CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

CARNEGIE INTERNATIONAL NONPROLIFERATION CONFERENCE

2:00 – 3:30 P.M.
SIX-PARTY TALKS: NEW ROLES AND PURPOSES

CHAIR: JON WOLFSTHAL,
CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

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MONDAY, JUNE 25, 2007
RONALD REAGAN BUILDING
AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTER
HORIZON
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Transcript by:
Federal News Service
Washington, D.C.
JON WOLFSTHAL: Good afternoon. I’m sure everybody is bright-eyed and bushy-tailed after their at least one cup of coffee and the excellent speech we had at lunch today. So I want to use that energy; and we’ll pour right into what I think will be a very interesting panel discussion.

My name is Jon Wolfsthal. I’m very pleased to say that I’m no longer with the Carnegie Endowment because I no longer have to run this giant operation with moving parts. I’m now with the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and very happy to be the organizer and chair for today’s panel.

I want to be very brief, because I think what you’re here to listen to are the expert comments by our three panelists. I just want to make a very brief introduction to say that I have worked on the issue of East Asia, North Korea, from a very narrow nuclear perspective over the past – well, nearly – 20 years. And it’s increasingly clear to me every day that trying to solve a narrow piece, as important as it is, of the security situation disconnected from the regional security dynamics, simply is like – well, it just makes no sense whatsoever. And so, trying to understand the broader security implications – both the history, the present, and the future trends and dynamics – are critical for those of you that are interested simply in the North Korean nuclear issue, understanding those regional dynamics, and tying the two together for me is exactly why we’re here.

And I think we’re incredibly lucky to have the three panelists we do today to help walk us through both the trends as they see them, but also to help us understand the national perspectives, because obviously trying to understand how these different perspectives fit together and may involve into a larger whole is a critical part of the question. The way we’ll run is we’re going to start with Michael Green. There are bios in the program that you were handed. I won’t really go into any detail other than to give their basic affiliations, particularly since Michael is – in addition to being at Georgetown University – the Japan chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. He will begin. We will then hear from Wu Xinbao who is, I believe, still at the Brookings Institution?

WU XINBAO: USIP.

MR. WOLFSTHAL: USIP. Okay, sorry. Excuse me. This is why they’re written down in your program. And then, we’ll hear from Jae Ku who is the incoming director of the U.S.-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins.

They’ll each speak for about 10 minutes, and then we’ll still have plenty of time for Q&A. We will end promptly at 3:30, so that should leave us plenty of time for discussion. So with that I’ll turn the panel over to Michael Green.
MICHAEL GREEN: Thank you. And I’m sorry I missed the lunch, but I hope we can keep you alive and motivated in that postprandial slump people tend to enter. I have worked on this North Korea nuclear issue for at least 10 years now, I guess. I did a lot of work on it at Council on Foreign Relations, went into the administration and the NSC in 2001, left at the end of 2005, worked on it then. And frankly, I expect I expect to be working on the North Korea nuclear issue for some time into the future, for better or worse, or for my sins.

At one of the particularly unpleasant points in North Korean policymaking – I think around 2003 – the New York Times had an editorial by Nick Kristof. And being in the Bush White House, to be honest, I tended not to agree with most of the New York Times editorials. But this one everyone had to agree with, because what Nick wrote was, take pity on the poor people who have to work on North Korea policy, because they must surely have done something really bad in a previous life, which prompted this sudden interagency flurry of emails from NSC to State to Defense to Energy asking, what did you do in a past life to deserve this? And the most interesting one was my friend Dave Straub who I guess is not here, so I won’t embarrass him by saying what he did in a past life that got him here. It’s a very hard problem. Iran may rival it; I don’t think so. I think North Korea in some ways is the hardest problem in proliferation and international security today, in terms of the difficulty of the options.

Now, what we’re going to talk about today is somewhat more hopeful and more forward looking, and that is the role of the Six Party Talks or a Northeast Asia Forum, potentially a new role as we move forward. And I guess I am representing, to some extent, the American view. But what I want to highlight for everyone before we go into discussion is the importance of the Six Party Talks, the potential of the Six Party Talks to contribute to peace and stability and denuclearization, but this inherent tension that we’ve always faced between the denuclearization mission and the multilateral mission.

The Six Party process, Six Party talks being institutionalized, clearly can contribute to, have contributed to progress on denuclearization. But there is a tradeoff as you institutionalize the Six Party Talks between process or institutions on the one hand, and denuclearization on the other. If we are not careful, we will end up sort of losing track of the denuclearization and becoming obsessed and satisfied with the institutionalization process.

So one of the harder questions is, how do you do what I think most experts looking at this region want to do? And that is, how do you make the Six Party process a lasting institution, but do it in a way that it helps with the North Korean nuclear problem, not in a way that makes it harder.

Now, the idea of a Northeast Asia Forum has been around for a while. In the mid-90s, Winston Lord, when he was assistant secretary, proposed it briefly in a speech. The Japanese foreign minister, Kono Yohei, in about ’94, said we ought to have a Northeast Asia Forum. Canada and Mongolia have been particularly eager to have such a forum take shape.
But the real movement began in January 2003. Jim Kelly, the assistant secretary of State, had been to Pyongyang, had confronted them on their uranium enrichment program. The North Koreans acknowledged it. I was with him. We came back. It was not clear what we do next. The general sense was that the U.S. – in a bilateral process with North Korea – did not have enough leverage, that we could threaten a military strike, which is essentially what happened in 1994. But the dynamics in Northeast Asia in 2003 were different and that would backfire against us and perhaps end up isolating us. Besides, we didn’t have any intention of following through.

You could give, bilaterally, diplomatic recognition or various carrots, but the problem with that is, how do you ensure the North Koreans actually denuclearize? So the conclusion, almost mathematically, was we need China especially, but we need our allies Japan and Korea, perhaps Russia, in this. We need this to be a regional solution; we need all of the parties working together. That discussion happened in the Oval Office in January 2003, and then Condoleezza Rice called a couple of us into her office to start designing this. And she said, I think the way we do it is to get at another problem we have in Asia, which is the lack of institutions. So in a kind of kill two birds with one stone approach, let’s think about – let’s put on paper for the president – how we would create a multilateral forum that maximizes leverage on North Korea, but at the same time lays the groundwork for a lasting institution in Northeast Asia that builds confidence among the major powers?

Now, I think, for the most part, the concept has worked. One weakness has been that the Six Party Talks, as originally conceived, were modeled largely – at least for the White House – on the contact group with Milosevic where you had NATO, Russia, and others meeting, and then negotiating a collective position – more or less collective position – with the Serbs. That was the concept.

