

Institution: University of Cambridge
Unit of Assessment: UoA27
Title of case study: Regional security in East Asia and the Political Situation on the Korean Peninsula
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Dr Swenson-Wright's research into mechanisms for resolving the security challenge of a nuclear North Korea combines collaboration with a broad range of policy communities, advocacy and advisory work with the UK and Republic of Korea (ROK) governments, engagement with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) (including unique educational and cultural initiatives between Britain and the DPRK), contact with policy makers, politicians, military officers, corporate and nongovernmental representatives, as well as frequent interaction with the international media and the general public. His research has had an impact on government policy, training military personnel, deepening public and media understanding of the Korean situation, and persuading business leaders to engage with the DPRK.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>John Swenson-Wright became a member of the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies in 1995, initially joining as an Assistant Lecturer. He became a Lecturer in 1996 and a Senior Lecturer in 2008. His research is on the international relations of Northeast Asia, with reference to the security challenge of a nuclear North Korea and its impact on regional political and security alliances involving the United States, Japan, and South Korea. It involves exploring the options for using international engagement with the DPRK as a means of alleviating regional tensions and re-integrating the DPRK into the international community. In the latter case, the issue of providing humanitarian, cultural and educational assistance to the DPRK, whether via NGOs or individual governments (such as the UK) is an important practical issue that stems directly from his research.</p> <p>By analysing both the historical evolution of the policies towards the DPRK of key regional actors in Northeast Asia, notably the United States, South Korea and Japan, as well as contemporary developments in North Korea policy, Dr Swenson-Wright's research has highlighted the strengths and weakness of a competing range of policies towards the North, encompassing economic and political sanctions, positive inducements such as partial political and diplomatic recognition and various forms of engagement, including the provision of humanitarian aid, economic assistance and cultural and educational contact.</p> <p>Methodologically, Dr Swenson-Wright's research has involved an exhaustive study of the secondary and primary literature relating to East Asian Security and the DPRK. It has also involved direct contact, interviews, and practical cooperative initiatives with government officials, academics, NGO representatives, journalists and human rights activists and military personnel in the UK, US, Japan, South Korea and the DPRK. This direct contact, based on lengthy periods of research leave in East Asia and extensive language training in both Korean and Japanese, has been indispensable in allowing him to assess the merits of different approaches for dealing with the DPRK.</p> <p>Through his involvement and leadership role in a number of track II and track 1.5 initiatives sponsored by organizations such as the Korea Global Agenda Council of the World Economic Forum, the UK-Korea Forum for the Future, the UK-Japan 21st Century Group, Chatham House, the Pyongyang Literary Festival voluntary organization, and the Nippon Foundation, Dr Swenson-Wright has been able to directly observe and assess the efficacy of a number of different approaches for dealing with the DPRK. His research has concluded that, notwithstanding the importance of close coordination between the US and its regional allies as well as the use of sanctions and incentives in encouraging the DPRK to abandon its provocative stance on nuclear weapons, sustained progress with North Korea requires a serious commitment to long-term</p>

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engagement with the DPRK in the broad arena of cultural, educational and diplomatic contact. “Engagement” in this context should be seen not as a reward to the North for constructive behaviour, but rather as an end in itself – a necessary process that can help to create confidence and trust between the key regional actors.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- “Is Japan Truly ‘Back’: Prospects for a more Proactive Security Policy,” Chatham House Briefing Paper, June, 2013. Available online at: <http://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/papers/view/192477>
- “Inter-Korean relations and the challenge of North-East Asian Regional Security,” in Andrew T. H. Tan, ed. East and South-East Asia International Relations and Security Perspectives (London: Routledge, 2013)
- “The Role of Japan in the International Relations of East Asia,” in Ruediger Frank and John Swenson-Wright, eds. Korea and East Asia: The Stony Road to Collective Security (Leiden: Brill, 2012)
- “The Limits of Normality: Japanese-Korean Post-Cold War Interactions,” in David Welch, ed. Japan as a Normal Nation (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011)
- “Auditing Engagement: Human Security, Economic Contact and the DPRK – Past Initiatives and Future Opportunities,” *Dealing with North Korean Instabilities and the Future of the Korean Peninsula*, (Seoul, Republic of Korea: Center for International Studies, Seoul National University, 2010)
- “East Asia: Consistency and Sensitivity Needed in a Strategically Vital Region,” in Robin Niblet, ed., *America and A Changed World: a Question of Leadership* (London: WileyBlackwell, 2010)
- “Contending with Regional Uncertainty: Japan’s Response to Contemporary East Asian Security Challenges,” in Patricia Nelson and Marie Sodeberg, eds, *Perspectives on Change in Japanese Politics and Economics*, (Routledge, 2010)

