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Abstract

The widespread existence of weapons presents a threat, to global security as evidenced by the circumstances involving Iran and North Korea. Both countries pursued nuclear policies, leading to regional and global conflict. Rightly needing peace, Iran's nuclear energy has faced international skepticism, resulting in sanctions and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action to Control its Nuclear Activities (JCPOA) but the effectiveness of "the JCPOA remains controversial", worrying Iran to comply according to the law. In contrast, North Korea's nuclear program is growing more military, with many tests of nuclear weapons and missile launches in defiance of UN resolutions. Despite international attempts, including treaties and penalties, North Korea's nuclear development continues to deteriorate, defying global non-proliferation rules. Global security requires better international collaboration, robust verification methods, and long-term transnational solutions.

Keywords: North Korea, Iran, Nuclear Power, Security, UN, War.

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Abstract

The widespread existence of weapons presents a threat, to global security as evidenced by the circumstances involving Iran and North Korea. Both countries pursued nuclear policies, leading to regional and global conflict. Rightly needing peace, Iran's nuclear energy has faced international skepticism, resulting in sanctions and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action to Control its Nuclear Activities (JCPOA) but the effectiveness of "the JCPOA remains controversial", worrying Iran to comply according to the law. In contrast, North Korea's nuclear program is growing more military, with many tests of nuclear weapons and missile launches in defiance of UN resolutions. Despite international attempts, including treaties and penalties, North Korea's nuclear development continues to deteriorate, defying global non-proliferation rules. Global security requires better international collaboration, robust verification methods, and long-term transnational solutions.

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Keywords: [North Korea](#), [Iran](#), [Nuclear Power](#), [Security](#), [UN](#), [War](#).

Introduction

Nuclear weapons and development of countries not recognized as nuclear-armed nations by the NPT pose a severe challenge to the international security of Iran and North Korea which shows the complexity and geopolitical consequences of nuclear proliferation (Zarate, 2013).

The nuclear program of Iran has long been the object of international concern. Officially, Iranian activities aimed at developing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes have raised doubts about possible weapons. The international response, notably the imposition of economic sanctions and the JCPOA

negotiations in 2015 aimed at restricting Iran's nuclear capabilities. (Narang, 2015).

North Korea offers a more direct risk to non-proliferation principles. The Republic of Korea (DPRK) has conducted open-ended nuclear tests as well as created ballistic missile technological advances, directly defying UNSC resolutions. North Korea's uranium ambitions are based on a desire for regime safety and global influence, and it has taken a series of aggressive steps and diplomatic contacts. The President Donald Trump meets Kim Jong-(the president). A high degree of conversations between the two have been momentarily prohibited, but this



has no meaningful impact on North Korea's nuclear capabilities (Akhtar, 2014).

This case study highlights the complex interplay between national security needs, regional stability, and non-proliferation efforts. They emphasize the difficulties of executing international treaties, the limits of diplomacy, and the ongoing danger of nuclear-armed nations outside the existing non-proliferation framework (Bleek, 2014).

Nuclear expansion, technology, and nuclear weapons in nations within the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) pose a threat to security. The situations, in Iran and North Korea demonstrate the complexities that arise when nuclear weapons proliferate due, to implications. Iran's nuclear program has long been the object of international concern. Officially, Iranian activities aimed at developing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes have raised doubts about possible weapons due to dual-use nuclear technology. In response, the UN, the EU, and the US. imposed severe economic sanctions targeting key sectors of the Iranian economy, especially its oil exports and its financial system, and these sanctions are aimed at forcing Iran to comply with international standards types of non-proliferation weapons to be transparent about its nuclear activities (Gartzke, 2009).

This deal requires Iran to decrease enriched uranium stocks, limit enriched uranium production, and relieve international nuclear exchange restrictions. Extensive review and IAEA approval was required. The JCPOA was seen as a major diplomatic breakthrough, aimed at preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons (Cotton, 2005).

However, the effectiveness and sustainability of the JCPOA has been debated

Currently, North Korea is something of a thorn in the side of the non-proliferation process, conducting nuclear tests and developing and producing ballistic missiles are a violation of the UN Security Council's decision. However, North Korea also generally has officials who have worked towards achieving nuclear interests based on regime security and seeking status, thereby causing provocations and nuanced international relations. The program of North Korea emerged in the nineties, but in 2003 it withdrew from the NPT. Since that time, there have been few nuclear tests in North Korea the last of which took

place in September 2017. The country has also produced and initiated testing of ICBMs that can target the United States, thus making a shift (Mazarr, 1995).

However, Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un of North Korea in June 2018 and June 2019 stated the hope of making progress on actual denuclearization but remained a pipe dream. However, diplomacy that seemed to have eased current tensions in the region is rendered meaningless by North Korea's efforts to develop and modernize its nuclear arsenal and its missile technology, thus thwarting efforts aimed at maintaining non-proliferation across the globe, and aggravating regional uncertainty (Amir, 2023).

Research Questions

- Who are the primary players and groups engaged in worldwide proliferation policies that support Iran and North Korea's nuclear programs?
- What are the vital diplomatic measures aimed at restraining Iran and North Korea's nuclear programs, and how successful have they been?
- What are the larger global security and regional consequences of Iran and North Korea's nuclear programs?
- What role do security guarantees and diplomacy play in addressing governments' motivations to develop nuclear weapons?

Literature review

Sverre Lodgaard's book, "Atomic Denuclearization and Non-Proliferation: Approaching a Radioactive-Weapon-Free World," explores a review of methods for non-proliferation and disarmament. The book also explores the strategies used for disarmament. The Preventing nuclear proliferation Agreement is a complete international treaty that prioritizes three key components: nuclear elimination, and the peaceful use of atomic energy. He emphasizes the difficulties associated with contemporary outreach efforts.

In the Cold War, He elucidates the persistence of governments in engaging in nuclear activities, notwithstanding their adherence to the NPT. His primary attention lies on Iran & North Korea. He also concentrated on examining the relationship between disarmament and preventing nuclear proliferation in a multi-centric global setting that

encompassed China, India, Russia, European states, and the USA. He finishes the discussion of three separate worlds sans ear arms and nuclear disarmament accords, power, and Russia. He proceeds by exploring three conceivable worlds with no nuclear arsenals and the repercussions of atomic disarmament efforts (Amir, [2023](#)).

According to Christopher Ferrero's paper "The Ideational Context of US Foreign Policy Making Decisions toward the Islamic Republic of Iran," the relationship between Iran and America has remained contentious since the Islamic Revolution of 1979. In the United States, there is a long-held view that Iran is responsible for its harmful activities and threatening rhetoric (Gebru, 2015). Between 1990 and 2003, the possibility of peace between the United States and Iran increased. A large body of professional studies, concepts, and analytical judgments clearly present Iran as America's biggest threat and opponent. Assessments that clearly show why Iran is America's most serious threat and adversary. The current arms acquisition and transparent denuclearization issues with Iran and North Korea defy non-proliferation precedents set in 2003. (Ogilvie-White, [2010](#)).

Washington has given confusing signals as to whether its aim in dealing with both Tehran and Pyongyang is regime change or just a change of behavior. If regime change is the aim of coercive diplomacy, which conceptualizes diplomacy as the use of incentives and threats to compel countries to abandon their nuclear program, then it becomes dysfunctional. While the negotiations with Iran and North Korea can specify the degree and kind of the particular threat in various aspects to some extent, they cannot exclude most of the possible uncertainty. This means that the containment strategy based on concepts of deterrence and reassurance is still the most reasonable approach to the management of these nations' nuclear-related uncertainty (Lee, [2024](#)).

The report to the UN established that Iran ceased its nuclear weapons programme in 2003 possibly as a result of surveillance. This differs greatly from the 2005 NIE that alleged that Iran was going all out in the development of a secret weapon program. The 2007 NIE hampered the Bush administration's ability to mobilize international support for decisive actions against Iran's nuclear activities (Sobecki, [2024](#)).

When the problem of the nuclear program of Iran shifted, so did the diplomatic focus on the blatant nuclear weapons of North Korea. North Korea crossed one of the major 'red lines' to conduct a nuclear test in October 2006, and by doing so the country declared that it had developed the nuclear arsenal to act as a deterrence mechanism. Nevertheless, it also employed this particular program as leverage, asserting once again it stands for the complete nuclear disarmament of the Korean peninsula. In the Six-Party Talks in February 2007, North Korea consented to remove the nuclear facilities that they had and also reconfirm and present the details of their past and recent activities concerning nuclear weapons (Vaddi, [2024](#)).

