North Korean nuclear crisis / United States should negotiate with North Korea

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Position: United States should negotiate with North Korea

This position addresses the topic North Korean nuclear crisis.

For this position

"There may still be sniping from hard-liners such as John Bolton, former US ambassador to the United Nations, but the process of negotiating North Korea's denuclearization is gathering unmistakable momentum. This is one of the few bright spots in the struggle against nuclear proliferation."

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From Getting to yes with North Korea, by The Boston Globe editorial board (*The Boston Globe*, September 6, 2007) (view)

"The dangers are very real. What's needed now is real pressure and real diplomacy to get the North out of the nuclear weapons business — preferably before a nuclear test shows potential buyers just how well its weapons work."

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From North Korea and the Dominoes, by The New York Times editorial board (*The New York Times*, October 6, 2006) (view)

"Consider the countries that have chosen to give up either their nuclear weapons or a nuclear program: Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus, South Africa, Brazil and Argentina. In all these cases what worked was mainly a positive incentive, not a punishment. [...] On the other hand, punishment—decades of sanctions—had no effect on India or Pakistan. So far it has had no effect on Iran or North Korea."

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From Let Them Eat Carrots, by Fareed Zakaria (Newsweek, October 16, 2006) (view)

"There is strong Bush resistance to talks - especially direct talks - or sending a U.S. emissary along the lines of a Carter. And the chances of success are much slimmer now than under Clinton. But at some point, the White House will have to decide whether it wants to pursue the small chance of freezing Pyongyang's program, or at least limiting the number of weapons."

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From Why talks with N. Korea eventually must resume, by Trudy Rubin (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 15, 2006) (view)

"Sure the Clinton-era deal failed. Sure it would be humiliating to reward bad behaviour by North Korea. Sure it would be very unlikely to succeed. But there is just a chance, and it should be taken, before the horror of military action, or the proliferation danger of simply copping a North Korean nuclear capability, are all that's left."

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From US must talk to Pyongyang, by Michael Costello (*The Australian*, October 13, 2006) (view)

"The simple framework for a step-by-step agreement exists, with the United States giving a firm and direct statement of no hostile intent, and moving toward normal relations if North Korea forgoes any further nuclear weapons program and remains at peace with its neighbors. Each element would have to be confirmed by mutual actions combined with unimpeded international inspections."

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From Solving the Korean Stalemate, One Step at a Time, by Jimmy Carter (*The New York Times*, October 11, 2006) (view)

"The U.S. is already reducing its troop levels on the Korean peninsula; it should accelerate the process and move rapidly toward ending its military presence. Moreover, it should negotiate a peace treaty with North Korea. This will remove Pyongyang's motive to attack U.S. interests"

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From North Korea Isn't Our Problem, by Anatol Lieven, John Hulsman (*Los Angeles Times*, October 11, 2006) (view)

"While there is every reason to be alarmed by North Korea's cultish police state, it is still best to pursue a realpolitik pragmatism instead of the ideological and confrontational approach Bush and his neocons have pursued for six long years now."

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From Dear Leader Brings It On, by Robert Scheer (*The Huffington Post*, October 11, 2006) (view)

"Direct talks with North Korea should not be construed as a sign of weakness. The North Korean nuclear test warrants a serious administration review of whether bilateral discussions - in tandem with the Six-Party Talks - could deescalate the current impasse."

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From The President's Press Conference, by Diane Watson (*The Huffington Post*, October 11, 2006) (view)

"When told they were enabling their neighbor's nuclear ambitions, Chinese diplomats blithely insisted that the North was likely bluffing about having a weapon. Now, Washington, Tokyo, Moscow and others have to make clear that China will be judged by its willingness to confront this problem. The Security Council must also make clear that it is still demanding the complete dismantlement of Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program. For that, negotiations are the only hope."