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Dr Swenson-Wright’s research and related-activities have had an impact on five broad categories of actors: business and the private sector; government; the military; the media and the general public; and nongovernmental organizations. Much of this impact has been generated by the research that he has conducted during periods of extended research leave in the ROK and the DPRK.

4.1 Business and the Private Sector

- a. WEF and the Korea Global Agenda Council. The WEF is actively considering the possibility of using its considerable international influence and prestige to engage directly with the DPRK and to foster cooperative dialogue between China, the ROK and Japan to alleviate regional tensions. Since 2010 Dr Swenson-Wright has been centrally involved in both these initiatives and his research findings have helped to shape the deliberations and findings of the GAC and in turn the position of the WEF through direct discussions with senior figures in the WEF, including Klaus Schwab, Executive Director of the WEF. (See 5.1)
- b. Dr Swenson-Wright has also provided consultative advice over the past two years to two key private organizations that have been involved in direct talks with the DPRK, viz. The Elders, an independent group, established in 2007 of former global leaders, including Kofi Annan and Jimmy Carter; and Intermediate, a UK based private consulting firm headed by Tony Blair’s former Chief of Staff. (See 5.2)

4.2. Government

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- a. Dr Swenson-Wright has routinely provided direct advice on Korean issues to research staff in the UK Foreign Office, across Whitehall departments, to outgoing UK ambassadors to Seoul and Pyongyang, and occasionally to the Policy Planning division of the Foreign Office. (See 5.3)
- b. Dr Swenson-Wright has testified on two occasions (in 2008 and 2006) to the UK Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee and his advice has been directly cited in the reports of the committee that in turn have formed the basis for the committee's recommendations. (See 5.6 and 5.7)
- c. Dr Swenson-Wright has worked in close collaboration with the UK Embassy in the DPRK and the British Council to facilitate the Chevening Scholarship scheme, enabling two DPRK students/officials to study at Cambridge in 2011-12; a further two students are expected at Cambridge for the 2013-14 year under the same scheme. (See 5.3)
- d. Via his membership since 2008 of the UK-Korea Forum for the Future, Dr Swenson-Wright's has helped shape the annual policy recommendations that the Forum provides to the UK and ROK governments. These have included recommendations supporting the promotion of Korean studies in the UK and educational exchange between the UK and the DPRK. (See 5.3)
- e. Through the presentation of his research on Korea to the 2013 meeting of the UK-Japan 21st Century Group, Dr Swenson-Wright has similarly shaped the policy recommendations on regional security of the UK-Japan 21st Century Group to the UK and Japanese governments.
- f. Through two visits to the DPRK in 2004 and 2012, Dr Swenson-Wright was able to liaise directly with DPRK government officials, academics and representatives of the DPRK Writers Union, thereby facilitating academic exchange and establishing the foundation for the planned Literary Festival. Through a visit to Chatham House by former speaker of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly, Mr. Choe Tae-bok, Dr Swenson-Wright secured Mr. Choe's official role as Patron of the Literary Festival, a step that was critically important in persuading the DPRK government to endorse the festival. (See 5.3)

4.3 The Military

- a. Dr Swenson-Wright has been a regular guest lecturer on Korean security issues at the Joint Services Command and Staff College, of UK Defence Academy, in Shrivenham, since 2007. He has lectured to senior staff officers from more than 100 countries, to audiences in excess of 200. He also has been a regular lecturer at the Royal College of Defence Studies, lecturing to senior military staff officers from a wide number of countries. (See 5.5)

