

《Summary》

Japan's Foreign Policy Dilemma vis-à-vis North Korea —the Nuclear Issue, the Abduction Issue, and Diplomatic Normalization—

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The purpose of this paper is to examine Japan's relations with North Korea which have been deadlocked for a long time. Former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi made a dramatic visit to Pyongyang on September 17, 2002 and held a summit meeting with Chairman Kim Jong-Il, and signed the "Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration." Since then Japan has made a continuous effort to normalize diplomatic relations with North Korea. However, clear differences in priorities have emerged in the process of bilateral negotiations. It is the Japanese government's desire to put the abduction issue, the nuclear and security issue, and the normalization issue on the same table and solve all these problems in a comprehensive manner. This implies that to the Japanese government, the abduction issue is a top priority to be resolved along with the other issues, in view of strong public opinion in Japan. To North Korea, on the other hand, the normalization issue is the top priority, as they demand a full apology and adequate compensation for Japan's colonial past. They have reiterated that the abduction issue is something "already settled."

Meanwhile, North Korea's repeated nuclear testing and launching of missiles over the Sea of Japan has dampened the negotiating process. The Six-Party Talks intended to halt North Korea's nuclear development are coming to a stalemate. There are subtle but substantial differences in national interests as well as in attitudes among the five participating countries facing North Korea in the Six-Party Talks. Furthermore, U.S. economic sanctions and North Korea's efforts to retrieve money once frozen in a Macao bank complicated the whole situation. To date, North Korea failed to meet the agreed deadline to declare all the nuclear weapons programs by the end of December 2007. Whether or not North Korea will honor the agreement at all remains to be seen.

This paper, first, examines differences in priorities in foreign policy between Japan and North Korea. Second, the paper focused on the reasons why the Six-Party Talks are not making the progress expected toward North Korea's denuclearization. Third, the conflicting interests and differences among the five countries toward North Korea are analyzed. Fourth, recent changes and developments in Japan and other countries are examined. Finally, different approaches and alternatives regarding diplomatic relations between Japan and North Korea are considered.