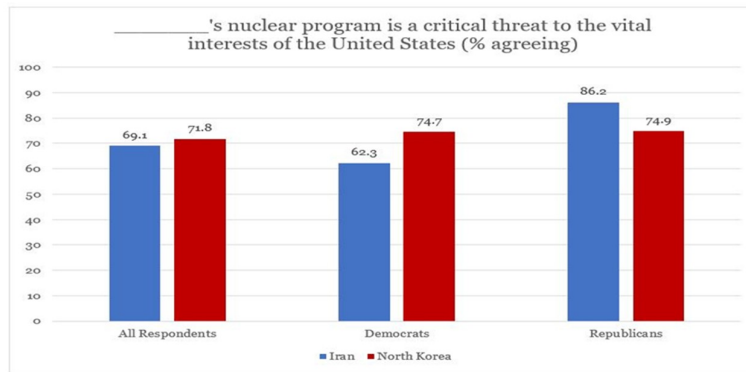
Theoretical Framework

Iran and North Korea: The Proliferation Nexus

For the present time, Iran and North Korea are the most menacing actors in the context of nuclear threats. Having been involved in the production of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, North Korea has recently shifted a major turn by asserting the status of a nuclear weapons state within the last four years. Iran is progressing rather fast in this regard, partnering with North Korea—the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)—as it neglects its NPT safeguards and works on medium-range missiles (Brewer, [2021](#)). With respect to nuclear, Iran has been developing it in cooperation with North Korea and has been accused of collaborating with Syria to produce weapons-grade uranium; the collaboration in developing Iran's missile program formed the core of President Bush's contentious "axis of evil" label when he tagged Iran alongside North Korea and Iraq in 2002. Assuming no outcomes analogous to Libya's in 2003 when Colonel Muammar Gaddafi decided that his country had no WMDs and demolished them, Iran and North Korea will remain the world's most problematic sources of nuclear proliferation. The inherent threat that comes with their nuclear and missile programs which are so central to their security strategies will not be eased out via a change of leadership or by emulating the Libyan model. More to that, their strategic cooperation is expected to proceed in the future (Fitzpatrick, [2006](#)).

Figure 1

The Diplomat, 2020



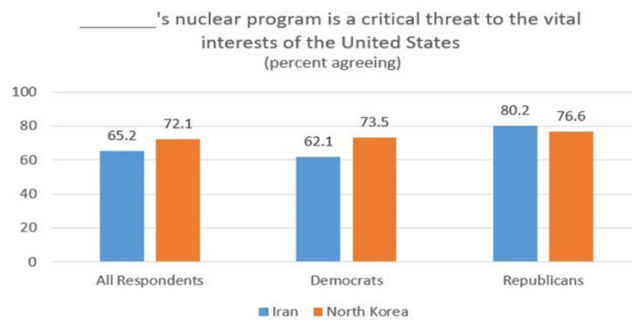
We need, however, to try to analyze, based on the available data and educated guessing, the North Korean-Iranian relations on arms proliferation with special emphasis on their technical cooperation and potential convergence of their policies. So, information presented by media, and especially in the context of nuclear cooperation, is usually full of assumptions that must be taken with a grain of salt. There is concrete evidence of the relationship between North Korea and the missile technology supply to Iran, thus, it would be relevant to discuss the prospects of cooperation in the sphere of nuclear weapons as well (Kim, 2022).

International U. S. relations are called into question due to nuclear defiance by Iran and North Korea; this essay finds out how the world particularly the Americans should handle these defiant states. The likelihood of the U. S. getting

back to the diplomacy of denuclearization could lead North Korea as well as Iran to step up their noncompliance. If these countries are using nuclear defiance to gain legitimacy and cover up for the reduction of their engagement capacity, then improving their engagement capacity might help bring down this defiance and also augur well for the NPT. External actors could play a role in improving both nations' engagement capabilities, potentially impacting U. S. strategies for preventing nuclear proliferation, restarting six-party talks, and initiating new negotiations with Iran (Ogilvie-White, The Defiant States: By pointing out that "No preconditions have been laid down for either North Korea or Iran's nuclear diplomacy" it is argued that both countries are equal players in the international system and that their actions are justifiable (G. N. S. Sorenson, The Nuclear Diplomacy of Iran and North Korea, 2010).

