

Statement by

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**U.S. Senate
Committee on Foreign Relations
June 11, 2009**

Mr. Chairman, I am honored to appear before this committee. I commend you and the members of this distinguished committee for holding this timely hearing on one of the most complex foreign policy and security challenges that the United States and the international community face today.

I appear before you as someone who has spent most of the past 40 years working on U.S. relations with the Asia-Pacific region, with a special focus on the two Koreas, China, and Japan. I've worked in and on the region as a soldier, a scholar, a diplomat, and now as the head of a private, non-profit organization. Today, the views I express here are solely my own.

I am also here as a long-time advocate of diplomacy with North Korea. Through several U.S. administrations during my career as a diplomat, I made the case that diplomacy, dialogue, and mutual respect were more likely to yield the results America sought, and to yield them at a more acceptable cost, than were policies based on confrontation.

I based this judgment on years of studying the North Korean regime and on hundreds of hours negotiating with North Koreans. Through this experience, I came to understand what motivates the North Korean regime, its strengths, and its weaknesses.

My advocacy of negotiations with Pyongyang has always been based on two principles: (1) that North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons represents a direct threat to U.S. national security interests, and (2) that eliminating this threat requires a concerted diplomatic effort to determine whether North Korea was prepared to make a strategic

decision to give up its nuclear weapons ambitions in return for things that the United States would be prepared to offer.

In the past, there were many times when American diplomats had serious reason to believe that such an arrangement was possible. Today, I am compelled to report that this may no longer be the case.

Today, there are disturbing signs that North Korea may finally have made a strategic decision about its nuclear weapons program. That decision appears to be that Pyongyang intends to keep its nuclear weapons and that the North will seek recognition by the United States and the international community that it is now a nuclear weapons state.

I am drawn to this conclusion because of statements that North Korean officials have made to me and to virtually every American visitor to Pyongyang in recent months. It is also based on the DPRK's public utterances and actions with respect to its nuclear weapons capability.

Since the beginning of this year, North Korea has abrogated the 1991-1992 North-South Denuclearization Accords; it has ousted IAEA inspectors from its nuclear facilities at Yongbyon; it has walked out of the Six-Party Talks; it has begun to restart its nuclear facilities at Yongbyon; and it has conducted another nuclear weapons test, in blatant contravention of its own formal commitment to denuclearization – a commitment that had served as the basis for multilateral and bilateral negotiations over the past four years.

The Obama Administration's response to all this has been measured and calm, but firm. Early on, President Obama appointed Ambassador Stephen W. Bosworth as his Special Representative to deal with North Korea. For anyone who knows Ambassador Bosworth and his reputation, that appointment signaled a clear U.S. intention to deal with Pyongyang at a high level and in a positive, pragmatic way.

Many Americans who deal directly with North Korea, including me, were deeply impressed by President Obama's commitment to diplomacy and to resetting relations with adversaries. As a result, we conveyed to our North Korean interlocutors in the strongest possible terms that the arrival of the Obama Administration represented an historic opportunity to put the U.S.-DPRK relationship on the right track.

Regrettably, North Korea has thus far rejected the diplomatic outreach of the Obama Administration.

In my longer statement, which I respectfully request be made part of the formal record, I discuss what may be behind Pyongyang's actions, and some of the history behind how we have arrived at this point. To summarize, the DPRK's behavior may have much more to do with its complicated internal politics than with its international agenda. Whatever the reason, Pyongyang's actions suggest that North Korea is seeking to establish a troubling and unacceptable new paradigm in its relations with the United States and the international community.

So what is to be done? Many of the steps that I and others have recommended in recent months are already at the core of the U.S. administration's policy approach. These include:

- Closer bilateral and trilateral consultation and coordination with Seoul and Tokyo.**
- Seeking strong sanctions through the UN Security Council, and supplementing these with unilateral steps as needed.**
- Working more closely with China. Chinese attitudes towards Pyongyang are changing, and the PRC may be increasingly amenable to working quietly with us to turn up the heat on North Korea.**
- Reinforcing strongly and publicly the U.S. defense commitments to our South Korean and Japanese allies, and reaffirming clearly the U.S. commitment to extended deterrence.**
- Making clear as a matter of U.S. policy that the United States will not recognize North Korea as a nuclear weapons state, nor will we normalize diplomatic or economic relations with a nuclear-armed North Korea.**

Taking such steps, and this list is by no means exhaustive, will exert clear pressure on North Korea, maximize solidarity with our allies and partners, and drive home the message to the DPRK that the path it is on will lead only to further isolation and suffering for its people. Patience will be needed as we take this approach, and there is every reason to believe that North Korea will challenge our resolve.

At the same time, the United States should keep the door open to a resumption of talks with the DPRK, as long as such talks are aimed at bringing about the complete and verifiable end to the North's nuclear ambitions. Such an approach will resonate well with the international community, which largely supports for the Obama Administration's approach precisely because it is based on U.S. willingness to engage constructively with the DPRK.

I would also recommend that the United State keep the door open to people-to-people, cultural, and other exchanges with North Korea. There is little to be lost, and much to be gained, from exposing as many North Koreans as possible to the reality of the way the world works. Such exposure will pay great dividends as North Korea inevitably changes. The truth is one of the greatest weapons we can employ in bringing about such change.

Let me conclude by noting that it is not too late for North Korea to halt this free-fall in relations with Washington and its neighbors. Pyongyang can still choose to accept the outstretched hand that has been offered to it. The United States remains prepared, as it should be, to build a better bilateral relationship with North Korea based on mutual respect, non-hostility, and the complete end of the North's nuclear weapons program.

Those principles used to form the core of the DPRK's own negotiating position. I would strongly urge Pyongyang to return to those principles.

Thank you. I would be pleased to answer your questions.

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