



**Report**

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*Office of the North Korea Policy Coordinator  
United States Department of State*

**Review of United States Policy  
Toward North Korea:**

**Findings and  
Recommendations**

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## UNCLASSIFIED REPORT

# NORTH KOREA POLICY REVIEW

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A North Korea policy review team, led by Dr. William J. Perry and working with an interagency group headed by the Counselor of the Department of State Ambassador Wendy R. Sherman, was tasked in November 1998 by President Clinton and his national security advisors to conduct an extensive review of U.S. policy toward the DPRK. This review of U.S. policy lasted approximately eight months, and was supported by a number of senior officials from the U.S. government and by Dr. Ashton B. Carter of Harvard University. The policy review team was also very fortunate to have received regular and extensive guidance from the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Advisor and senior policy advisors.

Throughout the review the team consulted with experts, both in and out of the U.S. government. Dr. Perry made a special point to travel to the Capitol to give regular status reports to Members of Congress on the progress of this review, and he benefited from comments received from Members on concepts being developed by the North Korea policy review team. The team also exchanged views with officials from many countries with interests in Northeast Asia and the Korean Peninsula, including our allies, the ROK and Japan. The team also met with prominent members of the humanitarian aid community and received a wealth of written material, solicited and unsolicited. Members of the policy review team met with many other individuals and organizations as well. In addition, the team traveled to North Korea this past May, led by Dr. Perry as President Clinton's Special Envoy, to obtain a first-hand understanding of the views of the DPRK Government.

The findings and recommendations of the North Korea Policy Review set forth below reflect the consensus that emerged from the team's countless hours of work and study.

### The Need for a Fundamental Review of U.S. Policy

The policy review team determined that a fundamental review of U.S. policy was indeed needed, since much has changed in the security situation on the Korean Peninsula since the 1994 crisis.

Most important – and the focus of this North Korea policy review – are developments in the DPRK's nuclear and long-range missile activities.

The Agreed Framework of 1994 succeeded in verifiably freezing North Korean plutonium production at Yongbyon – it stopped plutonium production at that facility so that North Korea currently has at most a small amount of fissile material it may have secreted away from operations prior to 1994; without the Agreed Framework, North Korea could have produced enough additional plutonium by now for a significant number of nuclear weapons. Yet, despite the critical achievement of a verified freeze on plutonium production at Yongbyon under the Agreed Framework, the policy review team has serious concerns about possible continuing nuclear weapons-related work in the DPRK. Some of these concerns have been addressed through our access and visit to Kumchang-ni.

The years since 1994 have also witnessed development, testing, deployment, and export by the DPRK of ballistic missiles of increasing range, including those potentially capable of reaching the territory of the United States.

There have been other significant changes as well. Since the negotiations over the Agreed Framework began in the summer of 1994, formal leadership of the DPRK has passed from President Kim Il Sung to his son, General Kim Jong Il, and General Kim has gradually assumed supreme authority in title as well as fact. North Korea is thus governed by a different leadership from that with which we embarked on the Agreed Framework. During this same period, the DPRK economy has deteriorated significantly, with industrial and food production sinking to a fraction of their 1994 levels. The result is a humanitarian tragedy which, while not the focus of the review, both compels the sympathy of the American people and doubtless affects some of the actions of the North Korean regime.

An unrelated change has come to the government of the Republic of Korea (ROK) with the Presidency of Kim Dae Jung. President Kim has embarked upon a policy of engagement with the North. As a leader of great international authority, as our ally, and as the host to 37,000 American troops, the views and insights of President Kim are central to accomplishing U.S. security objectives on the Korean Peninsula. No U.S. policy can succeed unless it is coordinated with the ROK's policy. Today's ROK policy of engagement creates conditions and opportunities for U.S. policy very different from those in 1994.

Another close U.S. ally in the region, Japan, has become more concerned about North Korea in recent years. This concern was heightened by the launch, in August 1998, of a Taepo Dong missile over Japanese territory. Although the Diet has passed funding for the Light Water Reactor project being undertaken by the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) pursuant to the Agreed Framework, and the government wants to preserve the Agreed Framework, a second missile launch is likely to have a serious impact on domestic political support for the Agreed Framework and have wider ramifications within Japan about its security policy.

