

R2R

We affirm, Resolved: the deployment of anti-missile systems is in South Korea's best interests.

Contention One is South Korean Nuclearization.

Kroenig at Georgetown in 2016 writes:

Currently, South Korea has no intention of developing nuclear weapons. However, South Korea could reconsider its non-nuclear stance if the relationship with the US were to weaken.

Deploying missile defense is needed to prevent this. Pinkston at the Center for Nonproliferation Studies in 2016 explains:

Missile defense plays a critical role in reassuring Seoul in the shadow of Pyongyang's growing nuclear capabilities. There is strong support in South Korea for nuclear breakout, it almost certainly would occur if not for the U.S. South Korean alliance.

Nuclearization would come easily for South Korea. Fitzpatrick at the IISS in 2016 finds that:

Given its industrial might, large pool of nuclear engineers and scientists, and the speed with which it has mastered other nuclear technologies, South Korea would face few technical barriers to producing a bomb. It would take South Korea only a year to separate enough plutonium for a weapon.

Developing nuclear weapons would be destructive to South Korea's national interests.

Chang at the Daily Beast in 2016 explains that for South Korea:

To develop an arsenal would mean withdrawal from the non-proliferation treaty. Thus, South Korea would lose its coveted place in global councils, and, the sanctions that would inevitably follow could severely damage its export-dependent economy

The US cannot support a nuclear South Korea and would walk away from the alliance. Glosserman at the CSIS in 2015 explains:

The development of nuclear weapons by South Korea would likely kill the alliance with America because the US has vested interests in upholding the nonproliferation rules

And Kuzminski at the Pentagon in 2016 writes:

China will feel directly threatened by nuclearization, leading to a costly breakdown in Sino-South Korean relations.

Ultimately, nuclear weapons will turn South Korea into an international rogue state. Kuzminski furthers that:

South Korea risks undoing years of economic progress, and destabilizing the region. South Korea's greatest advantage over North Korea is its extensive integration in the global economy. With nuclearization, it risks losing all of that.

Contention Two: Deterring North Korean Aggression

North Korea's nuclear development is aimed at enhancing its regional position and weakening South Korea. Hill of University of Denver explains this June that:

North Korea seeks nothing less than to decouple the US-South Korean alliance - a split that would enable the reunification of the Korean Peninsula on Kim's terms and set

the stage for an invasion. If North Korea had long-range nuclear weapons, it might be able to change the strategic calculus, by threatening to launch a nuclear attack on the US mainland in response to US intervention on the Korean Peninsula.

However, North Korea must achieve a quick victory if it is to attack. Goure at the Lexington Institute in 2015 explains:

Pyongyang knows the consequences of failing to achieve its offensive objectives rapidly and decisively. It has spent 60 years deploying capabilities expressly directed at ensuring that, should war come again, it can execute a decisive first strike

This is why their first strike strategy would be to overwhelm South Korea's military with missiles. Elleman at 38 North in 2016 explains:

Pyongyang's primary role would be to disrupt operations at air bases and military garrisons, all critical to the defense of South Korea

THAAD and other missile defense systems are effective enough to prevent a successful North Korean attack. The Economist in 2017 finds:

A layered defence consisting of South Korea's Patriot system and THAAD would destroy 90% of incoming land-based missiles.

That makes South Korea significantly safer than it would be without missile defense.

Daewoo of the Sejong Institute in 2017 finds that:

Deploying the THAAD and patriot systems will save 700,000 civilians for intercepting two nuclear missiles.

Thus, we affirm.

Cut Cards

Contention 1: Preventing South Korean Proliferation

There is increasing support for nuclearization in South Korea. Kroenig at Georgetown in 2016 writes:

Kroenig – 16 – Associate Professor in the Department of Government and School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University and Senior Fellow at the Center on International Security at the Atlantic Council (Matthew Kroenig, June 2016, “Approaching Critical Mass: Asia’s Multipolar Nuclear Future,” National Bureau of Asian Research, NBR Special Report #58, <http://nbr.org/publications/element.aspx?id=897>, p. 32-33, malia – 8/2/16)

