

## Session 4: The Six Party Talks as Viable Mechanism for Denuclearization

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### Summary

The topic of North Korea's nuclear program lends itself to pessimism, and it is fair to say that the panel's general tone did not stray too far from this course.

Sue Mi Terry articulated that the Six Party Talks (6PTs) were a dismal failure when it comes to denuclearization; however, *if* we believe that dialogue with North Korea is important, it is difficult to think of an alternative to the 6PTs. She went on to state that she was in agreement with the so-called “sticks” approach, which may include economic sanctions, being vigilant in stopping counter-proliferation activities, and staunching North Korea's other illicit behaviors such as money-laundering, counterfeiting, etc. However, sole reliance on “sticks” is unrealistic, and the Obama administration may need to, from a tactical standpoint, show that it is interested in some sort of dialogue with the North.

Bruce Klinger asked the question: “Should we defibrillate the 6PTs corpse?” He noted the importance of being clear about what caused their failure in the first place; it was North Korea's failure to comply with its commitments and its continued engagement in provocative actions. He argued that allied policy has suffered from a “binary debate,” the question of *either* sticks (pressure) *or* carrots (inducements), and instead we need to recognize the necessity of doing both. Diplomacy, without pressure, is useless. This means that we need to maintain a strong defense which, in his mind, includes missile defense systems, and we need to strengthen the U.S. alliances with the ROK and Japan.

Larry M. Wortzel framed his comments based on his experiences vis-à-vis China. He stated that China still values stability above all else, and that it wouldn't engage in activities that could lead to North Korea's collapse. Also, in his estimation, China believes that small states should have a minimum nuclear deterrent to fend off potential aggression by larger and more powerful states. Because of this, he believes that China doesn't have any incentive to advance the Six Party Talks to a final conclusion. Therefore, he suggested, it might be time to move the negotiations out of Beijing and to talk about finally replacing the armistice agreement. This may be a truly "game-changing" approach.

Finally, General Burwell B. Bell noted that the vision of the 6PTs was admirable, but he believes that they are not viable for achieving denuclearization. He feels that from their inception they have been hampered by three broad fundamental flaws. First, North Korea has been disingenuous throughout the process; second, the other five parties have had divergent objectives, and third, there have been instances of insincerity on all sides. Because of these flaws, there has never been a mutual agreement on process, objectives, or outcomes. General Bell placed major emphasis on the U.S., ROK, and Japan effectively and aggressively engaging in economic and military containment of the DPRK, and highlighted the need to have an integrated missile defense system which would protect against North Korean missile attacks.

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