

# North Korea: Nuclear Armament And International Security

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## Abstract

Nuclear armament is of significant concern for international security, with North Korea at the forefront of this controversy, this research investigates why despite the international community's efforts to curb North Korea's nuclear program through sanctions, negotiations, and military threats, the regime has continued to enrich its nuclear arsenal. The study employs a qualitative research approach, utilizing secondary data collection method and document analysis to examine the key factors contributing to North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons, including historical, geopolitical and other internal political factors. Social Constructivism theory which argues that international norms, values, and ideas shape state behavior was adopted to analyze the work. The findings of the study indicate that North Korea's pursuit of nuclear program is driven by a range of factors, including security concerns, regional power dynamics, and domestic politics. Moreover, the study argues that North Korea's nuclear ambitions pose a significant threat to international security, as the regime's unpredictable behavior and lack of transparency increase the risk of nuclear accidents, nuclear terrorism, and spread to other states and non-state actors. Addressing the underlying security concerns of North Korea which formed part of the major reasons why it has pursued nuclear program vigorously is key to solving the issues of nuclear proliferation as far as North Korea is concerned was part of the recommendations suggested by this work.

**KEYWORDS:** Nuclear Weapon, Nuclear armament, International Security. Diplomacy.

## Background to the Study

Nuclear armament is a crucial concern in international security, and North Korea's nuclear program has been a prominent example of this. Despite the vast body of literature on North Korea's nuclear program, current research has not significantly contributed to understanding the topic. This paper aims to address this gap by providing a critical and argumentative analysis of North Korea's nuclear

program, drawing on empirical evidence from a range of sources. North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons has created significant tension in the region and beyond (Kim, 2019). The country's complex relationship with the United States and South Korea is a critical factor driving its nuclear program (Moon & Hwang, 2021). The two Koreas have been in a state of armistice since the end of the Korean War in 1953, and tensions between them have remained high. North Korea's hostility towards the United States, a close ally of South Korea, has resulted in the country being a target of North Korea's aggression (Friedman, 2018). The North Korean regime perceives its nuclear program as a means of deterring a potential attack by the United States. Moreover, the possession of nuclear weapons provides the regime with a sense of security and prestige, which reinforces its legitimacy (Snyder, 2021; Bennett, 2018).

The international community has responded to North Korea's nuclear program with a range of measures, including sanctions, negotiations, and military threats (Choi, 2021). The United Nations Security Council has imposed several rounds of sanctions on North Korea, aimed at curbing its nuclear program and forcing it to return to the negotiating table (Choe, 2018). However, the effectiveness of these measures remains questionable, as North Korea has continued to defy international pressure and develop its nuclear program (Snyder, 2021). This paper argues that North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons is driven by a range of factors, including its desire for survival and legitimacy and its complex relationship with the United States and South Korea. The international community's response to North Korea's nuclear program has been varied, and the effectiveness of its measures remains uncertain. Policymakers must consider the root causes of North Korea's nuclear program and explore new approaches to engage with the country and promote global security.

In conclusion, this paper provides a critical and argumentative analysis of North Korea's nuclear program. Drawing on empirical evidence from a range of sources, it argues that the country's pursuit of nuclear weapons is driven by its desire for survival and legitimacy, as well as its complex relationship with the United States and South Korea. The paper highlights the need for policymakers to develop new approaches to engage with North Korea and address the root causes of its nuclear program.

### **Statement of Research Problem**

The acquisition of nuclear weapons by North Korea has created a significant threat to international security, as the country's unpredictable behavior, coupled with possession of nuclear weapons, poses an existential risk to regional and global security (Snyder, 2018). North Korea's nuclear program has heightened tensions between North Korea and the United States, South Korea, and Japan, and the failure to address the issue has the potential to destabilize the entire region (Cha & Kang, 2018). Despite the international community's efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation, North Korea's defiance of these measures raises questions about the effectiveness of nonproliferation strategies (Snyder, 2018). Therefore, this study aims to identify and analyze the following problems. North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons has heightened tensions in the region and increased the risk of a nuclear war. Despite several rounds of sanctions by the international

community, North Korea has continued to develop its nuclear weapons, raising questions about the effectiveness of nonproliferation measures (Cha & Kang, 2018). To address these problems, this study will conduct a comprehensive analysis of the North Korean case, drawing on existing literature to provide insights into the impact of nuclear enrichment program on international security and the effectiveness of nonproliferation measures (Snyder, 2018; Cha & Kang, 2018).

