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**Testimony to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs
July 28, 2015**

The Iran-North Korea Strategic Relationship

Obscurity in Washington versus Extensive Coverage Overseas

The Iran-North Korea Strategic Relationship is an issue that has drawn minimum public attention in Washington since at least 2007 when I wrote extensively about it in a report I authored at the Congressional Research Service and updated for the next three years: *North Korea's Nuclear Weapons Development and Diplomacy* (section on Nuclear Collaboration with Iran and Syria). This, despite the extensive coverage of the major advances in the nuclear weapons and missile programs of North Korea and Iran since that time.

A major reason for this has been the reluctance—I would say unwillingness—of the Executive Branch of the U.S. Government to disclose information about the Iran-North Korea relationship. There have been some public disclosures about Iranian-North Korean collaboration in the development of missiles. On nuclear collaboration, there has been a virtual blackout of public information. As my former colleagues at the Congressional Research stated in a recent report (*Iran-North Korea-Syria Ballistic Missile and Nuclear Cooperation*), officials of the Executive Branch have stated that there is “no evidence that

¹ The views expressed are those of the author and do not represents views of the organizations with which the author is affiliated.

Iran and North Korea have engaged in nuclear-related trade or cooperation.” This blackout includes this denial, avoiding specific answers when asked about this, and denial statements in unclassified and declassified U.S. intelligence assessments.

Thus, little has appeared in the American news media about this. There are, however, a couple of notable exceptions. In September 2012, Iran and North Korea signed an agreement for wide-ranging technology and scientific cooperation. This did draw a reaction from Obama Administration officials, which the *Wall Street Journal* reported on March 8, 2013. The report asserted that Obama Administration officials were concerned that the head of Iran’s Atomic Energy Agency was present at the signing ceremony. It described U.S. officials as concerned that Iran and North Korea share nuclear technology.

The *Washington Post* reported on November 7, 2011, that “secret intelligence” provided to the International Atomic Energy Agency showed that Iran had received “crucial technology” from North Korea for the development of nuclear warheads. This included mathematical formulas and codes for warhead designs “some of which appear to have originated in North Korea.”

On missile collaboration one of several notable reports came from the *New York Times* on November 28, 2010. This report cited “secret American intelligence assessments” that North Korea had supplied Iran with 19 intermediate range missiles in 2006 with a range of up to 2,000 miles. This missile today is known as the Musudan, which North Korea has displayed on several occasions. (It should be noted that several experts have

expressed doubt about the accuracy of this report and the intelligence assessments cited in the report.)

Nevertheless, the public information from the Bush and Obama Administrations, the State Department, and the U.S. intelligence agencies has been sparse. A major reason seems to have been that the Bush and Obama Administrations have sought to avoid dealing with the North Korea-Iran strategic relationship in U.S. nuclear talks with North Korea. In 2007 into 2008, the Bush Administration resisted requests from the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the House Intelligence Committee for information on North Korea's involvement in the Syrian nuclear reactor, which Israel had bombed in September 2007. Only after the committees escalated pressure did the Administration brief Members on the reactor and North Korea's involvement in late April 2008. Even then, however, the Bush Administration did not reveal the rest of the story: Iran's involvement in the Syrian reactor. Revelations of Iran's involvement later came from Israeli officials, the Japanese newspaper, *Sankei Shimbun*, and the German newspaper, *Der Spiegel*. *Der Spiegel* revealed in a lengthy article of November 2, 2009, that a high-ranking Iranian defector revealed the existence of the Syrian reactor to Israeli and U.S. intelligence agencies and Iran's financing of the reactor.

Moreover, in April 2008, the Bush Administration negotiated an agreement with North Korea that removed from North Korea the obligation in the six party agreement of February 2007 that North Korea issue a "complete and correct" declaration of its nuclear programs. Consequently, the North Korean declaration of June 26, 2008, contained no

information about North Korea's nuclear proliferation activities or its uranium enrichment program. In short, the Bush Administration chose to avoid dealing with North Korea over its nuclear collaboration with Iran and Syria.

