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Multilateral Sanctions on North Korea and the Role of Central Europe

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Taylor Cullinan

Multilateral Sanctions on North Korea and the Role of Central Europe

Abstract: The expansion of North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs, coupled with belligerent rhetoric, has raised tensions between North Korea and the international community to unprecedented levels. Sanctions are the best tool to respond to North Korea and can be applied to coerce a change in behavior that would bring about the resumption of negotiations between stakeholders. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has adopted sanctions resolutions that highlight the shared interest of stability and security, and signal the need to find a political solution. A multilateral response will disrupt North Korea's ability to use provocations to seek concessions. Central European countries' participation in the United Nations (UN) system and their cooperation to implement sanctions will play a vital role in achieving this goal. Increasing sanctions compliance and applying pressure on the North Korean regime will create space for negotiations between stakeholders and North Korea, which could achieve a peaceful political solution.

Keywords: North Korea, Sanctions, United Nations

Introduction

The continued expansion of North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs represents an immense threat to international peace and security. North Korea's fourth and fifth nuclear tests, which took place in January and September 2016, along with numerous ballistic missile launches, represent an unprecedented level of crisis manufactured by the North Korean regime. An active conflict on the Korean peninsula would disrupt the political and economic balance in a geographical region that has seen incredible growth in recent decades but remains divided on a number of political and security-related matters. The security threat associated with North Korea is real but it is not new; it fits into a long-term strategy that meets specific objectives,

primarily regime survival for the North Korean elite. This is particularly important to keep in mind in light of recent exchanges between United States and North Korean leaders over the imminent escalation of hostilities. The North Korean regime has survived as long as it has because of its skill in working within a framework that allows it to gain what it needs while ensuring its own survival. Provoking an active conflict with the US and its allies would surely mean its demise.

The UNSC has responded to North Korean provocations with the application of sanctions, starting with UNSC Resolution 1718 (2006). It has continued to incrementally increase pressure up to the most recent adoption of UNSC Resolution 2371 (2017). The expansion of sanctions in response to provocations has yet to curb North Korea's nuclear ambitions. There are several reasons for this: primarily, there is a lack of concerted commitment to uphold the sanctions regime, and North Korea is a master of sanctions evasion.

The main concern regarding sanctions imposed on North Korea is the humanitarian impact, which could be a source of instability if not managed appropriately. The regime has put its survival before the wellbeing of the population in the past and can be expected to do so again. Therefore, sanctions targeting the regime and the nuclear and ballistic missile programs are key to mitigating the potential for crisis. UN member states will remain reluctant to fully implement sanctions if there is a strong possibility for instability related to matters of human security.

The Six Party Talks, which took place between 2003 and 2009, created the space for Korea-related security issues to be discussed openly by the primary stakeholders – China, the United States, Japan, South Korea, North Korea and Russia. Resumption of the Six Party Talks or similar negotiations is the goal of the sanctions. In this format, the stakeholders can search for solutions that consider the collective interests of regional security and stability. Moreover, recognizing common goals and taking united action can disrupt North Korea's ability to use manufactured crises to seek concessions. Pursuing multilateral engagement with the inclusion of North Korea will allow for the advancement of a sustainable political solution.

The UN has been the chosen forum for diplomacy on this matter. The establishment and maintenance of a sanctions regime by the UNSC is founded on the notion of cooperation. A sanctions resolution

only maintains its legitimacy if its provisions are successfully adopted into national law and efforts are made to enforce such laws. Furthermore, efforts to exercise control over the flow of goods, people and money are transnational in nature. This raises the matter of sanctions implementation to the regional level. The objective of this paper is to examine the multilateral sanctions on North Korea and how Central European countries, through their participation the UN system, will play an important role in contributing to the goal of creating space to pursue a political solution to North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs. Furthermore, Poland will occupy a seat at the UNSC starting in January 2018. This will give Central Europe an important stake in tackling this issue. The argument is structured as follows. In the first section, multilateral sanctions, in the context of the UN, will be discussed. In the following, specific attention will be given to the North Korean sanctions regime and the major factors that influence it. Finally, an analysis of sanctions implementation in Central European countries will highlight the importance of the region for strengthening and enforcing the sanctions regime. Conclusions follow.