Despite the international community's efforts to curb North Korea's nuclear program through sanctions, negotiations, and military threats, the regime has continued to develop its nuclear arsenal. Understanding the underlying factors driving North Korea's persistence in pursuing nuclear weapons, and what are the implications for global security, becomes a global issue. This problem is aggravated judging from the fact that the country has complex relationship with the United States and South Korea which inform part of the critical factors driving its pursuit of nuclear weapons (Moon & Hwang, 2021; Friedman, 2018). Additionally, the regime's desire for survival and legitimacy has been identified as a motivator for its nuclear program (Snyder, 2021; Bennett, 2018).

Another issue begging for interrogation is the international community's response to North Korea's nuclear program, which included the imposition of sanctions by the United Nations Security Council (Choe, 2018) and the debatable effectiveness of these measures (Snyder, 2021).

### **Literature review**

North Korea's nuclear program has been a subject of international concern due to its implications for global security and stability. While several studies have been conducted on this topic, there remains a gap in the understanding of the underlying factors driving North Korea's persistence in pursuing nuclear weapons.

### **North Korea's Nuclear Armament and Global Security**

North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons poses a significant threat to global security for several reasons. First, North Korea's erratic and the unpredictable behavior of their leaders overtime combined with its aggressive rhetorics towards the United States and its allies, creates a volatile situation that could easily escalate into a full-scale conflict (Barnes, 2019). Secondly, North Korea's lack of transparency and its history of violating international agreements, such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, raise concerns about the potential for nuclear proliferation and the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries (Davenport & Elleman, 2018).

Furthermore, the potential for nuclear accidents or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons by North Korea cannot be ignored. North Korea has a poor track record in maintaining safety standards, as evidenced by several nuclear and missile tests that have resulted in accidents and malfunctions (Lankov, 2018). The risk of nuclear material falling into the hands of non-state actors or terrorist organizations is also a concern, given North Korea's links to illicit arms trade and its willingness to sell weapons to other countries (Barnes, 2019). In addition, North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons has destabilized the regional balance of power and triggered a nuclear arms race in East

Asia. Other countries in the region, such as South Korea and Japan, have felt compelled to develop their own nuclear capabilities in response to North Korea's nuclear program, thereby increasing the likelihood of a nuclear confrontation (He, 2021). Overall, North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons poses a serious threat to global security, and the international community must take steps to address this issue. The United States and its allies have pursued various strategies, such as economic sanctions and diplomatic negotiations, to curb North Korea's nuclear program, but a lasting solution is yet to be found (Davenport & Elleman, 2018). It is imperative that the international community continues to monitor and address North Korea's nuclear program to prevent a potential nuclear catastrophe.

### **Underlying Factors Driving North Korea's Persistence in Pursuing Nuclear Weapons**

One critical factor driving North Korea's nuclear program is the country's complex relationship with the United States and South Korea. As Moon and Hwang (2021) point out, tensions between North Korea and the United States have remained high due to the United States' close alliance with South Korea. North Korea sees its nuclear program as a means of deterring potential attacks from the United States. Additionally, the regime believes that nuclear weapons provide it with leverage in negotiations with other countries and ensure its survival in a hostile international environment (Moon & Hwang, 2021; Snyder, 2021). Moon and Hwang (2021) argue that the tensions between North Korea and the United States have remained high due to the United States' close alliance with South Korea. North Korea sees its nuclear program as a means of deterring potential attacks from the United States. Snyder (2021) also notes that the regime believes that nuclear weapons provide it with leverage in negotiations with other countries and ensure its survival in a hostile international environment.

Another important factor driving North Korea's nuclear program is the regime's desire for survival and legitimacy. Bennett (2018) notes that the possession of nuclear weapons provides the regime with a sense of security and prestige, which is critical for maintaining its grip on power. The regime's need for legitimacy is compounded by its repressive regime, which violates human rights and limits freedoms (Snyder, 2021). The North Korean regime's pursuit of nuclear weapons has been linked to the country's historical and geopolitical context. Kim (2016) argues that North Korea's nuclear program is rooted in its history of conflict with the United States and South Korea, as well as its perception of external threats to its security. The country's experience during the Korean War and the subsequent division of the Korean peninsula has also played a role in shaping its nuclear ambitions.