4.4 Media and the General Public

- a. Dr Swenson-Wright's research has directly informed the interviews and analytical pieces he has provided to the international media. For example, the BBC has commissioned numerous opinion pieces from him and these are accessible to a global audience online, along with broadcast television and radio pieces. Such commentary is also available to BBC journalists who have used his expertise in their reporting on Korea and East Asia. (See 5.8 to 5.15 inclusive)
- b. Dr Swenson-Wright has also provided "expert commentary" on Korea and Japan, online, via the Asia Program at Chatham House, to which he has been affiliated since 2002. At Chatham House he has hosted a number of international conferences, most recently in 2013 on Japan, which have typically attracted audiences (composed of the general public) in excess of 200 people. His specialized briefing and research papers are available online to a global audience and to the General Membership of Chatham House. (See 5.4)
- c. Public lectures at the Frontline Club in London and a keynote speech to more than 500 guests at a ceremony in Seoul in 2012 commemorating former President Kim Dae-jung's Nobel Peace Prize, have allowed him make the argument for pragmatic engagement with the DPRK to large and diverse audiences in the UK and ROK. (See 5.15)

4.5 Nongovernmental Organizations

Through his work exploring the issue of Human Security and the DPRK, he has been able to contribute to the important public advocacy work of organization such as the Citizens Alliance for Human Rights in North Korea, the RAFTO Foundation for Human Rights in North Korea, Amnesty International, and the East West Coalition, a Canadian NGO that promotes knowledge exchange and development in the DPRK.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- 5.1 Testimonial from person 1, Professor, Seoul National University, Chair of the Global Agenda Council for Korea of the World Economic Forum.
- 5.2 Testimonial from person 2, former British diplomat and Tony Blair's former Chief of Staff.
- 5.3 Testimonial from person 3, Deputy Head of Mission, UK Embassy, Pyongyang, DPRK.
- 5.4 Testimonial from person 4, Director of Communications and Publishing, Chatham House.
- 5.5 Testimonial from person 5, Director of the Advanced Command and Staff Course, Defence Academy of the UK, including annex detailing student nationalities and numbers.
- 5.6 *Global Security: Japan and Korea*. Testimony to the Foreign Affairs Committee, UK House of Commons, London, March 19, 2008. (See: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmcaff/c449-i/c44902.htm>)
- 5.7 "East Asian and Japan," Testimony to the *Foreign Affairs Subcommittee*, UK House of Commons, London, March 2006. (Transcript of testimony available both in print as House of Commons, Foreign Affairs Committee, *East Asia. Seventh Report of Session, 2005-6, Volume II* (London: The Stationary Office Limited, 2006), pp. 79-95, and also online at: <http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.com/pa/cm200506/cmselect/cmcaff/860/6032201.htm>)
- 5.8 "Viewpoint: What does Pyongyang want?" *BBC News online*, 17 June, 2013, available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-22902119>
- 5.9 "North Korea: Will new UN sanctions persuade or provoke," *BBC News online*, 8 March, 2013, available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-21704871>
- 5.10 "Analysis: What is driving North Korea's nuclear test plan?" *BBC online*, 30 January, 2013, available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-21231204>
- 5.11 "North Korea's Artful Long Game," *Prospect*, April, 2013, available in print and online at: <http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/blog/north-korea-south-korea-kim-ijong-un/#.UiAsRhbU7II>
- 5.12 "China talks tough over North Korea, but is hesitant to act" Comment is Free, *The Guardian*, 14 February, 2013, available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/feb/14/china-north-korean-nuclear-test>
- 5.13 "North Korea: How to Respond," Expert Comment, *Chatham House*, 9 April, 2013, available online at: <http://www.chathamhouse.org/media/comment/view/190679>
- 5.14 "Is Japan Truly 'Back': Prospects for a more Proactive Security Policy," *Chatham House Briefing Paper*, June, 2013. Available online at: http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Asia/0613bp_japan.pdf
- 5.15 Video evidence of Frontline address: "North Korea: Saber-rattling or Imminent Threat, April 23rd, Frontline Club, London: <http://www.frontlineclub.com/is-north-korea-the-ticking-bomb-we-thought-it-to-be/>