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The role of China and Russia in the resolution of North Korea Nuclear program

Angelos Kotrotsios

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1. INTRODUCTION

Despite the years of international condemnation, diplomacy, and pressure, North Korea has managed to develop a relatively small nuclear arsenal, which is ready for further gradual expansion in terms of its size and complexity in the future. North Korea has carried out a series of nuclear tests. While determining the level of North Korea's technical sophistication is difficult, some experts believe that Pyongyang may have achieved the capability to miniaturize a nuclear warhead to be paired atop a ballistic missile. Furthermore it is believed that it may have also developed a boosted-fission weapon that is more sophisticated than a simple fission device (Wertz D., and McGrath M., (b) 1:2016). North Korea is also increasing its stockpile of fissile material through both uranium enrichment and plutonium production programs. Added to this, Pyongyang has developed more sophisticated delivery systems and it has begun to articulate a nuclear posture by deploying underwater and land-based nuclear power distribution systems (Park D., 2016). In addition, North Korea has a history of proliferating nuclear and missile technology abroad, and the possibility of future nuclear proliferation remains a source of major international concern. The Six Party Talks¹, which aimed to find a diplomatic solution to North Korea's nuclear program, have not convened since 2008. Pyongyang has since repeatedly declared that it has no interest in denuclearization (Wertz D., and McGrath M., (b) 1:2016).

1. Six-party talks aim to find a peaceful solution to the security concerns of North Korea's nuclear weapons program. The six countries that are participating in the meetings are: DPRK, South Korea, USA, China, Russia and Japan: These talks were the result of the withdrawal of North Korea from the NPT in 2003. Source: 1:2013

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this working paper is to present and analyze the contribution of Russia and China to the United Nations Security Council (or UNSC) on North Korea's nuclear program, but also to describe the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) relations with China and Russia (in the light of the nuclear program). In order to further understand the attitude of both Russia and China in DPRK's nuclear program we will briefly address: (a) the historical relations of the DPRK with China and the USSR (later Russia), (b) how Russia and China contributed (both logistically and in terms of know-how) to the development of DPRK's nuclear program and missile systems and (c) to analyze China's and Russia's close economic relations with DPRK. In addition, we will mention China's, Russia's and the West's doubts whether North Korea will use its nuclear arsenal against neighboring countries, and how China and Russia as permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), can help to prevent North Korea from carrying out such an attack.

3. CHINA'S AND RUSSIA'S HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA (DPRK) SINCE THE DIVISION OF KOREAN PENINSULA (1948)

Russia and China maintain a long-term diplomatic and economic relationship with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. After the creation of the two Koreas in 1948, with USSR's help, North Korea immediately began a military buildup and economic infrastructure that was suited to capitalizing on its natural resources--the mining of coal, metals and other minerals, refinement using coal and hydroelectric power (plentiful due to its mountainous terrain). The North Koreans were told that South Korea was a puppet government for a new colonial power (meaning the USA), that the Americans were simply replacing the Japanese, and that having the support of an ally that assisted it to defeat the Japanese (Russia), it is not hard to see that North Korea was actually established on a strong foundation (Chadwick W. R., 4:2002).

Kim Il Sung, backed if not prodded by Stalin, attacked the South just two years after the North was created and just six months after Mao forced Chiang (the USA ally) to flee to Taiwan with a million of his followers. Till 1950, the USA still had hopes of Chiang Kai-shek's return to China. General MacArthur, then Governor of Japan, was sure of victory. Ultimately, his poor judgment brought the Chinese into the war, resulted in a almost a million Koreans losing their lives, roughly 1.5-2 million Chinese, and a stalemate instead of what seemed to be a sure victory after forcing the North Korean army back deeply into its own territory². DPRK, seeing itself as grateful to Russian and Chinese supporters who saved it from annihilation at the hands of the USA and lacking the ability to wage conventional war, it turned to the tools of the weak, fostering guerrilla movements and terrorist attacks, for which service it was well paid (Chadwick W. R., 4:2002). Since its establishment as a state until 1987, DPRK has spent some US\$2.8 billion on arms imports from China and the Soviet Union. Purchases included aircraft, missiles, trucks, radars, and command, control, communications, and intelligence equipment (Chadwick W. R., 5:2002). However, after the end of the Cold War, relations between China, Russia and North Korea began to decline due to Russia's democratization (and the

collapse of its empire), and China's economic push for capitalism and its accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). So China and Russia have made their relations increasingly difficult with North Korea. The focus has shifted from Cold War politics and Korean peninsula brinkmanship to managing economic globalization processes through various financial crises and adapting to a freer trade and capital flow regimen. North Korea, whether it admits it or not, is seeing itself left behind by the major powers, with its only legacy its ability to intimidate through promoting terrorism (Chadwick W. R., 7:2002).

The shift of China and Russia from the Socialist Economy to Capitalism, and the agricultural crisis of DRPK, forced Pyongyang to partially normalize the intensity of its relationship with the US and the West. This normalization will, however, last until 2002, when US President George W. Bush called North Korea as part of the "axis of evil" in a statement (Shuan S., 2015).

