

China's Policy in the Wake of the Second DPRK Nuclear Test

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North Korea's May 2009 nuclear test has infuriated Beijing. Signaling its extreme dissatisfaction with North Korea's unrelenting defiance of China's advice and interests, Beijing voted in favor of a new UN Security Council resolution that includes tougher sanctions than the resolution passed following North Korea's first nuclear test in 2006. China remains firmly committed to the goal of a denuclearized peninsula. At the same time, however, Beijing remains wary of both the direct and indirect potential consequences of pushing North Korea into a corner. The Chinese worry that exerting too much pressure could result in a loss of the limited leverage that they have over Pyongyang and a hostile relationship with a bordering country. China is also concerned that excessive pressure could provoke the North to take

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more dangerous actions rather than reverse course and resume its denuclearization commitments. It fears instigating instability in North Korea that could bring a flood of refugees into China's northeast provinces and set in motion a chaotic process that leads to the demise of the DPRK with no certainty that Chinese interests would be protected under a reunified Korean government. For these reasons, China is unlikely to work actively with the United States and other countries to exert the maximum possible pressure on the North through the implementation of UN sanctions and will eschew the even harsher unilateral actions that are being implemented by the United States and some other countries.

At the same time, however, North Korea's second nuclear test and other actions have triggered an intense debate over China's long-term interests on the Korean peninsula and how to best protect those interests. In a likely reflection of sharp differences among policy makers, the Chinese media has permitted, and perhaps even encouraged, discussion of the correctness of China's policy toward North Korea and the pros and cons of applying greater pressure on its neighbor. Although the debate is nowhere near closure, it is apparent that those who view North Korea as a strategic liability rather than a strategic asset have gained the upper hand. Yet it remains to be seen whether substantial adjustments will be made in China's policy toward North Korea.

THE OFFICIAL LINE

China's official response to North Korea's May 2009 nuclear test was issued in a Foreign Ministry statement, the same vehicle that was used following the October 2006 test. The Chinese government employs Foreign Ministry statements very rarely—it has issued such statements on only eight previous occasions since 1992, including in response to India's 1998 nuclear test and then-Taiwan President Li Teng-hui's 1995 visit to the United States—underscoring the gravity of China's concern. The statement responding to North Korea's second nuclear test reiterated the harsh language used to condemn the first test. Both statements expressed the Chinese government's "resolute opposition" to the nuclear tests and said that China "strongly demands" that the DPRK abide by its non-nuclearization commitments, "stop actions that may lead to a further deterioration of the situation," and "return to the track of the Six-Party Talks." The only significant difference between the two statements is that the 2009 statement omitted the word "flagrantly" in describing North Korea's conduct. This omission should not be construed as indicating a milder reaction compared to the 2006 nuclear test.¹ Indeed, Beijing did not object to the language used to condemn the North's action in UN Security Council Resolution 1874, which accused Pyongyang of acting in "violation and flagrant disregard" of Council resolutions.

At the same time, however, China sought to restrain the international community from reacting too strongly to the North Korean test, fearing that excessive punishment could set in motion an uncontrollable escalatory cycle. China's Foreign Min-

istry spokesman cautioned the UN Security Council, which convened in emergency session, to consider only actions “conducive to achieving the non-nuclearization of the Korean Peninsula,” and urged “all parties concerned to seek a calm and proper response and to pursue peaceful resolution of the issue through consultation and dialogue.”² Following the unanimous adoption on June 12 of UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1874, China’s Foreign Ministry spokesman voiced the government’s firm opposition to the nuclear test, but emphasized that China supports sanctions not to punish Pyongyang, but to persuade it to reconsider its actions and return to negotiations. He asserted that, “Imposing sanctions is not the purpose of the UN Security Council’s move. . . . The resolution just adopted by the UN Security Council sends a positive signal to the DPRK, leaving room for all parties to peacefully settle the DPRK nuclear issue through dialogue.” China also insisted on including a clause in the resolution stating that sanctions could be suspended or lifted if North Korea comes into compliance with relevant provisions of resolutions 1718 and 1874.