South Korea. **Concerns about South Korea’s nuclear intentions have resurfaced in recent years as prominent politicians have called for** a return of U.S. nuclear weapons or, failing that, **an independent nuclear arsenal [and]**.¹¹⁸ **Public opinion polling has supported this position**.¹¹⁹ In addition, Seoul shows continued interest in plutonium reprocessing (avowedly for peaceful purposes) and in developing means of delivery. **At present**, it would be safe to conclude, however, that **South Korea has no intention of developing nuclear weapons**. Indeed, in Seoul there is even an underlying level of frustration at Washington’s constant fears of the ROK’s possible nuclearization. One former South Korean policymaker described Washington’s inability to get past South Korea’s reprocessing program in the 1970s as a youthful indiscretion forever standing in the way of a happy marriage.¹²⁰ **The reasons for the ROK’s strong commitment to its nonnuclear status** are many but **center on the strength of the alliance with the [US]** United States and the superiority of U.S. capabilities over any of South Korea’s potential nuclear threats.¹²¹ It is conceivable, **however**, that **South Korea could reconsider its nonnuclear stance** under a number of conditions, such as **if the relationship with the [US] United States were to weaken**; if North Korean or Chinese capabilities were to improve, calling into question U.S. resolve to provide extended deterrence; or if Japan were to acquire nuclear weapons.¹²² / U.S. assurances are an important part of South Korea’s nuclear abstinence. Washington’s combined exercises with the ROK and deployments of aircraft to Guam and Okinawa provide assurance, as does the planned deployment of THAAD missile defense systems. Still, **the U.S.-ROK relationship bears the hallmarks of the classic abandonment-entrapment dilemma, and South Korea fears that it might be abandoned. It also feels insecure in relation to Japan, which it believes will always be the United States’ [US] more capable and closer ally. Further, South Korea also feels that it could be entrapped into providing support for the United States in the event of a conflict between China and Japan.**

Deploying missile defense is needed to prevent this. Pinkston at the Center for Nonproliferation Studies in 2016 explains:

Daniel Pinkston (North East Asia Deputy Project Director with the International Crisis Group, Director of the East Asia Nonproliferation Project at the Center for Nonproliferation Studies) Why it makes sense to deploy THAAD in South Korea” 14 Jul 2016 Web 16 Aug 2017 “, <https://www.nknews.org/2016/07/why-it-makes-sense-to-deploy-thaad-in-south-korea/>

This type of rhetoric is extremely irresponsible and counterproductive. First, it reveals Beijing’s likely intentions in the case of an inter-Korean crisis, and second, it strongly encourages South Koreans who insist that Seoul must acquire its own nuclear deterrent. **Many critics fail to appreciate the role THAAD plays in reassuring Seoul in the shadow of Pyongyang’s growing nuclear capabilities. There is strong support in South Korea for nuclear**

breakout, it almost certainly would occur if not for the U.S.-ROK alliance. If South Korea were to seek a nuclear deterrent, it seems implausible that Japan would not follow. This scenario is not in the interest of China, Russia, the U.S., or any nation with the exception of North Korea.

Nuclearization would come surprisingly easily and quickly for South Korea. Fitzpatrick at the IISS in 2016 finds that:

Fitzpatrick – 16 – Executive Director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (Mark Fitzpatrick, 2016, Asia's Latent Nuclear Powers, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, Kindle Locations 624-643, malia – 8/2/16)

Given its industrial might, large pool of nuclear engineers and scientists, and the speed with which it has mastered other nuclear technologies [South Korea], the ROK would face few technical barriers to producing a bomb. Its past weaponisation work, and perhaps also its small-scale experiments in enrichment and reprocessing, would give the country a head start. Yet it lacks dedicated facilities for either enrichment or reprocessing. The latter provides the quicker route, and could enable the production of a bomb in two years or less. In theory, a small reprocessing plant could be built quickly. In 1977 the US Oak Ridge National Laboratory concluded that, under certain conditions, **a simple reprocessing plant could be built in as little as four to six months, and that the first 10kg of plutonium could be recovered about a week after the facility began operations.** This estimate did not take into account steps such as plant design, the recruitment and training of staff, or the need for post-construction testing, which together would increase the estimated time it would take to begin operations to 19–24 months or longer.⁵¹ The estimate of four to six months may also have been based on the presumption that engineers would first be able to surreptitiously extract low burn-up fuel from South Korea's heavy-water reactors.⁵² Taking a more cautious approach, one Korean scholar estimated in 1978 that it would take South Korea four to six years to build a bomb, taking into account not only fissile-material production but also the effort to design and fashion a weapon, as well as related activity.⁵³ US strategic-weapons expert James Clay Moltz concluded in 2006 that **[that's why he concludes that] it would take South Korea at least a year to separate enough plutonium for a weapon.**⁵⁴ In the normal run of things, Moltz is probably correct. **In dire circumstances, however, South Korea could also use low burn-up spent fuel already on hand.** Without the need to build a dedicated reprocessing facility, small amounts of plutonium could be separated at the nine hot cells at KAERI's Irradiated Material Examination Facility near Daejeon. This facility is not designed to separate plutonium, but it could be adapted to do so. With this concern in mind, the US insisted that the ROK limit the size of the KAERI hot cells.⁵⁵

Developing nuclear weapons would be destructive to South Korea's national interests.

Chang at the Daily Beast in 2016 explains that for South Korea:

Chang 16 Gordon G. Chang [author of *The Coming Collapse of China and Nuclear Showdown: North Korea Takes On the World*. His writings have appeared in *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, among other publications. He is a *Forbes.com* columnist], 8-10-2016, "As South Koreans Lose Faith in Uncle Sam They Want Nukes of Their Own," *Daily Beast*,

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/as-south-koreans-lose-faith-in-uncle-sam-they-want-nukes-of-their-own>
//DF

To develop an arsenal, however, would mean withdrawal from the non-proliferation treaty and accepting the global condemnation and punishment that would follow. Won Yoo-chul, the Saenuri figure, notes that North Korea withdrew from that treaty, but that is not a smart comparison. The North was and remains an isolated state and does not care if it is shunned, but **South Korea is highly integrated into the international system and needs friends. The South, therefore, would lose its coveted place in global councils, and, more to the point, the sanctions that would inevitably follow could severely damage its export-dependent economy,** now ranked the world's 11th largest. Plus, **the U.S. would probably walk away from the South, making the country far more vulnerable than it is today.** An already isolationist American public would ask why 28,500 American troops now in the South are needed when Seoul had its own nuclear deterrent. And this is not a theoretical concern, because Mr. Trump has questioned America's pledge to defend South Korea and has implied there would be no need for the U.S. to stand with a nuked-up South. Some South Koreans point out the U.S. has a strong friendship with

nuclear-armed Israel, but the situations are different. Israel is not a signatory of the nonproliferation treaty, the U.S. does not base troops there, and Israel does not especially need outside help. South Korea, however, relies on the American “tripwire” force and the cooperation of American ally Japan. Moreover, Seoul relies on American nukes. “South Korea already has the backing of the best nuclear force on the planet with its ally, the U.S.,” notes South Korea-based Robert Collins, who works closely with American forces on the Korean peninsula, in an e-mail to The Daily Beast.

The US cannot support a nuclear South Korea and would walk away from the alliance. Glosserman at the CSIS in 2015 explains:

Glosserman and Santoro – 15 – Executive Director of the Pacific Forum CSIS and Senior Fellow for Nuclear Policy at the Pacific Forum CSIS (Brad Glosserman and David Santoro, 4-16-2015, “America’s Real Challenge in Asia: The Reassurance Dilemma,” National Interest, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/americas-real-challenge-asia-the-reassurance-dilemma-12642>, malia – 8/8/16)

Second, allies should not expect too much from nuclear weapons. Although the 2010 US Nuclear Posture Review makes clear that security architectures in Northeast Asia (and other key regions) will retain a nuclear dimension so long as nuclear threats remain, the United States [US] has set out a comprehensive approach that relies on nuclear and non-nuclear means, namely missile defense and conventional strike systems. Tokyo and Seoul should understand that this shift, which started during the previous administration of George W. Bush, is meant to strengthen, not weaken, deterrence. While there are threats that need to be addressed with nuclear means, others do not. After all, the threat of U.S. nuclear-use may not always be credible. An adversary may believe, rightly or wrongly, that there are forms of aggression that fall beneath the U.S. nuclear response threshold. Greater reliance on non-nuclear means helps solve this problem. Incidentally, non-nuclear means also offer important deterrence benefits. Missile defense of the U.S. homeland and deployed forces, for instance, further couples the United States with its allies, mitigating if not eliminating an adversary’s option to create a wedge between them. / In this spirit, allies should not expect redeployment of U.S. nuclear weapons in Northeast Asia. South Koreans, in particular, have frequently requested that Washington redeploy tactical systems to the Peninsula to help deter North Korea from provocative actions. This call misses the point that nuclear weapons do not play a useful role to deter such actions and, significantly, that such a move would be politically counterproductive as various governments work to denuclearize the Peninsula. **The development of indigenous nuclear weapons by [South Korea] allies, sometimes called for by South Koreans and to a far lesser extent Japanese, would be equally counterproductive and would likely kill the alliances [with America] because the [US] United States has vested interests in upholding nonproliferation rules and norms.**

Soul’s possession of nuclear weapons would also enrage China and lead to massive backlash. Kuzminski at the Pentagon in 2016 writes:

Kuzminski 16 Frank Kuzminski [active duty Army officer and currently serves as a strategic planner on the Army Staff at the Pentagon], 3-1-2016, “No Nukes in South Korea,” Real Clear Defense, http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2016/03/01/no_nukes_in_south_korea_109090.html //DF South Korea acquiring its own nuclear arsenal will achieve little beyond destabilizing the region. While North Korea defiantly continues its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, it keeps the bulk of its military positioned forward and able to attack the South with little or no warning; North Korea’s long range artillery and known stocks of chemical and biological weapons are just as threatening as, if not more destructive than, North Korea’s nascent nuclear arsenal. Kim Jong-Un does not need a nuclear-tipped Unha-3 ballistic missile, or even a submarine launched ballistic missile to turn Seoul into a “sea of fire.” The real purpose behind Pyongyang’s nuclear program is to ensure the regime’s long-term survival, and to convince the world that North Korea be taken seriously. According to the U.S. Director of National Intelligence, James R. Clapper, North Korea’s ballistic missile threat is aimed at the United States, and a nuclear South Korea will not neutralize this threat. Instead, **it will dramatically alter the regional balance of power and incense China, which already strongly opposes** the deployment of a U.S. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) battery to South Korea. **China will likely consider its interests directly threatened [by nuclearization], leading to further polarization over the North Korean issue, and a costly breakdown in Sino-South Korean relations. China is South Korea’s top trading partner by far – South Korea can only lose in a strategic contest with China**. One can also speculate that Japan, which forswears nuclear weapons largely due to being the only country ever attacked by them, will

not tolerate being left out of a North East Asian nuclear arms race, especially given the recent security reforms championed by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Ultimately, nuclear weapons will turn South Korea into an international pariah state. Kuzminski furthers that:

Kuzminski 16 Frank Kuzminski [active duty Army officer and currently serves as a strategic planner on the Army Staff at the Pentagon], 3-1-2016, "No Nukes in South Korea," Real Clear Defense, http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2016/03/01/no_nukes_in_south_korea_109090.html //DF There's no question that North Korea's nuclear program is a danger to the entire world, and a more direct approach, which includes China, is needed to counter this threat. Despite the pro-nuke agenda of a vocal minority, led by Mr. Chong Mong-joon, a South Korean businessman and erstwhile political operative, **South Korean nukes are [not] neither in South Korea's, nor in the United States' strategic interests. South Korea risks undoing years of economic progress, destabilizing the region, and sparking a nuclear arms race in North East Asia, if not around the world. The United States cannot endorse a South Korea withdrawal from the NPT, and must oppose any such unilateral effort by Seoul. South Korea's greatest advantage over North Korea is its extensive integration in the global economy as one of the world's top trading power. For its sake, Seoul must resist letting the nuclear genie out of the bottle and deal with North Korea in innovative ways. Anything else would play right into Kim Jong-Un's hands.**

Contention 2: Deterring North Korean Aggression

North Korea is developing nuclear weapons to gain a strategic advantage over the U.S. and South Korea. Hill of University of Denver explains this June that:

Christopher R. Hill (University of Denver). "North Korea's Real Strategy." June 20, 2017.

<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/north-korea-nuclear-program-invasion-by-christopher-r-hill-2017-06>