In addition, the international response to North Korea's nuclear program has also contributed to its persistence. Glaser (2018) notes that the failure of international sanctions and diplomacy to halt North Korea's nuclear program has emboldened the regime to continue its pursuit of nuclear weapons. This is compounded by the regime's belief that nuclear weapons provide it with a form of insurance against potential attacks or regime change efforts by external powers. Overall, the factors driving North Korea's persistence in pursuing nuclear weapons are complex and multifaceted, rooted in both the country's historical and geopolitical context, as well as its internal

political dynamics. The country's history of colonization, division, and war has created a deep-seated sense of insecurity and vulnerability, which has led to its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

One of the key events that shaped North Korea's nuclear program was the Korean War. The war, which lasted from 1950 to 1953, resulted in the division of the Korean peninsula into two separate states. North Korea emerged from the conflict with a deep-seated mistrust of the United States and its allies, including South Korea (Kan, 2019). This mistrust has persisted to this day and has been a key driver of North Korea's nuclear program, because they want to protect themselves and deter any form of external or internal aggression.

Another key event that shaped North Korea's nuclear program was the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 which had a profound impact on North Korea's economic and geopolitical situation. North Korea had relied heavily on Soviet aid and support, and the collapse of the Soviet Union left the country in a precarious position (Sagan, 2017). In response, North Korea began to pursue nuclear weapons as a means of deterring potential attacks from its enemies and ensuring its survival in a hostile international environment, so that they will not be divided further or face the level of internal division and external interference that brought about the collapse of the Soviet Union.

In addition to these historical events, North Korea's geopolitical context has also played a role in shaping its nuclear program. The country is located in a region that is characterized by geopolitical competition and conflict. North Korea is surrounded by powerful and wealthy countries such as China, Japan, and South Korea, which have often been at odds with each other. This regional context has further fueled North Korea's sense of insecurity and vulnerability, and has contributed to its pursuit of nuclear weapons (Snyder, 2019). In summary, North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons has been shaped by a range of historical and geopolitical factors, including the Korean War, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the region's geopolitical competition and conflict. These factors have contributed to North Korea's sense of insecurity and vulnerability, and have led the country to pursue nuclear weapons as a means of ensuring its survival in a hostile international environment.

### **International Responses to North Korea's Nuclear Armament**

International responses to North Korea's nuclear proliferation have been varied, and have included diplomatic efforts, economic sanctions, and military posturing. Despite these efforts, North Korea has continued to enrich its nuclear capabilities, which has led to increased tensions in the region (Snyder, 2019). The best way for the international community to respond to North Korea's nuclear proliferation has become a topic of much debate and discussion among scholars and policymakers. Some argue that diplomatic engagement and negotiations are the best approach, while others advocate for drastic measures such as sanctions and military action. One approach that has been suggested is a combination of engagement and pressure, also known as "strategic patience." This approach involves increasing economic and diplomatic pressure on North Korea while simultaneously engaging in negotiations and dialogue to try to find a peaceful solution (Kim, 2018).

The United States, South Korea, and other countries have used this approach in the past, but it has had mixed success. Others argue that sanctions are the best way to pressure North Korea to abandon its nuclear program. The United Nations Security Council has imposed numerous sanctions on North Korea in response to its nuclear tests and missile launches, but some argue that these sanctions have not been effective in halting North Korea's nuclear ambitions (Lee, 2019). Some policymakers have advocated for a more aggressive approach, such as military action or regime change. However, such approaches carry significant risks and could potentially lead to a large-scale conflict with North Korea, with severe consequences for global security (Sagan & Waltz, 2003). Ultimately, there is no clear consensus on the best way to respond to North Korea's nuclear proliferation. However, many experts agree that a combination of diplomatic engagement and pressure, along with multilateral cooperation and a focus on reducing tensions in the region, is likely the most effective approach to addressing this complex and highly sensitive issue (Kim, 2018; Lee, 2019; Sagan & Waltz, 2003).