With North Korea's declaration, the Bush Administration removed North Korea from the official U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism. The Obama Administration has continued the removal. The State Department continually states that the U.S. Government has no evidence that North Korea is supporting international terrorist groups. At a meeting I attended in June 2010, a State Department official dealing with the Middle East said she was "not prepared" to comment on a question whether North Korea was a source of missiles to Hezbollah. In contrast, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated in San Francisco on August 12, 2010, that "North Korea continues to smuggle missiles and weapons to other countries around the world—Burma, Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas." Hezbollah and Hamas are designated by the U.S. Government as international terrorist organizations. In 2014, there were new reports that North Korea was negotiating with Hamas to provide missiles and communications equipment to Hamas.

The State Department's defacto denials of North Korean assistance to Hezbollah and Hamas is another indication of the Bush and Obama Administration's policy of avoidance of dealing in U.S. diplomacy with the issue of Iran-North Korea collaboration. Numerous reports describe the Iranian Revolutionary Guards as the main foreign supporter of Hezbollah and Hamas and the facilitator of North Korean assistance to these groups.

This pattern appears to be followed in the new Iran nuclear agreement. There is no known provision related to Iran-North Korea nuclear collaboration in it. The National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) is a group of some controversy, but it has issued detailed reports in the past—some confirmed as accurate--about Iran’s nuclear program and North Korea’s collaboration with Iran. It reported on May 28, 2015, that a North Korean delegation of nuclear warhead and missile experts had visited Iran under tight security and had held meetings with Iranian counterparts. The National Council claimed that this was the third visit of the North Korean delegation in 2015. When asked about this, a State Department spokesman gave a previous standard answer to questions about NCRI reports that “we take such reports seriously” but “we don’t have information at this time.” The spokesman added that given the absence of information, the allegations would not “impact our ongoing negotiations over Iran’s nuclear program.”

The obscurity of this issue in Washington and the apparent policy motives behind it contrast strongly with the extensive coverage given overseas to Iran-North Korean collaboration, especially nuclear collaboration. Reputable newspapers in Great Britain, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Israel, Australia, and even Russia have contained a volume of reports since the late 1990s on the building Iran-North Korea collaboration in developing missiles and nuclear warheads. They frequently cite non-U.S. intelligence sources and reports, senior European and German defense officials, Japanese diplomatic officials and intelligence sources, Israeli government officials (including intelligence officials), South Korean intelligence sources, high-level North Korean and Iranian

defectors, and sources within the Iranian regime. Other reports cite as sources “foreign intelligence officials” and “western intelligence sources.” Information from German intelligence and defense officials is especially prominent in these reports. This may explain why Germany has been included with the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council in the negotiations over the current Iran nuclear agreement.

Two major foreign news organs, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Reuters News* have quoted from non-U.S. intelligence reports on the Iranian-North Korean collaboration. The Australian newspaper, in 2005, quoted from a three page intelligence report describing a secret course North Korean nuclear experts were conducting in Tehran on developing nuclear technology for possible military uses. The Reuters report, in May 2010, quoted from “an intelligence report from a non-U.S. diplomat” in Vienna that North Korean nuclear experts were continuing to instruct Iranians in developing nuclear technology. Both media organs quoted IAEA officials that the intelligence reports were credible.

It seems to me that the volume of non-U.S. reports and the sources cited give the information in them credibility in spite of the dearth of similar U.S. information. This further supports my conclusion that there are distinct policy reasons of the Bush and Obama Administrations behind the obscurity of the Iran-North Korea collaboration issue in Washington.

The Evolution of Missile and Nuclear Collaboration

The many reports about Iran-North Korea collaboration together portray an evolving relationship with collaboration becoming more intense and varied. It seems to me that there have been three stages in collaboration since the 1990s. The first is that between the seller of arms—North Korea—and the buyer—Iran. This has involved Scud and Nodong missiles, component parts of missiles, and conventional arms including arms ultimately bound for Hezbollah and Hamas.

There also may have been a transfer of nuclear materials from North Korea to Iran. In March 2010, Leonard Spector, deputy director of the Monterey Institute of International Studies' James Martin Center for Non-Proliferation Studies, said in a column in the Center's website that North Korea had shipped 45 tons of unenriched uranium concentrate, ie., "yellowcake," to Syria, which was moved to Iran.

