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North Korea's Nuclear Belligerence: The Extreme Application of the Realist Theory

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Abstract:

The possession of nuclear weapon capability by the United States of America in 1945 set other world powers on the race to add the lethal weapon to their arsenals. Between 1945 and 1964, all the five emerging champions of the WWII possessed nuclear capability and became known as Nuclear Weapon States (NWS). A bid to curb nuclear proliferation and avert the concomitant ominous risk which it might portend to world security led to the establishment of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Having opted out of the NPT, North Korea embarked on a brazen development and testing of nuclear weapons in defiance of all nuclear weapon regulatory bodies. While examining the underlining factors for North Korea's defiance, this research discovered that North Korea pursuit of nuclear weapons is absolutely in conformity with the realist proposition. However, since the belligerent attitude has made the country a pariah state and produced adverse effects on the nation's economic growth and the citizens welfare, the research suggests that North Korea should play down on 'hard power' which subjects it to international odium and explore the option of 'soft power' which states use to their own advantage. Descriptive research design method was used

Keywords: *Belligerence, nuclear weapon, power, proliferation, realist, security*

1. Introduction

The idea of balance of power in the European state system made nations to observe certain rules that limited war aims. The constraints of the available means of warfare also curtailed the ambitions of adventurous nations (Waltz, 1981). But the transition from the European state system to a global international system came with the revolution and transformation in the art of warfare. The advancement in economic and technological prowess brought about the development of lethal military weaponry. The United States of America was the first country to develop and use atomic bomb on 16th July 1945. The nuclear monopoly which the U.S enjoyed was short-lived as the Soviet Union successfully tested its own atomic device on 29th August, 1949. The achievements of the USA and the Soviet Union marked the commencement of nuclear race among the powerful nations of the world. It became imperative for other permanent members of the United Nations Security Council to also follow suit. Hence, the United Kingdom tested its first nuclear weapon on 3rd October, 1952, France did the same on 13th February, 1960 and China on 16th October, 1964. These five emerging champions of the Second World War became the only countries which have the right to develop nuclear weapons, hence, the reference to them as Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) (Magstadt, 2009).

However, the fear that loose proliferation of nuclear weapons may increase the possibility of targeting civilians with nuclear weapons, infringe upon the national sovereignty of states, de-stabilize international or regional relations, and make the entire globe unsafe due to likelihood of nuclear war, brought about the establishment of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968 (Waxman, 2017). The NPT is an agreement between the five nuclear weapon states and other states which are interested in nuclear technology. It stipulates that only the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council have the right to nuclear bombs and nuclear technology (Winnefeld & Morell 2017)

The main objectives of the treaty are: -

- To stop the further spread of nuclear weapons,
- To provide security for non-nuclear weapon states which have surrendered nuclear option,
- To promote international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and
- To pursue negotiations in good faith towards nuclear disarmament leading to the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. (World Nuclear Association, 2017)

Since the treaty came into force, over 180 states have signed it. The frontline states that have not signed it are Israel, India and Pakistan. North Korea signed it but opted out of the agreement in 2003 to pursue a gargantuan quest for nuclear

weapon. North Korea has not only acquired sophisticated nuclear arsenal, it has also repeatedly violated the international norms against nuclear testing by carrying out nuclear tests in 2006, 2009, 2013, twice in 2016 and in 2017 (Winnefeld and Morell, 2017).

The United Nations Security Council has passed several resolutions to condemn North Korea nuclear activities and these have led to series of harsh sanctions slammed on the military and economy of North Korea. Neither the untold hardship imposed on the citizens of the country by the sanctions nor the several diplomatic moves made by the United States and other countries has deterred North Korea from pursuing nuclear weapon programme, anchoring it on its national security and the security of the Korean Peninsula. Hence no state resources have been spared in pursuing this objective. As far as the leadership of the country is concerned, the military/ national security of North Korea takes priority over any other consideration and it could not be left at the mercy of any other states.

The actions of the Korean leaders can be understood from the perspective of political realism which states that nations should act on the basis of interest rather than ideals. According to the theory, survival is the basic goal of national policy and the best way to ensure survival is to enhance the nations' power. Morgenthau, one of the earliest proponents of realism, opined that "Whatever the ultimate aim of a nation might be, the immediate aim is always power. It is in the best interest of every nation to seek power first and pursue other objectives later. These other objectives are worth being pursued only if they enhance national power, prestige and the like" (Magstadt, 2009). The pursuit of this idea by North Korea has led to the ostracism of the nation which consigned it into the limbo of pariah status. This research examines the belligerence of North Korea and the extent to which 'Prudence' that is, weighing the consequences of political action, is taken into consideration in its quest for power.

