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**THE UNITED STATES AND NORTH KOREA:  
A RELATION UNDER THE NUCLEAR  
UMBRELLA**

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## Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to develop into the nature of American and North Korean relations to evaluate their interactions in a nuclear background. As nuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is an issue in which Washington has been struggling with since the Cold War, a more updated analysis is provided for a better understanding of current and past events. This includes an inductive examination of different crises which took place since the 90's until nowadays. From Kim Il Sung to Kim Jong Un and from Bill Clinton to Donald J. Trump. An examination of several crises reveals how some common patterns have eventually emerged across the years. The crises tend to be cyclical as well as repetitive. The paper discusses how American and North Korean actions have been shaped by the nuclear menace. This major threat has caused several confrontations among both countries, however, despite all threats and risks, they manage to reach an agreement in the end as evidence shows. The analysis also shows that these agreements are not always definitive as new crises await on the horizon.



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## Introduction

This dissertation seeks to analyze how the United States of America can deal with North Korea, a rogue state which is constantly threatening regional and world stability with its nuclear power. Their relations have been shaped across the years due to different contexts but only one issue has remained over the rest. This issue is the nuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and what has concerned the most different analysts is the unstable and hypothetical misuse by the North Korean regime. It seems clear that one regime which is considered to be an authoritarian regime and acts as one, is an element to consider when ensuring a proper foreign policy towards one region. However, if it has been proved that this totalitarian regime has access to nuclear weapons, it becomes a high priority target for the rest of the states which may have interests in the region.

Thus, in order to analyze the current situation, it has been necessary to put together different theoretical contributions which speak about diverse elements such as theories which explain the nuclear deterrence theory and the brinkmanship dynamic applied to rogue states among others. Once all these theories have been read and comprehended, they together form a theoretical frame, which is the first part of the work. It has to be said that along with the analysis, another justification for the work is basically to contribute with a bit of investigation to this theoretical frame. In other words, by analyzing and giving some further conclusions, this work aims to provide more recent and renewed information about the situation which is currently going on now. Partly because some theories are twenty years old and this project tries to find out if they are still fit today or are completely outdated.

Also, as a way to understand current relations with Kim Jong Un's North Korea, this work intends to understand the logic of its performance as they have had such an overwhelming coverage by the media due to recent tensions generated by the exchange of threats proffered by Kim Jong Un and Donald J. Trump. These actions have risen all levels of tensions as the nuclear threat was issued, which is no minor thing to take into consideration.

The reasons for why to carry out such an investigation are clear. First of all, as Donald J. Trump was appointed President, he delivered some ideas regarding North Korean nuclearization. He said that he was not willing to let Kim Jong Un to follow his path through further North Korean nuclearization. This would constitute a dangerous activity as well as peril to the region, and thus, for American interests too. After such declarations, North Korean supreme leader gave his answer to Washington and so on the whole situation started to catch everyone's eyes in the awake of what could seem likely to end in a nuclear exchange. As a way to prove if what has been said about the situation was really true or not, the first purpose for the development of this study is to look how both actors (North Korea and the U.S) have behaved in their relations. This involves past relations analysis which were also tied to nuclearization and current relations. Following this, it may be possible at the end of the analysis to figure out how they might behave in the near future.

In the second place, this work is done to see if both Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un are really able to handle the whole situation without reaching an undesirable scenario for any of the actors who are involved in the matters. As the 45<sup>th</sup> President of the United States and the North Korean supreme leader, they are called to take part in such critical but also historical moments regarding international relations and diplomacy. It is true then, that they have in their own hands the opportunity to solve a problem which has been lasting for so long. However, the option for a situation worsening is also one to bear in mind.

Finally, another reason for conducting such an investigation lies in the premise which says that as a totalitarian regime under the rule of a supreme leader, the North Korean foreign policy is completely submitted to the will of the leader. So following this premise, North Korean foreign policy could result totally unexpected and senseless as it comes from a single person who sometimes may act in a non-rational way. This is also tested in the study.

Following, in order to test and analyze, this projects presents a methodology which is formed by first, a short description of the main actors just to get a closer look, and second, a short review of their relations from before the Korean War until nowadays. Finally, a more intensive and inductive analysis is carried out. This study looks at each crisis which has taken place in the Korean Peninsula since 1990 and tries to extract some common points between them all, in other words, it seeks for common patterns amid the American and North Korean behavior during their relations. Once the patterns are identified, they

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are put apart and explained carefully with the help of different official documents which are provided by sources such as the United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency, United Nations Security Council, the U.S Department of State and some other Foreign Ministries.

This paper is organized into four sections. First, this work presents the reader with an initial introduction followed by the theoretical frame which provides knowledge from different authors who have already worked on the issue. This is mainly to introduce the reader himself into the dynamics and the topics from international relations theme as well as a way to take a closer look inside North Korea. Next, the analytical frame contains the methodology (previously introduced), which also links its outcomes with the theoretical contributions from the authors. At the end of the study, some final remarks and conclusions are offered to sum up the main ideas which may have come up during the whole process



## Part I. Integrating relational theory over the case study

Before proceeding with the analysis of the case which is about to be studied, the theoretical frame here gives some analytical and professional points of view from different authors who have already been working on the issue regarding North Korea and the USA. This part seeks for contributions such as nuclear deterrence theory which can help both the readers and the investigator while going through the process of analysis. Some other theories are related to foreign policy studies as well as to conflict resolution and international security. At the end of the day, a great theoretical frame constitutes a vital tool on which an investigator can rely. When it comes to see if what has been done follows others' path or opens a new line of investigation, the theoretical frame can sometimes make a difference.

All the knowledge which results extracted from the existing academic contributions constitute a guideline for the investigator in order to carry out a suitable analysis and see if the results are in line with previous studies or not. As the subject of study here is relations between North Korea and the USA, their explanations try to give an answer to the main question of the project previously introduced, the nuclearization of North Korea.

This theoretical frame is divided into 4 blocks. Each block contains academic research regarding its corresponding theme, which makes it easier to understand all the information which is given. Every theme is a different one and they are structured as follow: First, one block with the gathered knowledge on nuclear dynamics, second, information about different strategies which actors can follow, third, the security dilemma, and finally, implications for some actors concerning the situation.

When dealing with two states that have or claim to have access to the use of nuclear power, the main academic approach that may come to most of the minds is the one that tries to put an explanation on how two different states interact with each other under these circumstances. This doctrine is no other than the Nuclear Deterrence theory. It is used by analysts to try to explain the dynamics that applied to the United States and the Soviet Union during the cold war. So having in mind that in this work the United States and North Korea are analyzed, it seems that this outlook could fit perfectly when providing a

base for the analysis.

## 1. Dynamics inside nuclear and rogue states scenarios

Analyzing the nuclear deterrence theory written by Robert Powell in his work *Nuclear Deterrence Theory, Nuclear Proliferation, and National Missile Defense (2003)*, one can acknowledge that it follows a Cold war dynamic in which it puts as examples the main actors of the era as they were the United States and the Soviet Union (S.U). However, across his detailed explanations, the reader is capable to observe that despite how dangerous as having a nuclear arsenal is, ends up creating a paradox of relative stability.<sup>1</sup>

The nuclear deterrence theory explains that with the arrival of a technology which put into scene a condition of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD), both the S.U and the U.S could launch a devastating nuclear second strike even after absorbing a massive first nuclear strike. However, any state could not physically protect itself from the second attack, so consequently, both states would have to rely on the deterrence in order to dissuade the other from attacking or being tempted to do so.

Here lies another fundamental characteristic of the theory, which is the credibility problem. It says that a state's assured-destruction capability gives it the ability to make the cost that an adversary has to bear in any conflict outweigh any gains. So, if a state's threat to impose these costs were sufficiently credible, an opponent would prefer to yield. Still, in a MAD situation, states cannot credibly threaten to strike with a massive nuclear attack deliberately. But they may be able to credibly make "threats that leave something to chance" as the author puts it. At the same time, Powell affirms that indeed it is in the essence of a crisis that the participants are not fully in control of the situation.<sup>2</sup>

The states can expect that higher the stakes, the more risk could credibly threaten to run as during a crisis, states apply coercive pressure on each other by taking steps which increase the risk that events will go out of control. It constitutes a real and shared risk that the dispute will end in a destructive nuclear cross-fire.<sup>3</sup>

A state then can back down, or it can decide to remain freeze a little longer and take a somewhat greater risk in the hope that its opponent will find the situation too perilous and give up. Nevertheless, if neither state backs down, the crisis goes on with both states

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1- Robert Powell (2003). *Nuclear Deterrence Theory, Nuclear Proliferation, and National Missile Defense*. P.88

2- OP. Cit. P.89

3- OP. Cit. P.90

bidding up the risk until one of them finally finds it too elevated and yields or until actually do spiral out of control.<sup>4</sup>

Powell mentions in one part of his work what is considered to be a common practice among the states when facing crises. It is called “brinkmanship”<sup>5</sup>, which implies that statesmen are eager to run risks in order to outbid the other side and being very reluctant to press on and raise the risk, but still more reluctant to give up.

The next contribution is focused on this particular practice between states. As it is clear that it constitutes a paramount issue to take into consideration, it needs to be a bit more on the spotlight of the analysis.

The concept of brinkmanship described by Robert Powell in his work (the same as in the previous part), is a dispute of resolve in which states bid up the risk of events spiraling out of control until one of them finds the danger intolerably high and withdraws.

A crucial constituent here is the uncertainty and the level of resolve of every state and of course, the opposing state. There are no crises if there is little or no uncertainty about the states’ level of resolve. Crises emerge only if there is considerable uncertainty about the balance of resolve, and here, the dynamics of escalation revolve on a complex interaction between the states’ levels of resolve and their uncertainty about each other’s resolve.<sup>6</sup> Powell also states that the more resolute a state is, the longer it is willing to persist and the more risk it is compliant to run before backing down. This can make a crisis more dangerous.

On the one hand, figure 1 traces this effect by outlining the risk that  $S_1$  runs in a crisis as function of its resolve in a “nominal” case in which each state assumes that there is a 50-50 chance that the other’s resolve is 10 percent or less. As the figure demonstrates, the greater  $S_1$  resolve is, the more likely the crisis is to end with circumstances spiraling out of control.<sup>7</sup>

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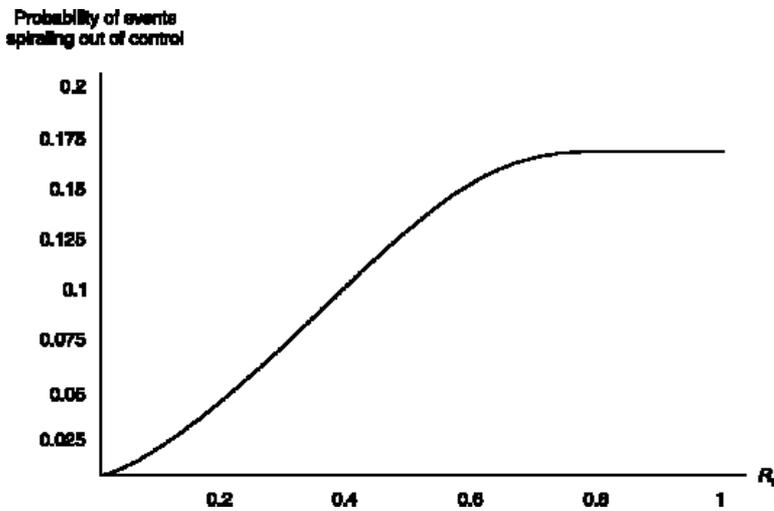
4- OP. Cit. P.90

5- Brinkmanship is the practice of trying to achieve an advantageous outcome by pushing dangerous events to the brink of active conflict.