DENVER – North Korea's quest for nuclear weapons is often depicted as a "rational" response to its strategic imperatives of national security and regime survival. After all, the country is surrounded by larger, supposedly hostile states, and it has no allies on which it can rely to come to its defense. It is only logical, on this view, that Kim Jong-un wants to avoid the mistake made by Iraq's Saddam Hussein and Libya's Muammar el-Qaddafi, both of whom would still be alive and in power had they acquired deliverable nuclear weapons. In fact, **North Korea's appetite for nuclear weapons is rooted more in aggression than pragmatism. North Korea seeks nothing less than to decouple the United States from its South Korean partner – a split that would enable the reunification of the Korean Peninsula on Kim's terms.** In other words, North Korea does not want only to defend itself; it wants **[and] to set the stage for an invasion of its own.** Of course, such a scenario is, in many ways, the stuff of fancy. But to be a North Korean today is not necessarily to accept the world as it is. And North Korean propaganda continues to reiterate the view that the Korean Peninsula consists of one people, sharing one language and one culture, indivisible – except by outsiders like the US. By this logic, the North needs to find a way to discourage those outsiders from intervening in the peninsula's affairs. As it stands, the US-South Korea relationship operates on the basis of something like the North Atlantic Treaty's collective-defense clause, Article 5: any North Korean aggression against South Korea will, it is assured, be met by the combined forces of South Korea and the US. Such a counterattack would be decisive, ensuring the total destruction of the North Korean regime. **If North Korea had long-range nuclear weapons, however, it might be able to change the strategic calculus, by threatening to launch a nuclear attack on the US mainland in response to US intervention on the Korean Peninsula.** The US might intervene anyway, launching its own devastating attack on North Korea. But it might also choose not to risk casualties on its own soil. If the US did shirk its collective-defense responsibilities, South Korea would still have plenty of recourse against its northern neighbor. After all, South Korea's conventional forces are far better trained, equipped, and motivated than their North Korean counterparts. But it is hard to say whether the

North Koreans know that. Like many dictatorships before them, they may be the first to believe their own propaganda – in this case, that they can succeed against a South Korean foe that is not buttressed by American military might.

Unfortunately, Rovere of Real Clear Defense proposes this July that when North Korea successfully builds up their nuclear arsenal:

Crispin Rovere (Real Clear Defense). "North Korea: The Case for War." July 11, 2017.

http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2017/07/11/north_korea_the_case_for_war_111767.html?utm_source=RC+Defense+Morning+Rec&utm_campaign=ec6206eb8f-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_07_10&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_694f73a8dc-ec6206eb8f-83928945

The United States chooses not to act militarily to destroy North Korea's nuclear program. North Korea successfully conducts a long-range atmospheric nuclear test, conclusively proving its ability to deliver a nuclear weapon to the American homeland. The U.S. is deterred from further intervention, and over the next five to ten years North Korea continues to expand, diversify, and protect its growing nuclear arsenal. Consequences 1. Increased North Korean provocation Having achieved a survivable second-strike capability and a stabilized nuclear deterrence relationship with the U.S., **North Korea [will feel] utterly unconstrained with respect to its neighbors.** North Korea launches conventional ballistic missiles directly at Japan, killing scores of civilians. **Instead of responding with massive force, the U.S. seeks to restrain its ally from escalating, fearful that a collapsing regime will retaliate with nuclear warheads against the United States.** North Korea is co-opted into talks, but instead of rolling back its nuclear program in exchange for aid, the international community is blackmailed with threats of violence. The spiraling provocations destabilize the region and U.S. influence in Asia drastically recedes. 2. North Korea invades South Korea **Certain that the U.S. will not be able to intervene, North Korea breaks the armistice with a massive invasion of South Korea. North Korea is pushed back beyond the 38th parallel with American help, but not before millions of South Korean citizens lay dead. In Seoul, thousands perish daily as the city remains under constant bombardment. There is overwhelming pressure to push northward in response; however, the U.S. is paralyzed by the fear that a collapsing regime will launch its nuclear weapons against the U.S.** In the end, ROK forces invade the north and seize control of the peninsula. At the last, North Korea launches two dozen nuclear missiles into the U.S., devastating several major U.S. cities and killing almost 20 million people. Despite being the victim of large-scale nuclear attack, U.S. options for responding remain elusive, as the North Korean regime is already being toppled.

He concludes that:

Crispin Rovere (Real Clear Defense). "North Korea: The Flaws of Deterrence." July 20, 2017.

https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2017/07/20/north_korea_the_flaws_of_deterrence_111851.html

Apparently, Santoro is imagining that conventional deterrence can be maintained even as North Korea achieves a state of mutual vulnerability with the United States - essentially defeating the "stability-instability paradox." This would be a breakthrough in international relations worthy of the Nobel Peace Prize, and nothing in Santoro's argument suggests it is possible here. Realistically, the only way is for America's allies to develop their own nuclear arsenals so they can retaliate against lower levels of aggression themselves, without relying on the U.S. to match North Korea's dominance of the escalation ladder. This is also one of many differences between North Korea today and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, where two European allies had their own nuclear deterrent. This all brings me back to the future scenarios I put forward in my original case for war. **If North Korea develops and expands an ICBM nuclear capability, there will be a series of unacceptable consequences, namely: increased North Korean provocation, nuclear proliferation, and/or a far more catastrophic future war.** Conversely, choosing war with North Korea now avoids these consequences and solves the fundamental problem. I am sobered by what war means and its many costs, but make no mistake, should North Korea continue its current path then war is the only viable choice.