2. Realist Theory

Realism as a school of thought explains international relations in terms of power. The theory posits that the nature of the international system reflects emphasis on power because, power is the currency of international politics. In other words, the realists opine that international politics is nothing but power politics (Kegley and Blanton, 2011). The theory identifies the state as the most important actor on the world stage. It views the world of sovereign states as being anarchic, where there is no central or overarching government or an ultimate arbiter. Since the state is not answerable to any higher political authority and since there is no night watchman who can guarantee that one state would not attack another or rescue states if they are threatened by other countries, any state that wants to survive has little choice other than to suspect the worst about the intentions of other states and to compete for power with them. This, according to the realists, is the tragedy of great power politics. Given this precarious situation, the reasonable and realistic thing for any state to do is to equip itself by acquiring enough power to protect itself, deter any belligerence and advance its interest so as to secure its survival.

The theory of realism is based on the principle of dominance. It suggests that states are not to entrust their security and interests to any international organization or international law for that matter. Rather, states should take matters into their own hands because no external body can better preserve their national integrity, interests and security. Nevertheless, the realist theory does not foreclose the possibility of states seeking alliance with the powerful nations in addition to arming themselves, they only opine that states should seek alliance in accordance with their selfish interests and not totally trusting the intentions of other states they align themselves with.

Furthermore, the Realists view political power as distinct from, and predominant over morality, ideology and other social and economic aspects of life. While it is expedient for states to pursue other goals such as economic prosperity, welfarism and human rights protection, the pursuit must be subsumed under the quest for survival because if a state does not survive, it cannot pursue or achieve these other essential goals. So, states must compete among themselves either to gain power at the expense of others or at least to make sure they do not lose power (Kegley and Blanton, 2011). The realists strengthened their position by alluding to the fact that the great powers, which serve as the main actors in the realists' purview, fear one another. There is little trust among them. They worry because none of them can predict the intentions of other states. Their greatest fear is that another state might have the capability as well as the motive to attack them. And that is why they pay careful attention to how much economic and military power they have in relative to each other. Little wonder the realists often argue that international politics is by nature strife-driven.

The root of realism can be traced to the words of Niccolo Machiavelli who urged the princes to do everything expedient and possible for them to stay in power, including the manipulation of the public and the military alliances (Nederman, 2009). Hans Morgenthau too argued that the world politics is governed by objective universal laws based on national interest defined in terms of power.

The realist theory traditionally holds a central position in the study of the wide range of interactions that exist in the international system and that is why some scholars see it as the main tool of understanding international relations. Nevertheless, the theory does not have any explanation to the series of socio-political and economic cooperation that exist in the contemporary international relations and the fact that soft power rather than the hard power which it advocates, is increasingly being seen as an effective means through which a state can achieve certain objectives.

3. North Korea's Nuclear Weapon Programme

The origin of the North Korea's nuclear weapon programme dated back to the Cold War era when Kim Il Sung (who ruled Korea from 1948-1994) made a failed attempt to unite the two Korean states. The belief that the re-unification effort on communist terms was frustrated by the United States of America, whose intervention reversed their initial success in the war, made Sung to be determined to protect his state from the U.S. His decision was buoyed by the support he received from the allied Soviet Union leader, Stalin (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2009).

During the Korean War, Stalin allegedly told the North Korean leader that "If you are short of arms, we will give them to you to strike the southerners in the teeth"

In the 1950s, Kim Il Sung began the process of amassing an arsenal that would rival what the U.S possessed and be potent enough to deter a dreaded U.S. attack. As the armistice commenced, the Soviet Union lent its support in the research that would help North Korea realize its objective of possessing nuclear capability (Waxman, 2017). One may say therefore that the North Korea's experience during the war was a harbinger to its nuclear weapon programme. During the period between 1960s and early 1980s, not much was known of the North Korea Nuclear weapon programme until late 1980s and early 1990s.

