity of Kim’s regime. This situation does not seem to improve in the near future. Lacking evidences and empirical data, what we can do is to speculate what is happening now inside the North, and suggest vague prediction.

Second, theories about North Korean domestic politics and foreign behaviors are highly underdeveloped. Comparative politics theories of socialist countries and post–communist transition do not easily lend support to what is happening in North Korea. Specific characteristics rather than generalizable features of North Korea often mislead North Korean watchers in explaining and predicting events. This may improve if we find out reasonable way to theorize North Korea based on available past data. However, without formidable empirical data, theoretical prediction on North Korean contingencies is still under controversy.

Third, general shortcomings in predicting fundamental changes in international relations have been proved to be very difficult to predict, as was shown in the debate on the predictability of the collapse of the former Soviet Union. Even with knowledge of critical factors affecting the fate of the country, the way how they interact defies linear trajectory of events. As is suggested by complexities theory, the combination and interaction of

multiple factors create punctuated equilibrium, by which we observe the tipping point of critical events. Only by relying on the non-linear, and complex theorizing, we know how the interaction of these factors create a new domain of events, in which new courses of action “emerge.”¹⁾

Then, what do we need to do regarding the study on North Korean contingencies? First, it is still meaningful to know 1) the factors or determinants that may bring about North Korean contingencies; 2) the scenarios of how these factors create the transitional stage and what results these will bring about; 3) possible responses of each relevant actors, including North Korean political elites, North Korean people, South Korea, neighboring countries, and international institutions.

Second, we need to be open to the questions of how and when North Korean contingencies will materialize. As we lack ample empirical data, and theoretical tools, also without clear meta-theoretical ground on which we build the general theory of “contingencies,” we must cope with several possibilities at the same time.

Third, changes of North Korea come not only from within, but also from without. How surrounding countries and international institutions react to North Korean politics and foreign policies will help shape the future trajectory of North Korean transformation, either in slow or in abrupt tempos.

Fourth, to do this, multilateral and international agreements not just on how to cope with North Korean contingency, but also on the future of North Korea or the end-state after North Korean contingencies need to be established among major countries. Also effective forms of coordination are to be invented to foster cooperation among different countries.

Based on many studies, possible scenarios are as what follows. It is a

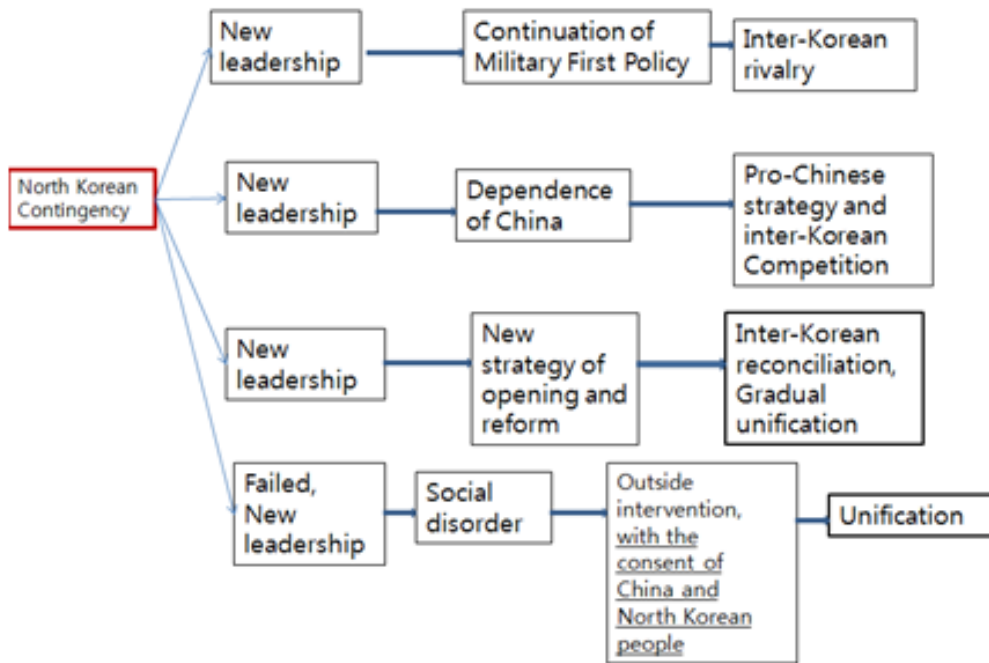
1) See related theoretical view, see Nial Ferguson, “Complexity and Collapse: Empires on the Edge of Chaos,” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April, 2010.