It proved very hard to do in practice. China didn’t want it to work that way, and so we cut some corners, which I think were – if we could go back in time – not worth cutting. We allowed Beijing, as host, to not call the meetings until Pyongyang had said they would come, which put Pyongyang in a position to delay, to demand, and to slow down the process. I think the Six Party process would have been much stronger if we had held to our guns – perhaps we should go back to this now – and said we’re calling meetings; if Pyongyang doesn’t want to come, we’ll talk about you, U.S., China, Japan, Korea, Russia. Then, we would not have had a year or more between each round as we all tried to plead and cajole and convince the North Koreans to show up.

So one little flaw in implementation that caused considerable delay, but I think, overall, the Six Party process resulted in a collective recognition in Northeast Asia that this was not in fact a U.S.-DPRK problem – that it’s a regional problem that requires a regional solution. Clearly, the U.S. has a role, but it’s a regional problem.

And just in the transformation of the dialogue in the Six Party process, you could see this. In the original discussions, China, Russia, and others were saying this is a U.S.-
DPRK problem. That’s not where they are now. All of the governments clearly accept they have a role and they have a stake in the outcome, which maximizes the leverage.

The question now is how do you move forward this Six Party piece and the denuclearization piece? We have in agreement the February agreement, which mirrors the September 2005 agreement, which mirrors the June 2004 U.S. proposal, which mirrors the Jim Kelly presentation – we sort of put this on the table a number of times. In the wake of the nuclear test, we got most of the elements into this February 13th agreement, which I think was a sound agreement.

It’s been criticized for not nailing down the schedule beyond the first 30 and 60 days, for not being specific. But unfortunately, none of our North Korean counterparts have taken contract law at Georgetown Law School. They don’t put details into treaties and agreements. They don’t do treaties, basically. So given what it was, which was a political statement by the five parties that North Korea signed onto, it was a pretty good framework for moving forward.

It also made sense that in the wake of North Korea’s October 2006 nuclear test, after which – remember – we passed 1718; the Japanese had unilateral sanctions. There was a lot of pressure on North Korea. And the sanctions in 1718, if fully implemented in the form of a Security Council entities list, would have targeted most of the major North Korean trading companies, frankly, and would have put a lot of pain and pressure on North Korea. So there was a lot of leverage in that period, and it made sense to draw down some of that leverage and get, in exchange, a piece of the North Korean program. And that piece was to be shutting down, dismantling Yongbyon, and coming clean with a declaration – obviously, it’s not going to be a perfect declaration, but some declaration that begins to get at the HEU program. That made a lot of sense. It was criticized in some quarters. I thought it made sense.

We – I think – went off the rails in March when we, the United States government, agreed to return the money from Banco Delta Asia, which amounts to about $25 million. The North Koreans have it back now – half of it from counterfeiting drug money and other illicit activities. And I think we compounded the mistake by acceding to successive North Korean demands, first, that we transfer it to them; second, that we have a meeting bilaterally in North Korean before moving forward. And basically, we spend from February until today going through a series of steps, in many cases accumulating and increasing North Korean demands. And during that period of time, the North Koreans did not do what they were supposed to do in the first 60 days, which was shut down Yongbyon and invite the IAEA back in.

So I think we now have taken a good framework, and in implementation, we’ve created a process that has taught North Korea – don’t move off the 50-yard line. If you just sit down and cross your hands act stubborn, the goal post will keep moving towards you. And we’re going to have to break that cycle if we’re going to succeed. I think the way to do it is to begin showing the North Koreans that the Security Council resolution will be implemented, and that we will move forward with some of these things, that we
will call talks without them. Some of this needs to be made clear to the North Koreans if we’re going to move forward. I suspect now that we have an agreement and that they will let the IAEA in and that they will freeze at Yongbyon, but it’s going to be a very difficult process.

That’s the denuclearization piece. No one is holding their breath expecting complete denuclearization. We may, by the end of the summer, have a freeze, perhaps some initial discussions of dismantlement at Yongbyon. It’s not moving very quickly. The North Koreans are not feeling very much pain.

They tested nuclear weapons in October. That creates a whole new reality we have to deal with, particularly vis-à-vis Japan, where now we have an obligation to begin reaffirming and strengthening the credibility of our extended nuclear deterrent. Now, I’m not a believer that Japan is going to go nuclear. But the main variable in that is the credibility of our extended deterrent. And we now are in a situation where we are going to have to do a lot of homework, and we’re going to get in situations, increasingly, where what Tokyo wants to hear, which is a very credible retaliation declaratory policy, is precisely the opposite of what Seoul wants to hear – our other ally – which is, war is 100 percent impossible on the peninsula. So it’s going to be tricky; and I think we’re now in a situation. And in some ways, we’ve made it worse by acceding to these North Korean demands where we have a very tricky management problem with the extended nuclear deterrent. Hardly terminal, but it’s going to take some attention.

Stepping over to the Six Party piece, the February agreement also established long-expected working groups. And I think you’re familiar with them. One is on denuclearization itself, probably the most important. Another is establishing a peace mechanism. A third is a regional security forum. And then there is one on energy to work on assisting the North Koreans with energy. And finally, the U.S.-Japan – excuse me – the U.S.-DPRK, U.S.-Japan bilateral meetings. This is where the institutionalization and the denuclearization become tricky. There is merit in all these working groups, quite apart from the denuclearization process.

Now, I would argue that the Six Party process has – whatever else it’s done or not done on the denuclearization piece – has created a level of confidence – or put perhaps more accurately, reduced the lack of confidence – among the U.S., Japan, China, Russia, and South Korea about the future of the peninsula. And without going into details, just watching the quantity and quality of discussions between President Bush and President Hu, or to the foreign minister and the secretary of State or national security advisor, the discussion about the regime, about North Korea, about the future of the peninsula, about future interests of the big powers, has been very promising. And I think that that long-term aspect of this process is an A+ generally, is a good thing.

And we wouldn’t want to stop all that by halting working groups on a peace mechanism to replace the armistice or the Northeast Asia Forum or other things because of lack of progress on the denuclearization working group. So how you link those is very tricky, because on the other hand, you don’t want a situation where the North Koreans are
absolutely not moving forward on the denuclearization side, but you’re rewarding them with a sense of legitimacy and entitlement as a nuclear weapons state, which they declare themselves to be, without progress on the nuclear side.