### **Impact of Sanctions on North Korea's Nuclear Proliferation**

The international community has imposed several rounds of sanctions on North Korea in response to its nuclear proliferation activities. However, despite these efforts, the effectiveness of these sanctions has been called into question. One of the reasons why these sanctions have been ineffective is that they have not been enforced rigorously. According to Haggard and Noland (2017), there are several loopholes in the implementation of sanctions, which have allowed North Korea to evade them. For instance, China, North Korea's largest trading partner, has not been fully compliant with the sanctions regime, allowing North Korea to continue to import prohibited goods. Similarly, North Korea has used front companies and other illicit methods to circumvent sanctions and continue its nuclear proliferation activities.

Another reason why sanctions have been ineffective is that they have not addressed the root causes of North Korea's nuclear program. As Haggard and Noland (2017) note, North Korea's nuclear program is driven by both external and internal factors. While external factors such as the country's complex relationship with the United States and South Korea have played a role, internal factors such as the regime's need for survival and legitimacy have been equally important. Sanctions alone cannot address these underlying factors, and thus, they have not been sufficient to curb North Korea's nuclear ambitions.

Moreover, the sanctions have also had unintended consequences, such as causing humanitarian suffering among the North Korean people. As Kim and Lee (2021) note, the sanctions have led to a shortage of essential goods, including food and medical supplies, which has exacerbated the already dire humanitarian situation in the country. This has led to concerns that the sanctions are harming ordinary North Koreans rather than the regime. Furthermore, North Korea has shown a high degree of resilience in the face of sanctions, developing new methods to evade them and maintain its nuclear program. For instance, despite the sanctions, North Korea has continued to develop its ballistic missile program, conducting several tests in recent years (Moltz, 2021). This indicates that the sanctions have not been effective in deterring North Korea from pursuing its nuclear ambitions. In conclusion, the ineffectiveness of sanctions on North Korea's nuclear

proliferation can be attributed to several factors, including poor enforcement, failure to address the root causes of the nuclear program, unintended consequences, and North Korea's resilience in the face of sanctions. To effectively address North Korea's nuclear armament, a comprehensive approach that addresses both external and internal factors will be needed, including diplomatic efforts, incentives, and multilateral cooperation.

### **Gap in Literature**

Based on the literature review conducted, there is a gap in the literature on the effectiveness of diplomatic engagement as a means of resolving the issue of North Korea's nuclear proliferation. While some scholars have argued for the need for diplomacy and negotiation to address the issue (Kerry, 2018), others have emphasized the limitations of such approaches (Snyder, 2021). However, there is a lack of empirical studies that have specifically examined the effectiveness of diplomatic engagement as a strategy for resolving the issue of North Korea's nuclear proliferation. Therefore, this study investigated the effectiveness of diplomatic engagement in promoting global security and stability in the context of North Korea's nuclear program.

### **Theoretical framework**

To critically analyze this work on Nuclear Armament of North Korea and International Security, the research adopted the Social Constructivism as its theory to explain the rationale behind North Korea's insistence on Nuclear Armament. The theory is attributed to several scholars, including Nicholas Onuf, Alexander Wendt, and Emanuel Adler (Reus-Smit, 2013). However, Wendt is often cited as the founder of Social Constructivism in International Relations. Wendt first proposed his version of Constructivism in his book "Social Theory of International Politics," published in 1999 (Wendt, 1999). Social Constructivism argues that international norms, values, and ideas shape state behavior, and this can provide insight into our subject matter.

According to Social Constructivism, North Korea's pursues nuclear weapons as a response to the international community's perception of the country as a pariah state. North Korea sees its possession of nuclear weapons as a way to gain legitimacy and respect on the international stage. However, the theory also has its limitations and criticisms. Some argue that it places too much emphasis on the role of ideas and norms in shaping state behavior, and neglects the role of material factors such as power and interests. Others argue that it assumes that all states are rational actors who are influenced by international norms and values, which may not always be the case. Social Constructivism provides a valuable perspective on the topic of research, by emphasizing the role of social norms, identities, and interactions in shaping state behavior. It argues that states' interests and actions are not fixed but are constructed through social processes, such as discourse and practice, which can lead to changes in state behavior. In the case of North Korea, social constructivist analysis helps to explain how its nuclear program is not just a result of rational cost-benefit calculations but also a product of its identity as a self-reliant socialist state and its interactions with other states in the international system. Simply put, North Korea values legitimacy and recognition in the comity of Nations and therefore resorts to Nuclear armament to secure and consolidate legitimacy as well as gain recognition as a major-power in the international community which failure to be accorded such status will lead to unmitigated disaster.

## **Methodology**

The secondary data collection methods where research materials are generated from documented evidences, reports, journals, government white papers, newspapers, magazines, media reports, internet retrieved materials are quoted and analyzed. Document analysis included reviewing of relevant reports, official documents, and other secondary sources related to the research question dominated this research work.

## **China and the United States of America in North Korea's Nuclear Quest**

The issue of North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons is a complex one with several arguments and perspectives. Scholars have argued that North Korea is pursuing nuclear weapons as a defensive measure against the United States has been made by several scholars. According to Waltz (2003), North Korea perceives the United States as a threat and has therefore developed nuclear weapons as a means of deterrence. Similarly, Buzan (2007) in his securitization theory argues that North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons is a response to the US's perceived hostile policy towards the country. According to this argument, the USA's hostile attitude towards North Korea, coupled with its past interventions in countries such as Iraq and Libya, has made North Korea believe that it needs nuclear weapons to deter any potential aggression from the USA. This argument is supported by scholars such as Andrei Lankov, who argues that "North Korea's nuclear program is driven by a sense of vulnerability and insecurity" (Lankov, 2017).

Another argument is that the USA aims to destroy North Korea in favor of South Korean capitalism. This argument is based on the historical context of the Korean War and the USA's support for South Korea. Supporters of this argument claim that the USA's aim is to weaken North Korea and bring about its collapse, which would allow South Korea to unify the Korean peninsula under a capitalist system. However, this argument is often criticized for its simplistic view of the complex geopolitical dynamics at play. As Joshua Pollack notes, "the idea that the United States is bent on regime change in North Korea is widely held but rarely supported by concrete evidence" (Pollack, 2017). This assumption seems paranoia because it is more likely that the US aims is to prevent the country from acquiring nuclear weapons, which if not controlled will escalate to other countries probably into the hands of non-state-actors. This is because according to Talmadge (2015), the US has pursued a policy of deterrence against North Korea, which involves a combination of military capabilities, diplomatic efforts, and economic sanctions and none was aimed at regime change or state annihilation. Additionally, the US has sought to negotiate with North Korea in the past to resolve the nuclear issue peacefully (Korean War, 2021).

The role of China in North Korea's nuclear program is also a topic of discussion. China is North Korea's primary ally and provides economic and military assistance to the country (Zhang, 2018). However, China has also supported international efforts to curb North Korea's nuclear ambitions and has implemented sanctions against the country (Jin, 2017). Never the less, China is North Korea's closest ally among the super-powers and their biggest trading partner, which is the reason some argue that China has been providing support and assistance to North Korea's nuclear program. However, others argue that China has been working to reign in North Korea's nuclear



ambitions and has implemented several sanctions against North Korea. As Jia Qingguo notes, "China has been trying to persuade North Korea to abandon its nuclear program and has been cooperating with the international community in imposing sanctions on North Korea" (Jia, 2018).

In terms of knowing the true intentions of the government of North Korea in their vehement pursuit of nuclear program, it is difficult to second guess as the regime is notoriously secretive and opaque. However, some argue that North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons is aimed at achieving a sense of security and prestige on the international stage. As John Delury notes, "North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons is driven by a sense of national pride and a desire to be taken seriously as a major power" (Delury, 2017).

### **North Korea's Possession of Nuclear Weapons; Its Challenges to Regional and International Security and Stability**

**Proliferation Risk:** North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons increases the likelihood of nuclear proliferation to other states and non-state actors, and this is one of the greatest global threats to security inherent in it. This is because it sets a dangerous precedent for other countries to pursue nuclear weapons as a means of deterrence and defense (Solomon & Cha, 2019). An example of proliferation risk leading to conflict is the case of India and Pakistan. Both countries possess nuclear weapons and have engaged in a nuclear arms race since the 1970s. In 1998, both countries tested nuclear weapons, leading to international condemnation and sanctions. The continued development and possession of nuclear weapons by these countries pose a significant proliferation risk, and tensions between them continue to escalate (Perkovich & Dalton, 2015).