By the late 1990s, the relationship evolved into more permanent institutional collaboration. This appeared to begin when North Korea sent missile experts to Iran to help Iran develop indigenous production facilities for the Shahab-3 intermediate range missile. The Shahab-3 is a twin of North Korea's Nodong missile. The original Shahab-3s contained complete Nodong components transferred from North Korea. The North Koreans then established working ties with Iranian companies responsible for producing missiles. The most important of these appears to be with the Iranian Shahid Memmat Industrial Group (SHIG). SHIG is part of the network of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards. North Korean missiles experts reportedly have worked in the SHIG facilities in

Iran, including work on upgrading the Shahab-3 and other Shahab class missiles. SHIG delegations reportedly frequently visit North Korea, including visits to observe North Korean missile tests.

The nuclear technology courses taught by North Koreans in Tehran cited above is another example of this institutional collaboration. Another group of North Korean instructors reportedly went to Tehran in February 2011 to teach Iranian Revolutionary Guard and Iranian Defense Ministry officials how to operate a specialized computer program that simulates neutron flows. According to the German newspaper, *Suddeutsche Zeitung*, “western secret services sources” described this program as “vital” for the development of nuclear warheads.

A body of non-U.S. reports have emerged since the early 2000s pointing to an institutional collaborative Iran-North Korea relationship inside Iran. North Korea’s principle interlocutor has been the Iranian Revolutionary Guards but also some joint work with the Iranian Defense Ministry and Atomic Energy Agency. From 2003 on, there have been a volume of reports that North Korean nuclear and missile experts have been stationed in Iran working with these Iranian organizations on research and development of missiles and nuclear warheads. (See my CRS Report, North Korea’s Nuclear Weapons Developments and Diplomacy, for descriptions of these reports from 2003 to 2010).

In 2011, a special committee under the U.N. Security Council, set up to monitor implementation of U.N. sanctions against North Korea, issued a report. The report was not made public, reportedly because of opposition from China. However, major portions of the report leaked to media organs. It seems to me that the report presented an accurate summary of the state of Iran-North Korea collaboration at that time. It asserted that North Korea and Iran were suspected of exchanging missile technology, using a third country” as a conduit (undoubtedly China). It described exchanges of scientists and technicians, exchange of data, reciprocal participation in nuclear and missile tests, and joint work analyzing the results of tests.

This institutional collaboration apparently is continuing, according to numerous reports since 2011 asserting that there have been several hundred North Korean nuclear and missile experts in Iran. One of latest reports came in *The Christian Science Monitor* (February 20, 2015), which cited South Korean intelligence sources that there were “hundreds” of North Korean nuclear and missile experts in Iran.

It seems to me that one of the questions about the Iran nuclear agreement is whether it will result in an identifiable exodus of these North Koreans from Iran, or whether the status of these people will remain largely unknown. Will North Korean nuclear and missile delegations continue to visit Iran, or will this be stopped? That being said, it also seems to me that the third stage in Iran-North Korean collaboration has the biggest connection to the Iran nuclear agreement.

This third stage appears to have begun about 2011. It may be connected to the technology sharing agreement Iran and North Korea signed in September 2012. The Ayatollah Khamenei attended the signing ceremony and declared that Iran and North Korea have “common enemies” and had established an “anti-hegemonic front.” But it may be even more connected with the report of Japan’s Kyodo News (July 23, 2012) that Iran and North Korea signed a secret agreement in April 2012 to deepen collaboration on bilateral “strategic projects.” According to Kyodo correspondent, Tomotaro Inoue (currently a Kyodo correspondent in Washington), his source, a “diplomatic insider” told him that a senior Iranian nuclear official, Saeed Jalili, lobbied Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, to send officials to North Korea to conclude such an agreement.

As the September agreement and reportedly the April agreement were signed, reports have emerged that Iran has sent missile experts and possibly nuclear experts to North Korea to be stationed there permanently or semi-permanently. Kyodo, United Press International, the Korea Herald (Seoul) and Reuters News all reported that Iranian missile experts arrived in North Korea in the early fall of 2012 to help the North Koreans prepare for the test launch of a long-range missile in December 2012. That test was successful. The UPI report identified the Iranians as officials of Shahid Hemmat Industrial Group (SHIG). The South Korean newspaper, *Chosun Ilbo*, cited a South Korean government source describing cars traveling from the likely living quarters of the Iranians to the test site for the December 2012 launch. Subsequent reports assert that SHIG officials continually visited North Korea throughout 2013 for extended stays. An additional report from a publication, Open Source Intelligence, authored by former Deputy Assistant

Secretary of the Army Van H Hipp, asserted that Iran had stationed in North Korea up to 100 nuclear scientists and technicians.