1 Understanding Multilateral Sanctions

1. Sanctions are a geo-economic tool that serve three general purposes: to coerce a change in behavior, to constrain illicit activities or programs, and to politically stigmatize. At the multilateral level, the UN Charter (Article 41) gives the UNSC the authority to take "measures not involving the use of armed force" to respond to threats to international peace and security.¹ Throughout the Cold War, gridlock prevented cooperation at the UNSC and limited sanctions regimes to South Africa and Rhodesia until the 1990s. In the 1990s, comprehensive economic sanctions were a popular tool imposed on states such as Iraq, Yugoslavia and Haiti. These sanctions regimes had negative humanitarian impacts as they choked vital aid and damaged the economic infrastructure in countries already stressed from conflict-related damage.

1 United Nations, *The Charter of the United Nations*, Chapter VII, 26 June 1945, <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/> [2017-08-17].

Beginning in the late 1990s, the UN shifted its strategy and began using “targeted sanctions” meant to inflict focused strain on decision-makers while minimizing unintended humanitarian consequences.² The UNSC currently maintains 13 sanctions regimes on countries in Africa, terrorist-affiliated individuals and organizations, and North Korea. These sanctions regimes focus on counter-terrorism efforts, nuclear non-proliferation, and de-escalation of conflicts in Africa. Sanctions most commonly come in the form of asset freezes, travel bans, arms embargos, sensitive goods embargos, cargo inspections, financial and commercial sanctions, natural resource bans, and aviation bans.³ Upon the adoption of a sanctions resolution, UN member states are obligated to enforce and implement the outlined measures, typically by incorporating such measures into domestic law. Often-times, the UNSC will also establish a committee to monitor compliance, which is usually assisted by a neutral expert panel that produces reports and gives recommendations on sanctions implementation.

While the effectiveness of sanctions is controversial, the lifting of measures on Iran in January 2016 and Côte d’Ivoire in April 2016 is recent evidence that sanctions can play a positive role in pursuing a political solution to a security problem. However, the lack of political progress with North Korea raises questions about implementation based on compliance and cooperation, limits due to competing national interests, humanitarian concerns, and understanding North Korea and its strategy. Some scholars believe that imposing harsh sanctions on North Korea will push it to race towards the production of a nuclear-tipped ballistic missile. They accept the regime’s priority for self-preservation and propose creating security guarantees for North Korea while allowing for a degree of economic appeasement.⁴ On the other hand, mainstream media reports the heated rhetoric of certain world leaders, which serves to unnerve the general public and detract from uniting stakeholders around a common goal. Understanding this issue and the importance of cooperation based on the shared interest

2 U. Friedman, ‘Smart Sanctions: A Short History’, *Foreign Policy*, 23 April 2012, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2012/04/23/smart-sanctions-a-short-history/> [2017-08-17].

3 Ibid.

4 J. Delury, ‘Trump and North Korea’, *Foreign Affairs*, 13 February 2017, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2017-02-13/trump-and-north-korea> [2017-08-17].

of security and stability will serve to strengthen compliance and find the path to engagement through targeted pressure. Central Europe, along with other regional blocs, will play an important role in implementing sanctions as a means to create space for political engagement.

Stakeholder cooperation runs counter to North Korea's fundamental goal of using a manufactured crisis to seek concessions because it relies on playing the interests of different countries off each other. The Six Party Talks ended in 2009 when North Korea withdrew and opened a new uranium enrichment facility.⁵ The major advantage of negotiations in this format is that it facilitates cooperation or at least mutual understanding. Withdrawing was a logical step for North Korean policymakers, who realized that dialogue ran counter to the regime's goals.

The composition of the UNSC is the closest format to sustained multilateral discussions on North Korea seen today. In 2016, several UNSC resolutions were adopted, 2270 (March) and 2321 (November), which represent significant achievements in terms of negotiation and cooperation aimed at achieving a common goal. Furthermore, the adoption of UNSC Resolution 2371 in August 2017, underlines the UNSC's continued commitment to addressing this issue. Gathering to discuss these matters in the Council, in Committee, and at the expert level on a regular basis is key for building understanding and finding avenues for cooperation. It is not enough for this to happen exclusively in New York since policymakers are based in capitals and removed from everyday diplomatic interactions that facilitate mutual understanding. If sanctions are to achieve the desired result, then governments should increase interaction and cooperation at all levels. Only a multilateral effort will have the weight to disrupt North Korea's strategy and mitigate the threat of crisis associated with its actions.

5 J. Bajoria, B. Xu, 'The Six Party Talks on North Korea's Nuclear Program', *Council on Foreign Relations*, 30 September 2013, <http://www.cfr.org/proliferation/six-party-talks-north-koreas-nuclear-program/p13593> [2016-07-28].