**Miscalculation:** The possession of nuclear weapons by North Korea increases the likelihood of miscalculation and misjudgment, which could potentially lead to a catastrophic event. This is because the presence of nuclear weapons can create a false sense of security and invincibility, leading to risky behaviors and actions (Perkovich, 2018). The Cuban Missile Crisis is a prime example of miscalculation leading to a potential nuclear conflict. In 1962, the Soviet Union placed nuclear missiles in Cuba, which was seen as a direct threat to the United States. The U.S. responded with a naval blockade of Cuba, and tensions escalated to the point where nuclear war was a real possibility. However, both sides ultimately chose to negotiate and avoid conflict (Allison, 2012).

**Conflict Escalation:** North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons increases the risk of conflict escalation in the region and beyond. This is because the use of nuclear weapons in any form could trigger a devastating response from other nuclear powers, leading to a full-blown nuclear war (Fitzpatrick, 2018). The Gulf War in 1991 is an example of how conflict escalation can lead to devastating consequences. Following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, a coalition led by the United States launched a military operation to expel Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Despite being heavily outmatched, Iraq launched Scud missiles at Israel and Saudi Arabia, which led to fears of chemical and biological warfare. The U.S. responded with airstrikes, leading to significant casualties and damage. The war ended with a ceasefire, but the region remains unstable to this day (Hiro, 2012).

### **Previous Diplomatic Engagements with North Korea**

Several diplomatic engagements have been used to address North Korea's nuclear proliferation program.

**Six-Party Talks:** This is a series of multilateral talks involving North Korea, South Korea, China, Japan, Russia, and the United States. The talks began in 2003 and aimed to persuade North Korea to abandon its nuclear program. However, the talks failed to achieve their objectives, and North Korea continued to conduct nuclear tests (Kerr, 2018). However, the talks failed to achieve their goal as North Korea withdrew from the talks in 2009 and resumed nuclear testing. According to Cronin (2017), the talks failed due to a lack of trust between the parties, as well as differing objectives and interpretations of the agreements.

**United Nations Sanctions:** The United Nations has imposed several sanctions on North Korea in response to its nuclear program. These sanctions include restrictions on trade, financial transactions, and travel bans on certain individuals (United Nations Security Council, 2018). However, the sanctions have not achieved their goal as North Korea continues to conduct nuclear tests and develop its missile capabilities. According to Lee and Kim (2019), the sanctions have failed due to insufficient implementation and enforcement, as well as North Korea's ability to evade them through illicit means.

**Bilateral Talks:** The United States has held several bilateral talks with North Korea over its nuclear program. In 1994, the United States signed the Agreed Framework with North Korea, which aimed to freeze North Korea's nuclear program. However, the agreement collapsed in 2002, and North Korea resumed its nuclear activities (Kerr, 2018).

**Track 2 Diplomacy:** This is a form of informal diplomacy that involves non-governmental actors such as academics, experts, and private citizens. Track 2 diplomacy has been used to facilitate communication and build trust between North Korea and other countries (Vestal, 2018).

**Strategic Patience:** This was a policy adopted by the Obama administration, which aimed to apply pressure on North Korea through sanctions and isolation. The policy was based on the assumption that North Korea would eventually come to the negotiating table to discuss its nuclear program (Kerr, 2018). However, despite the use of these diplomatic engagements, North Korea has continued to develop its nuclear program, indicating a gap in the effectiveness of diplomatic efforts in addressing the issue.

**Agreed Framework:** The Agreed Framework, signed in 1994 between the US and North Korea, aimed to freeze and ultimately dismantle North Korea's nuclear weapons program in exchange for aid and energy assistance. However, the agreement failed to achieve its goal as North Korea continued to pursue nuclear weapons in secret. According to Kim (2016), North Korea exploited loopholes in the agreement and pursued a clandestine uranium enrichment program, which was not covered by the agreement. The US-North Korea summits, held in Singapore in 2018 and Hanoi in 2019, aimed to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula through direct negotiations.

between the leaders of the two countries. However, the summits failed to achieve their goal as North Korea continued to conduct missile tests and refused to take concrete steps towards denuclearization. According to Klingner (2020), the summits failed due to lack of preparation and clear objectives on the part of the US, as well as North Korea's unwillingness to give up its nuclear weapons.