In October, 2006, North Korea carried out its first nuclear test and reported it as being successful. Some countries admitted this claim but agreed that the test produced much smaller result than the first successful tests of other powers (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2010). On May 25 2009, North Korea conducted a second higher yield test. Kim Jong-un who assumed the leadership of the country in April 2012 made the nuclear weapon programme a cardinal project of his administration. This was in defiance of the agreement reached with the country earlier in 2012 to halt its nuclear programme. During his first public speech on 15th, April, 2012, Jong -un made it abundantly clear that military expediency would take priority over any other sector in North Korea. He stated that his nation would no longer be susceptible to threats from any country. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) aptly captured his statement thus, "Superiority in military technology would no longer be monopolized by imperialists...We have to make every effort to reinforce the people's armed forces (BBC Profile, 2012). North Korea's nuclear programmes has experienced tremendous development under his rule. In December 2012, the country launched a long-range rocket. Similarly, a third underground nuclear test was conducted in February 12, 2013. The actions of North Korea in defiance of the NPT attracted a regime of economic and military sanctions against the country from the U.N. Security Council and some other countries. But the various sanctions did not prevent the country from carrying out another nuclear test. On 5th January 2016, North Korea conducted its fourth test which was hydrogen bomb. Another underground nuclear test was also conducted in September 2016. That was followed by another missile launch in February, 2017. The defiant and audacious posture of North Korea further infuriated a number of countries as they mounted more pressure on the nation to demand for denuclearization. On February 13, 2017, the 15 members of the UNSC convened a meeting in response to Japan, South Korea and US's demand for an urgent attention to North Korea's belligerence (Ryall, 2017). The United Nations Security Council publicly expressed its disapproval of North Korea's disregard for the United Nation's resolutions and therefore called on its members to double their effort to intensify sanctions against North Korea.

China has been variously accused of not performing its expected role of influencing the military ambition of its North Korea neighbor. The U.S. officials believed that it was the ally which North Korea found in China that made it to be perpetually defiant of the UN Security Council. In response to this, a representative of Chinese Foreign Ministry stated in July 2017 that "China opposes North Korea's violations of UN Security Council resolutions...at the same time, (China) hopes that all parties concerned will exercise caution and avoid intensifying tensions (Connor and Henderson, 2017).

On September 3rd 2017, North Korea detonated another nuclear bomb which caused a magnitude of 6.1 tremor. In reacting to this, the United States threatened that it may be compelled to resort to military options if new sanctions fail to deter North Korea from further testing its nuclear weapons (Borger, 2017).

On June 12 2018, Donald Trump of the U.S and Kim Jong un of North Korea came together on a round table in a historic meeting held in Singapore to sign an agreement that would lead to gradual denuclearization of North Korea. However, given the antecedent of North Korea with regard to flagrant disregard of terms of agreement only time will tell whether Pyongyang would abide by the new pact.

4. Reasons adduced to North Korea's Nuclear Weapon's Drive

Scholars have adduced some reasons to the quest of North Korea to possess nuclear weapons at all costs. First, the Soviet Union under which North Korea felt secured initially disintegrated into several states. Second, the economic ascendancy of South Korea, third, the demographic superiority of South Korea and fourth, the post-Cold War dominance of the U.S. military in the Korea Peninsula. The combination of all these imposed an aura of insecurity on North Korea. Hence, the leaders of North Korea felt that something must be done urgently in order to ensure the survival of their country. The popular belief in North Korea was that the U.S would not hesitate to use its dominance in the Korea Peninsula to overthrow any government in the region that was not in its good books. This, to North Korea was an ominous signal. It spurred the country into actions that would make it to entrench its relevance in power equation in the Korean peninsula and also give it a bargaining strength in world politics (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2010).

Burdened by dramatic level of poverty, with a starving population, lack of natural resources, infrastructure deficit, inadequate capital for investments, isolation from international trade and limited military capability, North Korea could only rely on the nuclear issue to enhance its national security level and gain international attention. The strategy has proved successful to some extent. Apart from the fact that nuclear issue has enabled the country to survive and maintain its regime, it has also launched the country into a system of multilateral negotiations which may be a tool for reduction or cancellation of sanction regime and getting international aid. So by and large the nuclear issue has been an instrument of foreign policy for North Korea. This made Abrahamian to say that North Korea's foreign policy is premised on survival and respect.