2. The North Korea Sanctions Regime

The North Korean sanctions regime has become one of the most robust and technically complicated multilateral sanctions regimes of all time. The UNSC has passed seven resolutions establishing and expanding the sanctions regime on North Korea. UNSC Resolution 1718 was adopted in 2006 in response to North Korea's first nuclear test. Since then, the UNSC has responded to nuclear tests in May 2009, February 2013, January 2016, and September 2016. It also adopted a resolution in response to ballistic missile tests in December 2012 and July 2017. The expansive and technical nature of the North Korea sanctions regime is largely due to the country's unique status as an isolated state experienced at using hidden networks and deception to accomplish its goals. The sanctions resolutions adopted in response to North Korea's most recent nuclear and ballistic missile tests indicate a new willingness by the international community to take a concerted response to North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

UNSC Resolution 2270 was adopted unanimously on March 2, 2016, after the US-China draft resolution was brought to the full membership of the UNSC. Robust provisions in Resolution 2270 mandated cargo inspections and cut off the sale of small arms and military-related material to and from North Korea. Strict measures were also put in place to prevent financial transactions that could support illicit nuclear and ballistic missile programs. Sectoral bans were placed on coal, iron and iron ore with exceptions for transfer through the port of Rajin and transactions determined to be exclusively for livelihood purposes. Four annexes were also included to designate individuals, companies, ships owned or operated by Ocean Maritime Management (OMM), and luxury goods. This resolution is important because it marks a significant shift from incremental strengthening of sanctions to a robust regime agreed upon by the US and China.

The negotiation and adoption of UNSC Resolution 2321 was a relatively quiet affair compared to that of Resolution 2270. The new resolution continued to expand the sanctions regime and strengthened provisions from previous resolutions. To address the ongoing coal revenues used to advance North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs, the "livelihood purposes" exception was changed to an annual cap. The resolution also added to the list of sectoral bans, expanded the list of individuals and entities designated for asset freezes, tightened

financial and diplomatic restrictions, expanded the list of prohibited dual-use items for transfer to North Korea, and extended limits for scientific and technical cooperation to North Korea. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon stated that this was the “toughest and most comprehensive sanctions regime ever imposed by the Council.”⁶ All 15 members of the UNSC delivered statements following the adoption of the resolution to express solidarity in their efforts to implement sanctions, the need for North Korea to change its behavior, and the Council’s preparedness to engage in negotiations with North Korea.⁷

Most recently, the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 2371 on August 5, 2017, in response to two ballistic missile tests that took place the previous month. Most notably, Resolution 2371 places a total ban on the export of coal, iron, iron ore, lead, lead ore and seafood from North Korea.⁸ It also places additional restrictions on North Korean access to the global financial system and the use of North Korean laborers abroad. The total bans on industries that support significant portions of the North Korean economy underline the commitment of primary stakeholders to rally around the threat that North Korea poses. Resolution 2371 also allocates additional resources to the Panel of Experts and takes steps to strengthen enforcement by requesting that Interpol publish Special Notices on North Koreans designated for travel bans. Such developments further emphasize the commitment to monitoring and enforcing sanctions.

China is correctly understood to play a prominent role in applying economic and political pressure on North Korea. The neighboring countries have a shared history and the survival of North Korea is in the interest of China, which sees it as a strategic buffer. In the past, China has been reluctant to permit strong sanctions measures against North Korea via the UNSC. It has traditionally favored incremental increases with fewer destabilizing effects. Chinese partnership and support for Resolutions 2270, 2321 and 2371 mark a departure from this.

6 UN Press, ‘Security Council Strengthens Sanctions on Democratic Republic of Korea, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2321 (2016)’; 30 November 2016, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sc12603.doc.htm> [2017-02-06].

7 Ibid.

8 US Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, ‘Resolution 2371 (2017) Strengthening Sanctions on North Korea’, *Fact Sheet*, 5 August 2017, <https://usun.state.gov/remarks/7924> [2017-08-17].

Despite taking some recent steps toward a harder line on North Korea, China continues to stress the need for negotiations. Wang Yi, China's foreign minister, recently stated that "sanctions are not the end and the issue should be returned to the channel of negotiation-based resolution."⁹ The combination of actions and words from Beijing highlight that China is attempting to strike a balance regarding North Korea. It must protect its interests regarding stability and even its preference for maintaining the status quo while also recognizing the problems that North Korea causes for it and the need to respond.