2. *The war began June 25, 1950 and ended in July 1950* (<http://www.history.com/topics/korean-war>)

4. CHINA'S AND RUSSIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF DPRK'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM AND ARSENAL

China's and Russia's role has been crucial for the DPRK's nuclear program development. Its nuclear activities have a long history. Based on the international bibliography, North Korea's nuclear program is divided into four phases: the 1st is its inception (since the 1950s), the 2nd is the Indigenous Accumulation of Nuclear Expertise (from the early 1960s to the mid-1970s), the 3rd one is its rapid expansion (late 1970s to early 1990s), and the 4th is maturation (since 1994) (Mansourov Y. A., 25-28:1995). Even before the DPRK was founded on September 9th in 1948, the USSR sent a team of scientists to North Korea in 1947 to conduct a geological survey on monazite mines. Since the end of 1949 with the outbreak of the Korean War, North Korea has been exporting monazite concentrates, minerals such as tantalum, niobium, and uranium to the Soviet Union in exchange for military equipment. In 1952, when the Chinese People's Volunteers were holding the battle line along the 38th parallel, China sent Dr. Wang Gao Chang to North Korea to search for and collect radioactive materials (Kovsh A., 139:2014).

After the war, on 26 March and 7 September 1956, the USSR and the DPRK signed two agreements on cooperation in nuclear energy research programs. Under these agreements, a framework for co-operation between the Soviet Union and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was established in the nuclear sector and North Korean scientists began to receive practical training at the Soviet Dubna facility. In 1959, the DPRK signed an additional protocol with the Soviet Union for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. This protocol allowed the transfer of a small research nuclear reactor and nuclear equipment to Pyongyang (Kovsh A., 139-141:2014)

Furthermore, in the late 1950s, the DPRK government sent some nuclear scientists to the People's Republic of China for nuclear training at the Chinese nuclear-related facilities. In the mid-1950s, the DPRK government established nuclear physics departments at Kim Il-sung National University and Kim Ch'aek Industrial College. These two universities were in charge of the academic education of most of the North Korean nuclear scholars and technicians. Their faculties conducted basic nuclear research and

were responsible for keeping abreast of international developments in the field of nuclear physics (Mansourov Y. A., 26:1995). Starting in the 1960s, DPRK scientists were trained by the Soviet experts at the Dubna nuclear research facilities and also by the Chinese. The DPRK technicians probably obtained knowledge about reprocessing chemistry and related technology during this training. The Soviet Union provided the DPRK an IRT research reactor (IRT-DPRK) and laboratory-scale processing equipment (“hot cells”) in the 1960s (Dreicer J. S., 275:2000).

North Korea asked the Soviet Union in 1963 and China in 1964 assistance to develop nuclear weapons, but its request was rejected by both states (Jae-Bong L., 1,12:2009). South Korea prepared to develop its own nuclear weapons in 1974 and North Korea began to develop its own program in the late 1970s (Jae-Bong L., 1:2009). The DPRK signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1985, but did not ratify an INFCIRC/153 type comprehensive safeguards agreement associated with the regime until April 9, 1992 (Dreicer J. S., 275:2000). The objective of INFCIRC/153 safeguards is «*the timely detection of diversion of significant quantities of nuclear material from peaceful nuclear activities to the manufacture of nuclear weapons or of other nuclear explosive devices or for purposes unknown, and deterrence of such diversion by the risk of early detection*». (Greene O., 6:1992). As part of their safeguards declaration in May 1992, the DPRK provided the IAEA with nuclear material and facility declarations (Dreicer J. S., 275:2000).

DPRK had extensive understanding of nuclear technology by the 1990s. As early as 1965, the DPRK had an indigenous nuclear infrastructure, including technically capable scientists and technicians, the IRT-DPRK research reactor, critical and subcritical facilities, and a quality source of natural uranium at Pyongsan (Dreicer J. S., 275:2000). According to the World Information Service on Energy (wiseinternational.org) from the mid-1990s, DPRK began to exploit the extraction of its own indigenous uranium reserves and enriched nuclear warheads (wiseinternational.org/17/01/2003). Beyond its nuclear program, China and Russia have logically supported the development of North Korean missile systems. For example, North Korean Hwasong-5 and -6 are variants of the Scud-B and -C-Soviet ballistic missiles (both of which are believed to be at the top of North Korea's list of exporting missiles) (Cordesman A., Hess A., 8-9:2013). In addition, the mid-

range ballistic missile NoDong (the exact date of development of which is not accurate) was developed in the late 1980s as part of Soviet technology transfer (Pierre B., 2014).

5. CHINA'S AND RUSSIA'S DIPLOMATIC AND ECONOMIC TIES WITH DPRK

Relations with China

According to Professor, Artyom Lukin: *«The resilience of the DPRK stems, to a large extent, from its economic links with China. Commerce with the Middle Kingdom (meaning China) accounts for as much as 90% of North Korea's total foreign trade»*. China has so far largely refrained from introducing economic sanctions against DPRK, even though Beijing is visibly unhappy with the North's nuclear and missile shenanigans. China's caution in using its economic leverage to punish North Korea is mainly due to the concern that harsh sanctions could trigger the collapse of the DPRK, (Lukin A.(a), 2016), *«through a US – led military effort at "regime change" in Pyongyang that would rapidly topple the regime but leave South Korea at the centre of picking up the pieces at it assembled a unified Korean state»* (Olsen A. E., 164:2005).