very simplified version of the possible scenarios and results of North Korean contingencies.²⁾

Determinants	Scenarios	Responses from outside/Results
1. Struggle inside leadership	1+2) crash landing from within	Unilateral intervention from China, South Korea, or the United States
2. Challenge from the below	1+3) leadership struggle with policy orientation	Bilateral or multilateral intervention from the ROK–US alliance, or 5 party
3. System reform and Opening/improving economic condition	1+2+4) internationalization of the civil war/strife	Intervention from the international organizations such as the UN
4. Outside pressure/ intervention	1+4) internationalization of leadership struggle	Unification by absorbing the North Korean from the South
	2+4) revolt against the regime supported by outside	
	3) soft landing	Gradual Unification

What is to be noted here is that contingencies in North Korea do not automatically lead to unification. There are several possible paths and some critical conditions to make unification realize.

2) Andrew Scobell suggests the following scenarios: the five scenarios described—“suspended animation” (Albania); “soft landing” (China); “crash landing” (Romania); “soft landing/crash landing hybrid” (the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics [USSR]); “suspended animation/soft landing hybrid” (Cuba). On the other hand, Robert Kaplan suggests the following lists: Depletion of resources; Failure to maintain infrastructure around the country due to resource depletion; Rise of independent fiefs informally controlled by local party apparatchiks or warlords, along with widespread corruption to circumvent a failing central government; Attempted suppression of these fiefs by the regime once it feels that they have become too powerful; Active resistance against the central government; Fracture of the regime; Formation of a new national leadership.



2. Jang’s fall and Trilemma of North Korea

Now returning to current North Korean situation, there are growing expectations that political turmoil in the North may bring about rather early, unexpected contingencies which may lead to unification. This observation, however, should be subject to careful scrutiny.

First, it is hard to know if Jang’s fall will lead to North Korean leadership deterioration. On the other hand, Kim Jung Un may have a stronger grip on elites group after purging Jang’s followers. Unless this political event really reflects North Korea’s systemic weakness, it is hard to know if this political struggle will give rise to any weaknesses in systemic sustainability.

Second, Jang’s execution does not show any sign of changing North Korean strategic line of Byungjin. Reading New Year’s Address 2014 by Kim Jung Un resonates the last year’s basic strategic line of simultaneously

economy and nuclear power. Especially North Korea continues to put much emphasis on economic development and economic special zones which requires an amicable relationship with China. Jang's own performance to facilitate trade relations with China and even a certain degree of reform may have been interpreted to be weakened with his fall, but North Korea still wants to have good economic relationship with China, replacing Jang's role in trade by North Korean administration. It will be too much to interpret Jang's fall and current political turmoil in North Korea as the result of serious factional strife representing different strategic outlooks.

Third, there is not clear sign that there is a direct negative systemic result coming from this political event. It is true that growing abhorrence appeared in many liberal countries, but North Korean leadership tried to provide persuasive indictment as much as possible to North Korean people. Also Kim Jung Un suggested that North Korea want to resume its relations with the South under certain conditions. President Park Geun Hye showed positive response to this suggestion by advancing her intention to resume the reunion of separated families. China also tried to downplay this incident defining Jang's fall as North Korea's domestic affair.

Then, it is hard to connect what happened at the end of the last year to any possibility of North Korea's systemic weakening, at least in the short run. We need to bear in mind the fact that dictatorship usually collapses from unexpected political events. However, dictatorship collapses only when these seemingly insignificant political events reflect underlying structural changes and deterioration. For now, we need to more carefully analyze if North Korean political changes really signifies growing vulnerabilities.

The real dilemma in North Korean situation rises among the need to maintain the dictatorship, possessing nuclear weapons, and developing economy. In a new two track simultaneous strategic line of North Korea,

Byungjin line, Pyongyang expects that North Korea can have both nuclear weapons and economic prosperity at the same time. However it is simply impossible to develop North Korea's economic situation without external economic assistance. North Korea under the Byungjin strategy has sought cautious and partial opening, trying to boost its economy. Its seemingly inefficient endeavor for Masikryung ski resort and plan to establish 14 economic special zones point to North Korea's need to find momentum for economic development.