6- Robert Powell (2003). *Nuclear Deterrence Theory, Nuclear Proliferation, and National Missile Defense*. P.91

7- Figure 1. The effects of Resolve on Stability. OP. Cit.

Figure 1: The effects of Resolve on Stability

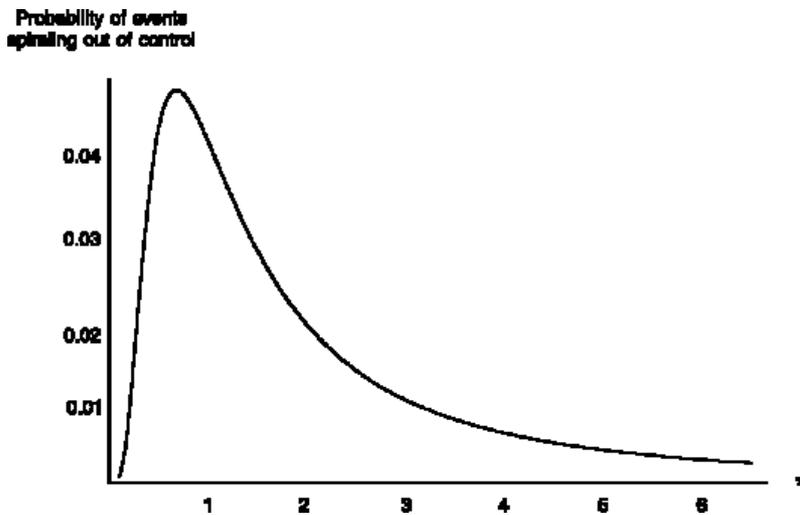


On the other hand, figure 2 reflects the impact of uncertainty about the balance of resolve on stability. If it is taken in mind that  $t_2$  measures  $S_1$  believes that the other state's resolve is very likely to be quite moderate, as a consequence, the balance of resolve in these circumstances is relatively explicit and in  $S_1$ 's favor. And it makes that the states run little risk in brinkmanship. As  $t_2$  begins to rise,  $S_1$ , still unsure of its opponent's precise level of resolve, believes that it is higher on the overall. Consequently,  $S_1$  becomes less confident that it is more resolute than the other state, so the balance of resolve begins to blur and the risk of the situation ultimately going out of control begins to rise. As  $t_2$  continues to rise,  $S_2$  becomes increasingly confident that it is less resolute than its adversary. The balance of resolve becomes clearer, and the risk of events going out of control starts to decrease.<sup>8</sup>

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8- Robert Powell (2003). *Nuclear Deterrence Theory, Nuclear Proliferation, and National Missile Defense*.  
 Autor: NIL SOLER SILVA  
 Figure 2. The Effects of Uncertainty on Stability.

Figure 2: The effects of Uncertainty on Stability.



Following, a different application for brinkmanship is explained as the spotlight is getting closer to a more precise theory for the case study. The new analysis by Robert Powell talks about the brinkmanship and a rogue state which, for the case study, it could be performed by the USA and North Korea taking the role of a rogue state as it was described by President George Bush.

Robert Powell analysis concludes basically arguing that when the balance of resolve clearly favors a small nuclear state, that same state will be capable to deter the United States. Being more precise, the U.S predominantly will be deterred from trying to overthrow the regime of smaller nuclear states. When the balance of resolve is vaguer, the higher the risk the smaller the nuclear state is willing to run. In other words, the more of a rogue state it is, the more likely the U.S is to be deterred from opposing or intervening against that state. Following the logic, a rogue state is less likely to back down and more likely to push a crisis forward should the U.S intervene.<sup>9</sup>

There are two variables that should be kept in mind, first one is that there is an outcome which both states view as being worse than surrendering to the other state in the dispute.

The second one talks about that states can make threats that leave something to fate, which represents that states' efforts to further their concerns elevate the risk that events will go out of control and end in the worse situation.

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9- Robert Powell (2003). *Nuclear Deterrence Theory, Nuclear Proliferation, and National Missile Defense*.

As Powell puts it, the American policymakers are likely to contemplate the death and devastation created by even a very limited nuclear attack on the U.S as being far worse than the consequences of not intervening against a regional nuclear power.<sup>10</sup>

One significant statement by Charles Glaser and Fetter is that United States' interests in regional disputes generally are not truly crucial, making it arduous to justify the seeking of foreign policies that increase the probability of attacks with weapons of mass destruction against American soil.<sup>11</sup>

One question that the author asks himself is if the leader of a rogue state would rather endure the overwhelming retaliation triggered by a nuclear strike on the U.S than withdrawing in a dispute. If he did, this state would be "undeterable". However, evidence shows that even being described sometimes as undeterable, rogue states are deterable. So, the first variable to apply brinkmanship looks like to be holding.<sup>12</sup>

A conclusion which the author reaches is that when the balance of resolve is clear, there are no crises. If it is known that the less resolute state cannot prevail, it would be dangerous and pointless for it to run any kind of risk. So it backs down to the more resolute state.<sup>13</sup> Besides, in the majority of cases in which the survival of a small state's regime is at stake, the balance of resolve will clearly favor it. Because its will to run risks to remain in power will normally dominate the U.S intention to run risks to overthrow it. The proliferation of nuclear weapons will strongly deter any American effort to use its superior military capabilities to depose another nuclear state's regime.<sup>14</sup>

The main problem comes when the survival of the regime is not immediately at stake in the equation. As the balance of resolve is not clear, both states may be willing to push the crisis to coerce the other into surrendering. Here, the U.S has to choose if it has to intervene against a nuclear state, and the state has to decide if to withstand against the U.S if it intervenes. Both states engage in brinkmanship just if neither backs down.<sup>15</sup>

In Figure 4, Powell describes the brinkmanship model of a confrontation between the U.S and a small nuclear state.<sup>16</sup>

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10- Robert Powell (2003). *Nuclear Deterrence Theory, Nuclear Proliferation, and National Missile Defense*. P.101

11- Charles L. Glaser and Steve Fetter. (2001). *National Missile Defense and the Future of U.S Nuclear Weapons Policy*.

12- Robert Powell (2003). *Nuclear Deterrence Theory, Nuclear Proliferation, and National Missile Defense*. P.101

13- OP. Cit. P.103

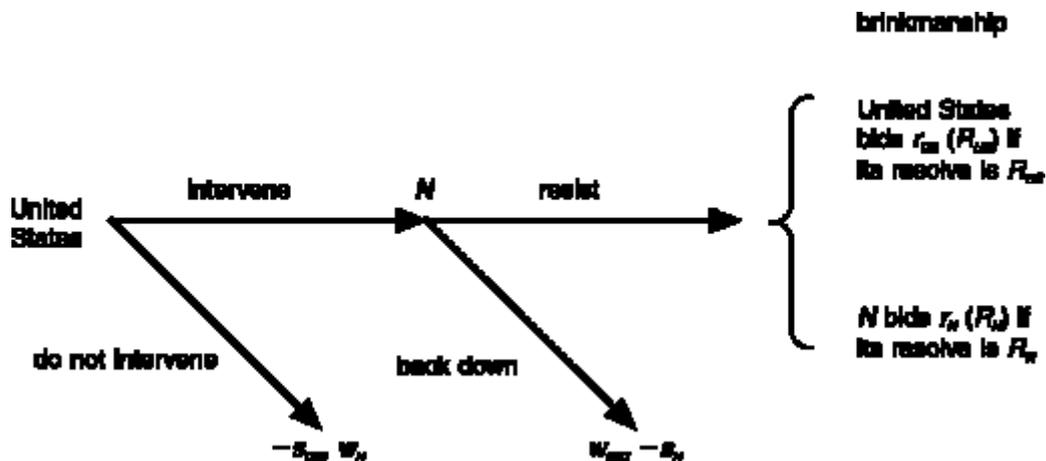
14- OP. Cit. P.103

15- OP. Cit. P.103

16- OP. Cit. P.104

The United States pays the cost of intervening  $S_{U.S.}$ , and the small state receives the payoff to prevailing ( $W_N$ ) if the U.S does not intervene. If the U.S decides to confront the other state, that one has to decide whether to give up or resist. The former ends the confrontation with the U.S receiving  $W_{U.S.}$  for prevailing and the other state's paying  $S_N$  for yielding. If the small nuclear state resists, the states confront in a brinkmanship, and the one who is up to tolerate a major risk will prevail ( bearing in mind that the situation would not go out of control). If both are disposed to assume the same level of risk, the status quo on the ground stays.<sup>17</sup>

Figure 3: A brinkmanship Model of a Nuclear Confrontation.<sup>18</sup>



But what if a National Missile Defense (NMD) enters the equation? As the author puts it, the small nuclear state will be able to deter the U.S even if it deploys an NMD, unless that system is virtually flawless. However, in situations where the balance of resolve is more ambiguous, the missile defense rises the effective resolve of the U.S. If American defenses are really good, they would give the U.S more freedom of action and thus make a rogue state more likely to back down in a crisis situation.<sup>19</sup>

Powell finally says that the U.S is more likely to achieve its ends as it is decided to press the crisis harder. Even in the cases that makes the probability of a nuclear strike on American soil are more real and possible.<sup>20</sup>

17- Robert Powell (2003). *Nuclear Deterrence Theory, Nuclear Proliferation, and National Missile Defense*. P.104

18- OP. Cit. Figure 3. *A brinkmanship Model of a Nuclear Confrontation*.

19- OP. Cit. P.112

20- OP. Cit. P.113

Now, the aim is to introduce and explain some of the strategies and situations which are considered fundamental across the scenario in which this paper is focused. Situations like the one taking place inside North Korea and their possible foreign strategies are considered to be crucial matters inside the high decision spheres. Depending on the path which the supreme leader could take, the future and the policies of the country are going to be differently shaped in one form or another concerning nuclearization. Bruce E. Bechtol Jr. is the first one who offers a view and gives an opinion about the recent transitional era.

## 2. North Korean and American Strategies and Situation

Bruce E. Bechtol Jr. talks in his research about the main concerns over North Korea during the transitional era, from Kim Jong-il to Kim Jong-un.