However, North Korea must achieve a quick victory if it is to attack. Goure at the Lexington Institute in 2015 explains:

Goure 15 Daniel Gouré, Ph.D., 3-30-2015, "U.S. Should Deploy THAAD Missile Defense To South Korea," Lexington Institute, <http://www.lexingtoninstitute.org/u-s-should-deploy-thaad-missile-defense-to-south-korea/> //DF

Deterring aggression requires, at a minimum, creating uncertainty in the mind of the aggressor state that it can win quickly, if at all. Beyond this, the defender also must convince the would-be aggressor that he faces the certainty of suffering unacceptable costs, if not military defeat. This was the approach the U.S. and its allies took with respect to deterring the Soviet Union. Over decades, the West continually upgraded and shaped its conventional and nuclear forces so as to make it clear to Moscow that it couldn't achieve a rapid conventional victory nor a disarming nuclear first strike. The essential elements of a deterrence strategy remain the same in the 21st Century. What has changed are the capabilities available both to the prospective aggressors in their efforts to develop a first strike advantage and the nations seeking to deter them. Nowhere are the challenges associated with deterring a prospective aggressor clearer than on the Korean peninsula. The regime in Pyongyang knows better than most the consequences of failing to achieve its offensive objectives rapidly and decisively. It has spent the 60-plus-years since the 1953 armistice developing and deploying capabilities expressly directed at ensuring [that], should war with its neighbor to the south come again, it can execute a decisive first strike. Some 60 percent of North Korea's Army is deployed within easy striking distance of South Korea's capitol, Seoul, along with approximately 13,000 pieces of artillery and rocket launchers. Pyongyang also has a 100,000-man-strong Special Operations Corps that could flood the South for the purpose of paralyzing communications and movement.

Very explicit evidence

Warden 17 John K. Warden [policy analyst on the Strategic Analysis & Assessments team at Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) in Arlington, Virginia], 3-2017, "North Korea's Nuclear Posture: An Evolving Challenge for U.S. Deterrence", Proliferation Papers //DF

First, the United States and its allies should challenge North Korea's ability to conduct limited nuclear strikes. If nuclear threats were to fail and North Korea used nuclear weapons to coerce the United States and its allies, Pyongyang might launch a nuclear strike with one or two nuclear weapons against a relatively remote military target such as a U.S. surface action group or a military base on Japan. Such a strike would have a significant military impact and demonstrate North Korean resolve, but would allow North Korea to argue that it exercised restraint. North Korea's goal would be to disrupt the flow of forces to the Korean peninsula and scare Washington, Tokyo, and Seoul while demonstrating willingness to control its nuclear use. Deploying layered missile defenses to protect U.S. and allied forces involved in a war on the Korean peninsula would challenge North Korea's strategy by making it more difficult for Pyongyang to achieve a nuclear effect on a target with only a handful of weapons.⁹⁰ The United States has already taken steps in this direction by deploying a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) battery in Guam and Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) interceptors aboard Aegis cruisers.⁹¹ In addition, the United States is making arrangements to deploy an additional THAAD battery in South Korea, cooperatively developing a new SM-3 interceptor with Japan, and pursuing additional technologies that are likely to make its missile defenses more reliable and cost effective. South Korea is also planning to develop its own indigenous missile defense system. If the United States and its allies have a credible layered defense in place, North Korea, when considering nuclear use against U.S. and allied forces or bases in the theater, would be forced to choose between a large nuclear strike that is more likely to penetrate missile defenses, but, because of its size, would increase pressure in the United States to respond more forcefully, on the one hand, and no nuclear use on the other. Given those options, Pyongyang may well calculate that the risk of escalation is too high and choose restraint.