While sharing his view on North Korea's defiance on nuclear technology advancement, Daniel Pinkston stated that "They want to be recognized as a peer nuclear power and to have the level of prestige and respect that they believe is commensurate with that. They also want the sanctions regime to be lifted (Ryall, 2017). The professor of international

relations said further that North Korea wants to rewrite the current security architecture, including Washington's alliance in the region, and eventually to remove the US military presence from North-East Asia

5. Explaining North Korea's Actions in the Context of Realist Theory

As earlier stated, the several attempts made by some world powers and the UN Security Council (either persuasion or coercion) to beat North Korea back to line have not yielded the targeted result. Rather than embrace denuclearization, the country has remained adamant and undeterred. The belligerent actions of the nation can be understood from the perspective of the realist theory. Realism posits that states coexist in a condition of anarchy; therefore, self-help is the principle of action in an anarchic order. The most important way by which states could help themselves is by providing for their own security. (Waltz, 1981) The leadership of North Korea has long decided to take matters into their own hands with regard to the preservation of their country's territorial and national integrity. The nation is not looking up to any international organization to help preserve its interests. The realists have established the fact that the duty of every sovereign state is to survive and only the fittest can indeed survive. They state further that survival does not happen through mere wishful thinking. Rather, nations should plot out their own survival. The need to survive coupled with the need to achieve some set objectives and protect certain interests may drive even well-meaning states to practice self-help. This explains the reason why offensive realists argue that states should always look for opportunities to gain more power with the ultimate goal of achieving hegemony, because that is the best way to guarantee survival.

The leadership of North Korea see this objective as a worthy course to pursue. Thus, all their efforts have been dedicated to beefing up the military strength of the country rather than trusting in any world power which may prove untrustworthy and disappoint them. While explaining the reason for the failure of the successive administrations in the U.S., from Clinton to Bush to Obama and then to Trump, to curb North Korea's military goals, Winnefield and Morell observe that "A succession of paranoid and isolated regimes in the North, incorrectly believing the U.S. intends to overthrow them, have seen deliverable nuclear weapons as their principal deterrent to such action. They have decided that bearing the cost of possessing such weapons is well worth their efficacy in ensuring regime survival" (Winnefield and Morell, 2017).

North Korea has always felt threatened by the United States of America since the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. Therefore, if North Korea leaders are convinced that the only way they can guarantee their nation's survival and deter the threat posed by the perceived enemy of the state is by increasing their military strength through the acquisition of nuclear weapon, they may be acting in the best interest of the nation.

Some scholars observe that the principle of the strong nations desiring to dominate the weak is one of the major reasons North Korea has remained undeterred by the reactions of the big powers. Big powers like Britain, United States of America, France, China and Russia who all possess nuclear capability are only trying to make sure that the rich (strong nations) stay rich and the poor (weak states) stay poor because of their selfish nature. Therefore, all the complaints coming from any of these technologically advanced countries seem to North Korea as mere means to protect their own selfish interests. So, rather than being deterred by their reactions, North Korea continued to see the need to accelerate its nuclear technology so as to make its army and by extension, its country, a force to reckon with. This, according to the realists is the way the weak states can avoid being drowned by the strong states.

As earlier mentioned, issues such as agriculture, quality of education and tangible economic reforms have not received much attention from the 'military-obsessed' North Korean leader. His actions imply that military advancement trump over any other consideration in the state and it should be pursued with all the strength of the state so as to deter potential threats. This aligns with the realist view which states that while it is expedient for states to pursue other goals such as economic prosperity, welfarism and human rights protection, the pursuit must be subsumed under the quest for survival because if a state finds it difficult to survive, it will certainly find it uneasy to pursue or achieve these other essential goals.

Furthermore, the refusal of North Korea to desist from testing nuclear weapons especially close to the territories of other countries could also be explained from the realist point of view. The realist theory opine that ethical preferences are not relevant in the pursuance of state goals and objectives. A state's philosophical or ethical preferences are neither good nor bad. What matter is whether they serve the state's self-interest or not. The primary obligation of every state is to promote its national interest and it can employ any means to achieve this. What should be important to states is whether the end justifies the means adopted to achieve it. The implication of this is that if testing of missiles is germane to the advancement of North Korea's nuclear strategy, which apparently is the state's core objective, the means employed in achieving the objective matter less. After all, North Korea, in the realist view, is not answerable to any higher actor as it possesses equal sovereignty with the complaining countries. Giving in to their demands at the detriment of advancing its nuclear technology would only have a weak reflection on the state.