So there is going to have to be some kind of loose linkage that is also going to be tricky. I would argue you supplement it by having trilateral U.S.-Japan-Korea TICOG meetings built up again, and by using that to press China and perhaps Russia to agree to meetings without the North Koreans when they’re being intransigent.

On the whole though, I think we’re in a pretty good position in terms of moving forward among the major powers, and a not so great position in terms of actually getting North Korea to denuclearize. So it’s a glass half full or glass half empty conclusion, depending on how you look at it.

The very last thing I’d like to say before you flash the yellow card is when administrations change, North Korea policy gets weird. And it’s a very ideological thing. You have difficult tradeoffs; you have human rights, which are very important – should be getting more prominence now than they are; you have the non-proliferation piece; you have alliance relations.

There are a lot of tough tradeoffs. And new teams tend to come in and say, the previous team was either too soft or too unwilling to negotiate or too whatever. And you have the anything but Bush and then the anything but Clinton, and the last thing we need in the next administration, whether it’s John McCain or Hillary Clinton or Rudolph Giuliani, the last thing we need is anything but what went before. What we need to do is assemble a tool kit, and we need to get away from a very – in my view – sophomoric debate about whether we choose between bilateral negotiations or regime change, and start constructing a tool kit that gives us the leverage we need to engage, but keep the pressure on to get a result. And just end with that, because this is a well-informed group. And hopefully, conferences like this will begin laying the intellectual groundwork, so that the next administration, whoever it is, gets beyond some of the shallower debates you often see.

Thank you.

MR. WOLFSTHAL: That’s great, Mike. Thank you very much. Wu Xinbo, please.

WU XINBO: Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone. My last name is Wu not Xinbo, by the way. I’m glad that the topic about the institutionalization of Six Party Talks is put on the agenda of the conference on non-proliferation, because if you look at the North Korean nuclear issue, you cannot view it just as an issue of non-proliferation; you’ve got to view it in a broader security and strategic context.

My starting point is that to turn Six Party Talks into a permanent security mechanism in Northeast Asia is both necessary and feasible. It is necessary because if
you look at the security arrangements in Northeast Asia 15 years after the end of the Cold War, they are mainly the Cold War arrangements, basically the U.S. forward military presence on the Korean peninsula, U.S.-Japan, U.S.-ROK bilateral alliances. And also, U.S. relations with DPRK are mainly featured by one of confrontation rather than one of peaceful coexistence. If you argue that, the criteria for the security arrangements should be its effectiveness, not whether it’s created during the Cold War period or not. Then, you have to confess that in the last one decade and a half, the approach to North Korea – especially to the North Korea nuclear issue – has not been working – I mean the traditional security approach to this issue.

So the North Koreans going nuclear suggests that we do need some new approach to the entire Korean issue. And also the emerging security challenges in Northeast Asia, besides the North Korean nuclear issue, also are calling for new approaches to those challenges. And if it is necessary to create a security mechanism based on the Six Party talks, then what about feasibility? I think the fact that the six countries, including North Korea, sit down over the past several years to talk about a common security issue reflects the changing geopolitical landscape in Northeast Asia, as well as shifting perceptions of national interest among some of the members, at least the five out of the six members.

And also, if you look at the growing economic interdependence among the regional members in Northeast Asia, I mean, the economic cooperation is far ahead of political and security cooperation. Economic cooperation, economic interdependence may not necessarily lead to institutionalized security cooperation, but they do lay down very solid foundation for future cooperation in political and security areas.

Now, if we can turn the Six Party talks into a permanent security mechanism, what would be the agenda for this mechanism? One, of course, first and foremost, is the denuclearization of North Korea. And second would be to help build and maintain permanent peace on the Korean peninsula as it undergoes tremendous and complicated transformation in the next one decade or even two ahead. In this regard, establishing a permanent peace mechanism, replacing the truce treaty is the top priority down the road.

The third ought to be to enhance confidence and increase mutual trust among all the parties concerned. If you look at Northeast Asia, a major problem for regional security is the lack of mutual trust between the regional members. So enhancing mutual trust can be pursued in both bilateral as well as multilateral settings. And it will be better pursued in multilateral settings, given the complicated geopolitical situation in Northeast Asia. Last, but not the least, is to promote cooperation on a wide range of security issues, both traditional and non-traditional in Northeast Asia. For example, we can think about the idea of a nuclear-free zone in Northeast Asia, and other issues, et cetera, if we can really make progress on the denuclearization of North Korea.

Now, what has to happen to kick off the process to institutionalize Six Party talks into a permanent security mechanism? Ideally, a breakthrough on the DPRK nuclear issue is the first step. If this doesn’t happen, then engaging a nuclear North Korea will be the first priority of the Six Party talks, with a shifting of the focus from denuclearization
to non-proliferation. I understand it’s hard for some of you to imagine that we can still go ahead with new Six Party talks without denuclearizing DPRK.

But at the end of the day, there is a possibility that North Korea will give up all its existing nuclear programs, at the same time keeping the nuclear weapons – no matter how many they already had. So in that sense, the starting point for the future will be a limited nuclear North Korea, and the immediate concern will certainly be to promote the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and technology with regard to North Korea. So if that happens, that doesn’t necessarily mean the end of the Six Party talks. It’s just kind of a changing mission of the Six Party talks.

If one of these scenarios were to happen, either denuclearization of the North Korea or an agreement on the nuclear non-proliferation with North Korea, then the next step would be to establish, of course, as mentioned, a new peace mechanism on the Korean peninsula. So that would be the next step. And following this, the Six Party talks process can expand its scope of agenda to include issues like what I have already mentioned – common security measures from all the members and the cooperation on many other security issues.

So if this is going to be the roadmap to the future of institutionalization of Six Party talks, what are the problems and the major obstacles? First and foremost would be the lack of a consistent, and a more pragmatic U.S. policy towards DPRK. As Mike Green has just highlighted, the change of administrations in the United States always causes a kind of uncertainty in the policy towards North Korea, be it anything but Clinton or anything but Bush. So that not only hurts the credibility of U.S. policy towards DPRK, but also creates – to some extent, you’ve hardened the hardliners in Pyongyang who believe that there is no option but to go ahead with their nuclear program. That’s the most reliable way to promote the national security interests.

So the core of the security equation in Northeast Asia, not just on the North Korean issue, remains the confrontation between Washington and Pyongyang. From hindsight in the early 1990s when China and Russia recognized South Korea, there was a window of opportunity that the U.S. and Japan could extend diplomatic recognition to the North. And there was a window of opportunity there.