Figure 2

Official White House Photo by Shealah Craighead, 2019



One methodology for boosting North Korea or Iran's engagement capability is to endeavor to impact the guidelines and standards that support the worldwide community so that it is more steady with, or less antagonistic to, the philosophies that run the show the governments in Pyongyang & Tehran. This would require an alter by the US and other transaction parties toward China's methodology, which is propelled by a want to deflect administration collapse and limit US and Western impact in universal society (Foster, 2020). To keep dialogs going, the US non-proliferation procedure ought to depend on political use advertised by China, Russia, and select NAM pioneers and eyewitnesses. A multilayered control approach would require critical backing and participation from other governments, especially those developing nations that have restricted US-led non-proliferation endeavors and supported hard-headed administrations.

Iran and Economic Sanctions

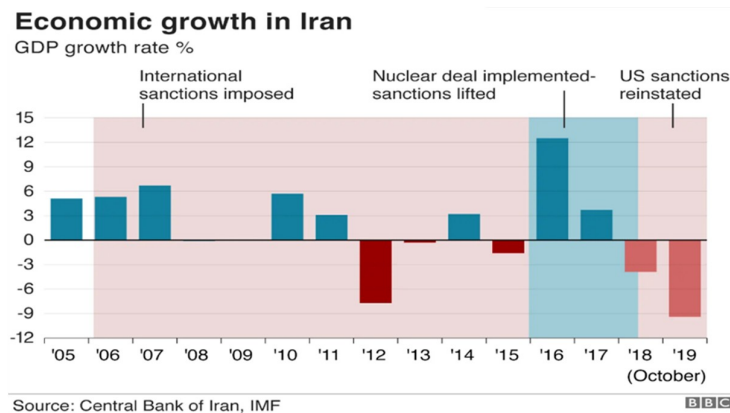
Prior to the Iranian rebellion, the United States was Iran's main business partner and second-biggest

exporter. The 1979 revolution ended a symbolic alliance between the United States & the Shah, which had previously backed the US's economic and political objectives within the Persian Gulf region. Following the Islamic revolution, Iran was exposed to economic penalties, including the imprisonment of 52 American nationals at the US Embassy in Tehran. The United States has imposed further sanctions on Iran, accusing it of developing nuclear weapons and supporting international terrorism (Arslanian, 2023).

The 1979 financial freeze was a boon for US banks, enabling them to hold onto nearly ten billion dollars in Iranian assets for over a year and reclaim all of the loans they had made to Iran prior to the Shah's abdication. Since 2005, the UN Security Council has placed international sanctions on Iran for the purpose of stopping its nuclear weapons development. Iran faced four waves of penalties in 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2010, largely directed at key politicians, government institutions, and enterprises involved with Iran's nuclear program. (Hufbauer, 2020).

Figure 3

Central Bank of Iran, IMF, 2022



Since 2007, the European Union has increasingly increased economic sanctions on Iran, focusing on particular people, Iranian financial institutions, and the purchase and sale of petroleum products to Iran. In 2010, the EU strengthened its sanctions policy to

comply with US moves, preventing European institutions from doing transactions with Iranian banks and restricting trade and investment in Iran's energy and transportation sectors (Evans, 2021). In 2012, the EU put an embargo on imports of Iranian

crude petroleum goods and crude oil, claiming that the Iranian central bank's resources would be frozen and gold, diamond, and metal trading with Iran would be restricted.

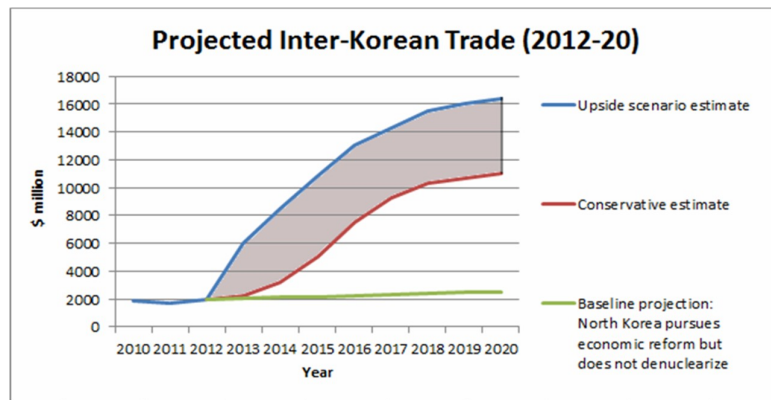
North Korea and Economic Sanctions

The Korean War began in 1950 when North Korea pushed its border from the Soviet Union into the pro-Western Republic of Korea. The US put a

boycott on North Korean sends of products, in this way taken after President Truman's address in December 1950, which forced more financial punishments. Since 2006, the United Nations has enacted eight key resolutions imposing and tightening economic sanctions on North Korea for maintaining its nuclear program, dismantling it, rejoining the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, returning to six-party negotiations, and suspending ballistic missile tests. (Smith, 2020).

