ABSTRACT

For over twenty years U.S. conventional strategies have failed to restrain and reform North Korea. Kim Jong-un is following the same playbook as his father and grandfather; nullifying the Armistice, declaring war, shutting down the Kaesong industrial factory, and spewing bellicose rhetoric. The U.S. must recognize the historic success of these iniquitous tactics and the minimal effect of past U.S. strategies. Economic pressure, isolation and promoting regime change have not worked. U.S. vacillation stemming from geo-political consequences has emboldened North Korea. The road to success with North Korea is difficult and their very young leader is testing the water as his father and grandfather did. The U.S. reaction to aggressive North Korean behavior will set the tone for potentially the next thirty to forty years the menacing Kim Jong-un is in power. The key to success lies with China as they remain the primary guardian of North Korea.

Key words: North Korea, U.S. National Security Strategy, Nuclear Weapons, Rogue Nation
The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), commonly known as North Korea, has been one of the most riling and persistent challenges to U.S. foreign policy since the country’s inception in 1948 and continued rule by the despotic Kim regime. Their dalliance when confronted with the volatile subject of nuclear proliferation often frustrates and slows progress towards security in the region. North Korea is a Communist nation of approximately 23 million impoverished and oppressed people who live in a country that is essentially a prison where border guards face inward to prevent mass defections. North Korea’s dogged blustering and brinkmanship manifest into regional and international instability. They are the embodiment of a rogue state. The U.S. is compelled to remain engaged in the North Korean dilemma as bilateral security agreements require them to defend Japan and South Korea. North Korea’s proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to other rogues, like their Iranian cohort, threatens global peace and security. History is crucial to understanding international relationships and developing effective foreign policy, thus occasional reference of past North Korean-U.S. incidents and relations is paramount. Digesting paradigms of the Kym dynasty will exponentially increase the predictability of the new young leader Kim Jung-un. North Korea is a top U.S. National Security priority and sustained focus and consistent leveraging of all the instruments of power is required.

There is no greater responsibility for a nation’s leader than the safety and security of the people, the 2010 National Security Strategy is the foundation for this heavy responsibility. One of the top National Security priorities is weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their proliferation, particularly nuclear weapons. The U.S. is pursuing a comprehensive nonproliferation and nuclear security agenda, grounded in the rights and responsibilities of nations, and is leading the way with reductions in their arsenal while balancing deterrence. A key example is the U.S. pulling their tactical nuclear weapons out of South Korea in 1991 in a show of faith to pursue a nuclear weapon free peninsula.¹ A major component of strengthening the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is holding nations like North Korea accountable for their failure to meet international obligations. The U.S. National Security Strategy presents a concise choice to North Korea: the U.S. will pursue the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and hold them responsible in hopes of a successful nonproliferation regime.² The clear choice to North Korea is to eliminate their nuclear weapons program and proceed on a path to greater political and economic integration with the international community. If they choose to ignore their international obligations, the U.S. will pursue multiple means to increase their isolation and bring them into compliance with international nonproliferation norms.³ North Korea’s nuclear program has engulfed the past three U.S. administrations.

The main U.S. strategy for containing North Korea is simple, economic sanctions designed to strangle Pyongyang and compel reform. Yet, North Korea’s military and opulent elite are seemingly unaffected, while the people remain destitute. Perplexing is the continued economic sanctions and then subsequent monetary aid (primarily for food) the U.S. has provided