So if that happened at that time, I would doubt whether North Korea had come a long way to become nuclear. So I mean, this is something hypothetical and you cannot credit, but thinking on these issues really give you some hint and clue to the future direction of your policy.

The second obstacle would be DPRK’s isolation from both regional and international community, because this very isolation leads to the lack of genuinely reconciliatory and cooperative security behavior on the part of DPRK. And obviously, they have viewed the self-help as the only way to enhance their own security. Even though nominally, China still has a kind of security alliance and the DPRK. But I guess,
at the bottom of the heart of the leaders in Pyongyang, they wouldn’t regard the security arrangement with China as something sufficient to promote their national security.

The last obstacle in broad sense is the lack of strategic mutual trust among the many players in Northeast Asia, in China, the United States, and Japan. And here, we have two particular problems. One is the uncertainty in U.S. strategic intention towards China. And the other is whether the U.S. security policy towards East Asia can be transformed from one of balance of power – more traditional approach – to one of concert of power or one of cooperative security, or both.

From a Chinese perspective, even though the U.S. takes a positive view of China functionally, I mean, on the bigger issues like North Korea nuclear issue, but it also regards China as a major security challenge or threat structurally. And some parts of the U.S. hedging strategy towards China, like the forging of a trilateral or quadrilateral security coalition in Asia, including U.S., Japan, Australia, or including India in the future, will only alienate China and reduce cooperation on regional security among the major players. So in that sense, it’s not just an issue of nuclear issue; it’s an issue of peace and security on the Korean peninsula, and also an issue of the strategic reassurance and the mutual trust among the many players, especially between China and the United States in Northeast Asia.

So to go back to my starting point, while it is desirable and, to some extent, feasible to turn the Six Party talks into a permanent security mechanism in this area, we do have a long way to go. With that, I’ll stop here. Thank you.

MR. WOLFSTHAL: Thank you very much. Very useful contribution. Jae Ku, please.

JAE KU: Thank you, John. Let me just preface my comments by saying that my views are personal and that doesn’t reflect the institute that I work for, the U.S. Free Institute. The problem with going last on a panel discussion is that you’re sitting here thinking, I was going to say that or I wish I could have said that. So what I’ll do is I’ll limit my comments narrowly to a South Korean perspective, and perhaps go beyond what the two speakers have said about the kind of intricate details of the Six Party process.

It’s fitting that we are discussing this today, June 25th, because it was today 57 years ago that the Korean War broke out. And also today, Seoul time, North Korea invited the IAEA inspectors, expected to go into Pyongyang, I guess, Tuesday, Seoul time. I think many of us can agree that the time has come for some kind of a multilateral security arrangement in East Asia. And certainly, with the advent of the Six Party talks, the chances are at its best.

Just last week, South Korea’s president Roh Moo-hyun, speaking at a peace forum, said multilateral consultative body for peace and security cooperation in Northeast Asia should control armaments and mediate disputes in Northeast Asia. Now, if you think of what the South Korean government or the president is thinking out loud looking
towards the future is mediating disputes, many disputes in Asia tend to be grounded on historical issues. If you do a quick balance sheet of the factors that kind of help towards – helps move along – multilateralism versus factors that militate against it, it’s pretty clear that the cards are stacked against you. Certainly, the globalization process is helping the economic cooperation.

But on the negative side, you have unresolved issues that fester. Certainly, you have the potential to derail cooperation, but never enough to destabilize the region. Frank Fukuyama, writing in a 2005 Foreign Affairs article, says that there should be a permanent five institutionalization, largely to dampen nationalist tendencies, nationalist tendencies that could arise from the Japanese historical textbook fight, Japanese prime minister’s Yasukuni shrine visits, various territorial disputes; but not all necessarily bilateral disputes with Japan. I mean, South Korea has an ongoing issue with China’s historical claims to northern half of the Korean peninsula.

And these issues are not limited to the boundary of the region. For example, on the comfort women issue, the U.S. is now being involved. In the U.S. Congress House Resolution 121, largely being pushed by the Korean American community, is calling on Japan to bear responsibility for the comfort women issue. Last – is it last week or the week before – a coalition of Japanese groups put a large ad in the Washington Post wanting to correct the historical interpretation of the comfort women, which then led to more – I think – fallout of that was U.S. Congressional leaders signing on. And as of late, Congressman Tom Lantos had signed on. So while this is the regional environment, South Korea’s view towards regionalization of security, aside from President Roh Moo-hyun’s rather positive call, is more deeply divided.

Structurally, South Korea will continue to seek interdependence with North Korea, and this will be a priority, even if the conservatives win in South Korea this December. So regardless of the ideological hue, Korea will continue to call for some form of an engagement policy. Again, this is because South Korean polity continues to evolve from an anti-Communist one to one that is based on ethnic community.

And because of this priority in South Korea, U.S.-ROK alliance has occasionally been strained. And at times, the divergence of interests between the U.S. and ROK has been great. Therefore, steps towards a multilateral security arrangement will necessarily question U.S. commitment to South Korea and heighten the abandonment fears in Seoul.

Attitudinally, South Korea will be very wary of Six Party talks evolving onto something that would go against their national interest. For example, if the talks evolved into some kind of a mechanism that emphasized more application of the stick approach towards North Korea, or even calls for regime change, this process will not be supported by a South Korean government regardless, again, of ideology. Another difficult issue at hand is the inclusion of human rights. From a South Korean perspective, inclusion of North Korea’s human rights into the security dialogue may be resisted, because North Korea may balk at any attempts to raise the issue, thereby freezing inter-Korean dialogue.
But this issue of human rights cannot be ignored. You have vocal and growing voices in the U.S. Congress – and not only in the U.S., but also in South Korea – calling for inclusion of human rights in dealing with North Korea. In the past, there have been bipartisan statements here in the U.S. Congress demanding that any towards U.S.-North Korea normalization must come about only after measurable improvements in North Korea’s human rights record.

So as for policy recommendation, what’s to be done? I think the glue that will hold together the multilateral security arrangement is a fundamentally altered state of relations between the U.S. and North Korea, coupled to a degree at the North and Japan relations. I think only when U.S.-North Korea standoff is diffused can there be momentum for a multilateral security arrangement. Now, Mike talked about the tradeoff is that you solve for one and the parties may just leave, or you don’t solve for one but the parties come together on other issues.