Figure 4

The Economic Costs of North Korean Nuclear Development, 2013



The EU plays no substantial role in the problem of North Korea's nuclear program, although it does support the Six-Party Talks and the full dismantling of the North Korean nuclear program.

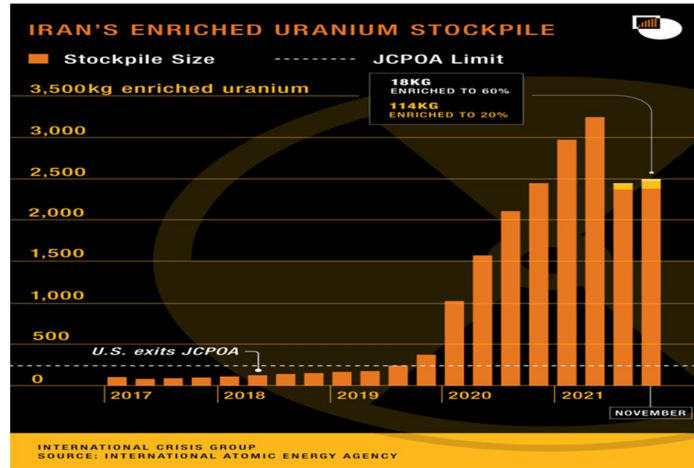
The EU imposed its initial sanctions in 2006 in response to North Korea's nuclear testing. In response to North Korea's nuclear testing in 2006 and 2009, the UN United Nations Security Council issued resolutions condemning multiple launches, restricting the supply of weaponry and related materials, and barring expensive goods, exports, imports, and financial operations (Min, 2020). Resolution 2270, 2321, 2321, and 2375 aim to stifle North Korea's economic sectors that underpin nuclear and ballistic weapon development. These measures are designed to be more comprehensive than any prior UN sanctions regime in the last two decades. North Korea has responded by saying that the sanctions regime constitutes a substantial threat to its sovereignty.

The influence of international networks and technology transfer on the development of nuclear programs in Iran and North Korea

International proliferation initiatives and technical transfers have contributed significantly to the establishment of nuclear programs in Iran and North Korea. These covert agreements permitted the transfer of the equipment, supplies, and know-how required to manufacture atomic bombs. One of the foremost conspicuous figures in these systems is Abdul Qadir Khan, also known as the father of Pakistan's atomic program. Khan wrongfully exchanged atomic innovation with Iran and was provided by North Korea's Khan organization with centrifuge systems and offices to help Tehran improve uranium (Baxter, 2022).

Figure 5

International Atomic Energy, 2022



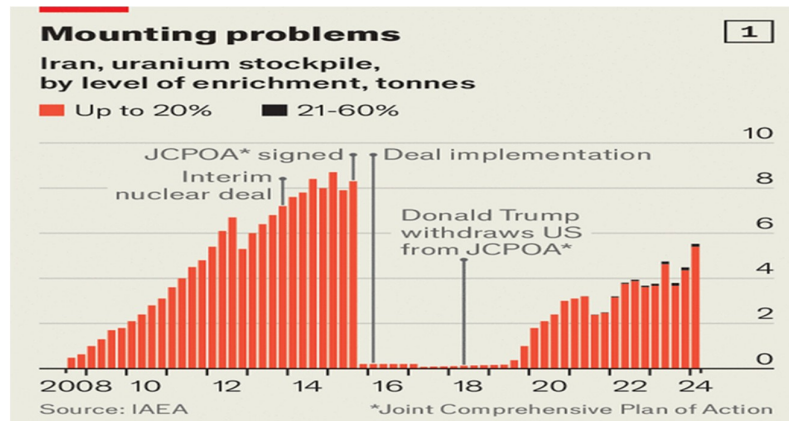
Similarly, North Korea has used web-based technology to further its nuclear weapons programs. In addition to the missile agreement, the two nations have directly engaged in bilateral collaboration and sought aid from other nuclear powers such as China and Russia to boost their technical capabilities. That technology and this unlawful trade underscore the issue of preventing nuclear proliferation, implying that a. What domestic players and state-sponsored networks may maneuver around international rules to get nuclear power. The international community has fought to break through these discussions and implement non-proliferation treaties, emphasizing the need for strong global collaboration and information sharing in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons technology (Baxter, Mapping the development of North Korea's domestic nuclear research networks, 2022).