In summary, the failure of these diplomatic engagements can be attributed to factors such as a lack of trust between the parties, differing interpretations and objectives, insufficient implementation and enforcement of agreements, North Korea's ability to exploit loopholes and evade sanctions, and a lack of clear objectives and preparation on the part of the US. These factors highlight the complexity and difficulty of resolving the North Korean nuclear issue through diplomatic means.

### **Summary of Findings**

After analyzing the literatures we reviewed on the North Korean nuclear proliferation, the following findings were made:

1. North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons poses significant risks and challenges to regional and international stability, including the potential for proliferation, miscalculation, and conflict escalation.
2. Past diplomatic engagements, such as the Six-Party Talks, United Nations sanctions, bilateral talks, track 2 Diplomacy, and strategic patience, have failed to achieve their goals in addressing North Korea's nuclear program.
3. The failure of these diplomatic efforts can be attributed to factors such as a lack of trust between the parties, differing objectives and interpretations of agreements, insufficient implementation and enforcement of sanctions, North Korea's ability to evade sanctions, and North Korea's unwillingness to give up its nuclear weapons.
4. The Trump-Kim summits in 2018 and 2019 also failed to achieve their goal of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula due to a lack of preparation and clear objectives on the part of the US and North Korea's unwillingness to give up its nuclear weapons.
5. To address the North Korean nuclear crisis, it is recommended that a multilateral approach be taken, involving all stakeholders in the region, including North Korea, South Korea, China, Japan, Russia, and the United States.
6. North Korea embarked on Nuclear Armament as the only option available to her as security measure and preservation of her sovereignty.

This approach should prioritize building trust between the parties, establishing clear objectives and agreements, implementing and enforcing effective sanctions, and incentivizing North Korea to abandon its nuclear program through aid and other means

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the study of nuclear armament by North Korea has revealed significant concerns regarding international security. The findings of this research have shown that North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles is a significant threat to regional and global peace

and stability. The regime's continued development of its nuclear program poses a significant challenge to the international community's efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation.

Furthermore, the research has also identified the failures of the international community in effectively addressing the North Korean nuclear issue. Despite imposing economic sanctions and diplomatic pressure, the international community has been unable to persuade North Korea to abandon its nuclear program. The research has also highlighted the need for a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to address the North Korean nuclear threat.

### **Recommendations**

Given the failure of past diplomatic engagements in addressing North Korea's nuclear crisis, and based on our findings in this work, we put up the following recommendations for handling the crisis include:

1. **Strengthening Sanctions with Adequate Consequences:** This could involve enhancing the implementation and enforcement of existing sanctions, as well as exploring new ways to pressure North Korea economically, such as restricting its access to international financial systems. The aim would be to increase the costs of North Korea's nuclear program and incentivize it to come to the negotiating table.
2. **Engaging in Multilateral Talks:** Given the failure of previous bilateral talks, engaging in multilateral talks with North Korea could increase the chances of success. This could involve reviving the Six-Party Talks or creating a new multilateral forum that includes other relevant countries and regional organizations.
3. **Using Track 1.5 Diplomacy:** This involves combining the formal diplomatic efforts of government officials with the informal efforts of non-governmental actors. By bringing in outside experts, academics, and private citizens, Track 1.5 Diplomacy can help build trust and facilitate communication between North Korea and other countries.
4. **Adopting a Phased and Incremental Approach:** Rather than insisting on complete denuclearization upfront, a phased and incremental approach could be taken that involves offering North Korea incentives at each stage of the process. This could involve building trust by implementing small steps, such as freezing nuclear tests or dismantling certain facilities, before moving on to more comprehensive measures.
5. **Addressing the underlying security concerns of North Korea:** One of the reasons why North Korea has pursued nuclear weapons is because it sees them as a means of deterrence against perceived threats from the US and its allies. Addressing these underlying security concerns through diplomatic means could help reduce North Korea's perceived need for nuclear weapons and increase the chances of successful negotiations.

These recommendations are not exhaustive but represent possible ways of addressing the North Korean nuclear crisis. It is important to note that there are no easy solutions, and any approach will require sustained diplomatic efforts and willingness to compromise from all parties involved

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