



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on April 3, 2017

Trump Pressures China: Restrain N. Korea or U.S. Will Take Unilateral Action

Speaking to the *Financial Times* in an interview published on April 2, President Trump said he will discuss the growing threat posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons program with Chinese President Xi Jinping (shown on right) when the two meet at Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida on April 6 and 7. The summit will be the first meeting between the two world leaders.



"China will either decide to help us with North Korea or they won't," Trump told the *Times*. "If they do, that will be very good for China, and if they don't, it won't be good for anyone."

CNN, in an April 3 report that observed the Trump administration's repeated expressions of concern over North Korea's nuclear weapons program, noted that Secretary of State Rex Tillerson visited China last month, and met for two hours with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi. The primary purpose of that visit, reported CNN, was to seek China's help in mitigating the North Korean threat. Prior to that visit, speaking in Seoul on March 17 at a joint press conference with South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se, Tillerson said that the United States would consider military action against North Korea if it was provoked.

"Certainly, we do not want things to get to a military conflict ... but obviously, if North Korea takes actions that threatens the South Korean forces or our own forces, then that would be met with an appropriate response," Tillerson said.

CNN cited a statement from the Beijing government that quoted China's State Councilor Yang Jiechi, about Xi's upcoming visit to the United States. Yang said the meeting was of "utmost importance in China-U.S. relations" and was important for "promoting peace, stability and prosperity... for the whole world."

The *Financial Times* reported that during the Oval Office interview with FT, Trump made very clear that he would deal with North Korea with or without China's help. When asked if he would consider a "grand bargain" — where China would pressure Pyongyang to stop its nuclear weapons program in exchange for a guarantee that the United States would later remove troops from the Korean peninsula, Trump simply said: "Well if China is not going to solve North Korea, we will. That is all I am telling you."

Trump said it was "totally" possible for the United States to deal with North Korea without China's intervention. When *FT* asked if that meant dealing with Pyongyang one on one, he said: "I don't have to say any more. Totally."

FT also reported that month, Wang Yi, the Chinese foreign minister, made appeals to both North Korea and the United States, urging Pyongyang to halt its missile and nuclear programs, and also urging the



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United States to stop military exercises that anger the North Koreans. “The two sides are like two accelerating trains coming towards each other with neither side willing to give way. The question is, are the two sides really ready for a head-on collision?” Wang said.

The military exercises Wang referred to are a U.S.-South Korean exercise, known as Foal Eagle, which has been conducted since 1997. A report produced by GlobalSecurity.org notes: “FOAL EAGLE is a purely defensive exercise which tests the ability of the Republic of Korea (ROK) to defend itself, assisted by U.S. armed forces.” The Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (established by the Korean Armistice Agreement signed July 27, 1953) monitors the exercise to ensure that there are no violations of the Korean Armistice Agreement.

We noted in [our article of March 14](#) that North Korea has often issued strongly worded statements in response to the Foal Eagle exercise.

In a [previous article published in 2013](#) article, we cited observations about the tense situation on the Korean Peninsula made by Van Hipp, former deputy assistant Secretary of the U.S. Army, and chairman of American Defense International, Inc., in an opinion piece published by Fox News, “What to expect from an erratic North Korea.” After listing half a dozen potential threats presented by the communist regime in Pyongyang, including nuclear weapons tests, Hipp wrote: “The North Korean threat is the greatest nuclear weapons challenge to the United States since the Cold War.”

In that article, we wrote that while Hipp may well be correct in this assessment, U.S. response to the threat is often subjugated to official United Nations direction, in the form of UN resolutions.

We continued by reminding our readers that the present state of the Korean peninsula, divided into a tyrannical communist regime in the North and a free nation in the South, came about as a result of a UN-directed “police action” that has never officially ended.

A report in the Daily Caller on April 3 quoted statements made by U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley on ABC’s *This Week* program related to U.S. attempts to pressure China into using their influence to rein in North Korea’s rogue state actions.

The United States will “no longer take the excuses from China that they’re concerned too. They need to show us how concerned they are. They need to put pressure on North Korea. The only country that can stop North Korea is China,” Haley said.

“You’re going to see President Trump meet with President Xi and a lot of conversation, and the most important conversation will be how we’re going to be dealing with the nonproliferation of North Korea,” our UN ambassador explained.

The Daily Caller also quoted previous statements that Haley made on March 30.

“I have no patience for it, and it is not helping anyone. This administration has no patience for it,” she said. “Look, can we change the way North Korea thinks? No. They’re not going to cave. China can, and that’s the part we want to look at.”

“I know China says they’re worried about North Korea. I know China wants to see North Korea stop with the testing. Prove it. Prove it,” Haley added.

Perhaps the most encouraging thing about Haley’s statements (especially considering her position as our ambassador to the UN) is that she did not propose that the United States seek further UN sanctions as a solution to North Korea’s nuclear program. Such sanctions are not only ineffective, but, in the past, our presidents have cited violations of them as a pretext for U.S. military intervention overseas. Former



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President George W. Bush addressed the UN General Assembly on September 12, 2002 to outline the complaints of the U.S. government against the Iraqi government. Bush stated on March 6, 2003, that he believed that Iraq's leader, Saddam Hussein, was not complying with UN Resolution 1441.

Whenever a U.S. president uses a UN resolution to justify military intervention overseas, instead of asking Congress for a declaration of war (if war is indeed justified) they are wrong on two counts: First, they are usurping the mandate given to Congress by the Constitution to be responsible for declaring war. And, secondly they are ceding control of U.S. foreign policy to the UN, thereby surrendering U.S. sovereignty and setting the stage for U.S. involvement in no-win, UN-directed wars such as those that involved us in the Korean Peninsula in the first place.

However, the U.S. attempt to have China take a role in our foreign policy is also disturbing. While China, as the world's largest communist nation, unquestionably has much influence over its smaller surrogate in Pyongyang, it is also risky to trust them to do what is in our best interests. We would be better off if China refused our demands and forced us to deal with North Korea directly, as Trump has threatened to do. Just as it is bad foreign policy to form entangling alliances, it is also bad foreign policy to cultivate entangling "enemies of our enemies." Our nation will always be better off if we are beholden to no other foreign power or international organization.

Photos of Presidents Donald Trump and Xi Jinping: AP Images

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