The choice between the two "bad" scenarios – meaning: a) a nuclear-armed and belligerent North Korea versus b) the entire Korean Peninsula coming under the strategic umbrella of the United States — Beijing prefers the former. In other words, China will continue to tolerate the North Korean regime as long as Beijing sees Washington as the chief strategic opponent and source of threat. One should also keep in mind that, since 1961, China has maintained an alliance treaty with North Korea and shows no intention of renouncing it (Lukin A.(a), 2016). China is North Korea's most important trading partner and main source of food and energy. It has helped sustain Kim Jong-un's regime, and has historically opposed harsh international sanctions on North Korea in the hope of avoiding regime collapse and a refugee influx across their 870-mile border. Pyongyang's 4th nuclear test and missile launch at the beginning of 2016, have complicated its relationship with Beijing, which has continued to advocate for the resumption of the Six Party Talks, the multilateral framework aimed at denuclearizing North Korea. Yet China's policies have done little to deter DPRK's nuclear ambitions (Albert E., and Ro J., 2016).

China's support for North Korea dates back to the Korean War (1950–1953), when its troops flooded the Korean Peninsula to aid its northern ally. Since the war, China has lent political and economic backing to North Korea's leaders: Kim Il-sung

(estimated 1948–1994), Kim Jong-il (roughly 1994–2011), and Kim Jong-un (2011–). But strains in the relationship began to surface when Pyongyang tested a nuclear weapon in October 2006 and Beijing supported UNSC Resolution 1718, which imposed sanctions on Pyongyang. With this resolution and other subsequent ones (UNSC Resolutions 1874, 2094, 2270, 2321, 2371, and 2375), Beijing signaled a shift in tone from diplomacy to punishment (Albert E. and Ro J., 2016). Chinese Ambassador to the UN, Li Baodong, said China supports a balanced and proportionate approach towards this issue. «*China is a country of principle. We're firmly committed to safeguarding peace, stability on the Korean Peninsula. We're committed firmly to safeguarding the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, promoting the denuclearization of Korean Peninsula. And also we're committed to peaceful settlement of relevant issues through negotiations and dialogue*». Just hours before the Security Council's vote on the new sanctions, North Korea re-issued its threat to launch a preemptive nuclear strike against the United States. Chinese Ambassador Li Baodong was calling on everyone to cool down and look for a diplomatic solution. He also admitted that a nuclear-free Korean peninsula would be hard to achieve, but he said that it could be possible if the six-party talks could resume. Pyongyang has said it no longer wants any part of the Six-Party talks (china.org.cn, 2013).

Following the Pyongyang Third Nuclear Test in February 2013, China called North Korea's ambassador, for de-nuclearization talks (Snyder S., 2014). However, Beijing still has broad links with Pyongyang, including financial transactions and senior executive travels, such as the visit by senior Communist Party leader Li Yunshan to attend the 70th anniversary of the ruling North Korean party in October of 2015 (Albert E. and Ro J., 2016), (Hewitt G., 2015). Liu Yunshan was the only foreign dignitary of any significance attending this anniversary. Kim and Liu met for talks in October of 2015, during which the Chinese official delivered a letter from President Xi Jinping, and voiced Beijing's willingness to work with Pyongyang on resuming multi-party talks on its nuclear program. China remains North Korea's most important diplomatic ally and economic partner, even as Beijing has grown increasingly wary and impatient with Pyongyang's nuclear weapons ambitions (Hewitt G., 2015).

China–North Korea trade has also steadily increased in recent years: in 2014 trade between the two countries hit \$6.39 billion, up from about \$500 million in 2000, according to figures from the Seoul-based Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency.

Recent reports indicate that bilateral trade dropped by almost 15% in 2015, though it is unclear whether the dip is a result of chilled ties between Beijing and Pyongyang or China's economic slowdown (Fisher M., 2016). According to director of the program on U.S.-Korea Policy at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) «*there is no reason to think that political risks emanating from North Korea will lead China to withdraw its economic safety net for North Korea any time soon*» (Fisher M., 2016), (Snyder S., 2014).

In conclusion, it could be argued that China will not let its relations with DPRK deteriorate because of the latter's nuclear program. From China's view, North Korea is a vital buffer zone that serves to keep US forces away since they are stationed in South Korea. Last but not least, China would not wish to see a united Korean state, which is likely to be an ally to United States.

Aid and Trade for Pyongyang

China accounts for more than 90% of North Korea's total volume of trade, including food and energy supplies (Albert E., 2017). Over the past fifteen years there has been an increase in the volume of China and North Korea's trade (see Figure 1). In September 2015, the two countries opened a route for cargo and container shipments to boost coal exports to China, and China created high-speed rail links between the Chinese cities of Dandong and Shenyang in the northeastern province of Liaoning, China (Albert E., 2017).