He states that since the father was gone, his third son stood at best 50-50 likelihood of holding the country together, and because of the single-man rule North Korea's always been under, he was the main chance the country had for continuing to survive as a nation-state after the passing of Kim Jong-il. As Bechtol says, Kim Jong-un may had been capable of standing for a couple of months or a few years, but the odds were very good that the country could collapse as the military broke from purges and resource limitations, and the party and security services competed for power because of a lack of strong central authority.<sup>21</sup>

It is important when considering the threat from N.K to bear in mind that there is an existence of a two-headed menace. One that comes from the military which has achieved to adjust to resource limitations and has also achieved a proper re-invention of itself as an army focused on asymmetric forces. The other one comes from a government that in many ways has been fighting for keeping away instability, struggling to avoid collapse and ultimately, absorption by South Korea.<sup>22</sup>

As a conclusion, the author says that these two menaces constitute the main threats that the Republic of Korea and the United States alliance has to be ready for and at the same time, both threats (strike from the North or collapse of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea) present intimidating challenges for military advisors.<sup>23</sup>

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21- Bruce E. Bechtol Jr. (2012). *Maintaining a Rogue Military: North Korea's Military Capabilities and Strategy at the End of the Kim Jong Il Era*. P.181

22- OP. Cit. P.181

23- OP. Cit. P.182

Going forward with the strategies and situation block and North Korea, the following paper is quite descriptive and it presents a view upon the whole situation. Most importantly, it explains which solution out of three possible situations the author (Gavan McCormack) thinks could be the best one to choose.

Gavan Mc Cormack presents North Korea as what he calls a “garrison state” built on “secrecy, xenophobia, and leader–centrality” which was hardened by years of resistance to Japanese imperialism and unresolved confrontation with the United States and South Korea.<sup>24</sup>

He is very critical to the outside hostilities perpetrated by the U.S and Japan, which according to him constitute a way to help the garrison state. As long as the country remains under siege by outside hostilities, North Korean abnormal situation will likely continue as his predictions say.<sup>25</sup>

The author states that North Korea may be able to possess (on paper) one of the world’s largest armies, yet its overall potential as a serious threat quickly dissipates when it comes to analyzing its content. Most of its military hardware is from 1960’s, or even 1950’s which means that its real military capabilities may be quite as he puts it “vintage”. He highlights that its soldiers spend more time farming than training for battle, and when it comes to flying hours, its pilot’s average of training are ten hours annually in flight trainings.<sup>26</sup>

In terms of striking big cities, the North Korean army may be able to cause serious firepower damage to Seoul or Tokyo but little else. Obviously with the help of its government’s disproportionate budget portion going to the military. The author says that North Korea surely lacks the capabilities to outlive battle with the United States and that N.K sees its nuclear capabilities as its saving grace, as without them, it surely would have faced an American strike.<sup>27</sup>

When it comes to possible solutions, McCormack offers 3 different options: Settlement through engagement, economic sanctions or military attacks on Korean nuclear facilities.<sup>28</sup> The first one, would require a return to the correlative conditions that led to the signing of the 1994 Agreed Framework. The second and also the third option would represent an escalation of the chances of war, so the author says that must be kept away.

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24- Gavan McCormack (2005). *Target North Korea: Pushing North Korea to the Brink of Nuclear Catastrophe*. P.4

25- OP. Cit. P.75

26- OP. Cit. P.108

27- OP. Cit. P.159

28- OP. Cit. P.190

So, the only remaining option is a seeking for understanding between the parts.<sup>29</sup>

Having seen how North Korea looks like according to one of the authors which are mentioned on the paper, the next one tries to go one step forward and analyses the strategies which Kim's dynasty takes in order to survive. In other words, the tools which the supreme leader uses if he wishes to remain in power.

In their work, Daniel Byman and Jennifer Lind start by outlining that during the 1990s, many observers said that Kim Il-Sung's regime would not survive the cessation of Russian aid and the economic downfall that it would bring with it. Also, speculations about a possible regime collapse began when his son, Kim Jong-Il succeed his father in 1994 and also when the famine in North Korea took place in 1996-1997.

As seen here, many predicted the collapse of the North Korean regime by one or another reason, but all those who predicted so were finally wrong in their calculations. So, how it is possible for a supreme leader to keep power even though he is mistreating its own people? Apart from being a regional and a world problem for many other countries that surround its country. Daniel Byman and Jennifer Lind explain in their article that the strategy that has been used by Pyongyang to remain in power has its own tools: Restrictive social policies, manipulation of ideas and information, use of force, co-optation, manipulation of foreign governments and finally, institutional coup-proofing.<sup>30</sup>

All these tools that are used by the regime also prevent a possible revolution or a Coup d'état from taking place in North Korea.

But focusing on the issue of nuclear weapons which is the one that is being discussed in the paper, the authors suggest that its logic is more an internal one and constitutes a key element which helps the leader to gain support of key constituents. Therefore, any inducements that tries to reduce Pyongyang's external threat will have only a limited effect.<sup>31</sup>

Kim Jong-Il co-opted the military by incrementing its policy influence and prestige as well as a great part of the national budget (approximated to be about of 25%). Moreover, the military operates its own economy, which is accorded to be higher priority over the national resources than the civilian's one, which gives the military a proclaimed title of "pillar of socialism and at the front of the revolution".<sup>32</sup>

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29- OP. Cit. P.197

30- Byman and Lind (2010). *Pyongyang's Survival Strategy*.

31- OP. Cit. P.60

32- OP. Cit. P.63

Nuclear weapons play a significant role here as their acquisition constitutes another tool to gain the military support and at the same time, they work as a deterrent in front of foreign adversaries with far superior conventional armies. They bring prestige to Kim's regime, an institution whose morale has been triggered by hunger and shortfalls. In addition, when it comes to dealing with the South they also are a fundamental issue as a quote from one general in the paper shows: "Our soldiers are hungry, our tanks are World War II vintage, but we have nuclear weapons and Seoul has not".<sup>33</sup> To put it simple then, nuclear weapons have been a tool which have made the supreme leader to have both internal and external security by being a deterrence and preventing a coup d'état among the military.<sup>34</sup>

When it comes to "nuclear extortion", it is said in their work that since the 1990s, the regime has generated more than \$6 billion in aid from South Korea, US, China and Japan and extra 500.000 tons of U.S food aid as a fee in exchange to an inspection of one North Korea's suspected nuclear facilities in 2008.<sup>35</sup>

Their analysis when discussing the thinkable successor of Kim Jong-Il suggest that the supreme leader will not give up his nuclear arsenal easily. As Kim Jong-Il had 14 years to prepare itself to gather enough support from the elites to support him later, his successor (not known yet back in 2010) seems that will lack support from the selectorate<sup>36</sup> who may be divided and thus making the regime collapse a real possibility.<sup>37</sup>

Their final analysis provides a significant result. It exposes that in the deterring of North Korea, the media persists in portraying the supreme leader as a madman or an incompetent while some scholars argue that their foreign policy has been highly calculated. Furthermore, they say that Washington should not persist in his deterrence strategy as little military operations undertaken to incite a coup or a revolution are unlikely to happen. Thus, they say that the only military action which is likely to prevail and overthrow the regime would be a large-scale invasion.<sup>38</sup>

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33- OP. Cit. P.63

34- OP. Cit. P.63

35- OP. Cit. P.63

36- North Korean selectorate can be conceptualized as an elites key group which includes the military leaders, party officials and high rank bureaucrats.

37- Byman and Lind (2010). *Pyongyang's Survival Strategy*. P.72

38- OP. Cit. P.73

Along the next part, the author revises North Korean provocations and strategies during recent years. This means that the nuclearisation of North Korea is also added as a paramount issue to consider as well as the author's views over Pyongyang's will to deter the U.S with its arsenal.

In his article, Scott A. Snyder, states that North Korea's nuclear and missile provocations are a result from its developmental mission to produce a nuclear deterrent. Also, he affirms that North Korean provocations will change and get more dangerous in the near future as his stated nuclear doctrine and precedents from new nuclear powers have shown. Thus, Pyongyang is likely to display its nuclear assets to intimidate and also to coerce as its doctrine articulates these two main purposes for its arsenal.<sup>39</sup>

On one hand, the deterrence objective seems to be the bulk of the strategy as North Korea is constantly citing the examples of Libya and Iraq as a justification for its nuclear development. They argue that if they do not invest in equalizing nuclear weapons to deter, the U.S will military intervene in their state. On the other hand, Kim Jong Un wants its arsenal to coerce as a way to provide North Korea more influence in its foreign affairs on the Korean Peninsula and the whole region. However, Kim cannot hit targets with its nuclear capabilities without facing the greater risk of regime-ending retaliation, so the author wonders how Kim may hope to use nuclear weapons to coerce. Giving his impressions, the author states that Kim Jong Un fits as a leader who is more likely to use brinkmanship and risk-accepting behavior as a way to work as he lacks conventional military superiority over the U.S and South Korea alliance.

As a final statement, the author says that strategic provocations will require more than military planner's attention. They will necessarily need to be countered by whole-of-government, bilateral and trilateral responses as a way to ensure a thoughtful and coordinated approach. The first step then, is to recognize that the future of North Korean provocations is likely to be different.

Next block focus on missile proliferation on the context of strategic interactions among neighboring states. It puts into scene the security dilemma.

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39- Council on Foreign Relations (2018). *The Future of North Korean Provocations*.

### 3. Security Dilemma over North Korean arsenal

Major findings from Daniel Barkley's paper are that after an analysis of 119 countries from 1967 to 1997 he comes out with empirical explanation which says that when faced with ballistic missile threats, nations tend to respond rationally and acquire also ballistic missile as a possible deterrent.<sup>40</sup>

The author states that defense against ballistic missile is quite a hard task to do even if the state has a SAM defense (Surface to air missile). The rational option that most of the states finally chose is to acquire new ballistic missile in order to put an end to a Security dilemma which says that when one state increases its defense, decreases others'.<sup>41</sup>

In his conclusions, Barkley relates that international norms against missile proliferation generated by MTCR (Missile Control Regime Technology) have significantly decreased the chances of proliferation but those were not enough to prevent a state from acquiring ballistic missiles to counter perceived security threats from adjacent states. Furthermore, he considers SAM defense as a destabilizing factor and increases the odds of ballistic missile proliferation in two ways. First one, because ballistic missile provides states assured penetration of enemy's air defenses. The second one, because SAMs reduces the enemy's ability to retaliate so it would most likely exacerbate the underlying motives for acquiring more ballistic missiles.<sup>42</sup>

The next stage, as stated above, will talk about nuclear implications for the bordering states which are highly menaced by the situation. This paper then tries to analyze the nuclear intentions of Japan, South Korea and Taiwan in the wake of North Korea's October 2006 nuclear test.