Finally, while the U.S. relationship with China sometimes reflects different perspectives on security policy in the region, the policy review team learned through extensive dialogue between the U.S. and the PRC, including President Clinton's meetings with President Jiang Zemin, that China understands many of the U.S. concerns about the

deleterious effects that North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile activities could have for regional and global security.

All these factors combine to create a profoundly different landscape than existed in 1994. The review team concurred strongly with President Clinton's judgment that these changed circumstances required a comprehensive review such as the one that the President and his team of national security advisors asked the team to conduct. The policy review team also recognized the concerns of Members of Congress that a clear path be charted for dealing with North Korea, and that there be closer cooperation between the executive and legislative branches on this issue of great importance to our security. The review team shared these concerns and has tried hard to be responsive to them.

### **Assessment of the Security Situation on the Korean Peninsula**

In the course of the review, the policy team conferred with U.S. military leaders and allies, and concluded that, as in 1994, U.S. forces and alliances in the region are strong and ready. Indeed, since 1994, the U.S. has strengthened both its own forces and its plans and procedures for combining forces with allies. We are confident that allied forces could and would successfully defend ROK territory. We believe the DPRK's military leaders know this and thus are deterred from launching an attack.

However, in sharp contrast to the Desert Storm campaign in Kuwait and Iraq, war on the Korean Peninsula would take place in densely populated areas. Considering the million-man DPRK army arrayed near the DMZ, the intensity of combat in another war on the Peninsula would be unparalleled in U.S. experience since the Korean War of 1950-53. It is likely that hundreds of thousands of persons – U.S., ROK, and DPRK – military and civilian – would perish, and millions of refugees would be created. While the U.S. and ROK of course have no intention of provoking war, there are those in the DPRK who believe the opposite is true. But even they must know that the prospect of such a destructive war is a powerful deterrent to precipitous U.S. or allied action.

Under present circumstances, therefore, deterrence of war on the Korean Peninsula is stable on both sides, in military terms. While always subject to miscalculation by the isolated North Korean government, there is no military calculus that would suggest to the North Koreans anything but catastrophe from armed conflict. This relative stability, if it is not disturbed, can provide the time and conditions for all sides to pursue a permanent peace on the Peninsula, ending at last the Korean War and perhaps ultimately leading to the peaceful reunification of the Korean people. This is the lasting goal of U.S. policy.

However, acquisition by the DPRK of nuclear weapons or long-range missiles, and especially the combination of the two (a nuclear weapons device mounted on a long-range missile), could undermine this relative stability. Such weapons in the hands of the DPRK military might weaken deterrence as well as increase the damage if deterrence failed. Their effect would, therefore, be to undermine the conditions for pursuing a relaxation of tensions, improved relations, and lasting peace. Acquisition of such weapons by North Korea could also spark an arms race in the region and would surely do

grave damage to the global nonproliferation regimes covering nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. A continuation of the DPRK's pattern of selling its missiles for hard currency could also spread destabilizing effects to other regions, such as the Middle East.

The review team, therefore, concluded that the urgent focus of U.S. policy toward the DPRK must be to end its nuclear weapons and long-range missile-related activities. This focus does not signal a narrow preoccupation with nonproliferation over other dimensions of the problem of security on the Korean Peninsula, but rather reflects the fact that control of weapons of mass destruction is essential to the pursuit of a wider form of security so badly needed in that region.

As the United States faces the task of ending these weapons activities, any U.S. policy toward North Korea must be formulated within three constraining facts:

First, while logic would suggest that the DPRK's evident problems would ultimately lead its regime to change, there is no evidence that change is imminent. United States policy must, therefore, deal with the North Korean government as it is, not as we might wish it to be.

Second, the risk of a destructive war to the 37,000 American service personnel in Korea and the many more that would reinforce them, to the inhabitants of the Korean Peninsula both South and North, and to U.S. allies and friends in the region dictate that the United States pursue its objectives with prudence and patience.

Third, while the Agreed Framework has critics in the United States, the ROK, and Japan – and indeed in the DPRK – the framework has verifiably frozen plutonium production at Yongbyon. It also served as the basis for successful discussions we had with the North earlier this year on an underground site at Kumchang-ni – one that the U.S. feared might have been designed as a substitute plutonium production facility. Unfreezing Yongbyon remains the North's quickest and surest path to nuclear weapons. U.S. security objectives may therefore require the U.S. to supplement the Agreed Framework, but we must not undermine or supplant it.