Realist's scholars maintain that it makes good strategic sense for states to acquire as much power as possible and, if the circumstances are right, to pursue hegemony. Their contention is not that conquest or domination is good in itself, rather, their argument is that having overwhelming power is the best way to ensure one's own survival. All indications point to the fact that North Korea is acting true to this. Its actions show that it is willing to go to a great length to be recognized as the only legitimate *de facto* power in the Korean peninsula. Its inordinate quest to achieve hegemonic position cannot be mistaken when one consider show it undermine the interest of its neighboring states.

In addition, the quest of North Korea to possess nuclear capability may have been given a boost by the words of the former French President, Charles de Gaulle who said that "Without an independent nuclear capability, France could not command its own destiny". In the same vein, a British official, Aneurin Bevan remarked in 1960 that "Without the bomb,

Britain would go naked into the council chamber of the world" (Kegley and Blanton, 2011). These sentiments continue to reflect the aspiration of emerging nuclear powers like North Korea. Realism opines that military power confers political stature and the big and powerful states understand it that way. They believe that possession of nuclear weapon provides a seal of approval. That is why a country like North Korea would see Nuclear No- Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as nothing but a cheer hypocrisy. If possession of nuclear weapons by the United States, Russia China, Britain and France is acceptable for the purpose of deterrence, political influence and prestige, North Korea believes that it should be granted as much respect and deterrence by the U.S and others in the nuclear club. After all what is good for the geese should also be good for the gander.

As regards membership in international organization, North Korea has refused to be a member of any international organization that focuses on arms control and non-proliferation which may inhibit its drive towards becoming a nuclear state. Examples of such organisations include; the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, or the Missile Technology Control Regime. The country also pulled out of the International Atomic Energy Agency (The Guardian, 2003) North Korea's non-involvement in any of these institutions goes to show that the military ambitious state does not tolerate any interference in its arms race. Its military objective is more important to it than any form of international solidarity. The realist theory opines that states are not expected to put their trust for survival and security or self-protection in any international security organization or international law which after all may not be fair. It says further that states should resist efforts to regulate international behavior through global governance. Thus, North Korea believes that the only institution that can guarantee North Korea's survival is North Korea itself. No other state can love North Korea more than North Koreans.

Looking at the actions of North Korea with the policy proposition of the realist theory in mind, one would agree that security and the preservation of national integrity of the nation have been the underlying factors for its belligerence. The leadership of the country is just trying to ensure the survival of the state by pursuing acquisition of power through nuclear weapons possession.

6. The Extremism of North Korea Ambition

The type of power which the realist theory encourages nations to acquire and which North Korea has been engrossed in pursuing is what is referred to as 'Hard Power'. However, it is important for North Korea to know that power comes in many forms because nations possess other capabilities or resources which can be deployed to achieve influence over others apart from hard power. For instance, 'Soft Power' is a non-military and non-coercive subtle method through which a state can make others to do what it wants. It is described as the capacity of a country to command global influence simply because the country's culture, ideas and institutions are valued and respected by most other countries (Nye, 2005).

Although, military and economic capabilities are still considered important in assessing national security and international power today, however, more attention is shifting to other factors such as technology, external respect and reputation, education, political culture, environmental protection, human development, national morale and internal solidarity. As a matter of fact, these other factors are the major reason why the USA is a desired country of destination to many people round the globe. Although, the country possesses the capacity to use hard power, however, it has excelled in projecting soft power with the help of its companies, foundations, universities, churches, and other institutions of civil society. The U.S. culture, ideals, and values have been playing significant roles in helping Washington to attract partners and supporters as well as influence and recognition with other countries. Similarly, the efforts of the Soviet Union to woo other states, through economic incentives and persuasion, into the Eastern Bloc during the Cold War is another example of the influence of soft power. In the same vein, France's vast diplomatic network, its cultural richness and Macron's policy on cooperation and integration have contributed to making France a leading country in the ranking of countries soft power and this has significantly increased the influence of the country on other nations (Nye, 2005). Moreover, States like China, are being given recognition based on their population and their share of global wealth.