### 4. Implications for neighboring states regarding Korean nuclearization

Christopher W. Hughes' main points of analysis are divided into 4 groups: National Security; Prestige, identity and norms; Domestic political economy; and Technological capability. About the first one, he says that the national security dilemma is not yet enough as Japan, Taiwan and South Korea see opportunities for diplomatic engagement and conventional deterrence. But what really makes the difference here, is that they do yet

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40- Barkley (2008). *Ballistic Missile Proliferation*.

41- OP. Cit. P.456

42- OP. Cit. P.471

fear most the alliance dilemmas of U.S entrapment or abandonment.<sup>43</sup> Regarding National Prestige, it can create temptations for nuclear proliferation, but they are countered by domestic pressures to continue with norms and regimes for non-proliferation.<sup>44</sup>

In terms of Domestic political economy, all three countries have only a minimal vested economic interest in nuclear weapons development, and the overall international economic costs are an awkward inconvenient against nuclear weapons armament. Additionally, in technological capability, all three countries have the capacity to build nuclear weapons but it would be a slow process and a poor substitute for U.S extended nuclear deterrence.<sup>45</sup>

When it comes to policy implications for Washington to those states, the author affirms that it has still the capacity to prevent further proliferation by revisiting its policy toward the four nuclear drivers. One beneficial situation for the United States would be if they try to move forward thorough diplomatic efforts and the upgrading of its alliances both to control security dilemmas and reaffirming its extended nuclear guarantees. At the same time, it should benefit the U.S if it continues to provide technological and economic incentives for avoiding nuclear proliferation.<sup>46</sup>

In his conclusions, the author states that rather than leaving his allies to feel that they must search for nuclear weapons, the U.S must continue with cautious efforts to support them in upgrading their conventional capabilities to respond North Korea. This also is likely to include that the U.S continues to restructure his forces to achieve greater strategic flexibility and at the same time maintaining sizeable troop presence that are symbolically manifestation of security commitments. The U.S then, must reaffirm its existing nuclear deterrent guarantees to its allies over pre-emption actions.<sup>47</sup>

Finally, if the U.S is not seen by other three countries to adopt a less threatening nuclear posture and to conform to international expectations in minimizing the role of nuclear weapons, they will feel that they also have no other option but to join the nuclear team. Hence, a U.S failure in the region to deter the North Korean nuclearization, would turn the situation into a process of wider nuclear proliferation. So the U.S has a big deal in the region as it has also to engage in its security commitments.<sup>48</sup>

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43- Christopher W.Hughes (2007). *North Korea's Nuclear Weapons: Implications for the Nuclear ambitions of Japan, South Korea and Taiwan*. P.76

44- OP. Cit. P. 76

45- OP. Cit. P.76

46- OP. Cit. P.76

47- OP. Cit. P.103

48- OP. Cit. P.104

## Part II. Crises in the Korean Peninsula: The issue of nuclearization

Once main studies about nuclearization and North Korea have been explained, now it is time to proceed with the analysis which takes place along the following pages. First, and before the analysis itself, some descriptive and introductive matters are given in order to present the case study. They consist of descriptions about main actors (North Korea and the U.S) and characteristics such as their population and capabilities. Second, this paper shows actors' relations which go from before the Korean War until nowadays. Third, and finally starting with the analysis, crises which took place during recent years (20 years the most) are carefully analyzed. Through an inductive methodology, all common patterns spotted from different crises are gathered into 3 groups as they keep similarities between them. These common issues are given a name, being then renamed as "Lightnings", "Storms" and finally "Rainbows". The aim is that by the end of the day enough evidence is found in order to explain or at least understand North Korea's behavior through years of turbulent relations. Graphical content is also showed after the analysis as a way to codify the results.

Finally, with some conclusions already extracted from the analysis, a couple of remarks are given concerning the previous academic research. This paper explains if the analysis results have something in common with other author's studies or if they indeed, follows their own way.

### 1. Introducing cases of study

In this part, some brief information about main actors is given. If their characteristics are known, they could result easier to comprehend later.

#### 1.1 United States of America

The first country to describe is one of the most powerful nations in the world as with the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union it raised as the only remaining superpower in the world during the 90's and during first years of the XXIst Century. The United States has an estimated population of 326 million people according to data from July 2017 and its population growth rate is over 0.80%. Its birth rate is about 12.5 births

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/ 1.000 population, and its death rate is 8.5 deaths / 1.000 population. It can thus be said that the USA is the third most populated country in the world.<sup>49</sup>

If the focus is put over US government, it is possible to see that it is a constitutional federal republic with a Chief of staff who is at the same time the head of government. The incumbent person now is the 45<sup>th</sup> US President Donald J. Trump who was elected last year and began his mandate on January 20<sup>th</sup> 2017. It can also be added that the office of vice president has been managed by Michael R. Pence from the Republican Party, as well as the President.<sup>50</sup>

As this project is about foreign policy and involves also some military matters and issues, it is to introduce the reader to some more people who will be mentioned from now on as they are currently taking part in the situation. So, beginning with the secretary of the State Department, we use to find Rex Tillerson as the incumbent (not any more as he resigned so now it is Mike Pompeo). Another relevant person in the matter is the incumbent of the Defense Department the retired U.S Marine Corps General James Norman Mattis. Also known by the nickname “*Mad dog Mattis*” or the “*War monk*”. Following, as director of National Security Agency incumbent admiral Michael S. Rogers and as confirmed by Senate, Gina Haspel as the Central Intelligence Agency director.<sup>51</sup>

In terms of economy, the United States of America has the most technologically powerful economy in the world, with a per capita Gross Domestic Product of \$57.300 according to CIA Factbook. “US firms are at or near the forefront in technological advances, especially in computers, pharmaceuticals, and medical, aerospace, and military equipment”.<sup>52</sup> Its GDP (purchasing power parity) is estimated to be 19.36 trillion of US dollars, which puts the country in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the world ranking and with an unemployment rate of 4.4%.<sup>53</sup> In military issues, the US is the 9<sup>th</sup> country in the world that spends a great part of its GDP in the military, as it spends a 3.29% of its GDP according to 2016 data.<sup>54</sup> However, this data could change as one of the main campaign arguments of President Donald Trump was to increase the military funding and back in 2017 he signed a \$700 billion military budget into law.<sup>55</sup>

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49- The CIA Factbook (2018). *United States People and Society*.

50- The CIA Factbook (2018). *United States Government*

51- The White House (2018). *The Trump administration. The cabinet*.

52- The CIA Factbook (2018). *United States Economy Overview*.

53- The CIA Factbook (2018). *United States Economy*.

54- The CIA Factbook (2018). *The United States. Military and Security*.

55- FOX News Website (2018). *Trump signs \$700 billion military budget into law*.

After this brief description of one main actor, it is time to proceed with the description of the other one. But, as many may know, finding accurate data or information about North Korea results really complicated as there are few sites which contain information regarding what is being seek for. Nevertheless, the intention is to provide the reader with the best data that the official websites can offer.

## 1.2 North Korea

It is understood that Korea was split during the cold war due to the tensions and conflicts in the area (which is explained in the next part) with the northern half coming under Soviet (sponsored) communist control. After the Korean War (1950-53), North Korea adopted a policy of “self-reliance” as a check against influences that claimed to come from outside.

Following the American backing of South Korea, the DPKR (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea) started a policy of demonizing the US as the ultimate threat to its socialist system through state-funded propaganda. Also, the state carried out conducts and behaviors that involved the political, military and economic reshape of policies around the core ideological goal of eventual unification of Korea under Pyongyang’s control.<sup>56</sup>

North Korea’s population is estimated to consist of 25.248.140 persons according to July 2017 data and with a population growth rate of 0.53%. The birth rate under there is considered to be about 14.6 births / 1.000 population and its death rate is 9.3 deaths / 1.000 population. It can be affirmed that North Korea is on the 51<sup>st</sup> position in the world ranking in terms of population.<sup>57</sup>

North Korea’s government type is a single-party state with a “national self-reliance” ideology. The incumbent of the Chief of State position is Supreme People’s Assembly President KIM Yong Nam (only duties as being the technical head of state and receiving ambassadors’ credentials). Performing in the position of head of government it is found f the State Affairs Commission Chairman KIM Jong Un (mostly known as the “supreme leader”) whose functions are to perform as a commander in chief and chief executive. Then, regarding the cabinet, its members are appointed by the Supreme People’s Assembly (except for the Minister of People’s Armed Forces).

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56- The CIA Factbook (2018). *Korea, North. Introduction.*

57-The CIA Factbook (2018). *Korea, North. Population.*

One fact which is found to be particularly surprising, is that the Korean Worker's Party continues to list deceased leaders KIM Il Sung and KIM Jong Il as the Eternal President and Eternal General Secretary respectively. In the last elections that were held, KIM Jong Un was re-elected unopposed, which is no surprise if all the background and antecedents are taken into account.<sup>58</sup>

From the economic perspective, North Korea is one of the world's most centrally directed and least open economies, what leads the country into facing chronic economic problems. The large-scale military spending and developing of its ballistic missile and nuclear program is severely drawing off resources that are needed for investment and most importantly, are needed by its population. People there suffer from frequent weather related crop failures that are aggravated by chronic food shortages caused by the system's problems and the lack of arable land plus poor soil quality. Fuel is another good that is lacking in North Korea as well as tractors for the farming practices.<sup>59</sup>

The extracted data from the CIA Factbook about North Korea's GDP confirms that it was about \$40 billion back in 2015 (acknowledge that North Korea does not publish reliable National Income Accounts data). In the world GDP real growth rate ranking it was in the 198<sup>th</sup> position with a -1.1% in 2015. In terms of GDP per capita, it was estimated to be \$1,700, which put the state in the number 215 in the country comparison ranking. Finally, the country unemployment rate was estimated to be about 25.6% in 2013.<sup>60</sup> Another fact which can also be found significant or surprising is that the country has a total population of 18,400,400 people without electricity.<sup>61</sup>

Figure 4: Korean Peninsula Seen From Space Station.



58- The CIA Factbook (2018). *Korea, North. Government.*

59- The CIA Factbook (2018). *Korea, North. Economic Overview.*

60- The CIA Factbook (2018). *Korea, North. Economy.*

61- NASA (2014). *Korean Peninsula Seen From Space Station.*

## 2. The U.S and N.K: Coupling amidst conflict

The aim of this part of the dissertation is to provide an historical knowledge base on American and North Korean relations from before the Korean War until the present day.

### 2.1 Relations before the Korean War (1945-1950)

It is clear at everyone's eyes that relations between both countries have its beginning at the end of the Second World War as it is back then when the Korean Peninsula was divided into two separated countries. Nevertheless, it can be said that there were in fact, previous relations between the United States of America and the Korean Peninsula. But as this project focus on North Korea as a country, this part explains relations which took place between the end of WWII (1939-1945) and the beginning of the Korean War (1950-1953).