Even after Jang's execution, North Korea has announced that, "Jang's execution should not be interpreted as the clue to change North Korea's efforts to elicit foreign investment and also North Korea's general economic strategy." North Korea also attempts to pursue agricultural reform based on small-scale, more independent production units, incentives for state enterprise, and deregulations on private companies and private economy. However this gradual experiment needs many conditions to succeed. For the success of economic special zone, several conditions should be met; more investments from abroad, increased income from foreign currency, expansion of the success of economic special zone to adjacent areas, and the effects of facilitating economy of related areas of the country. Also legal, institutional infrastructure is far underdeveloped, and foreign investments should be promoted without any hindrance, and expansive influence from the zones should be promoted.

Under this situation, North Korea's nuclear programs and continued economic sanctions will obstruct the possibility of forging favorable economic environments for foreign investment. Contracts for investments to North Korea do not mention anything about the linkage between the zones and related other areas. In addition, North Korea's nuclear weapons will prevent any country from supporting North Korea, even China. China

increasingly feels the need to observe international consensus to strengthen the non-proliferation regime and not to support outlaw country like North Korea which exports super-notes and narcotics. Although it will take time for North Korean leadership to realize that there is a unsolvable dilemma between their nuclear weapons and longing for prosperous economy. For South Korea and outer countries, there should be strong consensus that no country will recognize North Korea as a legitimate nuclear power, hence that no considerable economic assistance will be feasible under this situation.

North Korean nuclear weapons may consolidate North Korean current regime, but economic aggravation coming from nuclear weapons will endanger North Korean leadership itself. Kim Jung Un, a young leader lacking any traditional or charismatic justification of his power, cannot but resort to rational power base, which is good economic performance. In this sense, nuclear weapons, if they are subject to political deal to elicit economic assistance, will contribute to the heightened level of political justification. However, a current strategic line which formalized North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons will eventually endanger North's leadership.

The long term prospect to maintain dictatorship is also dim. When North Korean leadership finally gives up its nuclear programs and succeeds in economic development by external powers, there will be slow but strong changes among North Korean ordinary people. Inflow of external goods, capitals, and even cultural project will question the justifiability of Kim family's political legitimacy, and this might lead to a transformation into other kinds of political regime. Kim Jung Un, probably aware of this possibility, endeavors to sustain current socialist system and maintain his dictatorship. However dictatorship only resulting in economic hardship will

invite unbearable end-state.

What we know from North Korean trilemma is that economic improvement without real reforms and opening will weaken the regime's sustainability. However we do not know what kind of path North Korea will take if sudden collapse really happens. One thing to be noted is that now North Korea became more vulnerable after Jang's execution in the cohesion and efficacy of leadership maintenance. Jang's fall is not new, but the culmination of the series of purges after Kim Jung Un holds power. Report says that more than 40% of the upper personnel in the military and the party have been replaced through this purge campaign. There was a consistent logic to reinforce the dictatorship power base, sacrificing policy experience and institutional memory. The main reason for the purge was not policy failure as the Politburo statement said, but political reason, as expressed in "factional behavior". This is exactly the opposite to what Kim Jung Il tried to do for his son. What he worried was that the power base was too much personalized from the late 1990s, and he tried to establish more institutionalized power base for his son with institutional policy wisdom. Kim Jong Un has almost demolished it with the purge of the proponent of economic reform and pro-China policy.

The most important criteria for future policies of North Korea, either economic, or military, will be Kim Jong Un's own preference and his own capacity to enhance the real national interests of North Korea. Under the reign of terror, it will be very hard for policy elites to suggest effective policies, which may contradict Kim's own will. And the long-term future policies are not very prudent or experienced. Then we can predict that there will be stronger regime in the short term, but weaker in the long run, with possible policy failures.

IV. Main Components in South Korea's North Korea policy

1. More unpredictability in the North and South Korean Contingency Plan

What we worry about and need to prepare for is, then, is the fact that there will be more unpredictability in North Korea's future behaviors. More domestic political reasons, not policy rationality for strategic outcome, may dominate North Korea's motivations. As Ken Gause once analyzed in the case of NLL provocations, there will be new patterns such as covert operations for domestic reasons. Dictatorship can sustain itself only when people will prefer political order and security to political disorder and outside threats, and people appreciate economic performance which will guarantee their welfare. After Kim Jung Un, after his attempts to develop the economy through quite limited range of reform for some time, realizes that he cannot prove himself as an able economic leader, he will amplify the sense of insecurity by provocation in the relation with South Korea and the United States. This is where South Korea needs to really cope with the North's irrational aggressive behaviors.

We should be prepared for unexpected, all kinds of provocations. Kim Jong Un will not follow his father's manual anymore. He will have different policy motivations, and different advisors. We need to accumulate the data base for the time being about his policy behavior, meaning that there should be a period for South Korea to watch and manage.