### **Perspectives of Countries in the Region**

The policy review team consulted extensively with people outside of the Administration to better understand the perspectives of countries in the region. These perspectives are summarized below.

Republic of Korea. The ROK's interests are not identical to those of the U.S., but they overlap in significant ways. While the ROK is not a global power like the United States and, therefore, is less active in promoting nonproliferation worldwide, the ROK recognizes that nuclear weapons in the DPRK would destabilize deterrence on the Peninsula. And while South Koreans have long lived within range of North Korean SCUD ballistic missiles, they recognize that North Korea's new, longer-range ballistic missiles present a new type of threat to the United States and Japan. The ROK thus shares U.S. goals with respect to DPRK nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. The

South also has concerns, such as the reunion of families separated by the Korean War and implementation of the North-South Basic Agreement (including reactivation of North-South Joint Committees). The U.S. strongly supports these concerns.

President Kim Dae Jung's North Korea policy, known as the "engagement" policy, marked a fundamental shift toward the North. Under the Kim formulation, the ROK has forsworn any intent to undermine or absorb the North and has pursued increased official and unofficial North-South contact. The ROK supports the Agreed Framework and the ROK's role in KEDO, but the ROK National Assembly, like our Congress, is carefully scrutinizing DPRK behavior as it considers funding for KEDO.

Japan. Like the ROK, Japan's interests are not identical to those of the U.S., but they overlap strongly. The DPRK's August 1998 Taepo Dong missile launch over the Japanese islands abruptly increased the already high priority Japan attaches to the North Korea issue. The Japanese regard DPRK missile activities as a direct threat. In bilateral talks with Japan, the DPRK representatives exacerbate historic animosities by repeatedly referring to Japan's occupation of Korea earlier in this century. For these reasons, support for Japan's role in KEDO is at risk in the Diet. The government's ability to sustain the Agreed Framework in the face of further DPRK missile launches is not assured, even though a collapse of the Agreed Framework could lead to nuclear warheads on DPRK missiles, dramatically increasing the threat they pose. Japan also has deep-seated concerns, such as the fate of missing persons suspected of being abducted by the DPRK. The U.S. strongly supports these concerns.

China. China has a strong interest in peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and is aware of the implications of increased tension on the peninsula. China also realizes that DPRK ballistic missiles are an important impetus to U.S. national missile defense and theater missile defenses, neither of which is desired by China. Finally, China realizes that DPRK nuclear weapons could provoke an arms race in the region and undermine the nonproliferation regime which Beijing, as a nuclear power, has an interest in preserving. For all these reasons the PRC concerns with North Korean nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs are in many ways comparable to U.S. concerns. While China will not coordinate its policies with the U.S., ROK, and Japan, it is in China's interest to use its own channels of communication to discourage the DPRK from pursuing these programs.

The DPRK. Based on extensive consultation with the intelligence community and experts around the world, a review of recent DPRK conduct, and our discussions with North Korean leaders, the policy review team formed some views of this enigmatic country. But in many ways the unknowns continue to outweigh the knowns. Therefore, we want to emphasize here that no U.S. policy should be based solely on conjectures about the perceptions and future behavior of the DPRK.

Wrapped in an overriding sense of vulnerability, the DPRK regime has promoted an intense devotion to self-sufficiency, sovereignty, and self-defense as the touchstones for all rhetoric and policy. The DPRK views efforts by outsiders to promote democratic and market reforms in its country as an attempt to undermine the regime. It strongly controls foreign influence and contact, even when they offer relief from the regime's severe

economic problems. The DPRK appears to value improved relations with US, *especially* including relief from the extensive economic sanctions the U.S. has long imposed.

### **Key Findings**

The policy review team made the following key findings, which have formed the basis for our recommendations:

1. DPRK acquisition of nuclear weapons and continued development, testing, deployment, and export of long-range missiles would undermine the relative stability of deterrence on the Korean Peninsula, a precondition for ending the Cold War and pursuing a lasting peace in the longer run. These activities by the DPRK also have serious regional and global consequences adverse to vital U.S. interests. The United States must, therefore, have as its objective ending these activities.