At the end of WWII the United Nations divided Korea along the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel intending it as a temporary measure even though relations between U.S and USSR were not at its best moment. The breakdown of relations among both superpowers ended in the prevention of an effective reunification of the Korean peninsula as the North was under Soviet influence and the South under American influence. Such was Soviet influence that relations between U.S and North Korea were conducted through the Soviet military government in the North. It was during this period when North Koreans denounced the U.S and started to form a non-positive view of the United States due to Korean submission to Soviet pressures Kim Il Sung declared the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on September 9, 1948 and promptly received diplomatic recognition from the Soviet Union but not from the U.S. The United States did never extend diplomatic recognition to the DPKR. Kim Il Sung had an anti-American rhetoric which was based on the premise that the United States was a capitalist imperialist successor to Japan, the one who invaded the Korean Peninsula between 1912 and 1945. During December 1950, the United States initiated economic sanctions against the DPKR under Trading with the Enemy Act.<sup>62</sup> Those sanctions lasted until 2008.

### 2.2 The Korean War and the Aftermath (1950-1990).

The war started when the North decided to move forward its positions into southern territory starting an invasion. In response to those actions, the United Nations Security Council authorised a formation and dispatch of UN forces to Korea in order to repeal the

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62- Department of Treasury (1917). *Trading with the Enemy Act*.

invasion of the South. North Korea was backed by the Soviet Union and China while South Korea had full support from the US military force. It was a tough war to fight and after some battles and reshaping of occupied land, the Korean War ended in July 27<sup>th</sup> 1953 with an armistice. It was an agreement that put a pause to the battles and also created the Korean Demilitarized Zone. It is important to bear in mind that no peace treaty was signed by Korean parts back then, so technically, both North and South Korea are still at war with each other nowadays.<sup>63</sup>

After the war came to an end, to prevent or just to be ready in case of further North Korean invasions, South Korea and the USA signed a Mutual Defense Treaty.<sup>64</sup> This treaty aim is to commit the two powers to provide mutual help in case if any of them faces external attack. It also allows the United States to station its military in South Korea but always under consultation with the South Korean government.<sup>65</sup> Apart from their different allies, both Korean regions had different economies as well. As South Korea had one of the fastest growing economies from early 1960 to 1990, North Korea remained underdeveloped and under a totalitarian regime.

It could be said that after the war, over 100.000 people were killed in the purges in North Korea and there is an estimation that also over 1.000.000 people died while they were locked up in labour camps from 1945 until 1987.<sup>66</sup> It was clear that the differences between two Koreas went far beyond governments and allies. While North Korea was and is launching anti-American propaganda and campaigns that targets the US, it can be seen that South Korea is one of the countries in the whole world whose population is more pro-USA with an 82% rate.<sup>67</sup> Only after Philippines and Israel. Apart from that, if someone takes a look from space, it would be able to see one significant and also graphic difference between the two models, as the in the NASA did when it took a photo from space back in 2014.<sup>68</sup>

### 2.3 Post-Cold War Relations

Relations between countries back then were not an easy issue as they faced difficulties because of successive generations of Kim Il Sung's family rule. As a consequence, both parties had barely contact until 1971 when we can find the first contact after the Korean War.

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63- Li, Narangoa; Cribb, Robert (2014). *Historical Atlas of Northeast Asia, 1590-2010*. P.194

64- Yale Law School (2018). Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and North Korea.

65- OP.Cit.

66- Rummel, Rudolph J. (1997). *Chapter 10, Statistics of North Korean Democide Estimates, Calculations, And Sources*.

67-Pew Research Center (2014). *Which Countries don't like America and which do*.

68- See Figure 4.

Taking a look at what the Department of State said about North Korea, it is possible to read the next:

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*“The United States supports the peaceful reunification of Korea on terms acceptable to Korean people and recognizes that the future of Korean Peninsula is primarily a matter for them to decide. The United States believes that a constructive and serious dialogue between North and South Korea is necessary to improve inter-Korean relations and to resolve outstanding problems, including the North’s attempts to develop nuclear program and its human rights abuses”.*<sup>69</sup>

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Back in 1994, US and North Korea reached an agreement in which terms for denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula appeared. Later in 2003, The United States asked and proposed multilateral talks on the nuclear issue regarding North Korea. Since then, several rounds of Six-Party Talks (which included China, North Korea, Japan, South Korea, Russia and the USA) have been held, its last round took place in 2009.<sup>70</sup> Despite all efforts and having said that they would take steps forward denuclearization, North Korea has continued on its own way and has conducted tests (two nuclear tests and over 20 missile launches only in 2016 alone) in violation of International Law.<sup>71</sup>

On the one hand, in terms of U.S assistance to North Korea, it is paramount to keep in mind that most forms of economic assistance other than humanitarian are prohibited. North Korea has received from the US food and emergency aid during famines and natural disasters as well as help in the try for dealing with diseases and for improving North Korea’s farming and agricultural practices.<sup>72</sup> On the other hand, if bilateral economic relations is the matter to talk about, the US imposed near total embargo on North Korea back in 1950 when the North invaded South Korea. During the following years, more U.S sanctions were imposed and others were eased. It is also important to remember two of the most recent executive orders that were imposed. One of them, Executive Order 13687 was a direct consequence of North Korea’s cyber-attack on Sony Pictures Entertainment in 2015<sup>73</sup> and the other one, Executive Order 13722, was imposed following recent missile launches and nuclear test in March 2016.<sup>74</sup>

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69- State Department (2016). *Bureau of East Asian Pacific Affairs. US-North Korea.*

70- Arms Control Association (2017). *The Six Party Talks at a Glance.*

71- State Department (2016). *Bureau of East Asian Pacific Affairs. US-North Korea.*

72- OP. Cit.

73- U.S Government Publishing Office (2015). EXECUTIVE ORDER 13678.

74- Department of U.S Treasury (2016). EXECUTIVE ORDER 13722.

## 2.4 Crisis under Kim Jong Un (2015- 2018)

Under the rule of North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un, the country has contemplated its largest crisis. It was under his rule when, after his father's death, the 2009-2012 crisis finished. Nevertheless, in 2013 another crisis took place as North Korea restarted its Yongbyon nuclear facilities and in 2015 a third nuclear test occurred. Since that year, there have been lots of provocative acts. They can be listed as for example, a fourth and fifth nuclear test, one of them claimed to be a hydrogen bomb test. Another sixth nuclear test in 2017 took place and also a considerable rise in missile launches and missile improvements in a demonstration of power.<sup>75</sup>

Figure 5: North Korea's Ballistic Missiles

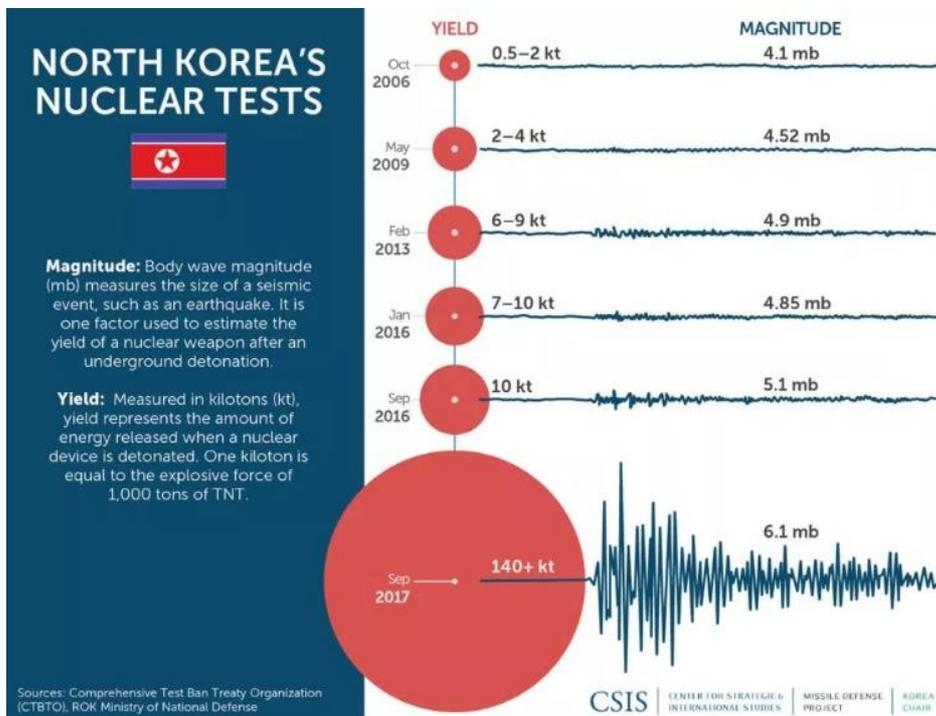


75- Figure five, six and seven. Missile Threat. CSIS. (2018). *North Korea's Ballistic Missiles, North Korean Missile Launches and North Korean Nuclear Tests*. Author: NIL SOLER SILVA

Figure 6: North Korean Missile Launches



Figure 7: North Korea's Nuclear Tests



75- Figure five, six and seven. Missile Threat. CSIS. (2018). *North Korea's Ballistic Missiles, North Korean Missile Launches and North Korean Nuclear Tests*.

If crises have taken usually one, two or three years the most, this one is a crisis which had its origins in 2013 and not until now in 2018 it seems that countries are going finally under negotiations in order to put an end to it. Despite the fact that it is taking too long to negotiate, this crisis follows the previous ones' path. Which seems that even though North Korean leaders change, the regime has its own ways of working. If an agreement is reached during next months, it would be the first and largest crisis during the rule of new leader Kim Jong Un.

However, it must be said that in this particular crisis there have been lots of improvements and unexpected events when it is referred to diplomacy efforts. As appointment of Donald J. Trump as 45<sup>th</sup> President of the United States took almost everyone by surprise, it seems that North Korean conflict resolution in 2018 is being quite unexpected in the same way. Almost everyone can remember how dangerous and risky looked the famous "Twitter encounters" which held Donald Trump mocking and calling Kim Jong Un "fat man and rocket man". Or when North Korean leader replied with expressions such as the "red button menace on his desk". Those days seem too far now when it is known that during this month both leaders will meet in a same room in order to discuss North Korean denuclearization. Furthermore, who of the ones who back in time severely criticized President Trump for his tough policies towards North Korea could have ever imagined that he may have now a chance for winning a Nobel Peace award?<sup>76</sup>

President Trump may get this prize because of the labor he has done regarding North Korea according to South Korean prime minister. It is true that until now, there has never been such an approach between both Koreas. Images of Kim Jong Un holding hands with South Korean President Moon Jae across the demilitarized zone last month are to be considered historical in an effort which is now being considered unprecedented as both Koreas are to sign peace treaty in the next months.<sup>77</sup> If so, the world would be in a point where it may see both Koreas reunited, or at least, a point where the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula would seem not so far as it looked five years ago. It should not be forgotten that Kim Jong Un has become the first North Korean leader to step foot in the South since the Korean War, as well as South Korean President Moon Jae who stepped his foot on the North as a gesture of kindness and will to promote good relations during last month act.