China’s Foreign Ministry spokesman also stated that, “As a sovereign country and a member of the United Nations, the DPRK’s sovereignty, territorial integrity and reasonable security concerns and development interests should be respected.” Once North Korea rejoins the NPT, he maintained, it should “have the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.”³ Speaking at the UN, China’s Ambassador Zhang Yesui admonished that, “Under no circumstances should there be the use of force or the threat of the use of force.”⁴

In the deliberations at the United Nations, China used its influence to water down some of the sanctions that could hurt North Korea most, not because it opposed exerting pressure in principle, but because it feared specific measures could be counterproductive and increase the likelihood of greater tension and conflict. For example, the United States, Britain and France favored making it mandatory for all states to search North Korean ships suspected of carrying illicit cargo, but China and Russia opposed. The agreed upon language in the resolution only “calls on” states to conduct inspections to ensure that North Korea is in compliance with all UN Security Council resolutions. China’s Foreign Ministry spokesman indicated that China “understands the concerns of relevant nations participating in the Proliferation Security Initiative,” and “agrees with the nonproliferation objective” of PSI. However, he added that China, along with other members of the international community, continues to have concerns that PSI includes actions “outside the domain of international law.”⁵

After the 2006 nuclear test, Beijing relied on active diplomacy to manage the crisis. Special envoy Tang Jiaxuan visited Washington and Moscow immediately following the test. Tang was then dispatched to Pyongyang, where he met with Kim Jong Il and elicited the concession that, “I have no plans for additional nuclear-weapon tests.” China was able to bring North Korea and the United States back to the dialogue table within three weeks of the test. After the second nuclear test, Beijing

not only refrained from sending a special envoy to get negotiations back on track, it canceled a visit by Vice Chairwoman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee Chen Zhili to Pyongyang.⁶ Plans to send State Councilor Dai Bingguo to North Korea were also scrapped.⁷ China may have deliberately intended to signal its intention to work more closely with the United States and other countries at the United Nations to curb North Korea's nuclear development efforts. The decision to send China's negotiator for the Six Party Talks, Wu Dawei, to Russia, Japan, the ROK and the United States in early July supports this proposition. Beijing may also have calculated that given North Korea's rejection of the Six Party Talks and its abandonment of its denuclearization commitments, there was little possibility for near-term compromise and therefore no point in dispatching an envoy to meet with Kim Jong Il.

WHY CHINA BACKED HARSHER MEASURES

In addition to condemning the May 25th nuclear test in the strongest terms, UNSCR 1874 tightened sanctions against North Korea by blocking funding for nuclear, missile and proliferation activities through targeted sanctions on additional goods, persons and entities, widening the ban on arms imports-exports and calling on member states to inspect and destroy all banned cargo to and from North Korea—on the high seas, at seaports and at airports—if they have reasonable grounds to suspect a violation.⁸ China's willingness to support tougher sanctions despite its concerns about the potential unintended consequences is largely a result of the circumstances surrounding the second nuclear test, which were significantly different from those that prevailed in 2006.

For one, the Obama administration had recently come to power and offered to extend its hand to countries that unclenched their fists. China welcomed the United States' firm commitment to achieving denuclearization of the Peninsula through the Six Party Talks and its willingness to build on the accomplishments of the latter years of the Bush administration. By contrast, in October 2006, the Bush administration was refusing to lift the financial sanctions it had imposed on North Korea and was perceived by the Chinese to be hampering a resumption of the Six Party Talks.

Furthermore, following its first nuclear test, North Korea did not declare its intention to withdraw from the Six Party Talks. Three weeks after the detonation, in part in response to China's urging, Pyongyang agreed to rejoin the talks. Following the April 13, 2009, UN Security Council presidential statement condemning North Korea's April 5th missile test, the North Koreans announced that they would "never participate in such Six Party Talks." This was undoubtedly viewed by China as a slap in the face since the Six Party Talks are widely considered to be one of China's major foreign policy achievements. Indeed, in the aftermath of the April 5th missile test, Pyongyang declared that it would no longer be bound by any agreement reached in the Six Party Talks. After the adoption of UNSC Resolution 1874 condemning the test, the North Koreans asserted that, "It has become an absolutely impossible op-

tion for North Korea to even think about giving up its nuclear weapons.” In 2006, North Korea had not renounced its pledge to denuclearize.

Moreover, the low yield of the October 2006 test raised doubts in some places about whether it was in fact a nuclear explosion. There was general agreement that the May 2009 nuclear test was successful, despite uncertainty of the exact yield and the failure of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) to detect radionuclides.