2. The United States and its allies would swiftly and surely win a second war on the Korean Peninsula, but the destruction of life and property would far surpass anything in recent American experience. The U.S. must pursue its objectives with respect to nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles in the DPRK without taking actions that would weaken deterrence or increase the probability of DPRK miscalculation.

3. If stability can be preserved through the cooperative ending of DPRK nuclear weapons- and long-range missile-related activities, the U.S. should be prepared to establish more normal diplomatic relations with the DPRK and join in the ROK's policy of engagement and peaceful coexistence.

4. Unfreezing Yongbyon is North Korea's quickest and surest path to acquisition of nuclear weapons. The Agreed Framework, therefore, should be preserved and implemented by the United States and its allies. With the Agreed Framework, the DPRK's ability to produce plutonium at Yongbyon is verifiably frozen. Without the Agreed Framework, however, it is estimated that the North could reprocess enough plutonium to produce a significant number of nuclear weapons per year. The Agreed Framework's limitations, such as the fact that it does not verifiably freeze all nuclear weapons-related activities and does not cover ballistic missiles, are best addressed by supplementing rather than replacing the Agreed Framework.

5. No U.S. policy toward the DPRK will succeed if the ROK and Japan do not actively support it and cooperate in its implementation. Securing such trilateral coordination should be possible, since the interests of the three parties, while not identical, overlap in significant and definable ways.

6. Considering the risks inherent in the situation and the isolation, suspicion, and negotiating style of the DPRK, a successful U.S. policy will require steadiness and persistence even in the face of provocations. The approach adopted now must be sustained into the future, beyond the term of this Administration. It is, therefore, essential that the policy and its ongoing implementation have the broadest possible support and the continuing involvement of the Congress.

## **Alternative Policies Considered and Rejected**

In the course of the review, the policy team received a great deal of valuable advice, including a variety of proposals for alternative strategies with respect to the security problems presented by the DPRK. The principal alternatives considered by the review team, and the team's reasons for rejecting them in favor of the recommended approach, are set forth below.

Status Quo. A number of policy experts outside the Administration counseled continuation of the approach the U.S. had taken to the DPRK over the past decade: strong deterrence through ready forces and solid alliances and limited engagement with the DPRK beyond existing negotiations on missiles, POW/MIA, and implementation of the nuclear-related provisions of the Agreed Framework. These experts counseled that with the Agreed Framework being verifiably implemented at Yongbyon, North Korea could be kept years away from obtaining additional fissile material for nuclear weapons. Without nuclear weapons, the DPRK's missile program could safely be addressed within the existing (albeit to date inconclusive) bilateral missile talks. Thus, as this argument ran, core U.S. security objectives were being pursued on a timetable appropriate to the development of the threat, and no change in U.S. policy was required.

While there are advantages to continuing the status quo -- since to this point it has served U.S. security interests -- the policy review team rejected the status quo. It was rejected not because it has been unacceptable from the point of view of U.S. security interests, but rather because the policy team feared it was not sustainable. Aside from a failure to address U.S. concerns directly, it is easy to imagine circumstances that would bring the status quo rapidly to a crisis. For example, a DPRK long-range missile launch, whether or not in the form of an attempt to place a satellite in orbit, would have an impact on political support for the Agreed Framework in the United States, Japan, and even in the ROK. In this circumstance, the DPRK could suspend its own compliance with the Agreed Framework, unfreezing Yongbyon and plunging the Peninsula into a nuclear crisis like that in 1994. Such a scenario illustrates the instability of the status quo. Thus, the U.S. may not be able to maintain the status quo, even if we wanted to.

Undermining the DPRK. Others recommend a policy of undermining the DPRK, seeking to hasten the demise of the regime of Kim Jong Il. The policy review team likewise studied this possibility carefully and, in the end, rejected it for several reasons. Given the strict controls on its society imposed by the North Korean regime and the apparent absence of any organized internal resistance to the regime, such a strategy would at best require a long time to realize, even assuming it could succeed. The timescale of this strategy is, therefore, inconsistent with the timescale on which the DPRK could proceed with nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs. In addition, such a policy would risk destructive war and would not win the support of U.S. allies in the region upon whom success in deterring such a war would depend. Finally, a policy of pressure might harm the people of North Korea more than its government.