Broad implications for international security

The importance of worldwide proliferating agreements and the transfer of technology in Iran's & North Korea's nuclear programs has major consequences for global security. First, the expansion of nuclear power in these countries undermines the goals of global nonproliferation efforts, particularly the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT). This non-proliferation strategy raises the danger of nuclear weapons falling into the possession of others, whether via governmental or other actors or being utilized in an attack itself. Second, Iran's and North Korean nuclear programs aggravate regional instability. The nuclear ambitions of North Korea have increased tension on the Korean Peninsula, sparking an arms race and raising the prospect of a military conflict involving major powers like the United States, China, or Japan. In retaliation, they may utilize their nuclear capabilities. (Bleek, Security guarantees and allied nuclear proliferation, 2014).

Figure 6

IAEA



Third, the spread of nuclear technology undermines the faith and credibility of international bodies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which is responsible for monitoring nuclear activities and guaranteeing compliance with non-proliferation treaties (Lee C. M., [2009](#)).

Finally, the longevity of these broad networks demonstrates the limits of conventional views on the role of the state in security. The involvement of non-state actors in the proliferation of nuclear technology emphasizes the need for comprehensive mechanisms such as strengthened international cooperation, improved intelligence sharing, and a given legal framework has made progress towards preventing the transfer of illegal technology. To summarize, the implications of international proliferation policies and technology transfers for Iran's and North Korea's nuclear programs are far-reaching, posing significant challenges to global non-proliferation efforts, regional internal stability, and the effectiveness of international security institutions.

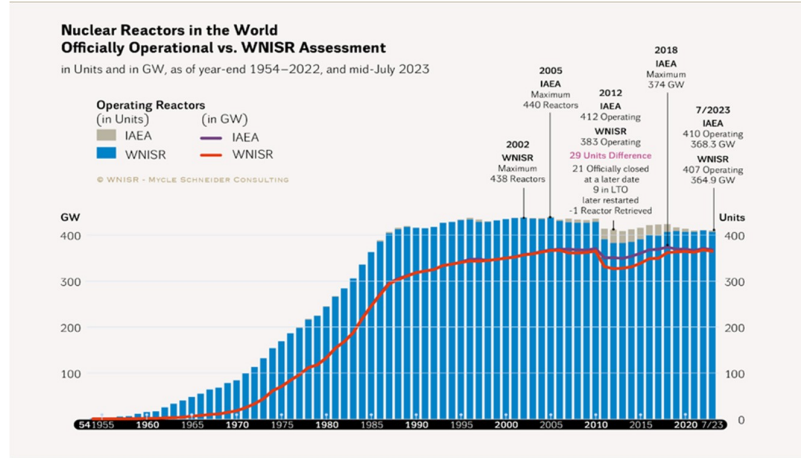
Diplomacy and coercion

Diplomacy and pressure are essential tools for addressing concerns of international proliferation

and technological transfers to Iran's and North Korea's atomic programs. These strategies aim to stop the manufacturing of nuclear arms and limit their possible use while maintaining global stability. Diplomacy has evolved as the primary method for addressing nuclear proliferation. Iran views the Joint Comprehensive Plans of Action (JCPOA) as a prime instance of international diplomatic efforts to limit Tehran's nuclear capabilities. This multilateral deal on Iran involves the P5+1 (the United States, Britain, France, Russia, China, and Germany). (Martin, [2007](#)). The goal of keeping Iran's nuclear program peaceful in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions is to ensure that, despite occasional challenges and obstacles, agreements like this highlight diplomacy's ability to achieve non-proliferation goals by imposing a ratification and compliance system on the part of the state in question. Similarly, diplomatic efforts with North Korea included conversations such as the Six-Party Talks with North Korea, South Korea, the United States, China, Japan, and Russia. These meetings aimed to accomplish denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula Shelf. While success is variable, diplomacy remains an important instrument for reducing tensions and achieving peaceful results (Jervis, [2013](#)).