³ Ibid, 4.
North Korea. The U.S. has provided North Korea over $1 billion in U.S. aid and simultaneously levied dozens of sanctions, yet little to no progress has been made except advancements in North Korea’s nuclear weapons program and lining the elite’s pockets with money they receive from proliferation.\(^4\) The U.S. is in a quandary. Imposing sanctions is a powerful tool to squeeze a nation into conformity; however, humanitarian assistance is necessary to prevent massive famine related deaths. Purportedly, 90% of international food aid goes to the North Korean military, yet, donations continue in hopes the average person benefits.\(^5\) Economic sanctions have been less than effective in restraining North Korea, as they continue to delve in illicit activities that garner the elite and military millions of dollars. In 2005 the U.S. Treasury Department cracked down on North Korea’s money laundering, and the strangle hold was tight. North Korea launders their illicit activity money through primarily Chinese banks, such as Banco Delta Asia. Utilizing Section 311 of the Patriot Act, the U.S. Department of the Treasury designated Banco Delta Asia as a primary money laundering concern as it represents an unacceptable risk of such activity and other financial crimes. The Treasury’s Financial Crimes Enforcement network (FinCEN) was able to issue a rule prohibiting U.S. financial institutions from directly or indirectly establishing, maintaining, administering or managing any correspondent account in the U.S. for or on behalf of Banco Delta Asia.\(^6\) This prohibition was an almost decapitating freeze of hard currency into North Korea that drastically impacted the elite’s personal coffers and lifestyle. The effects were so devastating the North Korean elite’s only reaction was to force a stalemate of the 2003 Six Party Talks. In an attempt to force the U.S. to concede, North Korea conducted seven ballistic missiles launches and their first underground nuclear test. The world watched to see who was going to blink first and mollify the other…the U.S. did, under immense pressure to resume the Six Party Talks.\(^7\) This historical sequence of events should be given serious consideration with regard to future postures taken against North Korea; many analysts believe the U.S. strangle hold would have forced reform, if they had maintained it. North Korea has a very young leader who is of great concern and curiosity.

With the death of Kim Jong-II in December 2011, Kim Jung-un took over as the Dear Leader of North Korea and the world was, and still is, on edge to see how this very young and inexperienced leader will engage the international community. It would seem the new leader is establishing his dominance and strength by stringing several provocations since April 2012 that have stifled any hopes he would take his country in a new and prosperous direction. In April 2012 North Korea launched a rocket that caused a bilateral agreement with the U.S. to fall apart; the agreement provided aid in return for freezing some nuclear activities.\(^8\) North Korea contends the rocket launch was to put a satellite into orbit, marking the 100\(^{th}\) anniversary of their founding father Kim Il-sung. The U.S. and other nations stated it was a disguised test of long-range missile


\(^7\) Ibid, 85-87.

technology banned under UN resolutions. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called the launch deplorable. The launch was a failure and some say an embarrassment for the new leader who many feared would do something else rash in order to save face with his nation and the world. The launch broke two UN Security Council resolutions prohibiting North Korea from testing ballistic missiles and broke a promise North Korea made to the U.S. in Beijing in February that year. President Obama’s reaction was to reaffirm his previous policy to “engage constructively with North Korea;” however, “North Korea must live up to their commitments, adhere to their international obligations and deal peacefully with their neighbors.”

Kim Jung-un was determined to achieve a successful event and affirm his strength and leadership on a global level.

In December 2012, Pyongyang showed the world how much progress they had made since the abysmal rocket launch failure a mere eight months earlier. On December 12, 2012, North Korea conducted a test-launch of the Taepo Dong 2 missile system. Unlike the failed attempt in April, this test appeared to be successful as all three stages worked and a small satellite was launched into space. Analysts focus more on the success of the three stage system over the satellite launch, since this system purportedly now gives them reach capability as far as Alaska or Hawaii. Of particular concern to the U.S. and international community is the Iranian-North Korean nexus. North Korea invited a team of Iranian scientists to observe the launch, as they have done in the past. No doubt Tehran is interested in ballistic missile technology and is willing to pay top dollar for it. The Iran-North Korea nexus goes back to 1980 and U.S. Security Strategy congeals them into a two-pronged threat.