Reforming the DPRK. Many other analysts suggest that the United States should promote the accelerated political and economic reform of the DPRK along the lines of



established international practice, hastening the advent of democracy and market reform that will better the lot of the North's people and provide the basis for the integration into the international community in a peaceful fashion. However much we might wish such an outcome, success of the policy clearly would require DPRK cooperation. But, the policy team believed that the North Korean regime would strongly resist such reform, viewing it as indistinguishable from a policy of undermining. A policy of reforming, like a policy of undermining, would also take time – more time than it would take the DPRK to proceed with its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs.

“Buying” our objectives. In its current circumstance of industrial and agricultural decline, the DPRK has on occasion indicated a willingness to “trade” addressing U.S. concerns about its nuclear weapons activities and ballistic missile exports for hard currency. For example, the DPRK offered to cease its missile exports if the U.S. agreed to compensate it for the foregone earnings from missile exports. The policy review team firmly believed that such a policy of trading material compensation for security would only encourage the DPRK to further blackmail, and would encourage proliferators worldwide to engage in similar blackmail. Such a strategy would not, and should not, be supported by the Congress, which controls the U.S. government's purse strings.

### **A Comprehensive and Integrated Approach: A Two-Path Strategy**

A better alternative, and the one the review has recommended, is a two-path strategy focused on our priority concerns over the DPRK's nuclear weapons- and missile-related activities. We have devised this strategy in close consultation with the governments of the ROK and Japan, and it has their full support. Indeed, it is a joint strategy in which all three of our countries play coordinated and mutually reinforcing roles in pursuit of the same objectives. Both paths aim to protect our key security interests; the first path is clearly preferable for the United States and its allies and, we firmly believe, for the DPRK.

The first path involves a new, comprehensive and integrated approach to our negotiations with the DPRK. We would seek complete and verifiable assurances that the DPRK does not have a nuclear weapons program. We would also seek the complete and verifiable cessation of testing, production and deployment of missiles exceeding the parameters of the Missile Technology Control Regime, and the complete cessation of export sales of such missiles and the equipment and technology associated with them. By negotiating the complete cessation of the DPRK's destabilizing nuclear weapons and long-range missile programs, this path would lead to a stable security situation on the Korean Peninsula, creating the conditions for a more durable and lasting peace in the long run and ending the Cold War in East Asia.

On this path the United States and its allies would, in a step-by-step and reciprocal fashion, move to reduce pressures on the DPRK that it perceives as threatening. The reduction of perceived threat would in turn give the DPRK regime the confidence that it could coexist peacefully with us and its neighbors and pursue its own economic and social development. If the DPRK moved to eliminate its nuclear and long-range missile

threats, the United States would normalize relations with the DPRK, relax sanctions that have long constrained trade with the DPRK and take other positive steps that would provide opportunities for the DPRK.

If the DPRK were prepared to move down this path, the ROK and Japan have indicated that they would also be prepared, in coordinated but parallel tracks, to improve relations with the DPRK.

It is important that all sides make contributions to creating an environment conducive to success in such far-ranging talks. The most important step by the DPRK is to give assurances that it will refrain from further test firings of long-range missiles as we undertake negotiations on the first path. In the context of the DPRK suspending such tests, the review team recommended that the United States ease, in a reversible manner, Presidentially-mandated trade embargo measures against the DPRK. The ROK and Japan have also indicated a willingness to take positive steps in these circumstances.

When the review team, led by Dr. Perry as a Presidential Envoy, visited Pyongyang in May, the team had discussions with DPRK officials and listened to their views. We also discussed these initial steps that would create a favorable environment for conducting comprehensive and integrated negotiations. Based on talks between with Ambassador Charles Kartman and DPRK Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye Gwan in early September, the U.S. understood and expected that the DPRK would suspend long-range missile testing -- to include both No Dong and Taepo Dong missiles -- for as long as U.S.-DPRK discussions to improve relations continued. The DPRK subsequently announced a unilateral suspension of such tests while talks between the two countries continued. Accordingly, the Administration has taken steps to ease sanctions. This fall a senior DPRK official will likely visit Washington to reciprocate the Perry visit and continue discussions on improving relations. Both sides have taken a bold and meaningful step along the first path. While it is only an initial step, and both sides can easily reverse this first step, we are hopeful that it begins to take us down the long but important path to reducing threat on the Korean Peninsula.