I think what we are seeing, whether we say it explicitly or not, is really a move towards Helsinki-like process to include economic issues and regional security dialogue. And from the U.S. perspective – and certainly, to a certain extent, South Korean perspective – some kind of a Helsinki-like process affords space for the government to go to its domestic constituency for support of some kind of a dialogue engagement with North Korea. But I think symbolism and language is important. In South Korea, anything modeled after the Helsinki process is seen as really a regime change mechanism. So while regional multilateral security talks continue, it has to be wary of the kind of allusion to the Helsinki process.

Just last week, there was a peace forum in South Korea in which some of the participants called for a Helsinki-like process – Ambassador Jim Goodby who many of you know has been a leading proponent of this. But I think one way to minimize the criticism at the Korean front is to really indigenize this process, have it more driven by Seoul, South Korea. A colleague of mine in Korea calls more of a Seoul process or the Seoul Final Act. But I think in doing so, we need to have some minimum standards, and Mike touched upon this, is that you’re not giving blind assistance and you’re not buying into North Korea’s argument of exceptionalism – that we’re exceptional, we’re different, and therefore you have to accept this.

Somewhat short-term goals and constraints allow our government – U.S. government – to in a way play into this, and this is what I think Mike was saying is, on issues like BDA, we should have held firm. But also on the issue of human rights, there has to be some minimal standards of international standards. If not, I think there won’t be domestic support here or in South Korea.

Let me just wrap up to say that while the balance sheet is really kind of stacked against it, I think the process – how do we deal with it – will determine the success. And certainly, I hope we can discuss that in the Q&A session. Thank you.
MR. WOLFSTHAL: Thank you all very much, all for sticking to time and for being so eloquent and focused on the issue. In a minute, I will open the floor to questions. We will have somebody who will come around with the mike, so I’ll just ask you to raise your hand and we’ll start to keep a list.

I guess I’m not surprised to hear it. And Dr. Wu, you mentioned explicitly, you felt that even if the Six Party talks don’t solve the denuclearization issue that there is still an imperative and a role for them moving forward, moving into a non-proliferation role and then broadening out. But I do want to press both of our other speakers to really confront this issue head on, because whether we like it or not, the Six Party talks are a denuclearization first and foremost.

If they fail, is that a construct that can move forward? And if not, then how do we begin to think about other possible vehicles? Because I think all of you have said very clearly that there is a pressing and real need to have a regional security mechanism. And you all have indicated that there is promise for the Six Party talks. But can you get to that role if they don’t solve the nuclear question as a first order of business. So maybe just ask the two of you and then I’ll jump for questions, for you Jae Ku, or for all three?

MR. KU: I’ve actually thought of that question, because I thought that’s what you would ask.

MR. WOLFSTHAL: I’m very predictable that way. The audience is unpredictable.

MR. KU: No, no. Well, I would like to think I’m as smart as you, John. My view is that if the Six Party talks isn’t successful that that would be the end of multilateral security talks in Asia. And I think it’s because you have to have the momentum of the success of denuclearization to branch out on other issues.

And I think for the academics, it’s to see the broader picture, how Korea, Japan, China can come together on a range of issues, they’re issues that are – again, I think the historical issues – again, the issues that are really somewhat intangible, but certainly that captures the spirit of the domestic constituency. And again, while it’s never sufficient – at least not yet.- to derail the stability – but it does keep the countries from cooperating. So if you’re going from step one, two, and three, and if step one is, well, you have this denuclearization process and you want to use this process to solve a whole slew of issues, you need that momentum – I think – from the first stage to carry onto the second stage.

And a lot of times, these are not necessarily sequenced. And so you can’t have a successful first phase, because you might have a very bad second phase. So again, in order to I think play that off, you really need to have a successful denuclearization before, I think, the multilateral security talks can move forward.

MR. GREEN: Well, the word architecture is frequently applied to this array of multilateral meetings and institutions and fora in Asia. And I have a book coming out
with my colleague Bates Gill on the institutional architecture in Asia. And our editors at Columbia said, you know, don’t call it architecture, because people will think it belongs in the engineering section of the library.

But it made me think, and Bates as well, architecture, which we use so frequently, is the wrong name for this. Architecture suggests intelligent design and all the rest. What’s happening in Asian institution building is anything but, and if for no other reason than that Asia has a diverse set of values and national systems, unlike, say, Europe. And so there will always be a fluidity and overlapping layers. You’ll have APEC and the ARF or the East Asia Summit at the broader level; you’ll have Six Party in Northeast Asia. It is not surprising that China enjoys the Shanghai Cooperation Organization that we’re not in, and that we sometimes enjoy the trilateral meetings with Japan and Australia or Japan and Korea that they’re not in. That’s sort of how multilateral diplomacy tends to happen in a place where there isn’t one finite, defined architecture; it’s fluid.

So to answer this question, I think the Six Party talks will not go away. Nobody will want to be responsible for killing them. The question is, how do you keep them vibrant? And I think the answer is, if North Korea is actually taking concrete steps to denuclearize, which would mean not only freezing Youngbyon, which is an old tired reactor that is off most of the time anyway, but actually dismantling it; coming clean on HEU. Then, more power on the Six Party talks; let’s drive a lot of these things through the working groups.

If North Korea is being intransigent, then we ought to have three-party, five-party to move the same agenda maybe a little bit off stage. And eventually, the production on stage will be Six Party. So we’re going to need a variety of these forums.

The other thing is I think we’re going to need pressure. It will have to be clear that there are consequences to North Korea of not implementing policy. That will lend some urgency and momentum to the process as well. I worry they’ve lost that sense that there are consequences for non-compliance. But bottom line is don’t look for a neat, tidy architecture. Sort of like the founding fathers of the United States who wrote the Constitution never envisioned a Republican and Democratic Party or boll weevil caucus or this, that – this is just how you make things happen and decisions get reached. You have caucuses and groups. And that’s how we have to move it forward.

MR. WU: Well, I think I already made my point, but to clarify it. It’s one thing that Mike Green has mentioned that North Korea has to dismantle all its existing nuclear programs; it’s another thing whether they also agree to give up the nuclear bombs they have already made, whether it’s one, three, or five.

So if we think about the U.S. position, is the U.S. really concerned about several very preliminary nuclear bombs that North Korea has got, or is it more concerned about the possibility of nuclear non-proliferation? I think given the Bush administration – maybe Mike Green can tell better – there is some understanding that it is unlikely that
North Korea at the end of the day will give up all the nuclear devices that it has already made. So what would be the criteria for talking about denuclearization? So that’s my point.