Iran is North Korea’s oldest and most profitable purchaser of missile technology and, although only speculation, nuclear weapons technology and strategy. North Korea has proliferated technology to Iran since the 1980s. Iranian officials were present at the 1993, 1998, 2006, 2009 and the recent 2012 test launches. Several sources indicate that since at least 2003, the DPRK and Iranians have been collaborating to design a Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) warhead that could be delivered by a No Dong missile (known as the Shahab-3 in Iran). These missiles are the likely candidates to deliver a HEU payload should the countries choose to launch a nuclear attack; DPRK against Japan or Iran presumably against Israel. In 2009, Iran sent a 15-man delegation, which included missile experts, to observe the launch of a Taepo Dong 2 missile. North Korea invited Iran as a marketing strategy since they felt the missile was ready to proliferate. The North Korea-Iran nexus is a serious concern for the U.S. and other stakeholders; the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and international community at large must continue to monitor this relationship and do all within their power to degrade WMD proliferation. This community must be aware of the stalling tactics North Korea used that

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9 Ibid, 15.
12 Ibid.
resulted in them possessing a nuclear weapon arsenal. Iran appears to be using those same stalling tactics and if the international community takes the same approach for Iran, the result will likely be identical.\textsuperscript{15} North Korea came under international focus and scrutiny again in February 2013.

North Korea conducted their third nuclear test in February 2013 and all indications lead to a six to nine kiloton yield, which is significantly higher than the first two tests. There is no conclusive evidence to indicate the test was a plutonium or HEU device; however, many indicators point to HEU. Dr. Bruce Bechtol analyzed available data from this test and suggests the device was HEU, based on the following: Iranian experts observed the nuclear test, the North Koreans announced it was a test of a miniaturized device and North Korea took extensive care not to let particles escape after the test.\textsuperscript{16} The Iranians paid North Korea tens of millions of dollars to observe the test and the money was paid through the Bank of Kunlun in Beijing.\textsuperscript{17} Since the demise of the Soviet Union, North Korea’s main supporter is China, who plays a pivotal role in U.S. security strategy for North Korea. The U.S. exercised, with great success, their diplomatic instrument of power by negotiating language with China resulting in expansive UN sanctions. China historically blocks sanctions against North Korea although, it is purported North Korea is irritating Beijing and China wanted to send them a message by flexing their diplomatic muscle. The resolution targets, for the first time ever, North Korean diplomatic personnel, North Korean banking relationships and illicit transfers of bulk cash.\textsuperscript{18} This monumental achievement of obtaining China’s vote on “first time” extremely strict sanctions is a pivotal moment for U.S. efforts to restrain and reform North Korea and a testament to persistent U.S. foreign policy as it pertains to the DPRK. However, actions speak louder than words. The Washington Post reported on May 1, 2013 that China is flaunting UN sanctions against North Korea. The new sanctions have had little impact on thriving China-North Korean cross-border trade. It is also reported that North Korea has become increasingly dependent on trade with China, which rose from $3.4 billion in 2010 to $5.9 billion in 2012. Analysts purport the new sanctions will not be effective unless China rigorously enforces them.\textsuperscript{19} The U.S. must continue diplomacy with China as they are crucial to restraining and reforming North Korea. The impending challenge is venal Chinese officials who benefit from less strict enforcement or payments to look the other way. In response to UN sanctions, North Korea may have gone on the offensive in the cyber domain.

On March 20, 2013, cyber-attacks paralyzed the computer networks of three major South Korean banks and two television stations. The United States and South Korea have not identified the attackers, as the investigation is still underway. Many analysts suspect North Korea was


\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.


behind the attacks and retaliation was the motive. Five days prior, March 10-11, 2013, North Korea blamed the United States and South Korea for an internet shutdown in Pyongyang; if the U.S. did conduct a cyber-attack, this would be another tool to execute U.S. Security Strategy towards the DPRK. Given China’s support for North Korea, there is high probability China’s Blue Army, an elite cyber-warfare unit that has been in existence for several years, has proliferated cyber-attack technology. Additionally, Iran has recently established a cyber-warfare organization that could potentially be working with or proliferating technology to North Korea. A coordinated attack from both Iran and North Korea is not improbable. North Korea is not averse to naval aggression, especially in the contested Yellow Sea along the Northern Limit Line (NLL).