While the first path devised by the review holds great promise for U.S. security and for stability in East Asia, and while the initial steps taken in recent weeks give us great hope, the first path depends on the willingness of the DPRK to traverse it with us. The review team is hopeful it will agree to do so, but on the basis of discussions to date we cannot be sure the DPRK will. Prudence therefore dictated that we devise a second path, once again in consultation with our allies and with their full support. On the second path, we would need to act to contain the threat that we have been unable to eliminate through negotiation. By incorporating two paths, the strategy devised in the review avoids any dependence on conjectures regarding DPRK intentions or behavior and neither seeks, nor depends upon for its success, a transformation of the DPRK's internal system.

If North Korea rejects the first path, it will not be possible for the United States to pursue a new relationship with the DPRK. In that case, the United States and its allies would have to take other steps to assure their security and contain the threat. The U.S. and allied steps should seek to keep the Agreed Framework intact and avoid, if possible, direct conflict. But they would also have to take firm but measured steps to persuade the

DPRK that it should return to the first path and avoid destabilizing the security situation in the region.

Our recommended strategy does not immediately address a number of issues outside the scope of direct U.S.-DPRK negotiations, such as ROK family reunification, implementation of the North-South Basic Agreement (including reactivation of North-South Joint Committees) and Japanese kidnapping cases, as well as other key issues of concern, including drug trafficking. However, the policy review team believed that all of these issues should be, and would be, seriously addressed as relations between the DPRK and the U.S. improve.

Similarly, the review team believed the issue of chemical and biological weapons is best addressed multilaterally. Many recommendations have also been made with respect to Korean unification; but, ultimately, the question of unification is something for the Korean people to decide. Finally, the policy review team strongly believed that the U.S. must not withdraw any of its forces from Korea -- a withdrawal would not contribute to peace and stability, but rather undermine the strong deterrence currently in place.

### **Advantages of the Proposed Strategy**

The proposed strategy has the following advantages:

1. Has the full support of our allies. No U.S. policy can be successful if it does not enjoy the support of our allies in the region. The overall approach builds upon the South's policy of engagement with North Korea, as the ROK leadership suggested to Dr. Perry directly and to the President. It also puts the U.S. effort to end the DPRK missile program on the same footing with U.S. efforts to end its nuclear weapons program, as the Government of Japan recommended.

2. Draws on U.S. negotiating strengths. Pursuant to the recommended approach, the United States will be offering the DPRK a comprehensive relaxation of political and economic pressures which the DPRK perceives as threatening to it and which are applied, in its view, principally by the United States. This approach complements the positive steps the ROK and Japan are prepared to take. On the other hand, the United States will not offer the DPRK tangible "rewards" for appropriate security behavior; doing so would both transgress principles that the United States values and open us up to further blackmail.

3. Leaves stable deterrence of war unchanged. No changes are recommended in our strong deterrent posture on the Korean Peninsula, and the U.S. should not put its force posture on the negotiating table. Deterrence is strong in both directions on the Korean Peninsula today. It is the North's nuclear weapons- and long-range missile-related activities that threaten stability. Likewise, the approach recommended by the review will not constrain U.S. Theater Missile Defense programs or the opportunities of the ROK and Japan to share in these programs; indeed, we explicitly recommended that no such linkage should be made.

4. Builds on the Agreed Framework. The approach recommended seeks more than the Agreed Framework provides. Specifically, under the recommended approach the U.S. will seek a total and verifiable end to all nuclear weapons-related activities in the DPRK, and the U.S. will be addressing the DPRK's long-range missile programs, which are not covered by the Agreed Framework. In addition, the U.S. will seek to traverse the broader path to peaceful relations foreseen by both the U.S. and the DPRK in the Agreed Framework, and incorporated in its text.

5. Aligns U.S. and allied near-term objectives with respect to the DPRK's nuclear and missile activities with our long-term objectives for lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula. The recommended approach focuses on the near-term dangers to stability posed by the DPRK's nuclear weapons- and missile-related activities, but it aims to create the conditions for lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula in the longer run, as the U.S. seeks through the Four Party Talks. As noted above, the recommended approach also seeks to realize the long-term objectives of the Agreed Framework, which are to move beyond cooperation in the nuclear field to broader, more normal U.S.-DPRK relations.