Representative Mike Rogers, Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, was quoted in November 2013 that Iran and North Korea were together testing engines for an intercontinental ballistic missile. (Washington Free Beacon, November 27, 2013) The North Korean Government has boasted openly that this program is intended to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile that could hit U.S. territory with a nuclear warhead.

We also have the report, again from Kyodo, that an especially high level Iranian delegation traveled to North Korea to observe the February 2013 nuclear test and that Iranian President Ahmadinejad approved the payment of “tens of millions of U.S. dollars” to North Korea in order to observe the test. The Kyodo report identified a Chinese bank, Bank of Kunlun in Beijing, as the bank through which the payment to North Korea was made. The London *Sunday Times* cited “western intelligence sources” that Iran’s leading nuclear scientist, Mohsen Fakhrizadeh-Mahabadi, was believed to have traveled to North Korea to observe the nuclear test. According to U.S., European, and Israeli press reports, Mohsen has been described as the key scientist in Iran’s program to develop a uranium warhead for Iranian missiles based on North Korean technology. He is said to be a target for assassination by Israel.

At the time of the nuclear test, the U.S. publication, *Investor’s Business Daily* quoted a “senior American official” who seemed to give partial credibility to these reports. He

said that “it’s very possible that the North Koreans are testing for two countries (ie., Iran).”

This third stage has at least two implications. One is that Iran now is investing heavily in North Korea’s domestic missile and nuclear programs both in terms of committing personnel in North Korea to participate in these programs and probably also in terms of financial investment (more about Iranian money later). The previous largely one way relationship of North Korean experts working in Iran has become a more mutual relationship. This raises the crucial question of what Iran expects to gain from its commitment to North Korea’s programs. The second implication is that, if the reported Iranian investment in observing North Korea’s February 2013 nuclear test is correct, that test likely was the test of a uranium warhead designed to fit on to a missile. Iran would not have made that kind of investment just to observe a third plutonium test; the Iranians, according to numerous reports, had observed the two earlier plutonium tests.

The Potential Dangers

The immediate potential danger in the wake of the Iran nuclear agreement lies in North Korea’s major nuclear weapons achievement to date: the development of a nuclear warhead that can be fitted on the Nodong intermediate range missile. North Korea’s National Defense Commission, chaired by Kim Jong-un, issued a statement on May 20, 2015, claiming major advances in developing missiles and nuclear warheads for missiles. All U.S. attention, including much skepticism, focused on North Korea’s claim that it had

perfected a long-range missile and a nuclear warhead for that missile. That skepticism appears accurate, at least for now. However, the National Defense Commission also alluded to “nuclear striking means” on “medium and short-range rockets.” That claim, it seems to me, is credible.

On April 3, 2013, Richard Engel, the long-standing national security correspondent of NBC News, reported that U.S. officials told him that they believe North Korea had developed nuclear warheads for missiles with a range of 1,000 miles. That North Korean missile is the Nodong. Chris Nelson reported in the Nelson Report (read by the author and most Korea-watchers) of May 5, 2013, that within the U.S. Government, the likelihood that North Korea had developed nuclear warheads for the Nodongs “seems far more certain behind closed doors than in public.” On July 28, 2014, Wi Sung-lac, South Korea’s Ambassador to Russia, was quoted by the *Korea Herald* that “Since North Korea can mount nuclear warheads on its rockets, our task is to counter these real threats.” Subsequently, the Commander of U.S. Forces in Korea, General Curtis Scaparrotti, said he believed that North Korea has “the capability to miniaturize a [nuclear] device” and the “technology to potentially deliver what they say they have.” Many non-government North Korea experts also believe that North Korea is producing nuclear warheads for the Nodongs.

China also appears to have reached this conclusion. In February 2015, a team of Chinese nuclear experts met with American counterparts in Beijing. One of China’s top uranium enrichment experts told the Americans that the U.S. estimate of North Korea’s nuclear

weapons stockpile (10-16 weapons) was too low. He stated that North Korea probably had 20 warheads at the end of 2014 and enough weapons-grade uranium to double that number within one year. Such an output would be in the form of nuclear warheads for missiles, probably first for the Nodong. The Nodong can reach targets throughout South Korea and most of Japan. I would add that the Chinese estimate is similar to recent estimates put out by Joel Wit of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and David Albright of the Institute of Science and International Security.