CHINA’S INTERESTS ON THE PENINSULA

China’s core interests on the peninsula are: peace, stability, no hostile foreign presence and no nuclear weapons. Maintaining peace is the highest priority. The Chinese fought a bloody war alongside North Korea in the early 1950s that resulted in high casualties and strategic losses for Beijing. Chinese leaders are determined to avoid getting embroiled in another military conflict on the peninsula that would set back China’s economic development and spoil the relatively favorable strategic environment that the government has worked for decades to foster. Even if China excises the clause in the 1961 Sino-North Korea Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance that obligates it to defend North Korea against unprovoked aggression, China would not be a bystander or passive observer if hostilities break out.

Beijing’s second priority is preserving stability on the peninsula. Instability in North Korea, whether economic or political, could trigger a flood of refugees crossing the border into China creating a potential humanitarian crisis and threatening social stability in a volatile region of the country. In addition, the Chinese worry that instability in the North could prompt the South to seize the opportunity to achieve reunification, resulting in a possible military conflict.

China’s third priority is to avoid the presence of a hostile foreign country close to its northeastern border. For decades the Chinese have viewed North Korea as a physical buffer against an American military presence on their northeastern border. The advent of long-range strike capabilities and China’s development of normal and amicable relations with Seoul have reduced the salience of a “buffer state” in China’s strategy and interests. Nonetheless, China remains wary of the presence and possible deployment of military forces by an antagonistic country along its border. Although Sino-US relations are improving and cooperation between the two countries is expanding, suspicion persists that the United States seeks to slow or inhibit China’s reemergence as a great power.

Maintaining a nuclear-free Peninsula is important to Chinese interests, but, at least so far, has been deemed less critical than the three interests discussed above. The continued development of nuclear weapons by North Korea doesn’t pose an existential threat to China, but it threatens to result in a significant deterioration in China’s strategic environment. In a worst-case scenario, Japan, South Korea and

even Taiwan could feel compelled to develop nuclear capabilities. Even if decisions are not made to develop nuclear weapons, it is certain that if North Korea's weapons efforts persist and appear irreversible, South Korea and Japan will undertake enhanced defense efforts to protect their security interests, and could possibly develop additional missile defense or longer range strike assets. Such steps might be taken in conjunction with the United States or as part of efforts to build more autonomous military capabilities to respond to a potential crisis. Any of these developments—a nuclearized Northeast Asia, stronger defense integration among Japan, South Korea and the United States, or enhanced indigenous conventional programs in South Korea and Japan—would have a detrimental impact on China's security environment.

A nuclear-armed North Korea could also have profoundly destabilizing repercussions for the international non-proliferation regime. The failure to halt and reverse North Korea's nuclear program could provide precedent for other states to pursue nuclear weapons options or, as in the case of Iran, to decide to not give them up. The further weakening and even ultimate collapse of the NPT would have destabilizing consequences both regionally and globally, and would likely be of grave concern to Beijing.

Another danger posed by a nuclear North Korea is the possible sale or transfer of nuclear materials, technology or knowhow by Pyongyang to a third country or non-state actor. Such proliferation would affect China's interests in several ways. For one, the United States and other countries would undoubtedly adopt a much harsher policy toward North Korea, which could even include the possible use of force to stop further proliferation. Also, members of the United Nations, including China, would be expected to strengthen efforts to inspect, interdict or otherwise prevent such transfers. Heretofore, Beijing has been reluctant to join collective efforts to counter proliferation activities.

Finally, if instability should occur while North Korea remains in possession of nuclear weapons material and weapons, there would be a high likelihood that the United States would intervene to seize control over WMD assets. The possibility of US intervention in a denuclearized North Korea would be much lower. The risk also exists that the North's nuclear weapons could be inherited by Seoul as the result of a reunified Korean Peninsula.

In my view, the preservation of a divided Korea remains a Chinese preference, but is not a core interest. The status quo, even with its many dangers and liabilities is still judged by China to be better than the uncertainties that a united Korea would pose. Beijing worries that the process of transition during reunification could be very unstable and unpredictable. The Chinese are also not confident that their interests could be protected adequately if Korea were unified. However, faced with North Korea's unremitting destabilizing actions, a new consensus may be forming around the assessment that North Korea is a strategic liability for China.

Can China be persuaded that its interests can be protected in a united Korea? I believe this is more possible today than ever before. There is greater cooperation between the United States and China on important security issues than in the past. Relations between China and South Korea are solid and expanding in all realms. Although there is a pressing need for the United States, China and South Korea to engage in contingency planning talks aimed at coordinating their responses to instability in North Korea, these discussions should begin with our respective visions for the future of the Korean Peninsula. A key topic to be addressed is our respective core interests and what is necessary to protect them. This should include reassurances and guarantees that can be provided to ease concerns, such as a pledge to not deploy US troops north of the 38th parallel.