MR. WOLFSTHAL: Thank you very much. I have one question up here in the front, and then I’m going to start to recognize people in the order in which I see hands, so we’re going to go one, two, three, four after that, and then we’ll see how we go from there. And also please, if you’ll identify yourself and your affiliation before your question.

Q: Thank you. Corey Henderstein (sp) with the Nuclear Threat Initiative. My question is for Mike actually. We don’t have a Japanese participant, so I guess I’m going to rely on your U.S. hat and then your experience in Japan. Jae Ku mentioned some of the historical issues that are playing into the relationships between the countries involved in the Six Party talks. And having recently been in Japan and heard a lot of discussion, trying to parse the U.S. position on whether the Japanese abductee issue is a deal breaker for the U.S. or whether they would accept a denuclearization and pursue denuclearization agreement without resolution of the Japan-DPRK sensitive issues. I’m wondering what your recommendation is on how the U.S. should be approach what – I agree with you – should be the first priority, which is the denuclearization while remaining sensitive to the real concerns of the Japanese with regard to the resolution of their historic issues with the DPRK, and specifically the abductee issue.

MR. GREEN: It’s a good question. I know you didn’t mean it to sound this way, but the first thing I would say is it’s not historic. These are living people in Japan, at least, or presumably or possibly in North Korea as well, so it’s a very urgent issue. And one can imagine how the U.S. body politic would react if Cuba had been abducting American kids off the beaches of South Florida in submarines to train spies. What comes to mind is smoldering parking lot. I mean, in comparison, the Japanese political leadership has been fairly moderate on this.

I think we don’t want to get in a situation where the North Koreans are able to argue – or we end up arguing for them – that in order to get denuclearization, we’re not allowed to talk about human rights, abductees, missiles, drugs, counterfeiting everything under the sun, that those are hostile policy and you’re not allowed to talk about those things. We’re at risk of falling into that position again. I think we were there about 10 years ago. We should be calling it as we see it, and we should be pulling our punches.

Part of it is because these are issues that are important domestically, that have constituencies. And as the Clinton administration learned, you can’t sustain an arms control agreement with a country like North Korea unless you’re doing something about these important areas. But you also need to do it for regional buy-in. So they have to be part of it.

We should be saying to the North Koreans that the abductee issue with Japan is a human rights issue that is important to the United States. We said that for a while; we’ve
stopped saying it. Now, we say it’s important bilaterally. We need to get universal about it again. That will help the Japanese diplomatically, because right now, our change in tone has hurt them diplomatically in their bilateral talks with North Korea. In exchange, we should ask of our friends in Tokyo that they have a more nuanced position, which is to say, right now, it’s essentially all or nothing. And they need to present to the North Koreans a roadmap on abductees so that there is some reasonable prospect for moving forward and we can measure progress. Seems to me that’s a fair tradeoff.

MR. KU: Can I add one thing to that? In my previous job, I was the director of North Korea human rights for Freedom House, an NGO in town that promotes democracy and human rights all over the world. And this is exact kind of the same kind of issue that I had to deal with in Tokyo. And my recommendation to the Japanese politicians is that in order for them to get the traction on this issue, they have to get beyond the abductees and makes this more again – as Mike said, nuanced – nuanced human rights issue, because then you can afford them space to find some kind of a face-saving way. If you include the issue of human rights and, let’s say, in some regional – or the working study group meanings – then it allows the Japanese government, I think, a way out. And yet, still address the abductees issues.

MR. WOLFSTHAL: Over here, please.

Q: Sally Horn (sp). I’m a consultant to the State Department. And I’d like to go back to what Dr. Wu had said about the possibility that North Korea may agree to give up its nuclear programs, but may not agree to give up its nuclear weapons. In the context of the September 19th, 2005 statement, the commitment made by North Korea was a commitment to abandon its existing nuclear programs and nuclear weapons. In the context of what will it mean to security, to the security process, to the possibility of setting up a framework or an architecture or something somewhere in between in Asia, if the end result is what I would call partial denuclearization or a commitment to follow through on only part of its commitment. And in particular, what I appreciate hearing is perspectives on how, for example, China, South Korea, Japan – and if someone wants to try Russia – and I know most people could try the U.S., might react to this and what its long-term ramifications might be.

MR. WOLFSTHAL: Okay, would you start off?

MR. WU: I’m not arguing for the scenario that North Korea will keep some nuclear weapons. I hope they would not. But we have to think about various scenarios, even the worst-case one. I think the problem for Northeast Asian security is not just nuclear issue. There are also many other issues that get involved in the equation. And also, even on the nuclear issue, if you look at India and Pakistan, when they become nuclear, that doesn’t mean the end of the security in South Asia. So you can still have many other ways to maintain the peace and stability in their part of the world.
Now, having said that, as I already alluded in my presentation, as the Six Party talks become institutionalized, a peace mechanism we are going to pursue other issues on the agenda, including in the future a nuclear-free Northeast Asia. So in that case, again, we are going to come back to the nuclear issue, but in a somewhat different context. So if North Korea is going to keep several nuclear bombs for the immediate future, then later on, when we put the nuclear-free zone issue on the agenda, that issue has to be brought to the attention of other parties again.

So what I mean is that we should not let the Six Party talks become the hostage to the nuclear issue only. We should try to broaden the horizon and to pursue it in a way that will serve the security of the region in both broad sense and also the long-term sense.

MR. KU: I think the South Korean perspective would be that they are motivated by two objectives. And that is, one, no war – no war at any cost., and two, how to progress inter-Korean dialogue? And if this means accepting existing North Korean nuclear devices in exchange for progress in those two fields or ensuring no war, I think that’s where the South Korean government – progressive or conservative – a decade and a half ago, there was a very popular South Korean fiction, the title I forget. But the concept was marrying South Korean ballistic technology with North Korean nuclear device, and then here you have the emergence of South Korean nationalism and a regional power.

I think that’s overblown, but it does captivate, I think, the growing perception that North Korea’s nuclear devices possibly can be ours when unification happens. And these are said by opinion leaders and also graduate students, et cetera. But I think that will be determined by process. And I think if this South Korean government understands, I think kind of the regional opposition that will come about in North Korea maintaining its existing nuclear devices, then I think South Korea – but South Korea won’t lead on this issue, I think. And if they somehow see U.S. coming to terms with North Korea, so be it.

MR. GREEN: At a minimum, I think the U.S. and Japan will not accept normalization or aid for North Korea – significant aid – without complete denuclearization. Now, as you know, Sally, we spend a lot of time trying to define exactly what that means. But there is a range of possibilities that are far beyond where we are right now.