I have detailed these reports because the Obama Administration has not publicly disclosed that North Korea has succeeded in developing nuclear warheads for the Nodong missile—and by this time no doubt mounting warheads on several of the missiles. The Defense Intelligence Agency stated in an assessment made public in April 2013 (the time of the Richard Engel report) that it had “moderate confidence the North currently has nuclear weapons capable of delivery by ballistic missiles.” Immediately, officials of both the White House and the Pentagon issued counter statements that they had seen no evidence that North Korea had such capabilities.

The South Korean Government of President Park Geun-hye also has tried to downplay the Nodong warhead story but with less success. Besides Ambassador Wi’s statement cited above, South Korea’s Defense Minister stated in November 2013 that “we evaluate that North Korea can build a nuclear weapon using uranium.” An R.O.K. Defense Ministry White Paper released on January 6, 2015, stated that North Korea had “considerable” technical capability to mount warheads on missiles.

The Obama Administration and Park Administration have their reasons for not wanting to disclose that North Korea has developed nuclear warheads for the Nodongs. For the Obama Administration, an admission would undermine the long-standing U.S. position that the United States will “never recognize” North Korea as a nuclear weapons state. Admission would be politically harmful to the President since North Korea’s achievement came “on his watch.” Thirdly, the Administration likely fears that disclosure of Nodong warheads would raise questions about Iran’s involvement in the program at the time the Administration has been negotiating the Iran nuclear agreement minus the issue of Iran-North Korea nuclear collaboration.

There also is the possibility that the Administration would seek to keep the Nodong warhead issue off the negotiating table if it resumed nuclear negotiations with North Korea. In meetings I have attended, previous Obama Administration officials have stated that in future negotiations with North Korea, the Administration should focus on achieving a freeze on nuclear and missile testing in order to prevent North Korea from advancing toward its stated goal of developing an ICBM and nuclear warhead that could reach the United States. Such a negotiating strategy likely would see the United States seeking to put the Nodong warhead issue on the sidelines.

It seems to me that the Obama Administration’s non-disclosure policy increases the already present danger that Iran’s growing investment in North Korea’s nuclear and missile programs has an objective of acquiring Nodong nuclear warheads. Knowing that

the Obama Administration and possibly the next U.S. administration would resist disclosing North Korea's development of Nodong warheads, Iran and North Korea undoubtedly would be more emboldened to seal such an arrangement and start transferring nuclear warheads to Iran as North Korea's production increases. Moreover, under a non-disclosure policy, if a U.S. intelligence agency discovered that North Korea was shipping nuclear warheads to Iran, the Obama Administration or a successor Administration might be less inclined to inform the IAEA and/or the U.N. Security Council.

Iran's Shahab-3 missile is a twin of the Nodong, developed with considerable North Korean input. According to estimates by the U.S. Air Force and the Institute of International Security Studies in London, Iran reportedly has at least 50 Shahab-3 missiles. A nuclear warhead that would fit the Nodong would fit the Shahab-3. The Shahab-3 could reach Israel and other targets in the Middle East.

If China's estimate is accurate, North Korea's output of Nodong warheads may be sufficient by 2016 for Iran to acquire a number of these warheads. They could be shipped by sea or transported by air from North Korea to Iran. Shipments would use Chinese ports (where weapons cargos are transferred to different ships multiple times) and airports as transfer and concealment points as North Korea has done relatively successfully for missile and weapons shipments to Iran and Syria. For example, U.S. intelligence officials were quoted in April 2015 in the *Washington Free Beacon* (April

15, 2015) that North Korea had transported successfully at least two shipments of missile components to Iran since September 2014.

China likely would do little to prevent this. It has done nothing substantive in the past to prevent North Korea and Iran from using Chinese ports, airports, and banks as conduits for their collaboration. China views the Iran nuclear agreement as opening the way to proceed with plans to build economic and energy relations with Iran, which China had to postpone when U.N. sanctions were imposed on Iran a few years ago. China can be expected to proceed with its aims of bringing Iran fully into its Asian Infrastructure Bank (Iran is a member) and promoting Iran's membership in Xi Jin-pings's proposed Asian continental security organization.