AN UNUSUALLY OPEN DEBATE

In the wake of Pyongyang's second nuclear test, there has been remarkably open discussion about North Korea in the Chinese media. In general, Chinese media coverage of North Korea has become more permissive in recent years. Only five years ago, the journal *Strategy and Management* was shut down because it published an article advocating an adjustment of Sino-DPRK relations and criticizing North Korea's leadership, evoking fierce protest from Pyongyang. Following North Korea's first nuclear test in 2006, many commentaries were published in the Chinese press, some of which disparaged North Korea and questioned the appropriateness of Chinese policy, but those that proposed taking harsh measures against North Korea only appeared in the PRC-controlled Hong Kong press or other media sources intended for foreign audiences.⁹

Following the May 2009 nuclear test, China's media coverage of North Korea broke new ground in its openness. The wide diversity of opinions covered is especially notable. Some voices cautioned against adjusting Beijing's policy toward Pyongyang, stressing North Korea's value to China as a strategic asset and even openly blaming the United States for the lack of progress in the Six Party Talks and the deterioration of the situation.¹⁰ One analyst warned that until the United States is willing to "give up containing China, the DPRK will still be an important link...This means that besides being China's strategic burden, the DPRK is at the same time an important strategic resource."¹¹ Another expert referred to the DPRK as a "natural screen and effective lever balancing the US-Japanese hegemonic strategic alliance."¹²

At the other end of the spectrum of opinion, Chinese analysts criticized Beijing for its failure to get tough with North Korea. A prominent Chinese North Korea expert wrote in a Foreign Ministry journal, that China "cannot tolerate or accommodate" North Korea's "extreme adventurist policy" because Beijing's "core interests" in regional stability lie in "denuclearization of the peninsula." The expert added that, if China wants to become a "world power," it will have to "put its responsibilities and duties" to the international community above those to North Korea.¹³ The popular newspaper *Huanqiu Shibao* conducted a survey of 20 experts on international affairs

and found them evenly divided between those that supported more severe sanctions on North Korea and those that opposed such actions. Six of the experts believed that the Six Party Talks had failed.¹⁴

Discussion of North Korea's political situation was previously deemed too sensitive for publication in the Chinese domestic media, but in recent months numerous articles have appeared analyzing the leadership succession issue.¹⁵ Another surprising development is reporting characterizing the disapproving attitudes of the Chinese public. According to one article, "Chinese peoples' attitudes toward North Korea have fallen to a historic low since the North's latest nuclear moves. Confusion, anxiety and disappointment are common among ordinary Chinese. The emotional ties connecting them to North Korea are no longer secure. And this is definitely not good news for North Korea."¹⁶ The role of public opinion in Chinese policy toward North Korea is becoming increasingly significant. After the second nuclear test, Chinese netizens living close to the Sino-DPRK border expressed fears that the test could cause an increase in disease from exposure to radiation and possible contamination of the water supply.¹⁷

The almost freewheeling debate in the Chinese media suggests that, at least for the time being, senior policy makers are encouraging commentators and analysts to voice their opinions and recommendations for Chinese policy. It is likely that government, party and military departments are holding internal meetings to assess the challenging situation that China faces and consider policy options. Some of the experts who are voicing opinions in the Chinese media are undoubtedly included in these policy consultation sessions.

It is possible, perhaps even likely, that the ongoing debate among experts reflects a sharp divergence of views among senior Chinese policy makers and leaders over policy toward North Korea. According to one source, there was a heated discussion of China's North Korea policy at a meeting of the foreign affairs leading group convened in mid-June. Due to the lack of consensus, no adjustment in policy was made. Diverse opinions and perspectives can be expected to continue to appear in the media until a policy consensus is reached and guidelines are issued.

PREDICTING FUTURE POLICY

Whether China's policy toward North Korea will change, in what direction and to what extent, is not yet settled. However, it is apparent that some of the assumptions and assessments that have underpinned China's past policy toward the North Korea nuclear issue are being reexamined. Understanding the rethinking of prior assumptions may provide some insights into future Chinese policy.