Figure 7

The World Nuclear Industry Status Report, 2023



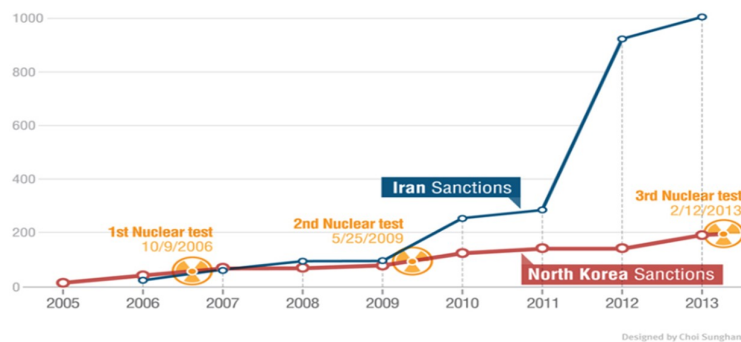
To enforce compliance with non-proliferation principles, economic penalties have often been employed in conjunction with diplomatic diplomacy. Sanctions may impose enormous economic pressure on governments developing nuclear weapons, increasing the price of such projects beyond their apparent advantages. For example, the imposition of global sanctions on Iran directed at its exports of oil and economy resulted in economic restrictions, forcing Tehran to the negotiating table. North Korea faced extensive sanctions aimed at reducing the assets and technology necessary for its peaceful nuclear and missile programs (Akhtar, 2014)

Enforcement of international agreements

The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are critical to avoiding nuclear proliferation and ensuring global security. The NPT seeks to prevent weapons of mass destruction proliferation, promote the elimination of arms, and allow peaceful nuclear energy usage. However, disobedience by countries like as Iran and North Korea has exposed faults in the existing system. The international community has used other enforcement instruments, including resolutions of the UN Security Council and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran. These agreements have severe verification mechanisms, such as regular IAEA inspections and sanctions (Dupont, 2013).

Figure 8

The cumulative number of individuals and entities listed in sanctions regimes



International cooperation is critical for effective oversight, with international activities like sharing data and coordinated sanctions boosting the ability to detect and respond to violations. Initiatives such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) enable member states to restrict the movement of proliferation-related commodities and the supply of unlawful goods. Enforcement entails addressing the root causes of the propagate, providing security assurances, settling regional issues, and using diplomacy, financial incentives, and global engagement (DeFrancia, [2012](#)).

To summarize, the implementation of international agreements is critical for avoiding nuclear proliferation and maintaining global security. Additional procedures, such as resolutions passed by the international coordination, and addressing underlying security issues, are needed to assure excellent compliance.

Policy Recommendations

- Enhance cooperation between major powers, regional stakeholders, and international organizations to develop an integrated strategy for dealing with nuclear proliferation, strengthening existing UNSC and IAEA strategies.
- The support for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) is crucial for universal compliance, ensuring verification mechanisms to prevent nuclear testing and prevent further technological advancement.
- Supporting CTBT is vital for ensuring universal compliance, preventing nuclear testing, and advancing technology.
- Focus on international efforts to resolve regional disputes and security issues, promoting regional stability via discussion and conflict resolution in hostile circumstances.
- Collaborate with international partners to strengthen border controls and prevent the smuggling of nuclear materials and technology.

Conclusion

Iran and North Korea's nuclear initiatives, which are being built via international proliferation treaties and technical transfers, pose serious challenges to global security. These covert acts undermine non-proliferation efforts, exacerbate regional tensions, and reveal flaws in the implementation of international agreements. Diplomacy and force, such as financial penalties and military restrictions, are critical weapons for addressing these challenges. The successful implementation of agreements like as the NPT, aided by the IAEA's prudent efforts and the cooperation of international organizations like the UNSC, is critical to limiting proliferation while also devouring its causes. Address the root causes of arms proliferation by strengthening diplomacy, economic incentives, and regional dispute resolution, all while maintaining international conflict security. And to ensure that the global community stays informed, cooperative, and adaptable.

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