6. Does not depend on specific North Korean behavior or intent. The proposed strategy is flexible and avoids any dependence on conjectures or assumptions regarding DPRK intentions or behavior – benign or provocative. Again, it neither seeks, nor depends upon, either such intentions or a transformation of the DPRK's internal system for success. Appropriate contingencies are built into the recommended framework.

### **Key Policy Recommendations**

In the context of the recommendations above, the review team offered the following five key policy recommendations:

1. Adopt a comprehensive and integrated approach to the DPRK's nuclear weapons- and ballistic missile-related programs, as recommended by the review team and supported by our allies in the region. Specifically, initiate negotiations with the DPRK based on the concept of mutually reducing threat; if the DPRK is not receptive, we will need to take appropriate measures to protect our security and those of our allies.

2. Create a strengthened mechanism within the U.S. Government for carrying out North Korea policy. Operating under the direction of the Principals Committee and Deputies Committee, a small, senior-level interagency North Korea working group should be maintained, chaired by a senior official of ambassadorial rank, located in the Department of State, to coordinate policy with respect to North Korea.

3. Continue the new mechanism established last March to ensure close coordination with the ROK and Japan. The Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) -- established during this policy review and consisting of senior officials of the three governments -- is charged with managing policy toward the DPRK. This group should meet regularly to coordinate negotiating strategy and overall policy toward the DPRK and to prepare frequent consultations on this issue between the President and the

ROK President and Japanese Prime Minister. The U.S. delegation should be headed by the senior official coordinating North Korea policy.

4. Take steps to create a sustainable, bipartisan, long-term outlook toward the problem of North Korea. The President should explore with the majority and minority leaders of both houses of Congress ways for the Hill, on a bipartisan basis, to consult on this and future Administrations' policy toward the DPRK. Just as no policy toward the DPRK can succeed unless it is a combined strategy of the United States and its allies, the policy review team believes no strategy can be sustained over time without the input and support of Congress.

5. Approve a plan of action prepared for dealing with the contingency of DPRK provocations in the near term, including the launch of a long-range missile. The policy review team notes that its proposed responses to negative DPRK actions could have profound consequences for the Peninsula, the U.S. and our allies. These responses should make it clear to the DPRK that provocative actions carry a heavy penalty. Unless the DPRK's acts transgress provisions of the Agreed Framework, however, U.S. and allied actions should not themselves undermine the Agreed Framework. To do so would put the U.S. in the position of violating the Agreed Framework, opening the path for the DPRK to unfreeze Yongbyon and return us to the crisis of the summer of 1994.

### Concluding Thoughts

The team's recommended approach is based on a realistic view of the DPRK, a hardheaded understanding of military realities and a firm determination to protect U.S. interests and those of our allies.

We should recognize that North Korea may send mixed signals concerning its response to our recommended proposal for a comprehensive framework and that many aspects of its behavior will remain reprehensible to us even if we embark on this negotiating process. We therefore should prepare for provocative contingencies but stay the policy course with measured actions pursuant to the overall framework recommended. The North needs to understand that there are certain forms of provocative behavior that represent a direct threat to the U.S. and its allies and that we will respond appropriately.

In this regard, it is with mixed feelings that we recognize certain provocative behavior of the DPRK may force the U.S. to reevaluate current aid levels.

Finally, and to close this review, we need to point out that a confluence of events this past year has opened what we strongly feel is a unique window of opportunity for the U.S. with respect to North Korea. There is a clear and common understanding among Seoul, Tokyo, and Washington on how to deal with Pyongyang. The PRC's strategic goals -- especially on the issue of North Korean nuclear weapons and related missile delivery systems -- overlap with those of the U.S. Pyongyang appears committed to the Agreed Framework and for the time being is convinced of the value of improving relations with the U.S. However, there are always pressures on these positive elements. Underlying tensions and suspicions have led to intermittent armed clashes and incidents and affect

the political environment. Efforts to establish the diplomatic momentum necessary to withstand decades of hostility become increasingly difficult and eventually stall. Nevertheless, the year 1999 may represent, historically, one of our best opportunities to deal with key U.S. security concerns on the Korean Peninsula for some time to come.