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From North Korea and the Bomb, by The New York Times editorial board (*The New York Times*, October 10, 2006) (view)

"To advance U.S. security interests, the United States should agree to bilateral negotiations. It should press North Korea to suspend further nuclear and missile tests while negotiations on normalization proceed, freeze plutonium production and make a firm, timebound commitment to return to the six-party talks."

From In a Test, a Reason to Talk, by Selig S. Harrison (*The Washington Post*, October 10, 2006) (view)

"Instead of pursuing yet more harsh and futile sanctions on North Korea in the UN Security Council, as the US ambassador to the UN John Bolton was doing yesterday, Bush ought to reconsider the wisdom of his refusal to test the seriousness of North Korea's repeated offers to trade away its nuclear and missile programs for the end-of-enmity agreement that only Washington can provide."

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From The North Korean test, by The Boston Globe editorial board (*The Boston Globe*, October 10, 2006) (view)

"North Korea is desperate enough and proud enough to ignore its neighbors — Japan, South Korea, China and Russia — and insist on talking to the United States directly. So why not sit down with North Korea, however belatedly?"

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From Now test diplomacy, by The Seattle Times editorial board (*The Seattle Times*, October 10, 2006) (view)

"The 2003 Libya deal, hinging on negotiations, cost us little in funding, nothing in lives, and was 100 percent effective in ending that nuclear program and reintegrating Libya into the world community. Even if such an effort fails with North Korea, we will have kept faith with our allies and laid the groundwork for an effective containment strategy"

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From North Korea fallout, by Joseph Cirincione (Salon.com, October 10, 2006) (view)

"Amidst all the focus on our diplomatic tactics, it is important to keep two broader points in mind. One, we are learning more about Pyongyang's nuclear efforts through the six-party framework than we otherwise would be. And two, this policy is our best option to achieve the strategic goal of verifiably eliminating North Korea's nuclear weapons and programs."

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From Diplomacy Is Working on North Korea, by Condoleezza Rice (*The Wall Street Journal*, June 26, 2008) (view)

"For Washington, and the unfairly maligned advocates of the six-party process, the task is to maintain laser-like focus on taking the next step toward fulfillment of the October agreement, with the goal of moving to the disarmament phase, and not allowing these hard-won steps to be drowned out by the noise of detractors."

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From Slowly, but Surely, Pyongyang Is Moving, by David Albright, Jacqueline Shire (*The Washington Post*, January 24, 2008) (view)

"Officially, the Bush administration rejects the one approach that has proven useful in the past: formal, high-level, one-on-one negotiations with Pyongyang of the sort that Clinton pursued ... The situation can only be seen as a major failure of the Bush administration, which, despite all its bluster about the axis of evil and the use of preemptive military force to combat it, has yet to find a way either to punish North Korea for pursuing nuclear weapons or to offer rewards for it to stop its program."

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From How Not to Deal with North Korea, by Richard J. Bernstein (*New York Review of Books*, February 1, 2007) (view)

"For six years, President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney refused to seriously negotiate with North Korea. The result? North Korea tested a nuclear device and went from having enough plutonium for one or two weapons to eight or more. We've seen that movie. The world can't afford a sequel."

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From North Korea Redux, by The New York Times editorial board (*The New York Times*, April 25, 2008) (view)

Against this position

"If the U.S. and China cooperate now in seriously sanctioning North Korea, the regime could collapse. That would be both welcome and deeply dangerous. On the other hand, if the U.S. and China refuse to cooperate in sanctioning Korea, and break with each other instead, we face yet another sort of destabilizing regional conflict."

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From It's the Nukes, Stupid, by Stanley Kurtz (National Review, October 9, 2006) (view)

"The lesson we should be teaching Pyongyang is that breaking your commitment to non-nuclearization leads not to concession after concession, but to isolation, pressure, and the uncomfortable position of having a nuclear arsenal pointed at you."