In March 2010, the South Korean naval vessel Cheonan sank just south of the Northern Limit Line in the disputed waters of North and South Korea in the Yellow Sea killing 46 sailors. North Korea denied sinking the vessel. A South Korean led multi-national investigation team concluded a North Korean was responsible for the sinking the ship with a “bubble jet” torpedo. Reports indicate a DPRK Yeono-class Special Operations Forces (SOF) mini-submarine was used in the attack to launch the torpedo that destroyed the Cheonan. The DPRK-Iran nexus is evident with these submarines and it is reported that, as of June 2012, Iran has at least 14 Yeono-class mini-submarines in their fleet. Interestingly, in June 2010, the U.S. State Department determined the sinking was not an act of terrorism and was not enough to place North Korea back on their terrorism list. China again emerged as North Korea’s protector and shielded them from international response to the sinking. China cannot divest them from North Korea as they are economically linked and fear North Korea becoming a failed state and flooding China with refugees. Further, if North Korea becomes a failed state, South Korea and the U.S. would likely take control of the territory and share a border with China, which they do not want. North Korea had previously been on the terrorism list for supporting terrorist organizations in the past, to include training camps in North Korea. French, Japanese, South Korean and Israeli sources related North Korean programs were providing arms and training to Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, with both groups designated by the U.S. Department of State as

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Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO).\textsuperscript{28} In 2009, vast amounts of North Korean arms were intercepted as they headed for Iran. These weapons are the same type Iran supplies to Hezbollah and Hamas. All indications are North Korea is currently supporting terrorism by supplying arms to Iran, who they know are supplying to Hezbollah and Hamas.\textsuperscript{29} Further, North Korea has conducted terrorist acts themselves, such as kidnapping Japanese citizens and being implicated in the bombing of a South Korean airliner in 1987.\textsuperscript{30} There has been heated debate about whether to put North Korea back on the U.S. terrorist list; geo-politics drove the ultimate decision to keep them off the list. Initially taking them off the list was a political move to get the Six Party Talks, or the remnants of them, back on the table and moving towards progress. Looking back on that decision, the U.S. placating diplomatic strategy did not work for a long term solution and is a perceived sign of weakness. North Korea’s motivation for supporting terrorist activities is two-pronged.

There is sustained proof that North Korea has supported terrorism for some time now, mostly out of necessity when support from the Soviet Union diminished after the cold war ended. There are two common threads that lead to North Korea’s support for terrorism. North Korea has great disdain and fear of the U.S. government and their allies and prefers to spread technology, weapons and training to terrorist organizations that have equal distaste for the U.S. Essentially, North Korea uses terrorism in a proxy war against the U.S. and their allies. Further, North Korea pursues and supports state and non-state allies who present a threat to the U.S., particularly in the Middle East. The desired goal is to distract the U.S. from North Korea while simultaneously depleting U.S. energy and money as foreign policy shifts to those regions. Second, as alluded to earlier, there is an economic motive to everything North Korea does. North Korea uses the proliferation of technology, weapons, training, etc. as an economic venture. Supporting terrorism provides badly needed hard currency to North Korea’s avarice elite to sustain their lavish standards of living and the military that protects them.\textsuperscript{31} North Korea’s sordid terror practice against their own people focuses on brutal human rights abuses and is always imminent in U.S. Foreign Policy.

North Korea’s diversion of 90% of international food aid money mentioned earlier pales in comparison to the barbaric abuses they perpetrate upon their own people. The North Korean people are essentially captives in their own country and kept from leaving by armed guards and strict rules enforced by brutal heavy handed officials. North Korea’s virulent camps are expanding; some call them concentrations camps, some call them labor camps and most call them “death” camps, as the only way to leave is typically when you expire. One such camp is Camp 14 and the only person to be born in a camp and escape, was Shin Dong-hyuk. He wrote a book called \textit{Escape from Camp 14}, the camp he was born in.\textsuperscript{32} He described the conditions as filthy, horrific, little to no food, continuous beatings, force labor, rapes, murder, and numerous