This is why their first strike strategy would be to rapidly overwhelm South Korea's military with missiles. Elleman at 38 North in 2016 explains:

Elleman 16 Michael Elleman, 3-10-2016, "THAAD: What it Can and Can't Do," 38 North, http://www.38north.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/2016-03-10_THAAD-What-It-Can-and-Cant-Do.pdf //DF

Pyongyang possesses a substantial arsenal of short- and medium-range mobile ballistic missiles deployed throughout the country, including: 1) 500 Hwasong-5 (Scud-B), and Hwasong-6 (Scud- C) missiles with a range of 300-500 km; and 2) 200 Nodong systems with a range of 1,000 km. Each of these systems is capable of carrying nuclear as well as chemical and biological warheads, though most are fitted with conventional explosives warheads. **Their primary role**, other than those armed with nuclear weapons, **would** appear to **be to disrupt** or slow **operations at air bases, [and] military garrisons** and port facilities, **all critical to the defense of South Korea, given plans to flow outside forces onto the peninsula in case of a war**. The DPRK also has a small stockpile of about 100 KN-02 (Soviet-era SS-21 Tochka) missiles with a maximum range of between 90 and 120 km. Unlike the Scud-based missiles, the KN-02 is accurate enough to attack specific point targets, such as radars, command headquarters or critical infrastructure with consistency. It also appears to be capable of carrying a range of different warheads.

Missile defense disables this ability because it protects military bases from attack by NK. The ISDP in 2016 writes that the location for the THAAD missile defense system:

ISDP 16 11-2016, "THAAD in the Korean Peninsula," Institute for Security and Development Policy, <http://isdpeu.org/content/uploads/2016/11/THAAD-Background-ISDP-2.pdf> //DF

On July 22, it was announced that THAAD would be installed on a South Korean Air Force base in Seongju County by the end of 2017.²⁴ Seongju County is located around 217 kilometers southeast of Seoul and its Air Force Base currently hosts a Hawk ground-to-air missile battery. The southern-central region **was strategically chosen in order to protect Busan, Ulsan and Pohang from North Korean missile attacks. These are areas where South Korean and U.S. reinforcements and supplies would be located during an attack**.²⁵ However, positioning THAAD in Seongju (figure 4) would not protect Seoul. To defend Seoul, the current PAC defense system of the South Korean army will be upgraded.²⁶ THAAD's positioning in Seongju County was considered as a cost-saving measure since the THAAD could be installed alongside the existing Hawk battery without the need of purchasing any additional land.²⁷

The THAAD and other missile defense systems are effective enough to prevent a successful North Korean attack. The Economist in 2017 finds:

"Why China is wrong to be furious about THAAD." The Economist. 23 Mar. 2017. Web. 17 Jul. 2017. <<https://www.economist.com/news/asia/21719485-deployment-american-anti-missile-system-south-korea-does-not-threaten-chinas-nuclear>>

America says it has repeatedly offered Chinese officials technical briefings on the radar's capabilities and limitations. They have shown little interest, possibly because they do not really disagree about the threat THAAD represents. Chinese military analysts have boasted of China's ability to "blind" THAAD (meaning to incapacitate it through electronic interference)—a further indication that the outrage is politically motivated. It is also wrong to suggest that THAAD does nothing to protect South Korea from the North. In a paper for 38 North, a website, Mr Elleman and Michael Zagurek calculate that **faced with 50-missile salvos, a layered defence consisting of South Korea's Patriot system and two THAAD batteries** (another may be deployed when it is available) **would probably destroy 90% of incoming land-based missiles**. The threat that one of the 10% getting through might be carrying a nuclear warhead would not be eliminated. **But South Korea is a lot safer with THAAD than without it**. It is more likely, however, that China, always resentful of the presence of American troops so near its borders, sees an opportunity to use THAAD to weaken America's alliance with South Korea. It may hope that its bullying might yet pressure

South Korea's next president into reversing the deployment. If that is the intention, however, it has probably overplayed its hand, raising Korean hackles with its blatantly coercive methods.