In October 2015, the Guomenwan border trade zone opened in Dandong with the intention of boosting bilateral economic links, much like the Rason Economic Zone and the Sinujiu special administrative zone established in North Korea in the early 1990s and 2002, respectively. Dandong is a critical hub for trade, investment and tourism for the two neighbors-exchanges with North Korea making up 40% of the total trade and 70% of North Korea's trade in and through Dandong and Sinujiu. China, Japan, South Korea, and the United States have provided more than 75 percent of food aid to North Korea since 1995, but donations from all countries except for China have shrunk significantly since the collapse of the Six Party Talks in 2009 (Albert E., 2017). China has long regarded stability on the Korean peninsula as its primary interest. Its support for

Pyongyang ensures a friendly nation on its northeastern border, and provides a buffer zone between China and South Korea. According to D. C. Sneider: «*For the Chinese, stability and the avoidance of war are the top priorities*» (Xu Beina and Bajoria Jayshree, 2014). However, in 2016, due to the United Nations pressures on China for its stance on North Korea's nuclear program and its refusal to engage in multilateral talks, China's and North Korea's trade relations worsened. In April 2016, China, banned most imports of North Korean coal and iron ore, the country's main exports. This decision was a result of a significant increase in pressure on the North under U.N. sanctions against its nuclear and missile tests. China buys an estimated two-thirds of impoverished North Korea's exports, making Beijing's cooperation essential for trade penalties approved by the UNSC. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, has intensified nuclear activities in defiance of U.N. sanctions, conducting his country's fourth nuclear test in January and test-firing missiles. In a sign of frustration with its ally, China signed onto UNSC sanctions last month that include mandatory inspections of cargo bound to and from North Korea (McDonald J., 2016).

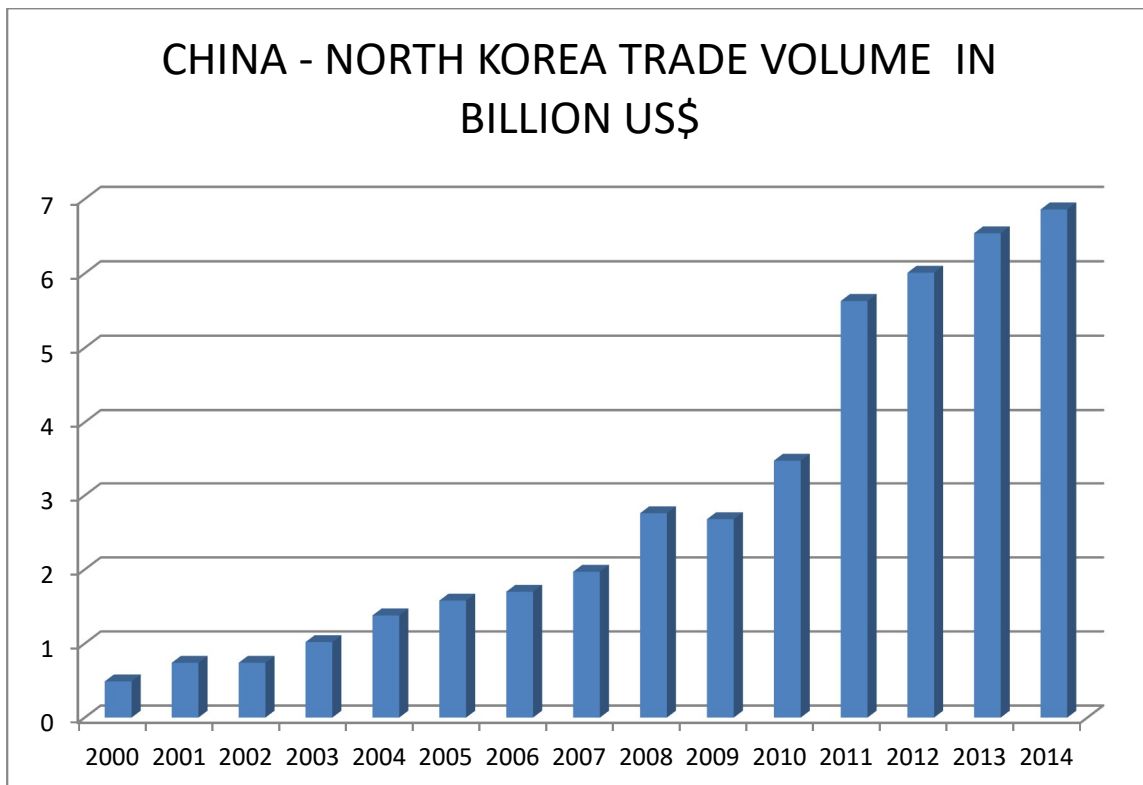


Figure 1. China and North Korea trade volume in Billion US\$

Source: Albert Eleanor and Xu Beina, Julia Ro. *Defence One*. Council on Foreign Relations. February 12, 2016

The council called on all countries to "redouble their efforts" to enforce the sanctions. The CIA estimated North Korea's 2013 exports at \$4.4 billion, with 65% of that going to China. The Chinese Ministry of Commerce said that *«Some imports for civilian use will be allowed so long as they are not connected to nuclear or missile programs»*. The announcement also banned sales of jet fuel to North Korea, but said civilian aircraft would be allowed to refuel during flights to China (McDonald J., 2016). President Barack Obama and his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, promised to cooperate to promote denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula during a nuclear security conference that took place in Washington, in March, 2016. During the conference, U.S. government expressed their satisfaction on Beijing's trade restrictions as part of efforts to enforce U.N. sanctions. The American Embassy in Beijing stated that: *«We will continue to urge China to do more until we see concrete signs that Kim Jong Un has come to the realization that the only viable path forward for his country is denuclearization»* (McDonald J., 2016).

In conclusion, it could be said that due to DPRK'S insistence on the further development of nuclear and missile systems and its refusal to denuclearize, there have been some major adjustments of Chinese foreign policy towards DPRK. It remains to be seen whether, in the near future, the status quo on the Korean Peninsula will continue. China, possibly, will continue to support North Korea both financially and politically.

