


Governing Nuclear in East Asia:

Sub-theme 4: Security in East Asia



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Points of Presentation

- ▶ Background: East Asia as a ‘Nuclear Dense’ Region
- ▶ Security
 - ▶ Managing nuclear proliferation: North Korean nuclear crisis
 - ▶ Controlling tensions and establishing strategic stability: U.S.-Japan-China relationship
- ▶ Nuclear Energy
 - ▶ Regional solution for fuel cycle management?
- ▶ Case of Six Party Talk:
 - ▶ Governing the risks and promoting peace and prosperity of the region

Background

▶ Global Non-Proliferation Regime in question

- ▶ Proliferation cases : North Korea, Iran, and non-state actors
- ▶ Universality (190 member states) vs exceptionalism (case of cooperation with India as non party to the NPT)
- ▶ Lack of enforcement capability, sanctions through the UN Security Council do not have immediate impact.
 - ⇒ Cannot provide effective solution for cases of non-compliance

▶ Regional Political and Security Environment

- ▶ The legacy of the Cold War
 - ▶ divided states
 - ▶ ideological differences (liberal democracies vs authoritarian regimes)
- ▶ Lack of confidence among regional actors: regional rivalries and historical legacy
- ▶ Element (not a whole picture, though) of strategic confrontation
 - ▶ US-Japan vs China, US-ROK vs DPRK

Nuclear Dense East Asia

▶ Nuclear armed states

- ▶ China, Russia are formal nuclear weapons states (NWS) under the NPT in the region.
- ▶ The United States, another formal NWS of the NPT, is an indispensable actor in the regional security.
- ▶ North Korea is a declared nuclear armed states under the violation of the NPT.

▶ Nuclear energy states

- ▶ Japan is the largest non-NWS possessing nuclear power plants as well as a full scale nuclear fuel cycle program.
- ▶ South Korea depends its nuclear energy program on 40 percent of its electricity needs. It also has expressed an interest in conducting R&D of pyroprocessing, a technology to reprocess spent fuel.
- ▶ Taiwan also has a large scale nuclear energy program.
- ▶ Mongolia possesses a large scale uranium reserve.

Need for Managing 'Nuclear Risks' (1)

▶ Security dimension

- ▶ North Korean nuclear blackmail (and attacks)
- ▶ Proliferation from North Korea
- ▶ Rising strategic rivalries
 - ▶ Potential of nuclear arms races triggered by the modernization of Chinese nuclear arsenal
 - ▶ It could also bring about the sense of uncertainty on NNWSs (particular Japan and South Korea) in the region.

Managing Nuclear Order in East Asia

▶ Energy dimension

▶ Potential escalation of business competition

- ▶ US-Japan nuclear business partnership (Hitachi-GE, Toshiba-Westinghouse)
- ▶ strong Korean nuclear consortium (which won a contract with UAE, beating US-Japan and France)
- ▶ a potential rise of Chinese nuclear industry

▶ Spent fuel management

- ▶ storage for spent fuel in South Korea and Taiwan will face the shortage soon, and maybe Japan as well in the future. ➡ Quest for solutions by individual states?

▶ Interests in nuclear fuel cycle

- ▶ In East Asia, only Japan is allowed to conduct fuel cycle program under bilateral agreement with the US. Japan has a full scale fuel cycle activity, an exceptional case as a NNWS.
- ▶ South Korea is interested in conducting R&D of pyroprocessing, a type of backend solution, but not allowed by the US.

Need for Regional Governance Mechanisms

- ▶ Global non-proliferation regime has weak enforcement mechanism and cannot effectively deal with North Korean case. ⇒ specific approach is needed.
- ▶ All parties in the region express strong interests in utilization of nuclear energy, and share common concern over spent fuel management.
- ▶ All parties in the region hold technological competence to be able to manage fuel cycle technology, but so far only Japan is allowed to operate such technology.
 - ⇒ rising pressure for easing this inequality. Potential need for a regional framework.

Case of Regional Governance: Six Party Talk

- ▶ Established in 2003 after the revelation of North Korea's enrichment program in 2002.
- ▶ Members: all major stakeholders in the region=North Korea, China (as a coordinator), the US, South Korea, Japan and Russia
- ▶ Aiming at complete, verifiable dismantlement of North Korean nuclear weapons program
- ▶ At the same time, addressing and coordinating diverse priorities of members; peace mechanism in the Korean Peninsula, regional security, abduction issue, economic assistance, and etc.
- ▶ But negotiation with North Korea is not necessarily smooth, due to domestic political factors in each state.

Why Six Party Talk Needed?

- ▶ As a flexible mechanism for pursuing long term and short term goals at the same time:
 - ▶ Long term: Ultimate objective is to have North Korea comply with non-proliferation norms.
 - ▶ Short term: Crisis management in the process is another priority.
- ▶ Need to manage different priorities
- ▶ Flexible in approaches and measures taken for this ultimate goal.
- ▶ Therefore, proposed solutions are sometimes in contradiction with rules and procedures set by the regime, but supplementing with its flexibility.

Conclusion

- ▶ Regional governance mechanisms for controlling and reducing nuclear risks are important tools to supplement the shortcomings of the global non-proliferation regime.
- ▶ Flexibility is a key to coordinate diverse interests and to pursue multiple policy objectives.
- ▶ But such flexibility may sometimes conflict with rules and procedures of the global regime. = it may have risk of giving wrong lessons to potential proliferators.
- ▶ Governance structure is a combination of the global regime to provide principles and norms, a regional mechanism to accommodate diverse interests, and political will of engagement by parties concerned toward the success of the process.



Thank you very much