I think for more than 15 years, the North Koreans have had a pretty good gig. Create a crisis, back off, get concessions, everyone breathes a sigh of relief, forgets about North Korea a little while; create a crisis, back off, get some – it’s been a pretty good recurring pattern during which they’ve built themselves, over the course of three administrations, a nice little nuclear arsenal.

Some people look at this and think – and argue and write – well, the U.S. has had a hostile policy; you haven’t followed through sufficiently on promises, and it’s all about the U.S. And I acknowledge the North Koreans are paranoid and are worried about us. I’m convinced personally that if it were only about the U.S., they would have been more
interested in the security assurances we offered over the past few years, but they haven’t even sniffed them.

I think it’s not just about the U.S. Like Saddam Hussein, Kim Jong-Il needs nuclear weapons to deter his neighbors and his own army, in effect, for legitimacy. That makes it a much, much harder problem than it would be if it were just a simple blue team, red team sense of threat between the U.S. and DPRK, much more complicated. If you were going to open the regime, change the regime, perhaps it would be different. But I think he wants nuclear weapons to hold onto the regime more or less, as it is.

Where I think the North Koreans are now is, they’ve advertised and broadcast pretty openly for over a year now their interest in arms control talks, as a nuclear weapons state. And they’d like to turn the Six Party talks into a process for negotiating controls on export and so on and so forth, and in that process, get cash and other rewards, legitimacy, but above all, accepted status among the major powers as a nuclear weapons state with an arsenal, which is somewhere between six and 12 plutonium-based weapons, probably.

I personally think they’re willing to give up Yongbyon, because it’s been off most of the year, by most public reports. It’s getting old. It’s a small thing to trade in to get that goal of nuclear weapons status. They have the arsenal. The other thing they’ll want, I think, is a technological option for expanding it over time, which is the uranium enrichment piece.

That’s essentially where we are nine months after they test a nuclear weapon. It’s not actually a great place for us. It’s probably where they wanted to be. And that’s a problem. We’re going to have to recover from this.

In terms of the Six Party talks, what that means is we do not want the Six Party talks to become the vehicle for legitimizing, quote-unquote, “arms control talks” with a nuclear North Korea. But if we’re smart about it, we can use the Six Party talks to start building consensus in the region, keeping the pressure on, setting some objectives, some standards. We definitely do not want in any way to legitimize the idea that North Korea will have a nuclear arsenal and there’s nothing we can do about that. We never want the Six Party talks to somehow make that the premise. That would be a strategic failure, and we’re not there. And hopefully, we’ll never go there.

MR. WOLFSTHAL: We have one more question on the right side, and then we’re going to move over to the left. So over here, please. It’s coming around.

Q: I’m Houston Wood, University of Virginia. I have a question. Just to give a little bit of background; this will be brief. But I recently had a conversation with an old acquaintance, General Paul Hester who is in charge of the Air Force in the South Pacific. And he’s talking about his job in the South Pacific; he has to go to India and talk to his counterparts, and then he has to go to South Korea and talk to his counterparts, and all over the South Pacific. He talks to one or two countries at a time, which is quite different
than when you’re in Europe and you go to NATO. You sit down and you can have a conversation and everyone hears the same story and so forth.

So my question, with that background, my question is, do you think the Six Party talks might lead to some kind of organization in the Pacific of countries where we might have something of the nature of NATO where people could have a vehicle that could allow for conversations over delicate issues such as nuclear weapons and those things?

MR. WOLFSTHALL: Thank you for the question. Let me maybe take the chair’s prerogative and focus it. We’ve talked about the nuclear issue; we’ve talked about Korean peninsula. But there are a lot of issues we haven’t really – military security, transparency on the conventional military side, some of these different aspects that you can get in other forum of the world that you can’t yet get in Northeast Asia. And whether that’s in part a source of instability and whether the Six Party talks might be a mechanism for helping to resolve some of those issues. Mike, why don’t we start here and we’ll work back down the line?

MR. GREEN: The answer to your question is no time soon, at least in terms of the NATO comparison, because NATO was founded on a common threat, and that always makes interoperability and military dialogue easier. There are things like the Shangrila dialogue in Singapore; the Pacific Command – our guys are desperate to do what you’re describing. You frequently read in the press in Asia that the U.S. is reluctant about multilateralism; we prefer bilateral alliances. Nothing could be further from the truth. Our military people in the Pacific would love to have what you’re talking about for confidence building, but also for capacity.

If you have a tsunami in Asia, and you have to move 25 ships, you can really only go to Japan and Australia, India now, maybe Korea. There aren’t that many people to go to. What Pacific Command would love to have is some people, as the CNO put it, was a 1000-ship Navy, which was not the right way to put it, because the other 600 ships said, what alliance are you talking about? But it makes sense. It ought to be where we’re going. It’s not going to happen soon.

I think Six Party contributes because the Six Party process has led to a dialogue among the major powers about where we see the peninsula going in ways that reduce mutual concern and fear and highlight areas of mutual concern and fear and highlight areas of mutual cooperation. So they’ve contributed but they’re not going to be in NATO any time soon.

MR. KU: I would second that, but just to reiterate the difficulty of getting these countries, which it hasn’t had a whole lot of years of these kind of cooperative talks, is to start small. Perhaps, not only the Six Party talks, but also have it driven by the less threatening countries – less threatening maybe that’s a bad choice of terminology – but certainly something that doesn’t originate in Japan; something that doesn’t originate in China – maybe Ulan Bataar or so. I mean, again, because the Six Party talks is driven by
a Korean peninsular issue, again, I think there is an opportunity if somehow Seoul can take the initiative to evolve that process rather than great power.

MR. WU: I think there are basically two approaches to security arrangements in this region. One is what we talk about the Six Party talks and the other is more like the traditional security alliance. So these two approaches are different from each other, both conceptually and institutionally. And understand that I think there is a possibility that Six Party talks, if it’s going to become an institutionalized regional security mechanism, that will certainly promote the regional cooperation, not only in Northeast Asia, but also in East Asia as a whole.

So it’s interesting if you look at East Asia today, the dynamics for regional economic cooperation comes from Southeast Asia, while the dynamics for security cooperation may come from Northeast Asia. So where are they going to meet somewhere in between, and finally, we are bringing into reality some form of regional architecture – again, Mike Green mentioned architecture. So it is yet to be seen, but certainly, you see some interesting ideas in the air, and some serious efforts on the ground. So this is very much a work in progress; but I don’t want a simple comparison between the Asian practice with the European practice. Asia will go on its own way.