Relations with Russia

Between 2014 and 2015, Russia-North Korea relations have improved significantly in the diplomatic field. In particular, North Korea expressed support for Russia over Crimea. In turn, Moscow defended the DPRK at the UNSC when it voted, along with China, against the inclusion of the issue of human rights in North Korea on the UNSC agenda. According to A. Lukin: *«Moscow also probably wants to use its increased support for North Korea as additional leverage in the dealings with the West, Seoul and Tokyo, while North Korea needs Russia to reduce its extreme dependence on China»* (Lukin A. (e), 85-86: 2015). In 2014, Russia had become the country with the most frequent visits by senior North Korean officials. Since February 2014, the DPRK Supreme

People's Assembly Presidium Chairman, Kim Yong-nam, Minister of Foreign Trade Lee Ren-Nam, Foreign Minister Lee Soo-Young, Kim Jong-un's special envoy Choe Ryong Hae, Supreme People's Assembly Chairman Choi Thae Baek and other senior leaders traveled to Russia (Lukin A. (b), 2016). Russia reciprocated by sending to Pyongyang multiple delegations. Although the expected visit of the DPRK's supreme leader Kim Jong-un to Moscow for the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of victory over Nazi Germany did not materialize³. However, this did not slow the momentum of Russia-North Korea ties, with 2015 designated as the *Year of Friendship of Russia and the DPRK* (Lukin A. (b), 2016).

On the economic front, too, there have been a number of significant developments. The issue of North Korea's debt to Russia (inherited from the Soviet era) was finally settled in May 2014, with Russia agreeing to write off 90% of the \$11 billion debt. The remaining 10% of the debt (\$ 1.09bn) will be repaid over the next 20 years, which will be paid in equal installments every six months. The unpaid debt owed by North Korea will be managed by the state-run development bank of Russia, Vnesheconombank. Russian Deputy Finance Minister Sergei Storchak told the Russian media that the money could be used to fund a mutual project in North Korea, including a proposed gas pipeline and a railway line in South Korea (reuters/19/04/2014). In order to promote bilateral commerce, the Russian-North Korean Business Council was set up, while North Korea agreed to relax visa regulations for Russian businesspeople and facilitate their work activities in the DPRK. Russia and the DPRK have made steps to use rubles in their commercial transactions. Apart from facilitating bilateral trade, the shift to rubles may help reduce North Korea's vulnerability to the US financial sanctions that target dollar-denominated transactions (Lukin A. (b), 2016). North Korea is important for Russia as Putin is seeking economic benefits. In particular, Putin wants to establish a bridgehead for expanding economic cooperation with South Korea and Japan through the construction of the Eurasia Rail and Trans-Korean Railway, which will connect North and South Korea to Russia (Tae-jun Kang., 2015). The bulk of Russia's direct investment in North Korea is related to the Khasan-Rajin project. The state-owned Russian Railways spent roughly \$300 mln on the upgrade of the 54-kilometer cross-border railway link from Russia's Khasan to the North Korean port of Rajin To implement the project, a joint venture, *Rasonkontrans*, was established, with Russia holding 70% of the shares and North Korea 30%. the Khasan-Rajin venture may well be the largest single foreign

investment in North Korea. The upgraded railway, which became operational in 2013, allows the use of the port of Rajin for transshipment of cargos coming via the Trans-Siberian from Russia bound for Asia-Pacific countries (Lukin A. (b), 2016).

In conclusion, we could say that, since both states have been sanctioned by the West, Russia and North Korea now feel sympathetic to each other. In particular, North Korea expressed its support for Russia on the issue of the Crimea. In turn, Moscow defended DPRK in UNSC during the vote, along with China, on the inclusion of the issue of human rights in North Korea on the agenda of the UNSC (Panda A., 2014).

3. Pyongyang was instead represented by Kim Yong-nam, the second-in-command in the DPRK state hierarchy (Lukin A. (b), 2016)

6. CHINA'S AND RUSSIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO UN SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC) ON DPRK'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

Russia's contribution

UNSC on March 2, 2016 approved a plan to impose sanctions on North Korea for its nuclear tests and rocket launch, after Russia backed a joint resolution introduced by the U.S. and China (February 2016) and co-sponsored by 55 countries. Under the resolution, countries are required to ban all weapons sales to North Korea, and restrict all revenues to Pyongyang except for humanitarian purposes. The resolution also makes it mandatory for countries to inspect all cargo to and from North Korea, as well as cut off supplies of aviation and rocket fuel. In addition, countries have to expel North Korean diplomats who are affiliated with the nuclear program (Korablinov A., 2016).

On February 2016, the Russian ambassador to the United Nations said at South Korean news agency Yonhap that: *«the draft sanctions resolution is "not 100 percent perfect" but is necessary»* (Shim E., 2016). After the vote was postponed; Churkin met with reporters and explained that *"the draft was a very complex document"*. Russian news agency TASS reported that Churkin said that the Security Council must adopt the resolution because of the *"specific challenges of North Korea."* The Council was expected to vote on the resolution unanimously with Russia's support (Shim E., 2016). China and the USA already agreed on the details of the draft resolution, and after Russia disagreed with the draft's details on February 25, 2016 U.S. and Russian delegates had worked overtime to fix some of the terms and conditions. Churkin said the United States did not accommodate all of Russia's requests but that the two sides are trying to achieve consensus. A clause on banning aviation fuel exports to North Korea has been eased, after the Russian side requested a revision. The revision would allow for North Korean commercial airliners refueling at Russian airports to receive jet fuel so that its planes can return to their point of origin, Pyongyang (Shim E., 2016).