We also need to be prepared for contingencies. A series of purges, and the reign of terror does not seem to give rise to contingencies by themselves. If there are serious policy failure from the next year especially in economic areas, people's frustration will be a good reason for the opposition group for challenging Kim's regime. In the case Kim thinks that

all these failure poses real threat to his own survivability, then he will consider fundamental strategic decision. Also if there is more visible alternative, then the transformation will be easier.

The most important thing to deal with contingencies is not to permit events to lead themselves. Then, the question of how to manage contingencies in accordance with long-term, strategic purposes with several alternatives will be essential. South Korean people tend to vaguely assume that fundamental instability and subsequent contingencies in North Korea will lead to the state collapse, bringing about long-desired national reunification. As of now, this is wishful thinking. Factions in North Korea leadership will desperately strive to perpetuate its rule even with the outside help other than South Korea's, unless North Korean people present their will to be unified with South Korea. Even with North Koreans' intention to be reunified, the prospect is still dim.

If South Korea tries to unify the North, or set up a new form of governance and peace regime on the Korean Peninsula, the pace or schedule for economic integration, political coordination, and finally uniting the sovereignty should be predetermined and those schedule should be closely connected to the contingency plan. If the possibility of the advent of new North Korea leadership with reform-orientedness and global conformity is possible, gradual unification and networking with the North for the time being will lessen the shock of sudden unification, fostering soother social integration and cohesion.

Then, North Korean contingencies must be viewed from the longer, strategic North Korean policies, and South Korea's contingency plan should be coordinated with North Korea strategy. It is timely and appropriate to focus upon more specific issues such as denuclearization of North Korea, devising military plan to improve defense preparedness and even pacify the

North, and working with any possible civil affair operations.

2. Multilateral Contingency Plan

(1) Cooperation with the United States

North Korean contingencies and transitional North Korea is an international issue, directly affecting geopolitical interests of other countries, such as the United States, China, Japan, and Russia. South Korea is expected to suggest more comprehensive framework of dialogue not just for the North Korean nuclear issues, but also for the general North Korea strategy, unification, and even contingencies. Any changes in the status quo on the Korean Peninsula will affect geostrategic interests of Northeast Asian countries, especially in the times of power transition. Strategic dialogue and policy coordination among South Korea, the United States, Japan, and Russia will be crucial in preparing any possible contingencies. Once again, multilateral contingency plan should be with the overall strategic consideration over the future of North Korea. Consequently, common strategic views on the future of North Korea and Northeast Asian security relations will direct the success or failure of coordinated response to North Korean contingencies.

Events of contingencies will develop their own different course under different contexts. If North Korean leaders and North Koreans are already convinced of the reliability of engagement policy by South Korea, the United States, and Japan, it will be easier to deal with contingent cases.

Without long-term, strategic view on the future of North Korea on the part of neighboring countries, in the case of contingencies, North Korean leadership or people will come to rely upon the outside force for political assistance, stabilization, humanitarian assistance and so on. If the reliance

upon other countries in the matter of leadership change, and systemic chance may bring about the collapse, demise, and failure of the state, itself-unification with the South, North Koreans will resist the option of asking help from, or receiving the assistance from South Korea, the United States, and Japan.

In that case, the option would be 1) containing the North to prevent any military or political offense over the DMZ; 2) destroying the WMD if necessary; 3) intervening into the situation if possible, with the consent of relevant actors. However, without favorable response from the new ruling party and people of North Korea itself, the result will be sub-optimal.

The long-term, comprehensive plan for the North would suggest each stage of “modernizing” the North. Although it is very improbable to know when and how North Korean contingencies will materialize, we can know after its breakup immediately at which stage North Korean contingencies will fit in, and how those contingencies need to be managed based on the long-term plan.

In the course of dealing with contingency issues, the cooperation between South Korea and the United States is adamant. The US East Asian policy of rebalancing and South Korean policy of unifying the Peninsula based on liberal democracy are quite compatible in realizing national interests of both countries. Recent dialogue between two foreign ministers confirms this observation. On January 7, 2014, Secretary Kerry mentioned that “The United States supports President Park’s firm, principled approach to North Korea. I want to confirm that Foreign Minister Yun and I spent the lion’s share of our time – though we touched on a lot of topics, we were deeply focused on the challenge of North Korea, particularly with the events that have taken place in recent weeks in North Korea. Together, we call upon Pyongyang to start down the path of fulfilling its international obligation

and commitments. And most importantly, we call on the Republic – on North Korea to denuclearize. We will not accept North Korea as a nuclear state nor as a nuclear-armed state, and nor will the international community abide by that. I assured Foreign Minister Yun that we remain fully committed to the defense of the Republic of Korea, including through extended deterrents and putting the full range of US military capabilities in place. We will continue to modernize our capabilities so that we are prepared to face any threat.”

