

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**  
**SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA, THE PACIFIC, AND THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT**  
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**Opening Statement**

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Mr. Chairman, thank you for calling this important hearing on North Korea. First, I want to congratulate you on your reelection, and on you assuming the chairmanship of the Subcommittee on Asia, Pacific, and Global Environment. I look forward to working closely with you again this Congress. There is no better way to start the year than with a hearing on North Korea, which is one of the most important foreign policy issues that we face as a nation.

The successful denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is a goal that is vital to the security of the United States and its allies in the Asia-Pacific region. Persuading Kim Jung-Il to give up the bomb is a goal that all Americans can agree on. However, the road to denuclearization has proven extremely difficult despite the best intentions and efforts by the hardworking professionals involved in the Six Party Talks. Now as we examine the road ahead it is vital that America follows the right path so that the threat of nuclear weapons and proliferation can finally be eliminated.

The priority for the new Administration must be to resume vigorous multilateral negotiations with North Korea. As part of these negotiations, the Six Party Talks must occupy a central role since it provides a proven framework in which the most sensitive nuclear issues can be addressed. However, in addition to the Six Party Talks, there needs to be a concentrated effort by the Administration to halt North Korea's endless games and dilatory tactics. The way to do this is to insist that other critical issues are addressed in parallel to the denuclearization talks. This "all encompassing" approach must include the North's ballistic missile program given its serious ramifications to regional and global security.

I propose that the Six Party Talks format be modified so that it can focus solely on the critical goal of denuclearization. The current structure, with its five working groups, distracts from the Talks' main purpose and relegates other important topics to lower level discussions. This creates a perfect situation for North Korea to obstruct and delay. By creating a separate multilateral process more progress can be achieved. If we are serious about success, significant diplomatic resources must be employed so that North Korea has no choice but to engage with the U.S. and its allies. Finally, through this new framework, the U.S. and its allies must be prepared to offer North Korea the real possibility of normalized relations if all the key concerns are resolved.

A key part of employing a smart power offensive is to really invest in strengthening ties with America's closest friends in the Asia-Pacific region. Without a

doubt, our relationship with Japan and South Korea must be strong to ensure the highest likelihood for success. Given Pyongyang's notorious "divide and conquer" negotiating tactics the U.S. must not make itself vulnerable by allowing disagreements to fester. I reject the notion that concerns held by members of the Six Party Talks are merely stumbling blocks that should be brushed aside. Unfortunately, the U.S. has allowed unresolved issues between allies in the past few years to create distance within the Six Party Talks. Secretary Clinton's upcoming visit to Asia provides a perfect opportunity to put the relationship on the correct footing once again. For example, I encourage Secretary Clinton to meet with the families of Japanese abductees to hear first hand their concerns.

The path to denuclearization rests not only with America's willingness to engage North Korea but also in North Korea's willingness to negotiate in good faith. Pyongyang's recent provocative actions, which include belligerent announcements against South Korea and possible missile tests, do nothing to demonstrate good faith. I believe North Korea's interests remain focused on extracting maximum concessions from Six Party members, particularly the U.S., while doing nothing to living up to its commitments. It is very disappointing, albeit not surprising, that North Korea still refuses to agree to a verification regime even after former President Bush removed them from the State Sponsor of Terrorism list. Thus, I remain very skeptical about engaging North Korea without clearly established and defined objectives.

Denuclearization of the Korean peninsula must remain a top priority for the Obama Administration. There is simply too much at stake to allow North Korea to continue in its present course. Employing smart power, in conjunction with vigorous and sustained negotiations, is a path worth exploring. The Six Party Talks, with all its advantages and weaknesses, must continue to occupy a central role along with parallel multilateral negotiations. Just as importantly, the U.S. must never sacrifice its alliances in hopes of short-term gain.

Thank you for your willingness to appear before the Subcommittee. I look forward to your testimony.