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public executions. In these camps, people resort to eating rats, frogs, snakes, insects, grass, bark, and anything they can get their hands on to prevent starvation. Shin wrote about one torture experience where he was hung over a fire by his hands and feet and questioned about a plot between his mother and brother to escape.\textsuperscript{33} Random murders were common. Shin wrote about a child who made a guard angry and the guard stomped the child to death. North Korea has a “three generation” policy, established by Kim Il-sung in 1972, because he believed it took three generations of punishment to eliminate the bad or dissention in people. The majority of those in the camps are there for political reasons; they said something negative about the Dear Leader or the government.\textsuperscript{34} North Korea has unlawfully detained or kidnapped several expatriates for various reasons.

Equally disturbing as the camps is the routine unlawful detention and kidnapping of foreigners. In May 2013, Kenneth Bae, a U.S. citizen, was sentenced to 15 years hard labor by North Korean courts. The sentence stems from alleged, but unspecific, crimes against the state. This is not the first time this has happened. In 2009 North Korea detained and charged two U.S. journalists, Laura Ling and Euna Lee with unspecified crimes against the state; it took former President Clinton’s involvement to secure their release.\textsuperscript{35} These unlawful detentions, eventual convictions and sentencing, usually occurs during increased tension on the peninsula and is purported to be a strategic maneuver to leverage against the U.S. and allies. Forcing a high ranking U.S. envoy to intervene is touted as a success of the North Korean leader. North Korean agents routinely kidnap people. The Wall Street Journal reported in April 2013 that North Korea had kidnapped people from twelve countries. David Sneddon, who disappeared in China in August 2004, was purportedly abducted by North Korea; he is still missing. Keinju Furuya, the Japanese Minister of State said “it is most probable the U.S. national has been abducted to North Korea.” Japan has investigated North Korean abductions for over 30 years. Supporting allegations of sustained abductions by North Korea was the statement by Kim Jong-il in 2002 to visiting Japanese Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, that North Korea had kidnapped 13 Japanese citizens. He supposedly confessed to come clean and start the movement towards normalization with Japan. It did not work, it just inflamed Japan. Japanese citizens were abducted and forced to teach Japanese at North Korean spy schools.\textsuperscript{36} Perhaps, Mr. Sneddon is teaching English. The U.S. has attempted many strategies to restrain and reform North Korea, with limited success.

One of the primary reasons North Korea has pursued nuclear weapons is the loss of bilateral support they enjoyed from the Soviet Union that disappeared when the cold war ended.\textsuperscript{37} The U.S. was successful with bilateral diplomacy in the denuclearization of South Africa and the southern tip of the African continent and is attempting this with the Korean dilemma. U.S. bilateral security agreements offer them unique leverage. For example, when

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid, 54-58.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid, 6.
South Korea announced they were going to purchase a reprocessing facility from France that would allow them to separate plutonium from spent fuel that results in material used for a nuclear bomb, the U.S. blocked it. The U.S. leveraged the security agreement by promising to maintain military presence and threatened to stop delivery of fuel and equipment to a U.S. reactor in order to prevent the purchase. The U.S. has historically used bilateral security agreements, economic sanctions or more effectively economic support to entice nations to conform to U.S. desires. This occurred in 1975-1976 with Taiwan and more recently with Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan where financial assistance was instrumental in securing their membership in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). North Korean elites are ever fearful of losing power and their lavish lifestyle, thus when they lost their security from the Soviet Union, they pursued nuclear weapons purportedly to avoid complete reliance on others. North Korea refuses to conform to U.S. and international demands that would allow them into international mainstream society. By eliminating human rights abuses of their citizens, North Korean leaders believe they would lose power and that loss would lead to revolt and overthrow of the government. Human rights groups exploit this through propaganda to show the common North Korean things are eternally better outside of North Korea and their leaders are lying to them. Balloons are used to send radios, USB drives, other technology and chocolate snacks into North Korea to relay information and provide comforts ubiquitous in the south. If North Korea stops proliferating weapons and technology, they lose expansive amounts of money and the elite lose their lavish lifestyle. If North Korea abolishes their nuclear weapons program, they believe they will become more susceptible to attack, although their conventional weapons are immense. North Korea’s reluctance to conform to international pressure is not for the betterment of their nation, but for the continued lavish lifestyle of their elite.