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From He Huffs and He Puffs, by Dan Blumenthal (*The Weekly Standard*, October 9, 2006) (view)

"Kim wants direct negotiations with the United States, both to undermine the six-party talks, and because he wants to return to the good old days when the Clinton administration was providing him with aid in exchange for, in effect, nothing. Democrats, astoundingly, want to give him exactly what he wants, without first insisting upon a change in his behavior."

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From Democrats blew it on North Korea, by Jack Kelly (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, October 15, 2006) (view)

"The problem with North Korea has not been an insufficiency of multilateralist diplomacy in the past ten years but an overabundance."

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From The price of shillyshallying, by Gerard Baker (*The Times*, October 13, 2006) (view)

"Ordinarily multilateralist Democrats are now unalloyed champions of unilateralism, in the form of face-to-face negotiations with North Korea, while President Bush — that infamous go-it-alone "cowboy" — has embraced international teamwork. Both approaches are flawed for a simple reason: North Korea wants a nuclear weapon because it wants a nuclear weapon."

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From When Multilateralism Falls Short, by Jonah Goldberg (*National Review*, October 13, 2006) (view)

"North Korea is not demanding bilateral talks for any legitimate reason. Rather, it's attempting to create a win-win situation for itself. Either the U.S. agrees to biliateral talks, thus increasing the likelihood that the most important player -- China -- will pull out of the process (or, short of that, feel a lack of investment in it). Or North Korea can blame the U.S. for the stalemate."

From North Korea's perennial helpers, by Paul Mirengoff (*Power Line*, October 12, 2006) (view)

"Allegedly, this is all about North Korea's desire to press for bilateral talks with the United States, something the Bush administration has rightly rejected. In a bilateral setting, the blame for failure would inevitable redound to the United States"

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From Dancing with Kim, by Helle Dale (The Washington Times, October 11, 2006) (view)

"At a bare minimum, China, Russia, Japan and South Korea need to be on the same page - that is, willing to impose draconian sanctions on Pyongyang until its nuclear adventure has ended, and to respond with appropriate force if the North lashes out in response."

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From Kim's Ka-boom, by New York Post editorial board (*New York Post*, October 10, 2006) (view)

"South Korea and especially China should rethink appeasement. It has failed. A full cutoff of energy supplies and foreign aid would help pressure Kim Jong II. Opening the Chinese border to North Korean refugees would do so as well. Most important, the world should tighten the screws it already has in place, with success, on the North's external financial accounts. No dictator can run a rogue state without money."

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From North Korea's Nukes, by The Wall Street Journal editorial board (*The Wall Street Journal*, October 10, 2006) (view)

"But negotiations make no sense if your negotiating partner is using them only as delaying tactic, or as a way to demonstrate your weakness, or as a means to get concessions that it will pocket while never living up to its promises. North Korea arguably represents a trifecta."

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From Rogue Realities, by National Review editorial board (*National Review*, October 10, 2006) (view)

"We need to junk the six-party talks and pressure Pyongyang on all fronts, toward the long-term goal of the collapse of its government. All of the North's sources of income are illegal — counterfeiting, WMD trade, and narcotics trafficking — and we can crack down on them further."

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From A Blast at the Lamont Doctrine, by Rich Lowry (*National Review*, October 10, 2006) (view)

"However distasteful the Bush administration finds direct talks with North Korea, the president should nonetheless dispatch a personal envoy to Pyongyang with a clear message: Any attempt to use its nuclear arsenal offensively will bring immediate, disastrous and possibly nuclear consequences."

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From No More Negotiating With North Korea, by Jon B. Wolfsthal (*Los Angeles Times*, October 10, 2006) (view)

"China has feared to apply such pressure, worried that it could collapse Kim Jong-il's regime altogether -- an accurate assessment of the regime's limited staying power. Nonetheless, the effect of Chinese reticence has been to preserve Kim and his nuclear program. It is vital that China know this policy is no longer viable."

From Salvaging Our North Korea Policy, by John Bolton (*The Wall Street Journal*, March 17, 2008) (view)

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