Also Secretary Yun mentioned that “we agreed to enhance policy coordination to tackle North Korean issues, which include maintaining stability on the Korean Peninsula and seeking progress in the resolution of the North Korea nuclear problem. In this light, we decided to intensify our consultations to assess the North Korean situation and explore our policy options. These efforts will ensure that our two countries remain very much on the same page in dealing with uncertain North Korean situation. In the event of any North Korean provocation, the – South Korea and the United States will firmly respond based on our robust combined defense posture.” Also he emphasized a broader platform to forge common North Korean policy by saying that “in addition to our actions, we’ll ensure that the UN Security Council will take prompt measures which it deems necessary. We share the view that it is important to keep China and other related parties closely engaged to achieve substantial progress in the denuclearization of North Korea. In this regard, we agreed to place this issue at the top of our agenda so that we can better cope with the increasing volatility of the nuclear issue arising from the evolving political situation in North Korea.”

Implying unification, Secretary Yun said that “going beyond the nuclear issues, we agreed to strengthen our strategic cooperation on building sustainable peace that will pave the way for the unification of the Korean

Peninsula. We also redouble our efforts together with the international community, including the United States, to induce North Korea to embrace the path of peace and cooperation through the trust-building process on the Korean Peninsula.”

If the reunification comes into sight, the function of the alliance will be more critical. No one knows how the reunification will materialize. In the event of an abrupt collapse of North Korean regime leading to reunification, securing the process peaceful and preparing for any possible North Korean military opposition will be required. Partnering with the United States, South Korea will be able to stabilize the process. On the other hand, in the case of South Korea pursuing more gradual and peaceful reunification, the alliance will still be an essential element. To stabilize the process and to gain diplomatic support from other countries for the reunification, especially from China, will be an additional function of the alliance. Obviously China will worry about the strategic orientation of reunified Korea. It is natural for Chinese to think of the possibility that reunified Korea with the alliance will hurt Chinese interests. Washington can play the role to ensure Chinese that unified Korea and continuing alliance will not hurt Chinese interests.

(2) Cooperation with China

Pre-established policy coordination will proactively direct the course of events with high predictability. Then, the question is how compatible are the interests of neighbouring countries on the issue of the future of North Korea. Politically sensitive details concern 1) the intention to manipulate or take advantage of North Korean leadership; 2) the type of political regime and socio-economic characteristics of transitional North Korea; 3) the way to deal with WMDs; 4) whether possible unification under South Korea will

be agreeable; 5) the political direction of unified Korea and its influence on the changing logic of power transition and power balance. Critical in this process is the question of how China, or Russia will react to North Korean contingencies: will China intervene into North Korean political situation to prevent the rise of anti-China leadership or pro-unification faction?; will China respond to the invitation of North Korean new leadership, if any, which try to find solid political footing in unforeseeable leadership struggle?; will China and Russia agree with the idea of intervening into the North by South Korea and the United States?; will China and Russia will conform to the idea of South Korea, the United States, and Japan in the United Nations?

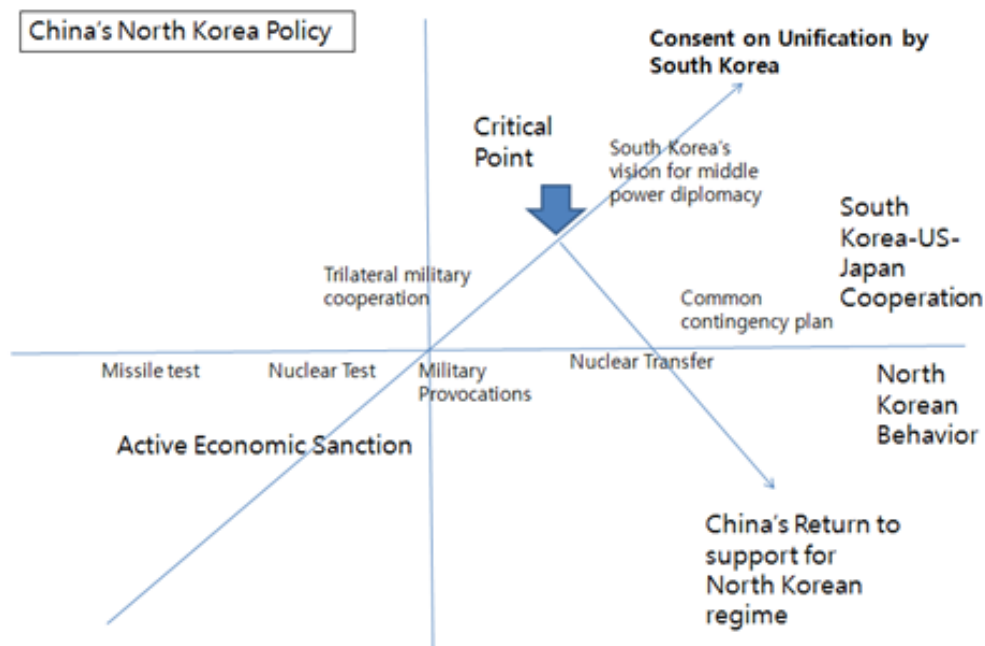
South Korea doesn't need to be defensive in dealing with contingency issue. These are not easy questions to deal with, because not only policies over North Korean contingency, but also the future of North Korea itself is the question that affect balance of power between the United States and China, China and Japan, and the whole security architecture of Northeast Asia. If strategic rivalry between these countries is inevitable, then, diplomatic aspect of contingency dealing will be much harder. However, the situation is not that pessimistic.

Especially with the establishment of the so-called "New Type of Great Power Relationship," the United States and China agreed to respect core interests of the counterpart, still continuing competition for the possible, all-out strategic rivalry for the coming decades. For now, the issue of North Korean nuclear problems has been defined with the awareness that both countries share common interests. South Korea's task is how to upgrade this perception to the level where both countries share common interests in looking at the event of unification.

Xi Jinping's China gives priority to economic development and

maintenance of high growth rate with social stability. As official purpose that China pursues regarding Korean Peninsula is to prevent instability to negatively affect economic development, there are much room to share in dealing with North Korean contingencies, and the future of North Korea with the United States and South Korea.

How can South Korea substantiate visions and convince Chinese? Only by proposing concrete policy packages to support North Korea's post-dictatorship, post-communist transition. From historical experience, we know that these transitions require a large amount of transition cost, which should be provided from outside. Actually we have prepared these packages, but the assurance should be renewed with the change of administrations in Korea, the States, and China. China may think that South Korea would not lose the chance of unification by absorption in the case of North Korea contingency, which will make China hesitate more pressure against the North. So with a more comprehensive, and detailed picture of how to engage with China, South Korea can persuade them to participate in stronger sanctions. Trustpolitik of South Korean government has shown a picture about the principle that South Korea needs to deter and engage both, but there need to be more works and renews for strategic roadmaps, for the coming years.



All in all, functional and technical issues in the case of contingencies which do not seriously affect the international status quo will be procedural problems, which also need to draw more attention. Especially China, as an ally of North Korea, still evades officially discussing North Korean contingencies with the United States and South Korea. Therefore, it is important to share the view that North Korean contingency needs to be viewed as a common problem related to many issues, such as refugees, the WMDs, and military stability. More difficult is the post-contingency political situation of North Korea which might change the balance of power in the region. This is directly related to great power balance especially between the United States and China.

V. Suggestions for South Korea's Two Track Strategy

First, although North Korea's political turmoil will not lead to any sudden contingency, there are more possibilities for structural degradation. In this process, North Korea's unexpected provocations may happen. The most important strategy is to confirm deterrence to military provocations and the development of nuclear programs. The cooperation with the United States is essential here and to continue strategic dialogue with China is also necessary.

Second, North Korean contingency will not automatically lead to unification. There are many different paths among which unification will not come true. To facilitate the unification, not only strong military preparedness, but also long-term perspective on the new governance on the Korean Peninsula is crucial. China will not consent to the idea of unification unless there is a clear picture of unified Korea's foreign policy which will not harm Chinese national interests. Also many forces in North Korea, most of all North Korean people, will embrace South Korea's initiative for unification.

Third, apart from the case of unification after contingency, South Korea needs to prepare overall, long-term North Korea policy and strategy of unification. Unification by absorption is based on the prediction which may not be fulfilled. Unfortunately we do not possess appropriate data to precisely evaluate North Korea's resilience and durability. Then, the core of South Korea's North Korea policy needs to be based upon long-term engagement plan and unification formula.