The sanctions of resolution 1695, Russia's position

In July 2006, North Korea launched seven ballistic missiles that landed in Japanese territorial waters, endangering Northeast Asia's security. The UNSC therefore passed resolution 1695, which demanded that North Korea suspend all missile-related programs, and called on Member States to be vigilant with regard to arms transfers to and from North Korea (UNSC/15/07/2006). In Resolution 1695, Russia condemned the launch of multiple ballistic missiles on July, BY North Korea stating that: *«...it jeopardizes peace, stability and security in the region and beyond. This action violated the DPRK's pledge to maintain a moratorium on missile launches and is inconsistent with the purposes of the Six-Party Talks Joint Statement of September 19, 2005, in which all parties - including the DPRK - committed to joint efforts to lasting peace and stability in Northeast Asia»*. (www.nti.org/16/07/2006).

In addition, Russia expressed its deep concern over possible additional missile launches from North Korea and the need to immediately return to full compliance with the NPT⁴. *«We also express our grave concern about the DPRK's indication of possible additional launches. We call on the DPRK to reestablish its preexisting commitments to a moratorium on missile launches and to refrain from contributing to missile proliferation. In accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution 1695 we will exercise vigilance in preventing any external cooperation with the DPRK's missile and WMD programmes. These missile launches intensify our deep concern over the DPRK's nuclear weapons programmes. We reiterate the necessity for the DPRK promptly to return to full compliance with the NPT. We strongly urge the DPRK to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes. We reaffirm our full support for the September 19, 2005 Joint Statement and the Six-Party talks. We urge the DPRK to expeditiously return to these talks without precondition and to cooperate to settle the outstanding issues of concern on the basis of this Statement, which reaffirms the common objective of Six Parties; all participants should intensify their efforts to achieve the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner and to maintain peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia»* (www.nti.org/16/07/2006).

The sanctions of resolution 1718, Russia's position

The UNSC Resolution 1718 prohibited the transfer to and from North Korea of weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery (ballistic missiles) and related materials. All UNSC members, including Russia and China, agreed that there should be some appropriate punishment for North Korea's nuclear test (Joo Seung-Ho, and Kwak Tae-Hwan, 193:2016) that took place on 9 October 2006 at the Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Site (North East of DPRK) (nti.org/learn/facilities/26/05/2015). But Moscow along with Seoul and Beijing, opposed the use of force and warned against escalating the situation out of control. In a live Russian TV program on October 25, 2006, Vladimir Putin strongly rebuked the nuclear blast but at the same time admonished against driving North Korea into a corner (Joo Seung-Ho, and Kwak Tae-Hwan, 193:2016).

After North Korea test-fired a long-range missile on April 5, 2009, Russia joined the other UNSC members in crafting a UNSC Presidential Statement. The UNSC adopted a Presidential Statement, which condemned the rocket launch as a violation of UNSC Resolution 1718. The condemnation was a compromise between Russia and China on the one side, and the US and Japan on the other (Joo Seung-Ho, and Kwak Tae-Hwan, 193:2016).

The sanctions of resolution 1874, Russia's position

UNSC Resolution 1874 was unanimously adopted by the UNSC on 12 June 2009 which imposed further economic and commercial sanctions on DPRK following an nuclear test conducted on 25 May 2009 (<https://www.un.org/press/en/2009/sc9679.doc.htm>). Russia welcomed decision UNSC Resolution 1874 describing it as "*balanced and appropriate*". The Russian foreign ministry stated that the resolution «*strikes the right balance: strong sanctions are counterbalanced by the framework of Chapter VII, Article 41 of the UN Charter are a clear positive alternative*». During the negotiations leading to the adoption of UNSC resolution 1874, the Russian side vigorously insisted that sanctions on North Korea should not include the use of military force in line with Article 41. The Russian Foreign Ministry called on DPRK to comply with Security UNSCR 1874 and urged all sides not to take any action that might aggravate the situation (Joo Seung-Ho, and Kwak Tae-Hwan, 199-218: 2014).

4. *The NPT is a landmark international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament. The Treaty represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States. Opened for signature in 1968, the Treaty entered into force in 1970. On 11 May 1995, the Treaty was extended indefinitely. A total of 191 States have joined the Treaty, including the five nuclear-weapon States (USA, Russia, China, UK and France). (<https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/>*

China's contribution

China criticized a February 2014 UN report that detailed human rights abuses in North Korea - including torture, forced starvation, and crimes against humanity (Xu Beina and Bajoria Jayshree, 2014) – and attempted to block UNSC sessions held in December 2014 and 2015 on the country's human rights status. Even China's punitive steps have been restrained. Beijing only agreed to UN Resolution 1718 after revisions removed requirements for tough economic sanctions beyond those targeting luxury goods. More recently, China backed UN Resolution 2375 in September 2017 after some of the measures in a draft version were dropped, including an oil embargo and the authorization to use force when ships do not comply with mandated inspections. Western officials and experts doubt how committed China is to implementing even the more limited new trade restrictions (Albert E., 2017).

