

North Korea's new direction: Bona fide or bluff?



What will be the impact of Pyongyang's new outreach to its old adversaries?

Tuesday, 15 May, 15.00 UK time

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War on the Korean peninsula became a plausible scenario late last year, after Pyongyang demonstrated that it had, or was very close to, the ability to strike the continental United States with a nuclear warhead. Then, this January, supreme leader Kim Jong-un announced an abrupt change of direction, which led in April to the first inter-Korean summit in nearly a decade. Kim has pledged concrete measures to de-escalate military tensions and revive economic cooperation with the South. He has also announced a wish to 'denuclearise' the Korean peninsula. This topic will top the agenda when Kim meets Donald Trump later this month or early next, in what will be the first ever summit between a US and North Korean leader.

- Is North Korea serious about peace, or is this yet another ploy?
- What are the prospects for denuclearisation? Would Trump settle for less?
- Does the Kim-Trump summit create new risks? Might Trump conclude, if he returns empty-handed, that peace has been given a chance and failed?
- What economic opportunities could arise if sanctions are eased? Could North Korea become 'another Myanmar', or 'another Iran'?
- What are the implications for US-China relations if the Korean peninsula ceases to be a flashpoint?
- Has Pyongyang's reverse course vindicated Trump's strategy of 'maximum pressure'? What are the consequences for future US policy if it has?

Share your thoughts on the above and put your questions to three of Oxford Analytica's senior advisors in our client conference call on Tuesday, 15 May, 15:00 UK, 10.00 EDT.

Chair

Paul Maidment, Director of Analysis and Managing Editor, Oxford Analytica

Paul Maidment joined Oxford Analytica in December 2014 as the Director of Analysis and Managing Editor of the Oxford Analytica Daily Brief.

He is an award-winning journalist who founded the New York-based digital editorial consultancy Bystander Media in 2010. A pioneer in combining digital and print journalism, he was previously Editor of Forbes.com and Executive Editor of Forbes, transforming a magazine website into the leading online destination for business, finance and up-scale lifestyle. Before joining Forbes in 2001, Paul was the founding Editor of the Financial Times' award-winning web site FT.com and Assistant Editor of the newspaper. His early career as an editor and foreign correspondent encompassed The Economist, the Asian Wall Street Journal and the BBC in the U.K, the U.S. and Asia — a depth of journalistic experience and breadth of media that gives him a unique perspective on the changes transforming publishing and the world economy. Paul was inducted into the Digital Hall of Fame in New York in 2010.

Panellists

Aidan Foster-Carter, Honorary Senior Research Fellow in Sociology and Modern Korea, Leeds University

Aidan is an Honorary Senior Research Fellow in Sociology and Modern Korea at Leeds University in England. He was educated at Eton and Oxford and taught sociology at the Universities of Hull, Dar es Salaam and Leeds from 1971 to 1997. Having followed Korean affairs since 1968, Aidan has been a full-time analyst and consultant on Korea since 1997: writing, lecturing and broadcasting for academic, business and policy audiences in the UK and worldwide. He has been Oxford Analytica's main contributor on Korea for 30 years.

Rana Mitter, Professor of the History and Politics of Modern China, Oxford University

Rana is Director of the China Centre at the University of Oxford, where he is Professor of the History and Politics of Modern China. He is the author of several books, most recently China's War with Japan, 1937-45: The Struggle for Survival (Penguin, 2013: North American title Forgotten Ally) which was named a Book of the Year in The Economist and the Financial Times and won the RUSI Duke of Westminster's Medal for Military Literature 2014. He is a regular presenter on BBC Radio and comments in media around the world.

Des King, Andrew W Mellon Professor of American Government, University of Oxford

Desmond is the Andrew W. Mellon Professor of American Government at the University of Oxford. He is one of the world's leading experts on US government and politics. He is the author of nineteen books including Obama at the Crossroads (2012), The Unsustainable American State (2010) and The Liberty of Strangers (2005). His most recent book is about the Federal Reserve's response to the 2008 crisis – Fed Power: How Finance Wins (2016). He has received several awards and has been elected a Fellow of many learned societies including the British Academy, the Royal Irish Academy, the Academia Europaea, the Royal Historical Society and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.