Chinese officials admit privately that they now believe that their assessment that North Korea desired nuclear weapons primarily as a bargaining chip was wrong. Even prior to the inception of the Six Party Talks, Chinese policy was based on the judgment that Pyongyang was using its nuclear weapons program to gain security assur-

ances, money, light water reactors and ultimately a normal diplomatic relationship with Washington. The Chinese now maintain that acquiring a nuclear deterrent and gaining recognition as a nuclear weapons state are important goals for North Korea. Now that Pyongyang has adamantly rejected the US demand that denuclearization precede normalization of relations, the Chinese no longer believe that North Korea's top priority is to normalize ties with the United States. The North Koreans may want a better relationship with the United States the Chinese say, but at least for the time being, they won't give up their nuclear weapons to obtain it.

A second assumption that the Chinese have reluctantly reconsidered is that the Six Party Talks are the best way to achieve denuclearization. Although Beijing continues to insist that diplomacy is the only path forward, there is now overwhelming pessimism in Beijing that the Six Party Talks can attain the desired goal. Recognizing that Pyongyang has rejected returning to the talks, China has played down their importance. Statements by China's foreign ministry spokesmen have shifted to an emphasis on peacefully resolving the issue through dialogue, with less attention paid to any specific mechanism.¹⁸ China has not abandoned hope that the Six Party Talks can serve in the future as a venue for dialogue among the various parties and play a role in managing the crisis, but they are dubious that the talks can resume anytime soon and that, by themselves, they can achieve a deal that eliminates all of North Korea's nuclear weapons.

A third issue that the Chinese have reexamined is the role of sanctions and pressure in policy toward North Korea. Although Beijing remains wary of putting excessive pressure on Pyongyang for the reasons discussed above, it recognizes that it is necessary to clearly signal to North Korea that its destabilizing behavior is unacceptable and views targeted sanctions as one of the ways to achieve that goal. Put differently, the Chinese have come to believe that sanctions and pressure must be part of, but not the sole focus of, a strategy to persuade North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons. This shift in China's assessment of the use of sanctions in handling the North Korea nuclear challenge was first evidenced in the wake of the 2006 nuclear test (China's attitude towards applying unilateral pressure may have changed as early as 2003, when it reportedly suspended oil deliveries to North Korea for a few days), but is even clearer today.

As it approaches the future handling of North Korea, China can be expected to cooperate with the international community to some extent in pressuring Pyongyang to abandon the path it is currently on, including the range of destabilizing actions that it has taken, and return to the commitments it agreed to in the Six Party Talks. Because China now accepts the indispensable role of pressure in dealing with North Korea, wants to be seen as a responsible member of the international community and the United Nations, and has growing concerns about proliferation, it will likely cooperate to a significant extent in implementing UNSCR 1874 and 1718. Specifically, China will likely agree to inspect North Korean planes and ships in Chinese ports and airports that are suspected of carrying prohibited (i.e. WMD, missile-related, or

heavy military) equipment and materiel, although there could be disagreement on what constitutes “reasonable grounds.”

As part of a broader message to North Korea that it should not take Chinese assistance for granted, Beijing could also take unilateral steps to squeeze the North.¹⁹ Chinese officials privately note that a large package of supplemental assistance was agreed upon during Vice President Xi Jinping’s visit to North Korea in June 2008, and suggest that delivery of elements of that package could be delayed or cancelled. China could also adopt strict customs and inspections procedures to slow transactions at border crossings. It could seek to crack down on North Korean companies engaged in illegal activities, such as currency counterfeiting and drug smuggling. Beijing could also take subtle measures aimed at making it difficult for North Korean banks to do business in China. Oil deliveries through pipelines could also be slowed or suspended, as many believe they have been in the past. China could also delay negotiations of the next aid package for North Korea, which is usually conducted every five years.

However, Beijing will remain cautious overall, as it continues to worry about the unpredictable consequences of a policy of disproportionate pressure, especially if it sees that pressure as not closely integrated into a diplomatic strategy. Even if Chinese leaders ultimately conclude that North Korea is a strategic liability for China, it is likely to have persisting concerns about risking instability in the North and provoking hostile responses from Pyongyang that could undermine peace and stability in the region. Thus, the bottom line is that if the United States leads with a strategy of strictly implementing its obligations under the relevant UN Security Council resolutions while remaining firmly opposed to nuclear weapons on the peninsula and open to negotiations with North Korea when it is ready to engage, China can be expected to contribute to and not undermine the effectiveness of such a strategy. However, Beijing’s willingness to squeeze Pyongyang will nevertheless continue to fall short of what many hope for. And in the absence of a relationship of greater strategic trust with the United States, reassurances that its interests would be protected and certainty that the process would be peaceful, Chinese support for “regime change” in North Korea is even less likely. ☹️

NOTES

¹ My personal speculation is that the use of the term “flagrantly” in 2006 evoked harsh criticism domestically because many who strongly opposed the test did not support the use of that term, which had been used previously to condemn the actions of the imperialists and prior adversaries, not to describe the actions of an ally. Beijing may have opted to not use the term after the second nuclear test so as to avoid the divisive domestic consequences.