MR. WOLFSTHAL: Okay, I’m prepared to go all afternoon. But Ms. Bell is telling me we have very few minutes left. So I’m going to take the last two questions starting here, Paul, and then up here, Miles. And then, we’ll ask the panelists to summarize, respond, and make some final comments.

Q: Okay, I’ll try to be quick then. I was interested to hear –

MR. WOLFSTHAL: And could you identify –

Q: I’m sorry. Paul Carroll with the Plowshares Fund. I was interested to hear the comments about human rights and a thought that there should be more emphasis on this. And just to tell you where I’m coming from, we support a variety of activities. Generally, we support pro-engagement. We think engagement is a good thing.

But when I first heard you mention human rights, I sort of went uh-oh, where is this headed. I think I’ve gotten some clarity on that, because you’ve addressed the Japanese concern with the abductee issue and the comfort women and so on, and the way that you, and Mr. Ku I guess, replied about how to bring this within the Six Party talks without it being a third rail was very instructive.

But what I’m interested in also is to play that out a little bit more. There are also people here in the U.S., and certainly on the Hill, that are interested in the human rights situation within North Korea. And those that I’ve spoken with and that sort of do work on exchanges have said, you know, we’re calling it development assistance – or we used to call it humanitarian assistance; now we’re calling it development assistance – agricultural exchanges, things like that. You say human rights and it is a third rail.
So I’m curious. I see it as sort of a long-term versus a short-term priority. If the short-term priority is the nuclear issue and moving the Six Party process forward, and all the benefits that can come with that, and looking at the long-term addressing of the human rights issue as, we start to open up North Korea and bring them into the international community, that will follow. I’m curious if that passes the sniff test for you or if you see concerns about my analysis. Thanks.

MR. WOLFSTHAL: And we’ll take the final question down here, Miles, please.

Q: Miles Pomper (sp) from Arms Control Today. Question sort of following up on one of Mike’s comments about the sanctions. I mean, if I were North Korea right now, I would feel in a pretty good position. You know, eight or nine months after the nuclear test, the sanctions aren’t going anywhere and I don’t see – even if they – I mean, assuming they go ahead with Yongbyon and close that down – any chance of really gearing those up again. I mean, I think they’ve looked at the model of Pakistan and other countries like that and have decided that it worked. And I don’t see a lot of evidence to the contrary. Don’t you think that over time this is just going to get easier and easier for them to just string out the talks, and any chance of applying additional pressure on them is decreasing over time.

MR. WOLFSTHAL: Mike, since that last one was to you, and then we’ll work our way through.

MR. GREEN: Very good questions. I’m pro-engagement too, as long as it empowers the North Korean people. Pyongyang or Kim Jong-Il wants a model of engagement. He has it to some extent in the Kaesong project; he certainly has it in the Kumgang tourism project, where he gets cash and he gets to choose a handful of people he exposes to the outside. So anything that increases interaction with the North Korean people is going to be a good thing, and I’m all for it.

In terms of human rights, I am not personally a supporter of the notion that human rights can be put on a shelf or put in the freezer and as we open up the regime, it will eventually follow. That may be true – 10, 20, who knows how many years down the road. But in the meantime, if we make it easier for Kim Jong-Il to do what Kim Jong-Il does, we’re not succeeding in that goal. And I think human rights have to be a more prominent part of our policy.

I think we made a little bit of a tactical error – we’ll see how long it lasts – by putting those human rights issues implicitly into the bilateral U.S.-DPRK and Japan-DPRK negotiating channels. We should have found some way, I think, to keep it in the broader baskets. For example, when we talk about Northeast Asian Forum, which is one of the working groups, I think we ought to be pushing our allies to say that includes social and economic issues, development issues – i.e. human rights issues. Sorry Jae, but the Helsinki model; I think we need to keep that front and center in the multilateral process as well for the reasons that I think you and I probably agree on.
Unfortunately, I have to agree with you; not because it’s you, Miles, but because I say unfortunately because it’s getting too late to gear up the sanctions. We should have had 1718 implemented in an unceasing fashion and kept moving forward to build more leverage for ourselves, based on an international consensus that had China and Japan and everybody in it, so that we could then draw down that pressure. It would be hard now to get consensus to start implementing 1718.

I think the only way we can do it at this point is when we have the Six Party process to push for a concrete deadline for the next phase, and in particular for the dismantlement plan and the declaration on HEU and so forth, and to start building a deadline into that with consequences if it isn’t met. And it will not be well received in Seoul or Beijing, particularly since everyone has gotten used to the mode we’re in. It would be very well received in Tokyo, and I suspect on the Hill. That’s the next opportunity to do it is to start building in some concrete deadlines. Say, look, we never really said what the deadlines were in the next phase. Now we’re there; this is what they are; and then among ourselves start agreeing on the consequences. It’s much harder now though, you’re right.

MR. KU: On the human rights issue, let me just – because it is such a politically divisive issue, not just in Washington, but in Seoul and everywhere else. And I think the right approach in dealing with North Korea isn’t that we want to beat the crap out of you; the point is that there has to be some minimal standards of accountability and international standards. And I think what I’ve noticed in this town is that there is such a gulf between the human rights community and the security community, when I think the reality is somewhere in between.

I think there are about 100 of us maybe in this room, if you’re in North Korea, one or two of you have been sent to the gulags. Many of you will know that person. It’s really two sides of the same coin on this nuclear issue, and we bind to this argument that Kim Jong-Il needs the nuclear weapons for security vis-à-vis the U.S. or the region, but he also needs just as much his gulags in order for him to stay in power domestically.

MR. WU: One point to make, we are paying much attention to the U.S. policy towards DPRK and the Chinese approach to the nuclear issue. But my hunch is that actually, ROK – South Korea – is gradually taking the center stage in the North Korea issue – gradually, and even more so, in the future. So both Washington and Beijing have to become more sensitive to the opinion in Seoul with regard to the North Korea nuclear issue; and what does this imply for the Korean peninsula issue is yet to be seen. And so far, I think it has not drawn due attention in this regard.

MR. WOLFSTHAL: It’s always very difficult when talking about North Korea and the Six Party talks to look beyond the day-to-day. And I want to thank our speakers for actually taking out of this cycle of, is it six kilograms, or the 22 inspectors; are the cameras on or off, to think a little bit more broadly about these challenges. And I hope you’ll join me in thanking them for their comments.
(Applause.)

(END)
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