Relations between the two countries have soured in recent years. Xi Jinping and Kim Jong-un have never met, which is significant considering the two countries' closely linked history. Chinese President Xi has sent standard congratulatory messages for political events in North Korea and has dispatched high-level diplomats following a nuclear or missile test or before one is anticipated to take place.¹⁰ China recently suspended coal imports from North Korea after the assassination of Kim Jong-un's half-brother, Kim Jong-nam.¹¹ It is unclear whether the suspension was linked to that event, but the move highlights China's growing frustration towards North Korea. Public sentiment towards North Korea has also soured, especially surrounding the deployment of the THAAD missile-defense system in South Korea. Some in China have begun referring to Kim Jong-un as "Fatty Kim the Third" and have blamed his actions for the system's deployment.¹²

Despite North Korean claims of self-reliance, it depends on China for 70 percent of its food and 80 percent of its fuel.¹³ However, North

- 9 MFA of the People's Republic of China, 'Wang Yi Gives Exclusive Interview to Reuters on Syrian Issue and Korean Peninsula Nuclear Issue', 13 February 2016, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjwb_663304/zjzg_663340/yzs_663350/gjlb_663354/2701_663406/2703_663410/t1340523.shtml [2017-03-30].
- 10 S. Choe, 'North Korea Launches Rocket Seen as Cover for a Missile Test', *The New York Times*, 6 February 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/07/world/asia/north-korea-moves-up-rocket-launching-plan.html> [2017-06-17].
- 11 S. Choe, 'China Suspends All Coal Imports From North Korea', *The New York Times*, 18 February 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/18/world/asia/north-korea-china-coal-imports-suspended.html> [2017-08-17].
- 12 J. Petrushka, 'The View from Jingshan: China Reacts to Kim Jong Nam Death, Missile Test', *NK PRO*, 2 March 2017, <https://www.nknews.org/pro/the-view-from-jingshan-china-reacts-to-kim-jong-nam-death-missile-test/> [2017-03-30].
- 13 D. Halpin, 'North Korea and China: Don't Bite the Hand That Feeds You', *NK News*, 27 February 2017, <https://www.nknews.org/2017/02/north-korea-and-china-dont-bite-the-hand-that-feeds-you/> [2017-08-17].

Korea and China hardly maintain the “lips and teeth” relationship that has been referred to in the past.¹⁴ China will have to reconcile its traditional stance with the obvious need for proactive, if politically challenging, solutions to address North Korea’s actions. North Korea could also turn to Russia if relations with China worsen. Like China, Russia also sees stability on the Korean peninsula and the maintenance of the regime in at least the short to medium term as ideal. However, Russia has been quick to condemn North Korean provocations and has supported stronger sanctions on it at the UNSC.¹⁵ Thus, the North Korean actions pose challenges to any strategic alliance it seeks to build, even with traditional partners like China and Russia. Moreover, the issue of enforcing multilateral sanctions on North Korea goes far beyond primary stakeholders since it has established a vast network of channels for illicit trade as a means to acquire sanctioned goods.

3. Central Europe and the North Korea Sanctions

Soviet Bloc countries and North Korea maintained congenial relations and the former were a source of economic aid to the latter throughout the Cold War. North Korea also sought to expand diplomatic activity in Central Europe, establishing relations with Switzerland and Austria in the 1970s.¹⁶ The “Agreed Framework” treaty was signed in 1994 as a result of the discovery that North Korea had established a nuclear weapons program. The treaty suspended North Korea’s nuclear program and permitted international monitoring in exchange for aid.¹⁷ North Korean diplomatic relations expanded again through the early 2000s, including the opening of an embassy in Germany and several other European countries. With this, Central Europe has consistently been present and played an important role in North Korean foreign relations. Kim Pyong Il, Kim Jong Il’s half-brother, even served

14 Ibid.

15 A. Rinna, ‘With China and North Korea Drifting Apart, Will Russia Step in?’, *NK News*, 20 February 2017, <https://www.nknews.org/2017/02/with-china-and-north-korea-drifting-apart-will-russia-step-in/> [2017-08-17].

16 D. Werz, J. Oh, K. Insung, ‘DPRK Diplomatic Relations’, *The National Committee on North Korea*, August 2016.

17 A. Lankov, *The Real North Korea: Life and Politics in the Failed Stalinist Utopia*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.

as the North Korean ambassador to Poland from 1998 to 2015.¹⁸ Kim Pyong Il has since moved on to become the North Korean ambassador to the Czech Republic.¹⁹ Today, Poland, Germany and the Czech Republic have embassies in Pyongyang and serve as hosts to North Korean diplomatic missions.

