
Abstract

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's Strategy
for Possession of Nuclear Weapons

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This paper discusses why nuclear development countries may choose to change their strategies for possession of nuclear weapons, and why the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) chose the strategy of declaring their possession of nuclear weapons, abandoning their strategy of keeping vague their possession of nuclear weapons.

I defined the strategies countries have for possession of nuclear weapons in terms of a threefold choice: visible, opaque or abandoned, introducing the concept proposed by Avner Cohen and Benjamin Frankel. However, Cohen and Frankel failed to explain the variables that affect a country's strategy for possession of nuclear weapons. Thus I proposed the hypothesis of three threat levels: 1) threat from a nuclear country, 2) threat from a non-nuclear country or one suspected of possessing nuclear weapons, and 3) no adversary country, i.e. "non-threat," introducing the theory of T.V. Paul, and tested it by considering the cases of eighteen countries known as nuclear development countries. Furthermore, I examined the causal relation between strategies chosen and the type of political regime: totalitarian, authoritarian or democratic. I had assumed that totalitarian and authoritarian countries would choose visible or opaque strategies and that democratic countries would not.

From what has been discussed above, it might be said that threat levels could have stronger influences on strategies for possession of nuclear weapons than differences of political regime. This conclusion also shows that international politics have stronger influence on a country's strategy for possession of nuclear weapons than do domestic politics.