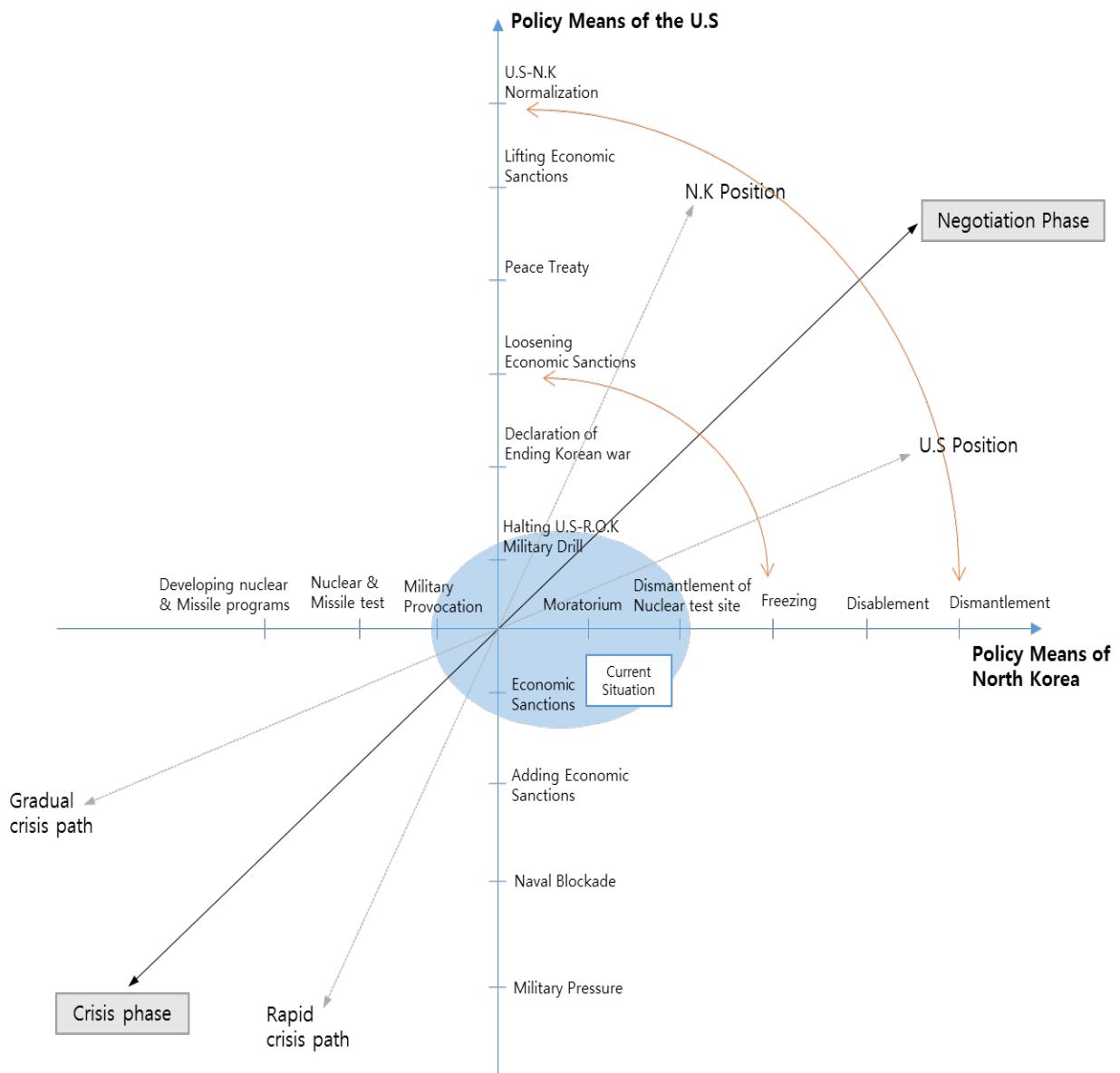


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## Possible Scenarios of North Korea's Nuclear Negotiation and Policy Recommendations

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### 1. Policy Means of the U.S. and DPRK and Scenarios of Nuclear Negotiation



## 2. Assessment of Hanoi Summit Meeting and Prospects

The second North Korea-United States Summit (Feb. 27-28, 2019, Hanoi) did not generate an agreement. At the summit meeting, the two leaders showed disagreement on the approach and scope of denuclearization and the lifting of sanctions.

First, regarding the approach to denuclearization, there was a gap between the United States' big deal (package deal) and North Korea's small deal (gradual step-by-step implementation). The Trump administration insisted on a package deal at the beginning of the 2018 negotiations, but it appeared to be accepting North Korea's idea of a gradual solution and considering its small deal as an option after the first North Korea-United States Summit. Concerns had been raised inside and outside of the U.S. government about the possibility of Trump accepting North Korea's small deal (easing sanctions on condition that North Korea freeze its nuclear and ICBM programs and giving up the ultimate goal of denuclearization). However, President Trump proposed a package deal (big deal) at the second Summit. For its part, the United States considered that a gradual solution would make it difficult to respond to North Korea's salami tactics. The United States also worried that relieving sanctions gradually could ultimately suggest its acknowledgement of North Korea as a nuclear power and that once the sanctions are eased, it would be hard to revert. On the other hand, North Korea proposed a gradual solution, saying that it would implement denuclearization step by step according to how North Korea-U.S. relations improve and that dismantling the Yongbyon nuclear facility would be the first step.