Avoiding a military outbreak is in South Korea's best interests. Chong at Hankuk University in 2016 explains:

Chong 16 Chong Jin Oh [Professor Dr., Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Fulbright Visiting Professor State University of New York], 2016, "NEO-COLD WAR IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA: RISING TENSION BETWEEN SOUTH AND NORTH KOREA," Review of International Law and Politics //DF

North Korea's recent provocation and South Korea's tough reaction are escalating the tension in the region to Cold War levels. North Korea's twin provocations of a fourth nuclear test on January 6 and a long-range rocket launch on February 7 both dramatically escalated tensions on the divided peninsula while simultaneously adding fuel to the already crackling fire of U.S.-China rivalry in East Asia. These two events have brought conspicuous change - and an uncertain future - to the Korean Peninsula. The current South Korean government reaction's has broken from precedent and now tension in the Korean Peninsula is like a runaway train. In the past, South Korea has taken a defensive realist policy not unlike that of neighboring China. This is mostly because **South Korea has no interest in any type of military confrontation with the North. A conventional military conflict would certainly result in a victory for South Korea**, especially with almost assured U.S. aid, **but would devastate the capital Seoul, which sits only 40 km from the demarcation line**. Accordingly, China and **South Korea had a shared security interest in preventing war in the Korean Peninsula**. However, continuous aggressive military gestures on the part of North Korea are shifting the region's security paradigm. China seems to be continuing its traditional protective policy towards North Korea, a stance which has disappointed the South Korean government. Many South Korean commentators are arguing that, in refusing to join in international efforts to punish Pyongyang, China has shown itself not interested in preventing the rise of nuclear-armed North Korea, but rather interested in preserving North Korea's role as a strategic regional asset for Chinese interests. It is obvious that China has an interest in maintaining the status quo in the Korean peninsula, as North Korea acts as a physical buffer for China. North Korea could possibly be forced to abandon its nuclear aspirations if China were to impose harsh economic sanctions but China fears that this would result in internal collapse of the North Korea regime which would eventually lead to loss of their buffer zone.

Extras

THAAD would enhance deterrence

Sankaran 17 Jaganath Sankaran [Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland, University of Maryland], 2-6-2017, "Missile defense and strategic stability: Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) in South Korea," Contemporary Security Policy, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2017.1280744> //DF

Conceivably, **the deterrence of the American nuclear umbrella might dissuade North Korean use of nuclear force** (O'Neil, 2005, pp. 327-338). **However, the North Korean missile threat outlined above must be taken seriously and a credible defense against such threats is needed. In a major military contingency for the U.S. ROK alliance, North Korea could potentially launch hundreds of SCUDs into South Korean cities and military bases simultaneously**. The North Koreans have recently demonstrated another worrisome capability. On March 26 2014, North Korea test fired two medium-range Nodong missiles, one day after a trilateral South Korea-Japan-U.S. meeting ("NK's March missile," 2014). Particularly worrisome about this test were the launch tactics. **Instead of flying a nominal trajectory with a range of 1500 kilometers, the Nodong flew a modified trajectory for a distance of only about 650 kilometers** ("NK's March missile," 2014). **It was apparently launched at a steeper (i.e. lofted) angle, rose to an altitude higher than usual and fell back down with a much higher speed. Such a missile trajectory would likely be quite difficult to defend using the Patriot Advanced Capability (PAC-2/3) point defense batteries already in place. As reported, according to an**

anonymous senior South Korean military source, by carrying out such a test, North Korea appears to have come up with a way not to be caught by either the South Korean or American missile interception system when launching an attack against South Korea with its midrange missiles. (“NK’s March missile,” 2014) A THAAD system would likely have a better chance of handling missile trajectories when “launched at high trajectories (i.e. arcing at a high angle and reaching a high altitude relative to the ground distance traveled)” (Grisafi, 2015). With a presumed capability to have an intercept range of 200 kilometers with a maximum altitude ceiling of approximately 150 kilometers, THAAD would, in principle, be able to execute intercepts earlier when the North Korean Nodong missile would be more vulnerable (Kasper & Balle, 2014). Missile defense, however, cannot provide 100% guaranteed defense against every incoming missile. Rather, missile defense is expected to intercept a significant fraction of an early salvo of missiles, thereby giving the U.S.–ROK forces sufficient time to respond. The presence of THAAD will not eliminate the missile threat that U.S.–ROK forces might face from North Korea. Specifically, a single THAAD battery⁴ is likely sufficient to defeat a barrage of a small number of threat missiles. North Korea, on the other hand, is believed to possess 250–300 Nodong missiles that can be launched in a short time window (The National Institute for Defense Studies, 2015, p. 64). Even with an idealized ratio of one interceptor for every missile, one or two THAAD batteries would only be able to provide only limited protection to critical civilian and military assets. A large North Korean attack salvo of hundred(s) of missiles could still cause severe damage to alliance forces or civilian populations. Nevertheless, THAAD along with the Patriot systems could offer a valuable capability to preserve important military assets, thereby strengthening overall deterrence.