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76- CNN (2018). *Trump deserves Nobel for role in talks with North, South Korea's leader says.*

77- Aljazeera (2018). *Koreas to sign peace deal, pursue "complete" denuclearization.*

However, time should be given to negotiation process as it may end up with a reconciliation which lot of people have been seeking for or as events have shown, it may end up in another provocation in a couple of years. It is because of this, that North Korea's fate is in Kim Jong Un's hands as it depends on the path he chooses during the forthcoming years or even days.

### 3. Crises forecast: An inside look at the phenomena of negotiations in a nuclear risk background

In this part of the project different crisis are carefully analyzed in order to figure out if there are in fact some similar behavior patterns from North Korea as it is indeed considered the most irrational one between both states. To try to find out these patterns and to avoid different history context which may distortion North Korean actions, the selected crises to analyze, are to be the most recent ones. As a way to avoid Cold War dynamics, all the selected crises took place beyond 1991. This means that the analysis examines Kim Il Sung's last years of rule, all Kim Jong Il's and the first Kim Jong Un's years of incumbent as Supreme Leader. However, the current crisis has had its beginning but not yet an ending as countries are still going under negotiations nowadays.

The selected crises are the following:

First of all, the 1993-1994 crisis, which started when North Korea was proven to have cheated on its commitments under the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and they consequently decided to abandon it. The second one took place in 1998-1999 and started when North Korea fired a missile over Japan. It brought an emergency alert to the U.S and its allies. The third crisis started on 2003 and ended in 2005. It was characterized by North Korea's decision to restart its nuclear reactor and its forbidden activities. Finally, the previous crisis before the current one took place in 2009 and it was resolved in 2012. It has its origins when North Korea launched an Unha-2 Rocket in violation of the United Nations Security Council 1718 resolution on April 5, 2009.

### 3.1 The lightnings: North Korean detonators against regional stability

The first thing which can be seen before a distant storm which approaches is always a lightning. So are North Korean actions which mark the start of a diplomatic storm that they can be compared to the weather phenomenon. During the analyzed years, it is usually North Korea the one who starts the crisis with its actions, whether it is announcing that it is leaving an agreed treaty or with a nuclear test.

This first analyzed crisis started on February 9th 1993 when the International Atomic Energy Agency demanded special inspections of two sites which were believed to store nuclear waste. They showed evidence in which North Korea had been cheating on its commitments under the NPT. After this statement, North Korea decided to refuse the IAEA's request and announced that they would be abandoning the Non Proliferation Treaty citing Article X:

*“Each Party shall in exercising its national sovereignty have the right to withdraw from the Treaty if it decides that extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of this Treaty, have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country”.*<sup>78</sup>

On August 31 1998, started the second crisis (1998-1999) when North Korea launched a missile type Taepo Dong 1 which had a range of approximately 1.500 2.000 kilometres and flied over Japan. Pyongyang rapidly announced that the missile had successfully placed a small satellite into orbit, which was contested by U.S Space Command. In the next hours, Japan suspended the signature of a cost-sharing agreement for the Agreed framework's Light water reactors project until November. It was then when U.S intelligence admitted to be really surprised by North Korean advances in missile-staging technology.

Another crisis (2003-2005) took place on January 2003, when North Korea decided to restart its nuclear reactor and carry on with operations of its related facilities. They also announced its abandonment from the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty arguing that they did announce that decision back in 1993 but they had suspended it temporarily. In March, Pyongyang stated that it might not adhere to its moratorium on missile testing as it was a sovereign right to have a peaceful missile program.

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78- United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (2018). *Non Proliferation Treaty article X*.

The most known example (fourth crisis) of North Korea's first move took place back in 2006, it started on April 13, when North Korea announced its will to return to the talks if the U.S lifted the freeze of Banco Delta Asia's funds, which were approximately \$25 million. That claim was later joined by the tests of seven ballistic missiles in July. Those actions were answered by the State Department calling them provocative acts which violated North Korea's voluntary moratorium on flight-testing longer-range missiles. Later on, the UN Security Council would adopt Resolution 1695 condemning the actions and urged Pyongyang to return to the six-party talks.<sup>79</sup>The resolution was met with an answer by North Korea's Foreign Ministry who stated that Pyongyang would not be bound by the resolution.

On October 3, North Korea announced that it would be conducting in the future a nuclear test under the condition where safety is firmly guaranteed. On the same time, North Korea also stated that it would avoid the use of first-nuclear weapons, prohibit any nuclear transfer and try to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. During October 9, North Korea conducted an underground nuclear test. Its yield was approximately between 5 and 15 kilotons.<sup>80</sup>

As way of starting the fifth crisis (2009-2012), North Korea launched an Unha-2 Rocket in violation of the UNSC 1718 resolution on April 5, 2009. The UNSC issued a statement in which it condemned the action and declared it a violation of the resolution.<sup>81</sup> As a response to UNSC statement, North Korea indicated that it was leaving the six-party talks and would no longer be bound to its agreements. In addition, North Korea also said that it would reverse steps taken to disable its nuclear facilities and ejected IAEA and U.S monitors from the Yongbyon nuclear complex. On May 25, it conducted a second underground nuclear test which had a yield of approximately 15 to 20 kilotons.<sup>82</sup>

Next common issue among crisis consists basically of the period when the countries are experiencing negotiations and further actions take place as they may turn the situation into a more unstable conflict or head the situation into an agreed and stable end. Sometimes as it is seen later, negotiations are not easy thanks to unexpected actions which tend to trouble the circumstances.

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79- United Nations Security Council (2006). *Resolution 1695*.

80- The New York Times (2006). *North Korean Says They Tested Nuclear Device*.

81- The Guardian (2009). *UN Security Council condemns North Korean rocket launch*.

82- The New York Times (2009). *North Korea Claims to conduct 2<sup>nd</sup> Nuclear Test*.

### 3.2 The storms: Negotiation processes towards an unknown result

After distant lightnings which announce the calmed situation is eager to change, usually comes the storm. In this part, common analyzed issues show the second part of the crisis as they are all the negotiations process, actions by one or another state, their demands and expectations and finally, a possible solution or deepening of the crisis.

The first “storm” began in 1993 when after bilateral talks with the US, North Korea decided to suspend its decision to pull out of the NPT before it became legally effective. It was also then where North Korea agreed to the full and impartial application of IAEA safeguards and the US granted assurances against threat and use of force with a promise of not interfering in North Korea’s internal affairs. After second talks, in a joint statement they announced that North Korea was ready “*to begin consultations with the IAEA on outstanding safeguards and other issues*” and it was also disposed to negotiate IAEA inspections of its nuclear facilities. The joint statement also indicated Pyongyang’s consideration of a deal with the United States to replace its graphite nuclear reactors with light-water reactors.<sup>83</sup>

On February 1994, North Korea finalized an agreement with the IAEA which allowed the inspection of all seven of its declared nuclear facilities in order to avert sanctions by the United Nations Security Council. Yet, in March of the same year, Pyongyang refused to allow inspection of Yongbyon reprocessing plant, which made the IAEA Board of governors to approve a resolution which called North Korea to “*immediately allow the IAEA to complete all requested inspection activities and to comply fully with its safeguards agreements*”.<sup>84</sup>

After some months of troubles between North Korea and IAEA, the first one announced it was leaving the IAEA<sup>85</sup> but after 2 days of talks with former President of the United States Jimmy Carter, Pyongyang confirmed its willingness to freeze its nuclear weapons program and resume high-level talks with the U.S. However, in July 9<sup>th</sup> 1994 Kim Il Sung died and was succeeded by Kim Jong Il. This constituted the first change in North Korea’s leadership.

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83- The New York Times (1994). *Statement by N.Korea and the U.S*

Autor: NIL SOLER SILVA

84- International Atomic Energy Agency Resolution (1993). *GC (37)/RES/624*

85- International Atomic Energy Agency Resolution (1994). *GC (38) /RES/16*

During the second crisis (1998-1999), U.S – North Korean missile talks began in New York but they had little if any progress. The United States repeated its request for Pyongyang to put an end to its missile programs in exchange for relief from economic sanctions. Nevertheless, North Korea refused the proposal arguing that the lifting of economic sanctions was implicit in the 1994 Agreed Framework. The United States and North Korea would not held any more talks until December when the U.S addressed they're concerns about a suspected underground nuclear facility at Kumchang-ni. Pyongyang accepted the idea of an American inspection of the place but was unable to agree with American proposals for appropriate compensation.

On February 1999, the U.S and North Korea held a fourth round of missile talks in Pyongyang. The United States expressed its concern over North Korean missile development and proliferation. They also proposed a deal in which North Korea would restraint its activities in exchange for a U.S sanctions relief. It was during the next months when the U.S, South Korea and Japan established the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight group to “*institutionalize close consultation and policy coordination in dealing with North Korea*”.<sup>86</sup>

In May, an American inspection team travelled to North Korea in order to visit the nuclear site in Kumchang-ni. According to State Department, the team found no evidence of nuclear activity nor violation of the Agreed Framework<sup>87</sup>. Also, travelling as a presidential envoy, former Secretary of Defense William Perry delivered a letter from President Clinton to North Korean leader Kim Jong Il.<sup>88</sup>

Perry reportedly called on North Korea to satisfy U.S concerns on nuclear weapons and missile proliferation that were beyond the scope of the Agreed Framework in turn for the lifting of U.S sanctions and normalization of diplomatic relations. Also some form of security guarantee were added too.

At the beginning of the third crisis (2003-2005), a major announcement to an American delegation was made in the context of trilateral talks in April between United States, North Korea and China. The statement was a claim from the Korean delegation who told the Americans that Pyongyang possessed nuclear weapons. At the same time, they said that they could stop its nuclear program and missile testing and exports, but North Korea expected something considerable in return for the effort.

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86- IFPA Project (2004). *The Evolution of the TCOG as a Diplomatic Tool*.

87- Department of State (1999). *Review of United States Policy Towards North Korea*.

88- The New York Times (1999). *Envoy to North Korea delivers Clinton letter*.

In August, during the first round of six-party talks in Beijing, North Korea proposed a step-by-resolution in which the United States had to conclude a non-aggression treaty, normalize bilateral diplomatic relations, cease the obstruction of North Korea's economic cooperation with other countries, complete the reactors promised under the Agreed Framework, restart suspended fuel oil shipments, and increase food aid.<sup>89</sup> In return, as stated previously, North Korea would finish its nuclear facility and also end its missile testing and export program. In September, former President George Bush agreed to provide \$3.72 million in KEDO<sup>90</sup> funding.