This is an indication that non-military underpinning of national security is gaining increased attention. In other words, soft power is increasingly being seen as an effective means through which a state can achieve certain objectives. One of the reasons for this shift is that military force has increasingly proved ineffective against the revisionist states as well as the violent transnational terrorist groups. Obviously, intelligence and communications are more central to fighting a sustainable counterterrorism than a country's military capabilities.

The former US. Secretary of State, Condolezza Rice observed that "Power is nothing unless you can turn it to influence" (Kegley and Blanton, 2011) Soft power possesses the capacity to command global influence more than hard power because it involves more persuasion and less coercion with the use of economic incentives rather than sanctions, carrot diplomacy rather than stick diplomacy and dialogue cum negotiation rather than military intervention. It is not aggressive and confrontational but convincing and co-operative (Nye, 2004). This diplomatic strategy is perhaps a more useful tool in a country's pursuance of its goals and objectives.

The confrontational approach adopted by North Korea through the vigorous pursuit of hard power has earned it the status of a pariah state and this has resulted in the increased isolation of its economy and low quality of life for its citizens. The government which, ab initio, promised to focus on educational, agricultural and economic reforms of the country is preoccupied with military reforms at the expense of improved and quality life for the nation's citizenry. Reports have it that about one quarter of North Koreans population rely on food aid while famine is believed to have killed more than two million people in the country. Unfortunately, forging economic cooperation with other countries with the aim of alleviating the people's suffering seems not to be a priority to the Pyongyang government.

Furthermore, the pursuit of nuclear weapons capability by North Korea is being done at the expense of the country's foreign relations. Jim Hoare, the former British Charge D'Affaires to North Korea had this to say about Pyongyang "Even

when they are friendly with other countries they are suspicious of them....I mean basically no international relations are of major importance to North Korea." (Westcott, 2016). He went further to explain that although about 80 per cent of North Korea's imports come from China, yet, no one can say that a serious friendly relation exists between North Korea and China. The country is stuck to China because its attempts to shift its attention to Russia has not worked out (Zhang, 2015). The country feels no burden at all sacrificing her allies, citizens and economy for security and military power. As a matter of fact, Kim Jong-un has not embarked on diplomatic visits to many countries of the world as other world leaders do. Fostering friendly relations with other states and taking full advantage of this to ensure the well-being of its citizens is not a priority to the North Korean government. One wonders what national security which undermines the welfare of the citizens seeks to achieve.

In addition, North Korea has no affiliation with most international financial institutions and trade organizations which could assist its economy to grow. It is not a participatory member of organisations such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Asian Development Bank or Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, World Trade Organization, World Customs Organization or the International Labor Organizations (Sang-hyun, 2009). This clearly shows the premium that North Korea place on International trade in comparison to military advancement. In the perception of Pyongyang, trade and affiliations will not solve its problems of nuclear advancement, therefore its leadership gives trade less attention. This undoubtedly is the application of realist theory taken too far.

7. Conclusion

This paper has discussed how the realist theory has provided justification for the reason North Korea put the possession of nuclear weapon at the center of its policy. Acting in tandem with the proposition of the realist theory that every state should take its destiny in its own hands, North Korea has brazenly engaged in arms race for the possession of nuclear weapon, not minding the disapproval of its action by the international community and the biting effects of the attendant sanctions on the nation's economic growth and the welfare of its citizenry. However, the discussion in this paper has made it clear that acquisition of military weapon is not the only means by which states can gain power and recognition. The values, cultures, economic wealth and skillful application of carrot diplomacy also confer great influence on nations and engenders socio-economic development. That is why this research would conclude by making a strong recommendation to the leadership of North Korea to play down on its pursuit of hard power and explore the advantages inherent in the use of soft power in the interest of its citizens who are wallowing in abject poverty. Other nations of the world thrive on the use of soft power which guarantees cooperation and economic prosperity. Similarly, many states have employed soft power through persuasion to gain allies and sell their ideologies. Arms race would only create a potentially explosive global environment.

Another recommendation is that the United States needs to constantly reassure North Korea that its survival/security is guaranteed. The USA should also stop the threat of use of force to destroy North Korea. After all, the only thing that can cause the country to use nuclear weapons is the direct threat to its survival. More so, the USA should not fail to assure and reassure North Korea that its relations with South Korea is only defensive exercise and not offensive. Lastly, the sanction against North Korea should be reduced.

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