² Xinhua in English, May 26, 2009. CPP20090526968214.

³ Xinhua, June 12, 2009, CPP20090612354001.

- ⁴ “Analysis” by Gu Zhenqiu, Bai Jie, and Wang Xiangjiang, Xinhua, June 13, 2009, CPP20090613968098.
- ⁵ Xinhua, June 2, 2009. CPP20090602172017.
- ⁶ China’s foreign ministry spokesman said the postponement was due to “itinerary reasons.” Transcript of Foreign Ministry News Conference, June 2, 2009, Open Source Center (OSC), CPP20090602038001.
- ⁷ “Beijing Calls Off Plans to Send Envoy to Pyongyang,” Chosun Ilbo Online, June 18, 2009.
- ⁸ Security Council SC/9679, June 12, 2009. <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2009/sc9679.doc.htm>
- ⁹ For example, an article by Huang Wanzhuan entitled “Rationally Deal with North Korea’s Nuclear Test,” stated that “if the North Korean government continues on its current dangerous policy, the Chinese people cannot but call on the Chinese government to resolutely cut off the supply of energy resources to North Korea so as to force this country to return to the six party talks...” Ta Kung Pao, October 11, 2006, OSC, CPP20061011718006. Another article posted on the People’s Daily website in English only and carried by the overseas edition of the party daily Renmin Ribao reported that if the DPRK does not halt steps that “worsen the situation,” China might stop oil and grain shipments to North Korea, October 17. Renmin Ribao, October 19, 2006, OSC, CPP20061019701005.
- ¹⁰ See, for example, Wang Linchang, “The Tone of China’s Policy Toward North Korea Must Not Change Just Because it Conducted Another Nuclear Test,” Huanqiu Shibao, June 12, 2009, OSC, CPP20090618710003.
- ¹¹ Zhan Debin, “Has the DPRK Become China’s Strategic Burden?” Huanqiu Shibao Online, June 3, 2009, OSC, CPP20090603710011.
- ¹² Ren Weidong, “The DPRK-US Relationship is the Crucial Point in the Peninsula Issue,” Liaowang, June 29, 2009, no. 26, p.58. OSC, CPP20090707710015.
- ¹³ Cai Jian, “How Should China Respond to the Resurgence of the North Korean Nuclear Issue,” Shijie Zhishi, May 1, 2009, OSC, CPP20090514671009.
- ¹⁴ Tang Xiang, “Many Noted Chinese Scholars Support More Severe Sanctions To Be Imposed on DPRK,” Huanqiu Shibao Online, May 26, 2009, OSC, CPP20090526710008.
- ¹⁵ See, for example, Qiao Kan, “General Secretary Kim Jong-il and His Children, Huanqiu Renwu, March 16, 2009, OSC, CPP20090515671001.
- ¹⁶ “Why Does North Korea Offend Chinese Folk With its ‘Ingratitude’?” Huanqiu Shibao, June 5, 2009, OSC, CPP20090603786001.
- ¹⁷ Postings from Chinese website Yanbian Xinxi Gang on May 25, 2009. OSC, May 25, 2009, KPP20090527032004.
- ¹⁸ Answering a question in mid-June about whether Beijing has stopped using the phrase “Six-Party Talks,” the spokesman omitted reference to the talks: “I want to stress that the Korean nuclear issue could only be solved peacefully through dialogue and consultations, among other political and diplomatic means. China is willing to work together with other parties so as to push the issue back to the track of peaceful resolution through dialogue and consultations, among other political and diplomatic means.” Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Qin Gang’s Regular Press Conference, June 16, 2009, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw/s2510/t568094.htm>.
- ¹⁹ At a press briefing in Seoul, a senior U.S. State Department official reported said that “China is in the process of developing its own implementation plan to impose sanctions on North Korea.” “China Preparing Its Own Sanctions on North Korea,” Chosun Ilbo Online, July 10, 2009, OSC, KPP20090710971061.