With the understanding that there are ties between Central Europe and North Korea, a study of how North Korea uses such ties to achieve its strategic goals can be undertaken. In their 2017 report, the Panel of Experts recommended that member states exercise vigilance over North Korean diplomats because of their role in commercial activities related to trade in prohibited items.²⁰ Earlier this year, it was announced Pak Nam Yong would be taking the place of Ri Si Hong as the North Korean ambassador to Germany.²¹ Ri Si Hong was relieved of his duties earlier in 2016 but returned to Berlin after his replacement was rejected by the German government. This could signal increased attention being given to North Korean diplomatic personnel following several years of reporting by the Panel of Experts that North Korea uses its diplomatic personnel to take part in activities meant to evade sanctions and advance its nuclear and ballistic missile programs. North Korean diplomatic and trade personnel are present in Central Europe, so exercising vigilance over who they are and what they are doing will lead to stronger sanctions enforcement.

The use of North Korean laborers to raise hard currency for Pyongyang has become a popular topic in recent years. The 2017 final report of the Panel of Experts reported that employees of Rungrado, a company operated by the Workers' Party of Korea, has sent workers to

- 18 G. Sedia, 'The Strange History of North Korean-Polish Relations', *Krakow Post*, 17 July 2015, <http://www.krakowpost.com/9717/2015/07/the-strange-history-of-north-korean-polish-relations> [2017-08-17].
- 19 J. Grisafi, 'Kim Jong Un's Uncle Made Ambassador to Czech Republic', *NK News*, 4 February 2015, <https://www.nknews.org/2015/02/kim-jong-uns-uncle-made-ambassador-to-czech-republic/> [2017-08-17].
- 20 United Nations, 'Final Report of the Panel of Experts Submitted pursuant to Resolution 2276 (2016) 1718 Panel of Experts', *United Nations*, 27 February 2017.
- 21 H. Macdonald, 'Germany Expecting New North Korean Ambassador in Berlin', *NK News*, 25 January 2017, <https://www.nknews.org/2017/01/germany-expecting-new-north-korean-ambassador-in-berlin/> [2017-08-17].

Poland to work on construction projects and in naval yards.²² This does not violate UN sanctions, but Resolution 2321 expresses concern that North Korean nationals are sent abroad to earn hard currency used to fund the country's nuclear and ballistic missile programs. In 2015, there were about 800 North Korean laborers in Poland. It was estimated that 90 percent of their wages are turned over to the North Korean regime.²³ Poland is reported to have ceased issuing new visas to North Korean workers in 2016.²⁴ Central European countries and others that receive North Korean laborers should be conscious of their treatment and what the income they earn is used for. Not granting visas and expelling laborers would be a productive means to apply targeted pressure on the North Korean regime.

Warsaw also maintains relations with North Korea via a joint shipping venture – the Korean Polish Shipping Company Ltd. – which the US Department of Treasury added to The Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) list of designated entities in 2016.²⁵ North Korea's use of vessels to ship prohibited goods is an area in which investigators have found success. North Korea has systematically used flags of convenience, front companies, management companies, foreign nationals, and a number of other means to move goods around the world. A report by the ASAN Institute (2016) identified 160 such companies in Hong Kong alone. Hong Kong requires companies to have at least one documented director, shareholder, and secretary, and must submit annual financial statements to the government. Such regulations helped generate baseline data points to investigate North Korean shipping networks.²⁶ Studying the information collected, the institute found points of convergence between different variables. The study found that six secretary firms represented 82 of the companies studied. This study

22 United Nations, 'Final Report of the Panel of Experts Submitted pursuant to Resolution 2276 (2016) 1718 Panel of Experts', *United Nations*, 27 February 2017.

23 J. Song, 'N. Korean Workers in Poland, Mongolia Face "rights Violations": Panel', *NK News*, 24 December 2015, <https://www.nknews.org/2015/12/n-korean-workers-in-poland-mongolia-face-human-rights-violations-panel/> [2017-08-17].

24 E. Batha, 'North Korea Sends "State-Sponsored Slaves" to Europe', *Reuters*, 6 July 2016, <http://www.reuters.com/article/northkorea-eu-slavery-idUSL8N19N43L> [2017-08-17].

25 US Treasury, 'North Korea Designations', 16 March 2016, <https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/OFAC-Enforcement/Pages/20160316.aspx> [2017-07-10].