The sanctions of resolution 1695, China's position

China did not block the resolution and made a regular statement that Beijing was gravely concerned about the emerging situation on the Korean peninsula and was opposed to any further tension. The UN agreed with China's plan of attending to the North Korean missiles issue through bilateral dialogue (Ren Mu, 121-122:2014). On July 10, the P5 and Japan convened a meeting to discuss the resolution against North Korea. China strongly opposed the Japanese draft but had changed its attitude to a possible resolution. The Japan-sponsored draft would have allowed military enforcement under Chapter VII of the UN Charter and would have banned all UN members from acquiring North Korean missiles or weapons of mass destruction (Fox News, 2010). After the meeting, Wang Guangya, the Chinese permanent representative to the UN, said that if other member states wanted a resolution, they should have a modified one instead of the current one (ie 1695) (Ren Mu, 122:2014).

The following day, China and Russia proposed a draft resolution on North Korea in the UNSC, which did not include strong measures such as sanctions (Jeffries I., 123-

124:2009). The second day after Wu's return from North Korea, China ultimately approved the watered-down draft resolution, which did not invoke Chapter VII of the UN Charter and excluded calling Pyongyang a threat. Instead, it called on states to exercise vigilance in their arms transactions with North Korea. In this process, China kept the same political stand with Russia (Ren Mu, 122:2014), (Colum Lynch, 2006).

The sanctions of resolution 1718, China's position

Contrary to that of the missile launch crisis, China's reaction to North Korea's nuclear test was forceful and straightforward. On October 9, 2014 the very day of North Korea's second nuclear test, China swiftly issued a statement condemning North Korea for defying the international community and calling the nuclear test a "flagrant" act (Ren Mu, 123:2014), (Glaser S. B., 2006). Ambassador and permanent representative of the Chinese mission to the United Nations, Wang Guangya responded that there had to be some punitive actions in the draft resolution presented to the UNSC by the US on October 9. China had directly and indirectly conveyed its position on denuclearization of the Korean peninsula to North Korea (Ren Mu, 123-124:2014).

However, China does not fully support the draft resolution proposed by the United States. The US considered that the choice of military intervention at the negotiating table should be maintained. China does not agree with this option, which is opposed to the use of military violence (Lukin A. (a), 2016). The discrepancy between China and the US focused on one provision in the draft resolution - the authorization of international inspections of cargo leaving and arriving in North Korea to detect weapons-related material (Charbonneau L., Nichols M., 2016). China rejected the revision due to a likely escalation of North Korean provocations induced by the inspections. In order to dissolve objections from China, the US modified the draft and excluded the measure of using military force as well as a blanket arms embargo. China limited the sanctions to nuclear and missile materials transactions because excessive sanctions might have led to the economic collapse of North Korea (Kuhn A., 2016). China's concern with coercive methods toward North Korea seemed rational since the Kim Jong-il regime would likely shift the burden of sanctions to the people, resulting in an accelerated humanitarian crisis (Ren Mu, 123-124:2014).

The sanctions of resolution 1874, China's position

China was disappointed in North Korea's second nuclear test on May 25, 2009, which was depicted by the rhetoric that North Korea had ignored universal opposition and that China was resolutely opposed to it (Xinhua News Agency, 25/052009). Beijing voted in favor of UNSC Resolution 1874, which included harsher sanctions than its precursor (Resolution 1718). The punitive measure was the only option to deal with North Korea's crisis since Pyongyang had declared its withdrawal from the Six Party Talks. Similar to Resolution 1718, Resolution 1874 did not include implied military measures and the content that all states should search North Korean ships suspected of carrying illicit cargo, as originally suggested by the US. Nonetheless, both resolutions were aimed at prohibiting North Korea from conducting nuclear tests or using ballistic missile technology in the future (Shen, D., 178:2009). Although it was reluctant to use coercive measures against North Korea, China compromised on the appeal of the international community. One important factor was that the international community had reached a consensus to apply sanctions against North Korea. From the Chinese perspective, sanctions against North Korea had alerted the latter's provocations in the condition of diplomatic deadlock (Ren Mu, 124-125:2014).

7. ANALYZING CHINA'S AND RUSSIA'S STANCE TO THE UNSC OVER DPRK'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

Washington's continued fixation on China as the only route to the solution of the North Korea nuclear problem is misplaced. It ignores other factors and actors that have an impact and can contribute to the resolution of the ongoing crisis on the Korean Peninsula. Russia is one such actor that is often overlooked. Russia is now the only major country that is on more or less friendly terms with Pyongyang (Lukin A.(d), 1:2017). The economic dependence of North Korea on neighboring states (mainly China) could be characterized as an asymmetrical dependence. In *Power and Interdependence* (1977), Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye built upon Albert Otto Hirschman's notion of how asymmetrical dependence serves as a source of power for the less dependent state. Although these works do not explicitly address the trade-conflict relationship, they illuminate the dynamics present in asymmetrical relations. The manipulation and potential for coercive tactics characteristic of asymmetrical relationships stand in sharp contrast to the harmonious ties described by liberals (Barbieri K., 30-31:2002).

The DPRK trusts no person or country, but it probably distrusts Russia much less than China and the United States. This dynamic gives Russia a potential diplomatic role in the North Korean problem. The Kremlin does not support using high pressure tactics against Pyongyang, especially military options, as it might have unpredictable and disastrous consequences for the entire Northeast Asian region. Moscow is committed to the denuclearization of North Korea, but sees it as a long-term goal, while the most realistic objective at present should be a North Korean nuclear and missile moratorium, or "freeze" (Lukin A.(d), 1:2017).