One of President Obama’s campaign agendas during his 2008 election was nuclear terrorism, which he termed as the most urgent international threat. He related a multilateral solution would be necessary to address disarmament and traditional arms control. Reducing nuclear arms stockpiles was a priority to ensure they did not fall into terrorist’s hands; dissuading terrorists is futile however, reducing stockpiles and thus accessibility is within reach. The 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) further expands on the 2010 National Security Strategy statement of “credible and effective alternatives to military action—from sanctions to isolation–must be strong enough to change behavior” and constrain our adversaries’ ability to act. Secretary Clinton designated senior diplomats to coordinate sanction enforcement against North Korea, which is a dynamic process intimately linked to human rights. The human rights component is deeply rooted in the QDDR. As national security depends on human security, advancing human rights is a key priority that reflects American values and

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promotes U.S. security.\textsuperscript{43} The U.S. National Security Strategy states “governments that respect the values of human rights, gender equality, etc. are more just, peaceful, and legitimate. Where these values are respected, stability and security can be strengthened, economies can thrive and individuals can fulfill their full potential.”\textsuperscript{44} The U.S. response to recent North Korean belligerence was typical.

With North Korea intensifying their rhetoric, blustering and brinkmanship, the U.S. and South Korea, in a show of force, carried out their regularly scheduled joint military exercise FOAL EAGLE (FE).\textsuperscript{45} In a show of force, specifically nuclear capability, the U.S. flew B-2 and B-52 bombers over South Korea, which are capable of a nuclear payload; F-22 fighters also flew. Further, U.S. and South Korea made an official announcement they had developed new and improved contingency plans defining how they would react to further intensified provocations from North Korea.\textsuperscript{46} The U.S. postured additional interceptors at missile defense facilities on their West Coast and deployed similar land-based systems to Guam, such as the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system (THAAD).\textsuperscript{47} The U.S. is forward deploying two more AEGIS ballistic missile defense ships to Japan, bringing the total to seven, to assist with the security of Japan.\textsuperscript{48} These moves were designed to send a strong message to North Korea, while at the same time reassure Japan and South Korea of U.S. commitments to security agreements. A periphery message was for China, intending to show U.S. resolve in the contentious matters North Korea instigated, in hopes China would assist in restraining North Korea from further rash actions that could thrust the peninsula and region into conflict. South Korean President Park Geun-hye responded strongly to North Korea’s threats and also maintained her course with the previously established trust-building policy with Pyongyang. With the primary concern of protecting South Koreans, she ordered her military to prepare to respond with force to provocation while simultaneously stating to de-link humanitarian concerns from the nuclear concerns, as a gesture of good faith to reach out to the Kim regime.\textsuperscript{49}

For over twenty years, and especially the last three U.S. presidents, American conventional strategies have failed to restrain and reform North Korea. Kim Jong-un is following the same playbook as his father and grandfather; nullifying the Armistice, declaring war, shutting down the Kaesong industrial factory, and spewing bellicose rhetoric. The U.S. would be wise to recognize this and the historical success of these tactics. Economic pressure, isolation and promoting regime change through propaganda have not worked. U.S. vacillation has bolstered North Korean confidence. Despite their bellicose anti-American rhetoric, Pyongyang has consistently conveyed the message it seeks normal relations

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid, 42.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid, 7.
with the U.S. The challenge is getting North Korea to comply with requirements that will allow the U.S. to establish normal relations.

In order to gain stability on the Korean Peninsula, several things must occur. The U.S. must convince China to apply greater economic pressure on North Korea. The challenge is China is economically conjoined with North Korea and does not want them to fail or they will have the U.S. and South Korea as a bordering neighbor. South Korea is unwavering in their pursuit of a unified Korea, which is of course a threat to the Kim dynasty as they wish to remain in power and enjoy their lavish lifestyle. Regardless of South Korean normalcy gestures, the omnipresent contentious issue is a unified Korea without the Kim regime; the U.S. must expect this to surface often. Japan is crucial to stability; the U.S. must overcome the strong Japanese opinion that centers on the North Korean security threat and abductions. Japan has no tolerance for North Korean belligerence and even less tolerance for abducting Japanese citizens. A very important aspect of North Korea is the Dear Leader saving face and avoiding embarrassment. North Korean domestic politics often drives decisions. If Kim Jong-un believes he is losing domestic control, he will act rashly to show his nation that he is virile like his father. Let us not forget the execution of key military leaders who the young leader perceived as a threat. Youth brings with it the risk of over aggressiveness forcing a military engagement. Secretary of State Kerry’s offer to talk was seen by some as weakness and others as a first move towards peace.

North Korean proliferation of WMD, support for terrorist organizations and their myriad other bellicose destabilizing activities is of monumental concern for the U.S., Pacific Rim partners, partners around the world and the international community as a whole. The U.S. must continue to monitor ship’s cargo, fiscal transactions, and meetings between the DRPK and their cohorts, while leveraging economic sanctions and isolation. The crucial component to success is diplomatically urging China to continue to support UN sanctions against North Korea and to enforce them on the ground. The U.S. must also reaffirm their invariant security commitment to South Korea and Japan and continue with their “Strategic Patience” policy that Secretary Clinton relayed, which is to wait for North Korea to come back to negotiations, stemming from arms interdictions and economic sanctions. Engaging in premeditated actions to prevent potentially dangerous situations from emerging is prudent rather than waiting for an event and reacting...proactive vice reactive. Further, they must continue information operations to inform the North Korean general population there is a better life than that of a starving prisoner in their own country. The U.S. must also continue to flex the military instrument of power in order to deter North Korea and show resolve to China, including the nuclear deterrent. If a time comes when a military strike is considered, the U.S. should weigh historical precedence and factor in the risk of the young leader acting more rashly than his father or grandfather. He has already set

the tone; in 2012 while visiting soldiers stationed on two islets near the disputed NLL, he stated “solemnly declared that if the enemy dares recklessly pre-empt firing and even a single shell drops” on North Korean territory, the North’s army “should lead the battle to a sacred war for national reunification, not confining it to a local war on the southwest region,” according to North Korea’s state-run Korean Central News Agency.53 In March 2013, while visiting border artillery officers he reportedly identified the South Korean Island of Baengnyeong as a potential target for aggression and stated to the officers “once an order is issued, you should break the waists of the crazy enemies, totally cut their windpipes and thus clearly show them what a real war is like,” according to the state-run Korean Central News Agency via AFP54 The menacing Kim Jong-un could potentially be in power for 30 or more years and current foreign policy decisions will influence decades of U.S.-North Korean relations. As we stand on the precipice of confrontingimmerging protracted asymmetric threats, such as the ruthless terrorist organization Islamic State, the U.S. can ill afford to relax their posture towards North Korea. The U.S. is the longstanding bulwark of North Korea and has sustained this effort since 1948 and must persevere.55

55 For more detailed information regarding the first years of the Kim Jong-un reign, see Bruce E. Bechtol, Jr., North Korea and Regional Security in the Kim Jong-un Era, A new International Security Dilemma (PALGRAVE MACMILLIAN, 2014). This is the first body of work analyzing, from an international security perspective, the key international challenges the first two years of the Kim Jong-un reign presented. Other works are immersing and must be digested to gain the full breadth of perspectives regarding North Korea today and in the future.
Bibliography


U.S. National Security Strategy and North Korea’s Recent Rogue Activity
Is it working?