Second, North Korea and the United States disagreed on the target and scope of denuclearization. The United States included all weapons of mass destruction, nuclear materials and intercontinental ballistic missiles as the target of denuclearization, while North Korea limited the first target of denuclearization to the dismantlement of the Yongbyon nuclear site.

Third, North Korea and the United States failed to narrow differences on the easing of sanctions. The United States maintained its position that sanctions would stay in place until the completion of denuclearization, while North Korea strongly requested the lifting of the five UN sanctions imposed since 2016 as compensation for the decommissioning of the Yongbyon nuclear facility. North Korea argued that the five sanctions covered its general economy and that they were just part of all sanctions on it, while the United States considered that those sanctions were essentially the central part and everything in terms of effect.

The second North Korea-United States Summit failed to reach an agreement but has positive implications for future negotiations. The positions of North Korea and the United States and what is at issue have become clear, providing criteria for future negotiations. Furthermore, there has been progress at the working level between North

Korea and the United States with the achievement of a temporary agreement on a small deal. The temporary working-level agreement reportedly makes the four major agreements in the Singapore Declaration more concrete, covering an end-of-war declaration, the installation of a liaison office and the return of the remains of U.S. soldiers. However, it has been reported that the most critical issues, such as the scope of denuclearization and sanctions relief, are not included in the working-level agreement. Nevertheless, President Trump and Chairman Kim Jong-un recognized the importance of dialogue and showed respect for each other after the breakdown of the second Summit, leaving the door open for negotiations.

### 3. Prospect

After the Hanoi Summit, the United States has been implementing a two-pronged policy of managing the situation and putting pressure on North Korea. By and large, positive views have been expressed inside and outside of Washington about the failure of the Hanoi Summit. The United States has suspended or reduced Korea-U.S. joint military exercises. President Trump downplayed the significance of North Korea's launch of two short-range missiles in early May, reaffirming his commitment to keeping the momentum of dialogue. At the same time, the United States has strengthened its sanctions on North Korea by seizing a North Korean ship.

Meanwhile, North Korea has also been engaging in dual tactics of handling the situation and raising pressure since the Hanoi Summit. For some time after the summit meeting, it refrained from criticizing the United States and did not report the breakdown of the negotiations. However, it has been cautiously exploring a new route. Kim Jong-un engaged in talks with President Putin in an attempt to secure deterrent force against the United States. Moreover, North Korea fired two missiles (on May 4 and 9) to increase its leverage over the United States.

Three scenarios can be considered in the future.

The first scenario is the resumption of the dialogue. North Korea and the United States may resume negotiations, first at the working-level and high-level, and then have a third summit to reach a compromise.

The second scenario is the continuation of an impasse. North Korea and the United States may try to increase their bargaining power by criticizing one another and trying to secure means of pressure, with continued failure to achieve a breakthrough. President Trump has to prepare for the 2020 presidential election and is likely to focus on issues related to Iran and Venezuela while trying to maintain the status quo for the North Korean nuclear issue. In the meantime, North Korea may refuse to give in, preparing a long-term plan for returning to negotiations after the end of the U.S. presidential election.

The third scenario is the establishment of a new framework after heightened tensions. North Korea may raise tensions through low-level provocations, including missile tests, and the United States may respond by strengthening sanctions on North Korea and increasing joint military drills with South Korea. This may lead to a critical situation, after which the establishment of a new framework for negotiations is likely.

On the whole, the North Korea-United States talks appear to be at a period of cessation for next round of negotiations or that of transition for a new framework. North Korea is likely to use low-level provocations as a way to raise the need for the resumption of dialogue and attempt to build a new framework. Meanwhile, President Trump is expected to devote all his efforts to the presidential election while keeping the North Korean nuclear issue under control. He would have little room for maneuver if there is no chance of a big deal.

#### 4. Policy Recommendations

##### (1) Establishment of a Comprehensive Nuclear Roadmap

To maintain the momentum for a denuclearization and peace process, South Korea should take the lead and come up with a roadmap for “a comprehensive agreement and gradual implementation”, while working on narrowing differences between North Korea and the United States to facilitate the resumption of negotiations between the two parties. A roadmap for “a comprehensive agreement and gradual implementation” should propose a package deal to achieve an agreement on comprehensive issues but a step-by-step approach to implementing them. It should also specify the definition and scope of the ultimate goal of denuclearization as well as its interim stage and timeline. Furthermore, the roadmap should set out early harvest programs (the combination of early steps to implement denuclearization and their corresponding measures), which should be swiftly carried out step by step. The roadmap should specify the corresponding measures to denuclearization, such as improved relations between Washington and Pyongyang, transition to a peace regime and eased sanctions. In addition, it should contain a snap back provision to restore sanctions if North Korea fails to implement the agreement.

##### (2) Formation of a Multiple Cooperation Mechanism

South Korea should utilize a multiple cooperation mechanism to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

First, it should engage in talks with the United States to coordinate the different stances on the denuclearization roadmap. This should be done through various diplomatic channels between Washington and Seoul including the Korea-U.S. summit scheduled in late June.

Second, it should have a dialogue with North Korea to explain the need for denuclearization and the resumption of North Korea-U.S. negotiations. To this end, a South-North dialogue channel should be put into operation and efforts should be made for another inter-Korean summit.

Third, it should try to gain support from China and Russia. China holds the key to the denuclearization of North Korea, and support from Russia is also important.

Fourth, as Prime Minister Abe has suggested having an unconditional North Korea-Japan summit, close consultation between Tokyo and Seoul is necessary in the process of denuclearization. And peace on the Korean peninsula.