

**Panel:** Reassessing North Korea's Nuclear Threat after the 3rd Nuclear Test (Regency Room)

**Date/Time:** Tuesday, February 19, 2013 / 12:30-13:45

**Talking Points for:** Markus Schiller, Schmucker Technologie

- Public debate (Unha-3) focused on missile role, range issues
- Different approach recommended
  - Threat = Intention x Capability
  - (No intention, no threat; no capability, no threat)
  - Unique chance: We can now learn a lot about their capabilities!
- Important questions to look into
  - Unha-3 – designed as a weapon or a space launcher?
  - Which capabilities were revealed by the launch?
  - What does that mean for past and future capabilities?
  - What does that mean in the political context?
- Knowledge: 1<sup>st</sup> stage good, 2<sup>nd</sup> stage some insights, 3<sup>rd</sup> stage poor
  - Only surprise: Control engines in 1<sup>st</sup> stage
  - Rest as predicted – aluminum airframe, Scud technology, propellants
- Stage operation times, trajectories: Known with medium confidence
- Result: Consistent model of the rocket that duplicates the trajectory
- Scud-like engine in 2<sup>nd</sup> stage, high performance 3<sup>rd</sup> stage
- NTO/UDMH in 3<sup>rd</sup> stage likely
- Important findings:
  - Perhaps more than 8,000 km range with 0.7 t ... **but:**
  - Low thrust 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> stage
  - Only sensible for small satellites
  - Higher thrust 2<sup>nd</sup> stage (Nodong engine) would offer >1,000 km more
  - Designed as a satellite launcher
  - Bad production quality of first stage airframe, imported parts: Indications for prototyping, not serial production!

### Consequences

- No change of previous assessments
- Long road to go for serious threat
- More of a political signal (domestic and external)
- Old program!
- NK: Demonstrate progress to NK people, world
- US, ROK, allies: Not important, remain vigilant
- Continue close observations

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\* The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies.