Article

North East Asia's regional Security Secrets: re-envisaging the Korean crisis

Smith, Hazel Anne

Smith, Hazel Anne (2005) North East Asia's regional Security Secrets: re-envisaging the Korean crisis. Disarmament Forum (2). pp. 45-54. ISSN 1020-7287

North-East Asia's regional security secrets: re-envisaging the Korean crisis

Hazel SMITH

The conventional picture of North-East Asian security is of stark national security threats caused by the alleged menacing behaviour of a highly militarized, nuclear-armed Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea). Not only does this picture obscure the profound human security crisis facing many North Koreans, mis-analysing of regional security problems also contributes to the prevalence and circulation of a fundamentally flawed "conventional wisdom" about what constitutes the security crisis for North-East Asia and consequently what can be done about it. It therefore precludes fruitful policy choices that could help to resolve the multidimensional Korean security crisis that is at the heart of short-, medium- and long-term regional stability.

One reason for the prevailing truncated picture of North-East Asian security is that to consider the more complex, real regional security crisis makes for uncomfortable reading for many of the elites in the region or indeed for extra-regional elites with regional concerns. It would mean making visible what have become almost taboo subjects in terms of their lack of coverage in the international media. These include the absence of a military threat to the region from North Korea, the real risks to regional stability from transborder spill-overs of unregulated capitalism in the DPRK, and the regionally held fear of unilateral US military intervention in North Korea.

Security discourses

Security debates these days are often categorized in mutually exclusive terms as either concerning national security or human security. National security analysts and policy makers worry about territorial integrity and military defence of state borders. They regard "security" as the domain of sovereign states. The international is inherently conflictual and in the end states must rely on their own resources to defend themselves and protect their citizens.

Human security analysts, on the other hand, argue that for most states, security no longer means only the protection of borders against invasion. It also implies protection against social and economic instability caused by disruption from outside the territorial borders. Human security analysts feel that in this globalizing world of porous borders and easy travel we should be more concerned about transborder threats to individual well-being. These may come, for example, from economic downturns, humanitarian and environmental disasters, or transnational crime. Human security concerns normally also imply a sense that one state can no longer—if it ever could—resolve such problems on its own.

Hazel Smith is Professor in International Relations at the University of Warwick. Her latest publication is *Hungry for Peace: International Security, Humanitarian Assistance, and Social Change in North Korea* (forthcoming, United States Institute for Peace Press).

Asian bird flu, for instance, is not just a problem for Thailand or Viet Nam or even just for Asia. Human security analysts prefer therefore to respond to human security threats by way of regional and/or global institutions. These institutions offer multilateral solutions designed, in the main, to be implemented through cooperation, not coercion.

National security and human security analysts have not been very good at incorporating each other's perspectives such as to offer multisectoral analysis.

National security and human security analysts have not been very good at incorporating each other's perspectives such as to offer multisectoral analysis. There is nothing in logic or in practice, however, to prevent a national/human security nexus as the basis for analysis and plenty to recommend it in terms of an increased ability to appreciate the complexity of contemporary security crises. National security concerns in terms of the potential use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) or terrorism against civilians should in fact remain the most basic of human security concerns. By contrast, there are few who would argue that simple territorial stability accompanied by the abrogation of basic political and economic rights offers any kind of meaningful national security to citizens, the regime that rules over them or neighbouring countries that must deal with legal and illegal migration and all manner of negative, unpredictable cross-border spill-over effects.

National and human security discourses can also be reconciled through policy choices that push for multinational solutions to global problems. After all, even in the hardest of security cases when military intervention is mooted, most states (including those often conceived of as diehard unilateralists) value multilateral solutions—whether this be through NATO, or the UN and regional peace-keeping forces. This is why the United States has sought to achieve multilateral backing for every international intervention it has made since the Second World War and why China has insisted that only multilateral, preferably UN-sanctioned, interventions are legal.

The prevalence and influence of the conventional security discourse

The dominant international security debate about North-East Asia focuses on North Korea as the source of most of the region's troubles. The discourse is on WMD including ballistic missiles and nuclear armaments, and of military threats by North Korea against its neighbours. It is commonly believed that there remains the ever-present threat of war caused by an irrational state and government in the DPRK. If human security concerns are mentioned in the context of North-East Asia they are invariably discussed in regard to North Korea's human rights violations. Humanitarian concerns are discussed in the context of the food crisis in North Korea and the consequent inability of the government to feed its people. Transnational crime and trafficking in women also come on to the agenda of the region's media through the prism of alleged North Korean misdemeanours.

Conventional security discourse on and in North-East Asia is of North Korea as the major source of a military security dilemma. Seen in this way, human insecurity is a direct consequence of the militarization of the DPRK and that government's political intransigence and antiquated economic policies. The implication is that once the DPRK military problem is resolved such that the DPRK no longer poses a security threat to the region, then human security problems for North Koreans and neighbouring populations will be solved as an automatic consequence. Human security threats are not, within this conventional security picture, understood as a common problem for all of North-East Asia—transcending borders and requiring common and cooperative solutions.

Conventional security talk is also pessimistic about the possibilities of achieving multilateral or cooperative solutions to the perceived security dilemma of North-East Asia. North-East Asia is known for its comparative absence of regional organizations. Recent years have seen some promotion of the

idea of a North-East Asian community but there remains no appetite for a European Union-type integration venture in East Asia—even in the distant future. The conventional wisdom is that it is difficult to perceive common interests and culture such as to place regional integration on the agenda for any North-East Asian state. Nor is North-East Asia home to even a loose association of states analogous to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which operates by putting aside ideological and economic disparity in order to formulate common approaches to shared concerns.

The dominant or conventional security discourse is influential globally, informing the foreign policies of major states—including the United States, Japan and all Western states from the European Union members to Australia and New Zealand. Its analysis permeates ASEAN members even if these states do not share the policy options of isolation and containment that have sometimes flowed from the dominant analysis. ASEAN prefers its own distinct method of conflict resolution and negotiation to achieve elite consensus and cooperative solutions.

The dominant approach is by no means universal, however, and obscures more complex intra-regional security dynamics. In China, for instance, the major North-East Asian security debate is not about North Korea, but about the perceived threat to the region from Taiwanese independence claims. Other concerns highlighted throughout the region although barely mentioned in the western media are the still extant territorial conflicts, regional rivalries and ideological differences between North-East Asia's major states—China, Russia, Japan and both Koreas. The bitterness engendered by the Japanese colonial period of the first half of twentieth century is still prevalent and a significant factor in domestic politics in China and both Koreas. Ideological differences between communist China and capitalist Japan still play a part in fear, suspicion and mistrust between the two peoples. Nationalist sentiments also motivate Chinese, Japanese, Korean and to a lesser extent Russian irredentist claims in the region.

The conventional approach tells part of the truth but it does so in such a way as to obscure other important truths for those concerned with North-East Asia. Conventional approaches reduce knowledge about complex security problems to a "one cause fits all" diagnosis that demonizes the DPRK and makes it almost impossible to conceive of negotiating, let alone reaching any agreement, with such an irrational state. Conventional knowledge about the DPRK also presents worst-case scenarios as factual accounts. The conventional wisdom does anything but provide wise guidance for policy makers. Instead it exaggerates and skews data in such a way as to aggravate—rather than merely analyse—security tensions.

Some "taboos"

Articulating some of the taboos—the issues that are known by all regional policy makers but rarely mentioned—is a first step to reconstituting security analysis in and about the region. A reconstitution of the conventional wisdom should be the aim—to try to force a belated recognition that the current security policies of major states are based on or informed in important ways by a dangerously deficient understanding of North Korean realities and therefore build policy on deeply problematic foundations.

The current security policies of major states are based on or informed in important ways by a dangerously deficient understanding of North Korean realities and therefore build policy on deeply problematic foundations.

THE DPRK IS A MILITARILY WEAK POWER

It may seem obvious, even logical, that the DPRK, which has suffered well-recorded economic devastation for over fifteen years and as a consequence almost total industrial infrastructural collapse,

would have little in the way of functioning military hardware or a very fearsome army. Nevertheless, the conventional wisdom is that the DPRK has a fearsome arsenal, ready to be released on all comers from Tokyo to Alaska with South Korea in-between. Table 1 starkly reveals the actual capacity of the DPRK military.

Table 1. Comparative military spending of North Korea, South Korea and Japan, 2000 (data in parentheses from 1999)

	Population (m)	Military expenditure (US$m) 2000	Per capita military expenditure (US$)	Percentage of GDP
North Korea	24.5	2 049 (2 100)	95 (87)	13.9 (14.3)
South Korea	47	12 496 (12 088)	263 (257)	2.8 (3)
Japan	127	44 417 (40 383)	351 (319)	1 (0.9)

Source: IISS, London.

The DPRK's annual military spending is dwarfed by its neighbours, at 2 billion US dollars, compared to Japan's 44 billion and South Korea's 12 billion. In addition, the US$ 95 per capita it spends on its huge armed forces has to cover food, clothing, housing, health supplies, as well as every aspect of what would normally come from a civilian infrastructure in a developed state—telecommunications, transport, food supplies and agricultural production, and industrial production for everything from weapons to clothing. This is because the social infrastructure barely functions and the civilian industrial fabric has all but disappeared since the economic meltdown of the 1990s. Additionally the data in Table 1 assume a formal exchange rate that in practice has been replaced by market rates since at least the mid-1990s. In 2000 the market rate for the won was conservatively 25 won per dollar—as compared to the 2.2 official rate. Taking this conservative market rate as the actual rate, DPRK per capita expenditure on it soldiers in 2000 was actually around US$ 8 a year. This expenditure is not enough to make for a powerful army.

The incapacity of the North Korean army provides an important reason as to why the DPRK is seeking to build or declare a nuclear deterrent. If successful, relatively cheap investment in nuclear fission would mean the DPRK would not have to find billions of dollars to support its hungry and economically unproductive army. The strategy does not even require the actual production of a nuclear weapon. The February 2005 announcement by the DPRK that it had "manufactured nukes for self-defence" may or may not be true. The DPRK has not, however, completed any nuclear-weapons testing, and the backward state of every aspect of its economy would indicate that the DPRK's claims are both aspirational and designed to bring the US into substantive negotiations to exchange its nuclear-weapons programmes for economic assistance.

No serious military analyst anywhere in the world views the DPRK as an offensive military threat to its neighbours or any other state. This is partly because of the weak military capacity of the DPRK and partly because of the lack of a military strategy that argues for either offensive attack against its neighbours or pre-emptive defence.

THE DPRK HAS NO LINKS WITH GLOBAL TERRORISM

Despite its involvement historically in terrorist attacks against South Koreans such as the Rangoon bombing of South Korean politicians in 1983 and its alleged blowing up of a South Korean airline in 1987 as well as its abduction of thirteen Japanese civilians in the 1970s and early 1980s, the DPRK does not have any recent or current connections with global terrorism. Its dramatically improved relationship with South Korea since the June 2000 Summit in Pyongyang (when North and South Korean leaders met for the first time since the end of the Korean War in 1953) and its dependence on

the South for economic and humanitarian assistance are also likely to preclude such activities against the South. Similarly Kim Jong Il, the DPRK's head of state, has made an intensive effort to improve relations with Japan—resulting in two visits by Prime Minister Koizumi to the DPRK, an agreement to return Japanese hijackers residing in Pyongyang since the 1970s along with their families, and the return of the Japanese abductees and their families. The DPRK's non-involvement in terrorist activities was acknowledged by the Clinton Administration, which was in the process of taking the DPRK off its list of states that sponsor terrorism before it went out of office in 2001.

The real military threat from and to the DPRK

The military threat from the DPRK is that if attacked, even in the form of a "surgical strike" or "limited" bombing campaign against its nuclear or other facilities, it would retaliate militarily. If attacked, weak military capacity would not prevent retaliatory military action by the DPRK against South Korea—where some 30,000 US troops are stationed. Seoul with its population of around 25 million is only about 50km from the Korean border.

The DPRK has the capacity to mobilize millions of its military and population if it is attacked. It is the DPRK's mobilization capacity—not its military hardware—that could potentially cause devastation if war broke out on the Peninsula. A determined march south by a mobilized North Korean population, even in the face of undoubtedly punishing bombing from US and South Korean forces, would result in human and economic catastrophe for South Korea. As the Rwandan genocide demonstrated, it is not necessary to possess sophisticated weapons to kill half a million people in two or three weeks.

On the other hand, even the DPRK government does not know if a mobilized people and army would continue to fight if war broke out. The population of North Korea is for the most part hungry and poor, and it blames the party and government officials, not the United States, for the country's economic crisis. Nor does it view South Korea as the enemy. Large sections of the population also now know that, contrary to what they were told by their education system and their media, South Korea is a rich country and life chances are better in the South than the North. The North Korean population could decide that the nationalist Korean project that is the essential foundation of the "Juche" philosophy could easily be satisfied by integration with South Korea. Therefore war is not a policy option for the DPRK government. Rather than mobilizing the people, North Korean policy makers know that military conflict may provide the catalyst to undermine fatally the current DPRK regime.

Real threats to regional security

MARKETS, INEQUALITY AND THE SPILL-OVER EFFECTS

The real threats to regional security can best be understood as a result of a causal relationship between the economic devastation faced by the North Korean population since the early 1990s and the subsequent actual and potential threats to stability in neighbouring states from spill-over effects of the rapid growth of unregulated primitive capitalism in the DPRK. Human (in)security analysis thus illuminates the cause of the potential regional security crisis and by doing so challenges conventional analysis of what constitutes the causes of concern in the Korean case.

The economic crisis that hit the DPRK with the loss of concessionary markets, cheap oil and technology transfers from the ex-communist states with the end of the Cold War is well-known. What

is less reported is the consequent marketization— without political liberalization—that has taken place in the DPRK since the early 1990s. The state could no longer deliver food and all other economic and social goods after the food crisis of the 1990s, when nearly a million people died of starvation and malnutrition. The remaining 21 million survived through recourse to the primitive market that filled the economic allocation and distribution vacuum.

The DPRK is now a nation of small and large business people. The state no longer provides enough for any member of the population to survive without individual entrepreneurship. Yet, at the same time, the state has not moved to create a regulatory framework to shape the workings of this mass of private economic activity. Thus there is little distinction between what is legal and what is illegal, what is legitimate and what is illegitimate. Corruption in this climate is simply a judgment made in terms of personal ethics. Everything is permissible as the legal system does not recognize—except in the very broad and basic legislation provided by the July 2002 "economic reforms"—that the foundations of the economic structure have been transformed.

CROSS-BORDER ILLEGALITY AND PETTY CRIMINALITY

One consequence of the DPRK's human security crisis is, as one North Korean residing in China told me in March this year, "the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer". The social safety net cherished under the Kim Il Sung development project has all but disappeared. Inequality and absolute poverty such as to keep the threat of starvation acute for probably the majority of North Koreans propel various kinds of cross-border illegality: economic migration to China, trafficking in women, armed robbery and night-time theft, and smuggling.

The 30,000 or so North Koreans residing illegally in China are generally pushed into illegal migration by economic motives. Their actions are criminalized by both China and the DPRK, however, and they risk severe punishment on their return to the DPRK if they are considered to have been colluding with South Koreans and/or Christians in Yanbian, the border region that is home to China's Korean minority. Both groups are viewed by the North Korean authorities not as humanitarians, but as provocateurs whose major aim is to overturn the North Korean regime.

Economic entrepreneurs make money out of trafficking girls and women as brides and prostitutes in north-east China—where single women are in short supply and where Chinese women are increasingly reluctant to enter into the hardships involved in rural living. So far, mainly small-scale cross-border operators have been responsible for the trafficking. Family, friends and local connections arrange the traffic—sometimes with connivance of the women. One North Korean woman who had introduced another to a Chinese man said that "of course this is an insult to the woman and to the country [North Korea]. But it is better than living without food to eat."

Another consequence of the country's continuing inability to feed its people and provide meaningful economic opportunities for its population is the general rise in crime in the country and, particularly important for regional stability, in the border area with China and Russia. Crime ranges from the nightly forays into China of North Koreans living near the border to steal food and supplies to the more sinister development of armed robberies on the Chinese side of the border. North Korean soldiers, for instance, robbed a bank in the border town of Tumen in north-east China last year and were caught by the Chinese police after they used the proceeds to buy and consume alcohol in China instead of immediately returning to the DPRK. Violent crime and property theft are carried out by small-scale operators and have not yet been linked to organized crime. Their prevalence is causing concern among local Chinese authorities, however, as they have caused a sharp increase in personal insecurity for local Chinese and Chinese Koreans.

Finally, the DPRK's human security crisis and lack of internal regulation has generated widespread smuggling across the Chinese-North Korean border. Lumber is sold into China along with herbs and mushrooms. Smuggling is almost institutionalized with North Korean local authorities, businesses as well as individuals routinely carrying out cross-border trade in ways that aim to avoid Chinese and North Korean taxation.

People-smuggling

Transnational organized criminal gangs have taken advantage of the DPRK's human security crisis in that it is Chinese "snake-heads" or people smugglers who transport North Koreans from China to Seoul. This is a market-generated activity where the snake-heads, who have the resources and contacts to make transnational operations between two and more countries possible, exchange their services with North Koreans who agree to pay a large part of the resettlement allowance they receive from the South Korean government once they are successfully located in Seoul.

Incidentally there are clear gender dimensions to this transnational criminal market. The snake-heads prefer women clients as they consider that women are more likely to pay back the debt accrued. This may be the reason disproportionate numbers of women are turning up in Seoul among the latest waves of North Koreans who have actually reached South Korea.

The regional effects of technical meltdown

The lack of internal regulatory capacity in the DPRK is not confined to economic legislation. The DPRK has no systematic technical arrangements for what is known in engineering parlance as "quality assurance" in any of its industrial or energy sectors. The major train crash in the DPRK in February 2004 that killed dozens of schoolchildren was as much due to the DPRK's inability to implement regularized safety procedures as it was to individual human error. This lack of capacity permeates all sectors. Its prevalence means that a nuclear accident is more likely than not given the recent resuscitation of the DPRK's nuclear reactors. The effects of a nuclear accident could not be confined to the DPRK: South Korea, China, Russia and Japan would suffer the consequences. A nuclear accident is a much more likely cause of a regional nuclear crisis than the launch of a nuclear weapon.

A nuclear accident is a much more likely cause of a regional nuclear crisis than the launch of a nuclear weapon.

The fear of US unilateralism

A major unspoken worry of all governments in the region is the reluctance of the United States to commit itself to achieving a diplomatic solution to the regional security crisis and the consequent fear of unilateral US military intervention in the DPRK. The governments of the region have not been encouraged by the American decision at the Six-Party Talks to read prepared statements and its failure to use the opportunities for informal discussions with the North Koreans on the margins of the formal meetings. In other words, they have been dismayed by the unwillingness of the United States to use the normal mechanisms of diplomacy whose very aim is to achieve agreement between conflicting parties that by definition do not share interests and values by way of compromise and trade-offs.

All the region's states fear military intervention by the United States on the Peninsula. South Korea fears the annihilation of Seoul and the crippling of its economy not to speak of the killing, maiming and devastation that would be suffered by millions of Koreans. China does not want a war on its borders—especially when it is making such profound efforts to develop its north-east. Neither does it or Russia relish being drawn into a hot conflict with the United States. Public opinion in both countries would be outraged if the United States even attempted a limited "surgical strike" against the North Koreans—and both countries have friendship treaties with the DPRK, with China still formally committed to some form of active support of the DPRK in times of war. Even Japan, whose alliance with the United States forms the foundation of its foreign policy and its existence as a democratic state, has given strong signals to the United States that it prefers conflict resolution through negotiation, not confrontation.

The regional response

Most of the DPRK's neighbours have been so concerned with the high-profile nuclear crisis and the consequent fear of American unilateralism that they have not analysed human insecurities as a cause of potential threats to regional stability in themselves. Only China has taken these new security threats in any way seriously. Its approach has been to punish those caught engaged in criminality as well as to step up its internal security surveillance procedures such as to try to identify North Koreans residing in China without papers. Once identified, they are sent back to the DPRK. Publicly, China has refused to cooperate with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in setting up screening mechanisms to distinguish refugees from economic migrants. Instead it has insisted on a bilateral approach with North Korea and has reiterated its official position that all North Koreans in China are economic migrants.

Concurrent with the official harsh approach, China has also taken a more flexible approach to North Koreans seeking support in China. Despite the fact that it has deployed some 100,000 troops to the border area, it has not militarized the still porous and open 1,000 mile border. There are still no fences, barbed wire, military emplacements or demarcation lines except for the river that separates the two countries. This means that in practice it tolerates North Koreans coming over the border at night to obtain food from relatives or other sources. It has facilitated the transport of North Koreans who invaded foreign embassies and consulates in Beijing and Shenyang to Seoul. It is also currently considering recognizing the estimated 5,000 children born to mixed marriages of illegally resident North Koreans and Chinese citizens.

Regional actors on the whole, however, have not taken seriously the potential threats to regional stability derived from the continuing structural impetus to growth in cross-border illegality and criminality arising from the DPRK human security crisis. No regional actor has addressed the potential consolidation of transnational criminal networks in the border areas of China, Russia and the DPRK.

These subjects remain off the security agenda because of the very fact that they contradict established discourse.

These subjects remain off the security agenda because of the very fact that they contradict established discourse. The "common knowledge" security paradigms that argue for the fearsome nature of the North Korean military are so strong and strengthened by every kind of cultural and ideological reinforcement that it becomes impossible to "see" data that does not fit the pre-existing perceptions. One contributing factor is simply lack of information reaching the public through the media or educational institutions.

And in many cases, keeping taboo subjects off the public agenda serves domestic political interests. For example, it is far easier to persuade the Japanese public to support changes in that country's constitution to allow a more active role for Japanese military forces if the enemy can be shown as

demented, irrational, nearby and of imminent threat. It would be much harder to justify such changes as part of a conformity to the reformulated Japanese-US strategic alliance that requires more pro-active participation from Japan in regional and global military activities.

Regional cooperation as policy solution

The conventional approach to regional security analysis argues that there is little commonality between the five major North-East Asian states such as to build a regional coordination mechanism. In fact, there are a number of ways in which North-East Asians are economically and politically more institutionally bound together than ever before. Rapid Chinese economic growth provides the meshing factor—with Japan, South Korea and Russia looking for and obtaining trade, markets and investment relationships with China so as to boost their own economic fortunes. The "ASEAN plus 3" formula has brought Japan, China and South Korea together in a multilateral forum and all participants in the Six-Party Talks are members of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Five of the six—not including North Korea—are members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum. In addition, the talks themselves provide potential avenues of cooperation between the six parties and the possibility of building more institutionalized cooperation mechanisms in the future.

By misconceiving nascent regional cooperation, the conventional wisdom rules out consideration of what could be innovative but pragmatic solutions to the region's security crisis. Multisectoral security problems require fine-tuned analysis. These solutions also provide the possibility for trade-offs and bargaining across sectors and countries, such as to provide multilateral solutions to the multifaceted security dilemma of North-East Asia today. The Six-Party Talks decision to convene working groups could, for instance, provide an acceptable forum to all parties to discuss the controversial issues of not just nuclear weapons and missiles, but human rights and humanitarian issues as well as economic and development matters.

It would not be very difficult to envisage a process akin to the Helsinki "basket" diplomacy where security, economics and human rights issues were negotiated by the Cold War adversaries but progress in each was not directly linked to simultaneous progress in all. Thus incremental negotiations provided confidence-building exercises in themselves as well as substantive positive outcomes at the end of the process. An analogous approach is feasible for North-East Asia by way of an extension of the Six-Party Talks. It will, however, require a rejection of unicausal analysis and the conventional wisdom and an adoption of security analysis that accepts the multidimensional nature of security threats in North-East Asia and the subsequent possibilities of multilateral and multisectoral solutions.

Old and new security analyses

Facing the myths and realities of North-East Asia's security dilemmas would bring advantages to policy makers. The insecurity facing the North Korean government and its consequent decision to advertise possession of a nuclear deterrent (whether based on a real or aspired for weapons capacity is almost irrelevant in this context) provide part of the security puzzle of North-East Asia. Elite discourse also, however, needs to recognize that focusing on the alleged military threat from North Korea to the exclusion of all other factors defers the resolution of real security threats to regional stability, and downplays other potentially dangerous conflicts between states and peoples in the region. Historical antagonisms are not disappearing and, because they have little purchase in inter-elite political discussion and are not the focus of any official attempts at conflict resolution, they are in many ways worsening.

Old security analysis masks the serious but multidimensional nature of North Korea's national security problems. Real security threats come not from the DPRK as a military threat but derive from generalized human insecurities generated by the breakdown of economic structures within the DPRK and the resulting transborder spill-over effects. Innovative security analysis should identify these new features of the regional socio-economic and political landscape such as to help policy makers build common, more cooperative futures.