



## Chapter 9

# The Need to Restructure Japan and South Korea's Diplomatic Strategy

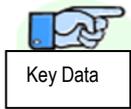
## —Changes in the East Asian Situation and Coordination of Policies on North Korea

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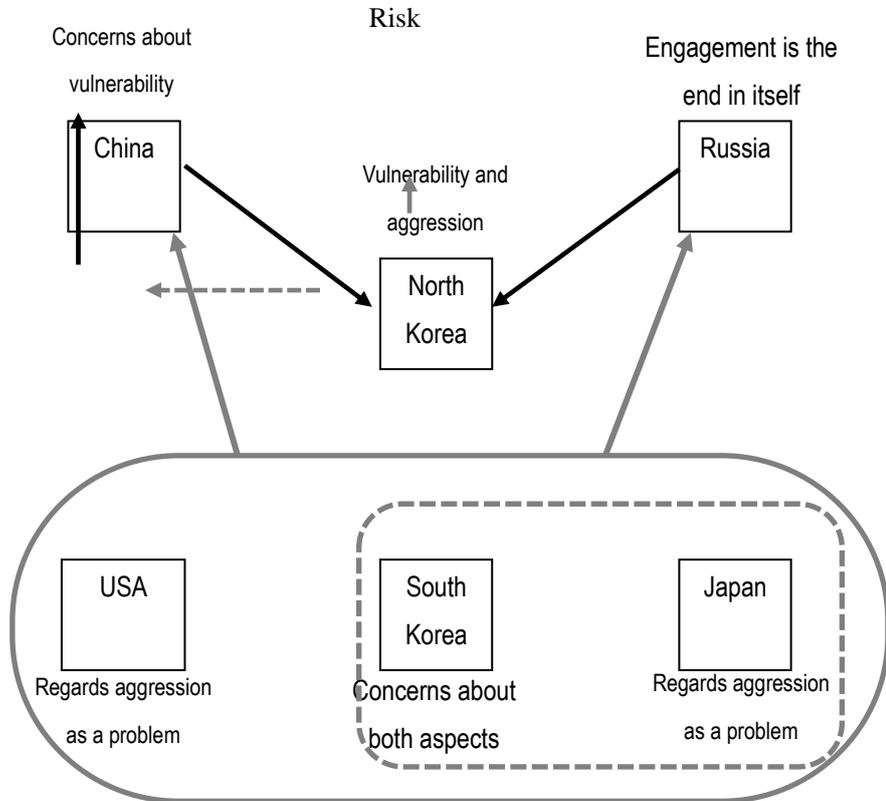
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### [Key Points]

- Cooperation among the relevant countries in such areas as information sharing regarding the North Korea issue is essential, but the response to date – including from Japan and South Korea – has been inadequate. The main reason why the Six-Party Talks were unable to prevent North Korea's nuclear tests is the fact that the countries concerned did not always maintain a united front toward North Korea.
- Maintaining a good bilateral relationship is the basic precondition for Japan-South Korea cooperation in the face of North Korea's actions. North Korea will benefit if cooperation between Japan and South Korea remains difficult. Assuming that China's presence in international politics will grow, cooperation with South Korea will be essential for Japan, if it is to secure adequate space for diplomacy in East Asia.
- The USA must play an appropriate role in tackling the North Korea issue. There are limits to what Japan and South Korea can achieve on their own in terms of lobbying China as well, so trilateral cooperation that involves the USA is an absolute necessity. In early May 2016, North Korea will hold the Congress of the Workers' Party for the first time in 36 years, and there can be no doubt that North Korea's future direction will be set out during this meeting. There would seem to be a need for efforts to restore the spirit of the liaison meetings between Japan, the USA, and South Korea, which previously functioned well, and to institutionalize this trilateral relationship.
- With East Asia's security environment in transition, as China gains power and the North Korean situation changes, the ability of Japan and South Korea to work together to address these developments will determine both countries' standing in East Asia in the future. The medium- to long-term vision will need to take into account the East Asian security environment and illustrate shared ideas for cooperation.



### Relationships between Major Countries Affected by the North Korean



Source: Compiled by the author → indicates the direction of approaches aimed at mitigating risk