26 J. Woo, M. Go, 'In China's Shadow, Exposing North Korean Overseas Networks', *Center for Advanced Defense Studies, Asan Institute for Policy Studies*, August 2016.

is particularly relevant because Hong Kong is a global shipping and financial hub and the information collected can help further investigations. Conducting similar investigations in Central Europe could generate similar results.

Information-sharing and working within the UN system will be key aspects of making progress on sanctions implementation. The Czech Republic has appeared in the final report of the Panel of Experts several times in recent years regarding its efforts to work with the 1718 Committee. In 2013, the Czech Republic notified the committee of an additional alias – Millim Technology Company – for the designated entity Korea Ryonha Machinery Joint Venture Corporation.²⁷ North Korea is known to use aliases for companies and individuals to avoid sanctions, so working within the UN framework to update designation lists is a productive way to address this issue.

In recent developments, several Central European countries have submitted sanctions implementation reports to the UNSC, as directed following the adoption of Resolution 2321. Poland has submitted a report that has been published on the 1718 Committee portal, while Czech Republic, Hungary and Switzerland have all submitted reports that are being processed. Information-sharing, especially through UN mechanisms, is key to building a concise picture of North Korea's vast trade network established to evade sanctions. Moreover, the reports include information about steps taken to ensure sanctions implementation. This information is valuable to member states who are adapting their domestic laws and working to address this issue. Central European countries should continue to be a role model in this regard as they work to ensure greater sanctions compliance.

Conclusions

The UN is the primary organization that has taken on the task of addressing the security threat posed by North Korea. It is a forum for diplomacy since the sanctions regime must be negotiated, agreed upon and maintained by its member states. Furthermore, the UN sys-

27 United Nations, 'Final Report of the Panel of Experts Submitted pursuant to Resolution 2141 (2014) 1718 Panel of Experts', *United Nations*, 23 February 2015.

tem acts as an agent to monitor sanctions implementation and provide assistance. Its functioning relies on the work of member states in their national and regional capacity to build support for and implement sanctions. Multilateral sanctions are transnational in nature and Central European countries represent an important group in accomplishing the shared goal of peace and security with regard to the threat posed by North Korea.

Sanctions, if implemented correctly, would create conditions in which North Korea could engage in constructive negotiations. Observers have rightly noted that there are few tools with which to respond to North Korea. Sanctions are the tool agreed by the UNSC and are therefore the topic that demands the most consideration. A unilateral response would dismiss the interests of stakeholders and have destabilizing outcomes. History provides evidence that multilateral sanctions can play a constructive role in pursuing a desirable political outcome.

Resumption of the Six Party Talks or similar negotiations is the goal of the sanctions. In this format, stakeholders can find solutions built on collective interests and take actions that will disrupt North Korea's ability to use a manufactured crisis to gain concessions. Only a multilateral effort will have the weight to disrupt North Korea's strategy and avoid crisis instigated by provocation. An analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of sanctions implementation provides the space to fill gaps so that sanctions can effectively impact the intended target.

Central European countries will play an increasingly important role in this matter. Finding and analyzing gaps in sanctions implementation, conducting focused investigations, and utilizing the UN system to share information and increase cooperation are keys to making progress. Germany's efforts to scrutinize incoming diplomatic personnel, Poland's efforts to cut back on North Korean laborers, and the Czech Republic's vigilance in communicating with the sanctions committee are steps in the right direction. As Central Europe has a history of diplomatic and trade relations with North Korea, they should continue to work with each other and through the UN to focus on sanctions implementation. When Poland takes a seat on the UNSC, this will be an exciting time for the region to take part in the front-line action addressing the security threat North Korea poses.

There is a saying in Korea: "wealth cannot last longer than three generations" ("부자는 삼대를 못간다"). Wealth earned through hard

work does not last forever. Kim Jong Un is the third generation of the Kim dynasty and inherited his position from his father. He is acting within the framework of manufactured crises, negotiation, foreign aid, and restoration of the status quo, though the level of escalation seen in the past year far surpasses any actions taken by his predecessor, Kim Jong Il.²⁸ UNSC Resolutions 2270, 2321 and 2371 highlight the new-found political will to respond to such actions. Kim Jong Un lacks the wisdom to properly balance provocation and appeasement. It would be wrong to harbor alarmist views, but now is the time to realize the common interests between the stakeholders and take unified action. Sanctions are the answer, and if implemented correctly can create space for constructive political engagement with North Korea. Central Europe will be an important region as the international community attempts to engage with and make progress on North Korea.

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28 A. Lankov, op. cit.

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