On February 25, 2004, a second round of six-party talks was held in Beijing but little progress was made. There were basically two main differences or issues which divided Pyongyang and other participants. The first was that Japan, South Korea and the U.S wanted all North Korea's nuclear programs to be dismantled, but Pyongyang wished to be allowed to maintain at least one for peaceful purposes. The second was that the U.S, Japan and South Korea wanted North Korea to admit that it had a uranium-enrichment program.<sup>91/92</sup>

In June, a third round was also held in Beijing being that the fourth round of six-party talks. In that round, the United States presented a proposal for resolving the crisis. The proposal called North Korea to first freeze its activities related to nuclear programs and in return, it would receive fuel oil from China, Russia and South Korea. After that, North Korea would dismantle its nuclear programs. The U.S would also draft talks about multilateral security agreements and start to survey North Korea's energy needs. Finally, Washington would begin talks with Pyongyang on the removal of U.S sanctions. However, if North Korea did not comply with its part, the benefits would be removed.<sup>93</sup>

On April 2005, the U.S sent an urgent diplomatic message to its allies to notify that there was a concern that North Korea might conduct a nuclear test. On the same month, experts claimed that North Korea might hand over nuclear weapons to terrorists if the USA drove them to a corner. On June, The U.S. Treasury Department announced that the U.S had frozen American assets of three North Korean entities under Executive Order 13382

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89- Council on Foreign Relations (2013). *The Six Party Talks on North Korea's Nuclear Program*.

90- KEDO: Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization.

91- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (2004). *The Second Round of the Six-Party Talks*.

92- U.S Department of State Achieve (2004). *Six Party Talks*.

93- China's Embassy in North Korea (2004). *Third Round Six-Party Talks Concludes with Important Consensus*.

94- U.S Department of Treasury (2005). *EXECUTIVE ORDER 13382*

issued by former President George Bush.<sup>94</sup>

During the fourth crisis (2006-2007) and after the nuclear test, North Korea's officials stated that the nuclear test was entirely attributable to the US nuclear threat, sanctions and pressure. The test was an act to prove its possession of nukes in order to protect its national sovereignty. They also announced that if the U.S persisted in increasing the pressure on the country, they might conduct a second test. Finally, they reaffirmed that the denuclearization of the entire peninsula was President's father dying last instruction and ultimate goal of North Korea. Also, on October 14, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1718 which demanded that North Korea ceased further nuclear tests, called to return to six-party talks, and to abandon its nuclear weapons. It also widened the range of prohibited transactions adopted in Resolution 1695.<sup>95</sup>

Finally, in the fifth crisis (2009-2012) and in response to the second nuclear test, the UNSC adopted (unanimously) Resolution 1874 which expanded sanctions against the regime.<sup>96</sup> This resolution was encountered by an issued statement from North Korea which said that Pyongyang would take countermeasures such as responding military to any blockade or continuing to develop uranium enrichment capability.

The first months of 2010 were influenced by the sink of the South Korean ship Cheonan near the South Korean-North Korean maritime border. Tensions aroused between countries as North Korea denied its responsibility in the ship's sinking and South Korea along with the U.S started joint military exercises in the Sea of Japan as a display of force in response to the Cheonan incident. Apart from that incident, in November, North Korea fired artillery rounds at a South Korean island and killed two soldiers. Tensions between the countries continue to grow.

On July 2011, foreign ministers of Japan, United States and South Korea issued a statement in which they said that there was a sustained process going on. In August, North Korea announced that they wanted to restart multilateral negotiations and after meeting with Russian former President Dmitry Medvedev, North Korea seemed to be willingly to accept a moratorium on nuclear weapons production and testing. Six-party talks went on in Geneva in October.

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94- U.S Department of Treasury (2005). *EXECUTIVE ORDER 13382*

95- United Nations Security Council (2006). *Resolution 1718*.

96- United Nations Security Council (2009). *Resolution 1874*.

The lasting part of the analysis is the one in which both countries reach an agreement and decide to decrease tension levels as a result of negotiations and actions which took place in the context of bilateral talks or negotiations held by the Six-party talks.

### 3.3 The Rainbows: An outcome with many concessions but any assurance.

In the middle of the storm there are usually some kind of signals which carry the message that the storm is about to end. Normally, these signals are the rainbows, which appear in the sky and signal that the storm has vanished and calm is restored. However, they do not mean that further storms may come.

During the first analyzed crisis, on August 1994, both countries signed an agreed statement which established a three-stage process for the elimination of North Korea's nuclear weapons program. The United States, in return, promised to move toward normalization of diplomatic and economic relations and assured that it would provide North Korea with construction assistance of proliferation-resistance light-water reactors. This statement became a reality when in October 1994 they adopted the "Agreed Framework" in Geneva in the context of the Six Party Talks. It called for Pyongyang to freeze and eventually eliminate its nuclear facilities in exchange for light-water reactors and annual shipments of oil during constructions of the reactors.<sup>97</sup>

The crisis finished when on November 28th 1994, the IAEA announced that it had confirmed that construction had been stopped at North Korea's Nyongbyon and Taochon nuclear facilities and that those facilities were not operational then.

Moving on to the 1998-1999 crisis, On September 1999, during talks in Berlin, North Korea decided to agree to a moratorium on testing any long-range missiles during the duration of talks. The United States agreed to a partial lifting of the economic sanctions. The two countries accepted to continue high-level talks.

Next crisis, the one that took place during 2003-2005, on July 2005, North Korea announced that it was returning to the six-party talks after they had previously left. On the same month, Korean Leader Kim Jong Il stated about his fathers' dying wish for

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97- Nuclear Test Initiative (1994). *US-DPKR Agreed Framework / Six Party Talks*.

98- Financial Times (2005). *The Joint Statement of the Fourth round of the Six-Party talks*.

the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The round of six-party talks which took place in that month included an unprecedented number of bilateral talks among U.S and North Korean representatives. In September, members of the six-party talks concluded a joint statement to guide future negotiations. A vital part of the statement said that North Korea “has the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy”.<sup>98</sup>

In the fourth crisis (2006-2007), and during discussions and consultations among different representatives in the context of the six-party talks, North Korean representatives stated that their country was ready to implement the September 2005 joint statement and abandon its nuclear program. On February 2007, the six-party talks concluded the fifth round with an agreed action plan to implement September 19, 2005 joint statement.

The sixth round of six-party talks began on March 19, 2007 in Beijing. However, the discussions were suspended because North Korea demanded the U.S to unfreeze the \$25 million North Korean funds which were held in Banco Delta Asia. They would not carry on with talks unless those funds were liberated. On April 10, the U.S agreed to unfreeze the funds and two months later, the IAEA confirmed the shutdown of the Yongbyon nuclear facilities.<sup>99</sup>

Finally, in the fifth crisis (2009-2012), on December 17, 2011, supreme leader Kim Jon Il died and was succeeded by his third son Kim Jon Un who was formally appointed North Korea’s new leader.<sup>100</sup> Later on, on February 2012, after meeting between the United States and North Korea in Beijing, both countries announced in different statements an agreement by Pyongyang to suspend its activities at Yongbyon uranium plant, the permission to IAEA inspectors to monitor its suspension as well as new moratorium implementations. In exchange, the U.S stated that it would procure 240.000 metric tons of food aid to North Korea.

### 3.4 Integrating relational findings on interactions between the U.S and N.K

In the following part, thanks to all the provided data from the analysis, it has been possible to gather all the results and structure them in Figure 8. This figure displays the distinct phases of North Korean and American crises as they have been explained previously. Figure 8 then, is a scheme which shows the common patterns which arise during separated crises between the U.S and North Korea.

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99- International Atomic Energy Agency (2007). IAEA Team Confirms Shutdown of DPRK Nuclear facilities.

100- The Guardian (2011). Kim Jong-Il, North Korean leader, dies.

Figure 8: Common patterns among crises

Phase	1993-1994	1998-1999	2003-2005	2006-2007	2009-2012
Lightning	N.K cheats and abandons NPT.	N.K fires Taepo Dong 1 over Japan	N.K restarts its nuclear reactors and abandons NPT	N.K conducts an underground nuclear test	N.K conducts a second nuclear test
Storm	Bilateral talks (Jimmy Carter)	Talks on missile development (Clinton letter)	Trilateral talks (N.K, CH, U.S) Six party talks	UN Security council issues resolution 1718	UNSC issues resolution 1874 and Six Party talks
Rainbow	Nyongbyon and Taochon facilities not operational	Moratorium on missile testing and sanctions lifting	Joint statement North Korea has right to nuclear energy	U.S unfreezes N.K assets and one reactor is shut down	NK leader dies and suspends nuclear activity.

The previous *Figure 8* has shown the three phases in which crises between North Korea and the U.S are divided. The first one, the lightning, is always provoked by North Korea, who starts a new crisis with its deliberated conduct. North Korea uses these kinds of actions under national sovereignty pretext or just under peaceful pretext. In other occasions, it attributes his own movements and behavior due to external pressure coming mainly from the United States

101- Figure 8: Common patterns among crises. Sources: Self-made from extracted data, the analysis Autor: NIL SOLER SILVA

In second place, after such provocations, it usually takes place some kind of acts of condemnation by the IAEA or by United Nations Security Council. In the documents, the supranational organizations usually first condemn North Korean attitude, condemn its actions, urge returning to previous agreements and finally warn that all actions can have their consequences. The storm begins as a response to the lightnings. These storms are also bilateral or multilateral talks between the actors. The Six-Party talks has had some influence over the main actors, for what is to expect that they take a bit of credit for the next phase. Also, the storm is the phase when the brinkmanship occurs, as main actors rise their bids until and end is reached. After such warnings and talks North Korea chooses to threaten with leaving treaties which have something to do with nuclearization. It can be the Nonproliferation treaty, the IAEA, or just announces its willingness of not accomplishing its duties regarding previous agreements as missile moratoriums or the freezing of its nuclear facilities.

North Korean response to supranational warnings usually contributes to raise the risk and tension levels. As North Korea has made its move, it is turn to mainly the U.S and its allies to respond to such provocations. This response habitually comes in form of economic sanctions or embargos, where North Korea can suffer the most as it lacks own capabilities of survival. Sanctions constitute a paramount issue as normally target North Korea as a country but also targets North Korean funds which damages the regime. It is expected that only if September 2017 sanctions are enforced, they could stem the flow of up to 1.3\$ billion dollars. So as said before, sanctions constitute a vital issue to consider when analyzing the conflict as more economic sanctions are expected from the U.S as Vice President Mike Pence announced that *“the U.S will soon unveil 'toughest' sanctions on North Korea ever”*.<sup>102</sup>

However, American response can also come by conducting joint military exercise near the Korean Peninsula along with South Korea. This represents the hard line of response as it constitutes a risky move because it can elevate tensions in the area. It is a bigger bid than.

Next phase in the crisis is a crucial one, the rainbow. As it is North Korea's turn to act, it can show that it is willing to return to negotiations to find a way out of tensions or it can

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102- FOX News (2018). *Mike Pence Says U.S will soon unveil “toughest” sanctions on North Korea ever.*

just place a bigger bid. As seen in the crisis, North Korea almost always adopts the less threatening option and decides to show an interest in stabilizing negotiations. This negotiations are held generally in Beijing or Geneva in the context of six-party talks or just bilateral talks between North Korea and the U.S. They can be summered in North Korean demands of humanitarian aid, help in the building of a “peaceful” reactor in order to get energy and in some cases, unfreezing of North Korean assets and funds.

