

# Military Confrontation: Obama Administration has ‘Cut off all Negotiations over North Korea’

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*The US leader follows a policy, which strangles N. Korea “through sanctions and economic measures in the hope that it’ll collapse at some point,” a member of think tank for the advisory board at the Korea Policy Institute, Gregory Elich, told RT.*

*Elich believes the United States is interested in the collapse of the North, as the US “can establish their military bases right on the border with China, meaning an encirclement of that nation.” He also added that America never “never tolerated a country that won’t put its economy at the service of foreign corporations.”*

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**RT:** *Neither side seems to benefit economically from Pyongyang’s latest decision not to allow South Koreans to work in the joint industrial zone. Why is the North taking such a decisive step?*

**Gregory Elich:** Basically there is a whole history leading up to this current impasse that they’ve reached and for instance under military consultative meeting that South Korea and the United States held back in October, they developed a new military plan for North Korea. So, even in a minor conflict, that both the US and South Korea would hit North Korea with considerable force. According to the South Korean Ministry of National Defense that policy would play in both peace time and war time. Under the missile technology control regime, the US allows South Korea an exemption on ballistic missile range, so they can now build a ballistic missiles that would hit the entire territory of North Korea. North Korea is under sanctions. Basically, North Korea has few options to resist...

**RT:** *I am sorry. You are talking about international law here. Is North Korea playing with fire by restarting its Yongbyon nuclear facility or is it a vital move for the country at this point?*

**GE:** No. As far as starting the Yongbyon nuclear facility is a symbolic move on North Korea’s part. It really makes little difference as far as a nuclear weapons program. It takes many months to restart the facility and at best it can produce enough plutonium for only one bomb per year. I think the rhetoric coming out of North Korea and the restarting of the Yongbyon nuclear facility are symbolic on North Korea’s part and it’s basically sending the message to the United States. Look, if you are heading for more sanctions, including sanctions on North Korea’s Foreign Trade Bank, which is a primary institution for international trade, and you have always threatening military moves you’re making toward us, if you think you are going to crush us, we’re going to hit you back harder than you

expect. I think this is basically what the message North Korea is sending.

**RT:** *Whose fault is it here do you think? Or, perhaps, Pyongyang and Washington are both just at fault here?*

**GE:** Well anyone who knows anything about North Korea knows, that if you approach diplomatically, they will negotiate, but if threat they're threatened or bullied, they'll respond with firmness. So, we kind of have a feedback loop, where the Obama administration come in and cut off all negotiations over North Korea. There was nothing in the last few years. Obama's following a policy of what it calls strategic patience, which is in effect a slow strangulation of North Korea through sanctions and economic measures in the hope that it'll collapse at some point of time...

**RT:** *If there's a hope on America's part, that Pyongyang will collapse at some point in time, then what is that hope about? Is it about America having an opportunity for another geo-strategic positioning? I mean isn't the US presence in South Korea and other parts of the Far East big enough?*

**GE:** It's never big enough. The United States has over a hundred bases throughout the world. If North Korea collapses, the US can establish their military bases right on the border with China. Meaning, an encirclement of that nation. Also there are considerable mineral deposits in North Korea, which would be useful for exploitation by US corporations. And the United States has never tolerated a country that won't put its economy at the service of foreign corporations...

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