Once in Iran, continued concealment likely would succeed until the warheads reached hidden storage sites or hidden Shahab-3 missile sites. (Since the early 2000s, reports have described North Korean assistance to Iran in constructing underground facilities to conceal weapons.) Iran then would have a secret nuclear weapons capability that it could unveil instantly at a time of its choosing. The so-called one year break out time that the Iran nuclear agreement is supposed to impose on Iran would be neutralized. If Iran decided to reactivate its nuclear weapons program, Shahab-3s with nuclear warheads would give it an immediate nuclear deterrence against any military action that the United States or Israel might contemplate.

During my work on this issue at the Congressional Research Service, one of my prime sources of information was Takashi Arimoto, correspondent of the Japanese newspaper, *Sankei Shimbun*. Mr. Arimoto provided me with information about North Korea's activities in the Middle East that almost always turned out to be accurate. In the 1990s, he wrote the first expose that North Korea had been supplying arms to the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka. When he returned to Japan, he continued to follow the North Korea-Iran relationship and send me information that he had obtained from his sources.

Sankei Shimbun published an article by Mr. Arimoto on February 9, 2011, citing Japanese sources knowledgeable about North Korea. It was close to a "blockbuster." Mr. Arimoto asserted that North Korea and Iran had entered into a secret agreement during the 2008-2010 period under which North Korea would ship a certain portion of its produced enriched uranium to Iran. Such an arrangement would be activated if Iran's own uranium enrichment facilities became unusable. Given the nature of Iranian-North Korean collaboration, Mr. Arimoto's report hardly seems illogical. If true, the question now becomes: Would this sharing arrangement be enlarged to include Nodong nuclear warheads if the Iran nuclear agreement shuts down or limits Iran's own warhead program?

Iran's contribution to North Korea's successful test of a long-range missile in December 2012 appears to signal that Iran is interested in the longer term to benefit if North Korea succeeds in developing a missile and nuclear warhead that could hit the United States. There appears to be little in the Iran nuclear agreement that would prevent Iran from

continuing or increasing its personnel and financial investments in North Korea's future missile and nuclear warhead programs.

Iranian Money: Lubricant for the Wheels of Iran-North Korean Collaboration

The reports of the different facets of Iranian-North Korean collaboration sometimes contain estimates from the non-U.S. intelligence and government sources that Iran has paid North Korea huge sums of money for cooperative projects related to missiles, nuclear warheads, and Pyongyang's assistance to Hezbollah and Hamas. As stated previously, the Kyodo report on Iranians observing the 2013 North Korean nuclear test referred to Iran paying tens of millions of U.S dollars to North Korea. The *Suddeutsche Zeitung* report of North Korea providing a nuclear computer program to Iran cited the newspaper's sources as saying that Iran may have paid up to \$100 million for the program. In 2009, the Institute of Foreign Policy Analysis issued a report estimating that North Korea earned about \$1.5 billion annually from its missile collaboration with Iran alone.

It seems to me that North Korea may receive from Iran upwards of \$2 to \$3 billion annually from Iran for the various forms of collaboration between them. Mr. Arimoto's report on the secret Iran-North Korean agreement on enriched uranium sharing stated that Iran paid North Korea \$2 billion during the 2008-2010 period to finance Pyongyang's uranium enrichment program. There should be no doubt that North Korea drives a hard financial bargain with Iran for the benefits it provides to Iran. As the collaboration has

deepened and North Korea has expanded its programs, North Korea's asking price no doubt has risen. One estimate is that the cost of North Korea's long range missile test of December 2012 was \$1.3 billion. Iran at this stage may be financing the bulk of the costs of North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

Iranian money appears to be the lubricant for North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. The Iran nuclear agreement will increase Iran's wealth considerably as U.N. economic sanctions are lifted and Iran receives at least \$50 billion from the United States in frozen assets. If Iran pursues its escalated investment in North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, more Iranian money likely will flow to North Korea. It always is possible that North Korean leaders will get overly-greedy and will repel the Iranians. But Iran's greed for benefits from North Korea's nuclear, missile, and terrorist-supporting assistance also appears to be growing, so the match likely will continue despite the Iran nuclear agreement.