On the other hand, the United States and its allies may ask for missile testing moratorium, denuclearization of North Korean facilities, stop of nuclear testing, and in some cases, the release of citizens who are retained in the country in exchange for Pyongyang’s demands.

Once negotiations have finished and a mutual agreement is reached, the situation is likely to return to a previous stage where North Korea seemed to cooperate before starting another crisis. It can be said that this kind of crisis are cyclical, which means that they have a start and an end but also they tend to be consistent during the years as they have shown to be repetitive. It will be seen if after current peace negotiations, North Korea will, in the future, adopt another risky move and start another crisis. Yet, it is also true as it has been put before, that historical levels of mutual trust have appeared in the last crisis. Who knows if after all, Kim Jong Un, the North Korean leader who grown up among western education, will be the one who finally accomplishes his grandfather’s dying wish regarding denuclearization.

After all it has been provided and said about North Korea, its political system, and its supreme leader, there is one thing among others which is completely true. North Korean foreign policy is extremely well calculated as it has been stated in Pyongyang’s Survival Strategy.<sup>103</sup> It has been possible to observe how North Korea has been able to survive despite the fact of being completely isolated and facing the United States of America, no minor issue. If its foreign policy hadn’t been so well calculated, there could have been any mistake in any of the crises which could have led to a massive disaster for the regime. However, the North Korean regime has not only been able to survive, but also has been able to proliferate its nuclear and missile arsenal.

It can be said without a doubt that this success in foreign policies is mostly in part because of the clever use and understanding of Brinkmanship by North Korea and the United States. Both have acknowledged their red lines and which were their top priorities and have acted in accordance to such premises. In their balance of resolve, it

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103- Byman and Lind (2010). *Pyongyang’s Survival Strategy*.

has always been clear that there were some goals to achieve for their part and some lines that should not be crossed under any circumstances. A nuclear strike which could evolve into a nuclear war was a scenario which could not last in any leader's mind even if they threatened to do so.

Talking about nuclear deterrence<sup>104</sup>, it is true that during the crisis existed some “cold war” dynamics as North Korea acted in many ways as the former Soviet Union which also had a nuclear arsenal. The example, in this case, lies on credibility issues over if North Korea was really able to assume the costs of a nuclear exchange, which also led to confusion and produced a Security dilemma as both states continued to increase their security measures (as written in “Ballistic Missile Proliferation”).<sup>105</sup>

Following with the academic contributions, McCormack<sup>106</sup> stated that “North Korea saw its nuclear arsenal as its saving grace, as without them, it surely would have faced an American strike”. What he wrote down is certainly true, as the U.S invaded previously some rogue states which had no mass destruction weapons, they have not been eager to begin a large scale invasion as the author gave as its third option to consider. Still, the U.S opted for the first and the second option from the list which were settlement through engagement and economic sanctions.

From Pyongyang's Survival Strategy<sup>107</sup> it can be also said that what they call nuclear extortion which worked during the XX<sup>th</sup> Century, it also has been working on the XI<sup>st</sup> Century. Furthermore, nuclear weapons have worked so well that they have been a double security agent as they have been a tool for external security and also they are expected to have secured supreme leader's position preventing any coup d'état as the authors said.

Finally, the article mentioned in the theoretical frame which makes an effort to highlight the issue of North Korean threats and how they may be handled, it has been possible to see that in the lightning phase of the crises, North Korea tried to coerce the U.S and its allies, what in the article is mentioned as a North Korean doctrine. Also, another true fact which is seen both in the article and in the analysis is that Kim Jong Un has been kind on the idea of brinkmanship when dealing with the U.S and its allies, what explains the amount of nuclear tests as a provocation.

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104- Robert Powell (2003). *Nuclear Deterrence Theory, Nuclear Proliferation, and National Missile Defense*.

105- Barkley (2008). *Ballistic Missile Proliferation*.

106- Gavan McCormack (2005). *Target North Korea: Pushing North Korea to the Brink of Nuclear Catastrophe*.

107- Byman and Lind (2010). *Pyongyang's Survival Strategy*.

108- Council on Foreign Relations (2018). *The Future of North Korean Provocations*.

So, after all, it is right to consider that Pyongyang's strategy with nuclearization has had its results for the regime as they have achieved what regimes like Libya and Iraq did not, an invasion from the United States of America. This article then, has done well when addressing the issue of nuclearization through international relations among North Korea and the U.S. It is well mentioned that North Korean threats did not only have to catch military attention, but also diplomats', what the second and third phase of the crises are related to.

## Conclusions

This dissertation has done an investigation about the United States of America dealing with North Korea. In connection with its main goals presented on the introduction, it has sought to analyze how the United States has interacted with a nuclear rogue state such as the one that North Korea represents. So, speaking about past relations, this study has explained every crucial and historical moment in North Korean-American relations, from the Korean War, the Post-Cold War, and finally their relations until nowadays. It has been possible to see the evolution of a rogue state which back in time was only able to “intimidate” the U.S with some regional missile firing test,

Although, everything changed when the U.S found out that there was some nuclear research going on in North Korea, something which they were not supposed to let that happened. It was then, when North Korea stopped to be just a regional problem to become an international issue, as it was appointed “Rogue State” by former President George W. Bush. It was in those days when with the fall of the Soviet Union, Cold War dynamics and brinkmanship, along with theories of nuclear deterrence, were put in practice with the Korean regime. Some of the crises took place precisely when the U.S found out about the North Korean evolution on nuclear issues.

Regarding times of crisis, this investigation has exposed through an analysis, some of the common patterns that took place amidst U.S and North Korean relations. They can be resumed in three phases: the lightnings, which are related to the start of the crisis and North Korean involvement in it; second, the storms, which explain the negotiations processes in search of an outcome that satisfies both parts; and third, the rainbows, which show the world that both parts have reached an agreement but it not constitutes in any way a lasting period of stability. Thanks to an inductive methodology, the analysis proved that all common issues arisen in the distinct crises, for what it can be said that it constitutes a common behavior when speaking about U.S and North Korean relations.

However, and in relation with another study goal, when trying to understand the logic of North Korean performance, the analysis found a reason which may give an answer to the situation. It is found in the research, that until the 70’s, North Korea was a really poor state as under his totalitarian regime, its supreme leader Kim Il Sung conducted several

purges which doomed the country into a process which led the state underdeveloped and under an authoritarian regime. In contrast to the North situation, the South was experiencing a fast economy recovery which lasted from 1960 to 1990.

According to the findings, North Korea has always lacked lots of basic elements just for assuring its survival. Yet, it is here where nuclear weapons were not only used by the regime as a way to ensure its survival, but also to negotiate under certain “nuclear extortion”. This means that North Korean regime achieved what it needed in terms of humanitarian aid and with deals which contemplated nuclear activities moratorium in exchange for dollars, fuel, or funds. Those deals also included the lifting of sanctions which were imposed by mainly Washington and its allies. It is an evidence then, that sanctions targeted against the regime and its core people had a tremendous effect on North Korean behavior.

As another dissertation’s objective, the intentionality and the logic behind North Korean foreign policy are also contrasted. It is seen after the analysis and contrasted with the theoretical frame that in the case of North Korea the premise which states that foreign policy under a totalitarian regime are submitted only to its leader’s will is partly false. This is because it is true that Kim Jong Un (and his antecessors) as a supreme leader has the power and the authority to command as he wishes, however, analyzing all the crises and North Korean movements across recent years, there is in fact a well calculated plan behind all that.

The North Korean calculation has much to do with nuclear deterrence. It elevated North Korean “category” until being able to compare itself to the American power. Still, in North Korea, both the country and the regime have survived through the years indeed, because of nuclear weapons. Those weapons, are considered to be fundamental for the regime survival as they protect it from outside aggression while the menace of firing one of them is an existing option to consider for the opponent. Thus, all brinkmanship theory becomes effective when analyzing relations between American and North Korean dynamics as they jump from one crisis to another. No one would take the risk to attack North Korea even if its army is as poor as its people and their pilots lack flying training hours.

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Even though North Korea insists that Kim Il Sung's dying wish was to achieve denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, the truth is, that nuclear weapons have resulted to work very efficiently even though they have not been fired against any enemy. To demonstrate it and as it has been shown before, North Korean foreign policy has proven to be also highly calculated during all years in which they have achieved great successes in terms of deals and extortions.

The remaining objective is the one which involves Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un. It is basically whether if they are, after all, really capable of handling the whole situation.

On one hand, all circumstances made the world believe that Kim Jong Un would follow his father's legacy and would continue a nuclear proliferation program, which today seems that it is not going to happen as talks are taking place in order to ensure a proper denuclearization. However, the world did not also expect an important appointment as it was Donald J. Trump's as the 45th President of the United States. This appointment had tremendous and unexpected consequences as tensions between both leaders arose due to their words and provocations exchange. While one threatened of releasing fire and fury over North Korea like the world had never seen before, the other one threatened with its desk nuclear button and so on. Tensions raised and the bids in brinkmanship became more elevated.

On the other hand, and despite of all tensions generated, North Korea decided to give up with his provocation policy and decided to submit into peace talks. Yesterday, North Korea was threatening the world and the U.S with its nuclear arsenal, today, Kim Jong Un is crossing the demilitarized zone and planting a tree alongside with South Korean Prime Minister in an historical effort to achieve peace among both Koreas. Hence, the world will have to wait until the end as talks between Kim Jong Un and Donald Trump were for a while in serious danger after the North Korean disliked the joint military exercises performed by the U.S and South Korea. After hearing about this, there was a menace to Kim Jong Un which included the words "ending like Gadhafi if he did not submit to peace talks."

After a couple of weeks of highly intrigue and the sending of reciprocal cordial missives, on June 12<sup>th</sup> 2018, both leaders will finally meet in Singapore to discuss the situation. So,

it seems that after all, one of the best outcomes of the situation has prevailed over the worse ones.

Finally, as events have not taken place yet, it would be wise to keep an eye on further encounters as historical meeting which will sit on the same table Kim Jong Un and Donald J. Trump will take place on June 12 2018, in Singapore. Actions like releasing of U.S hostages held in North Korea are a great way to initiate good faith talks. This meeting will probably decide the near future of the region and also the American policy through the Korean Peninsula. The world expects that proper denuclearization will result from the whole process and that peace is achieved among both Koreas, but in this matter, it is up to North Korea to decide which path to choose. They can rather opt for a decent denuclearization and a way through peaceful coexistence, or they can follow past steps and after achieving a great deal in 2018, they may start another crisis in 2019. That is the reason why further investigation would be required in order to follow the whole process in the Korean Peninsula and the American policy towards the region.

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