Unlike China, Russia is extremely worried about the menace of a nuclear-armed North Korea undermining the global non-proliferation regime. In this regard, Russian and U.S. interests come together, creating possibilities for collaboration. However, the prospects for Russia-U.S. cooperation on North Korea will, to a great extent, depend on the state of their bilateral relationship (Lukin A.(d), 1:2017). Like Washington, Moscow is loath to accept a nuclear North Korea, though the Kremlin's reasons may be somewhat

different. Although North Korea's nuclear test site is just 200 miles from Vladivostok, Russia does not feel directly threatened by Kim's nukes. However, North Korea's continued nuclearisation — and the chain reaction of horizontal proliferation this may trigger — will inevitably devalue Russia's own nuclear arsenal, which it sees as an essential attribute of its great power status and the ultimate guarantee of national security (Lee R., and Lukin A., 2017).

As the most basic common denominator, Moscow and Washington should collaborate to prevent possible horizontal proliferation of North Korean nuclear technologies and materials, such as attempts by the North Korean regime or by its rogue individual representatives to sell nuclear components to other states or non-state actors. A mechanism of permanent U.S.-Russian consultations and exchanges on the Korean peninsula security problems needs to be established to address non-proliferation and other concerns (Lukin A.(f), 2017).

8. CONCLUSIONS

From the viewpoint of traditional "power politics," (realpolitik or "realistic politics"), the use of military power for political coercion is a normal, traditional activity in international relations as any world history or world civilization class will attest (Chadwick W. R., 6:2002). The contribution of China and Russia to the UNSC on the issue of the nuclear program of DRPK was crucial. China and Russia share a common position on international sanctions such as the principle of non-intervention and their preference for soft measures rather than imposing rigorous measures to resolve international and regional crises in the Security Council (Budová A., 47-48:2016). However, when dialogue or negotiation proves ineffective, China and Russia accept the calls of the international community. China often seeks convergence with Russia when it does not agree with the rest of the Security Council. Moscow's role in the Korean peninsula is currently constrained by its quasi-alliance with Beijing. Moscow's estrangement from the West in the wake of the Ukraine crisis has made it increasingly deferent to Chinese interests in East Asia. In recent years, Russia's policies on the North Korea problem have largely followed China's. Yet China is playing its own strategic game in the peninsula, in which the denuclearisation of North Korea is by no means the top priority (Lee R., και Lukin A., 2017).

Since Donald Trump moved into the White House, prospects emerge for improvement in US–Russia relations. If Russia-US relations improved, it would give Moscow more freedom vis-à-vis Beijing, including in the Korean peninsula. Even though the Russo-Chinese 'strategic partnership' is likely to continue, Moscow will be more inclined to act as an independent pole in East Asian geopolitics rather than as a passive bystander and Beijing's junior ally (Lee R., και Lukin A., 2017). Diplomatically, Russia is almost ideally placed to play a key negotiating role in finding a multilateral solution to the North Korea conundrum. Moscow is friends with Beijing and Pyongyang, has reasonably good relations with Seoul and has lately enhanced ties with Tokyo. One major reason Russia has kept a low-profile in Korean affairs in recent years is its preoccupation with Ukraine and Syria. If those crises are contained, Moscow will be able to commit to the escalating nuclear problem in the Korean peninsula (Lee R. και Lukin A., 2017).

Furthermore, Russia could offer significant inducements to DPRK. For example, a trans-Korean gas pipeline, or a railway and electricity transmission projects linking the Russian Far East to the Korean Peninsula. If implemented, these schemes could greatly boost the economic fortunes of the DPRK. A few years ago Russia already spent roughly US\$ 300 million on the upgrade of a 54-kilometre cross-border railway link from Russia's Khasan to the North Korean port of Rajin. The Khasan–Rajin venture remains the largest single foreign investment in North Korea, except for South Korean-funded projects (Lee R., και Lukin A., 2017). Like Washington, Moscow is loath to accept a nuclear North Korea, though the Kremlin's reasons may be somewhat different. Although North Korea's nuclear test site is just 200 miles from Vladivostok, Russia does not feel directly threatened by Kim's nukes. However, North Korea's continued nuclearisation — and the chain reaction of horizontal proliferation this may trigger — will inevitably devalue Russia's own nuclear arsenal, which it sees as an essential attribute of its great power status and the ultimate guarantee of national security (Lee R., και Lukin A., 2017).

In addition, Russia's and China's trade relations with Korea's DPRK should be taken into account as a key negotiating tool in finding a multilateral solution for North Korea's nuclear program. Even supporters of expanded trade ties recognize that extensive economic interdependence threatens national autonomy and poses problems for policy makers. As American economist, policy adviser and academic, Richard Cooper states: *«Like other forms of international contact, international economic intercourse both enlarges and conflicts the freedom of countries to act according to their own lights. It enlarges their freedom by permitting a more economic use of limited resources; it confines their freedom by embedding each country in a matrix of constraints which it can influence only slightly, often only directly, and without certainty of effect ...As with a marriage, the benefits of close international economic relations can be enjoyed only at the expense of giving up a certain amount of national independence, or autonomy, in setting and pursuing economic objectives»* (Barbieri K., 31-32:2002).

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