Nuclear North Korea and Negative Peace.

Defining Peace:
Peace is a very vague term. There is no unanimity over the definition and practice of peace. Many times circumstantial, 'peace' remains a matter of individual interpretation and is defined in many ways. However, there are two dominant interpretations: 'Positive peace' and 'Negative peace'. The terms were coined by Johan Galtung. Both the approaches aim at eliminating 'violence' in all its forms, though. 'Positive peace' takes a very holistic approach to the matter and traces roots of violence in starvation, disease, all kinds of inequalities and in violation of human rights. Positive peace is regarded as utopian and sometimes it may also call for an intervention, like, the US intervention in Kosovo in late 1990s. 'Negative peace' defines violence in limited terms. 'Negative peace' implies absence of war and war is described as organized violence between states. In the words of Clausewize: "War is a continuation of politics by other means." Saved civil war, in the Westphalian system, war remains an inter-state affair. As long as nation-state continues to be the unit of practice, 'peace' remains an inter-state affair. Sovereignty of a nation-state signifies independence and legitimacy of existence and action. No nation-state likes intervention in its internal affairs and follows the well established rule of maintaining its territorial integrity and internal harmony; however, the expansionist tendencies are checked considerably in the post World War II period. Nation-states are always caught in a security dilemma. The self-help situation forces nation-states to develop military capabilities to defend themselves. Mistrust and miscalculation could give rise to an arms race between adversaries and could also precipitate into a war. Positive peace is very hard to be achieved universally. And negative peace cannot make any guarantees of long-lasting peace, though it could help in avoiding a head-on collision for sometime. Universalism, either by force or by consent, is an absolutely impossible achievement. In the absence of any effective and acknowledged universal constabulary institution, nation-states build and continuously enhance their military capabilities for the purpose of defence. They try to achieve peace by being prepared for war. They tend to achieve peace by strength. The United Nations recognizes the 'positive peace' and 'negative peace' simultaneously and it is committed to maintain international peace & security. But it has got a very limited scope of intervention and success-both in intra-state and inter-state affairs. On various occasions, the UN has failed to end intra-state and inter-state violence. The Korean War of 1950s in its later part had precipitated into a clash between the US forces and the Chinese forces. The war on the Korean peninsula still continues; there has been no 'peace treaty' signed so far. There exists only an armistice signed in 1953. The United Nations has also failed to stop the nuclear proliferation on the peninsula.

Negative peace and significance of nuclear weapons:
Conflict means clash of interests and war implies resolving the conflict by way of force. Thus, negative peace signifies stretching the period of peace as long as possible. In this context, nuclear weapons could provide for negative peace, though they may not be instrumental in resolving the underlying conflict. It is a fact that due to the nuclear weapons only the clash between the USA and the USSR after the Second World War remained 'cold' and never got 'hot'. Saved the dropping of nuclear bombs on Japan in

1945 to stop the Second World War, nuclear weapons haven't so far been used as weapons of war. Hiroshima and Nagasaki symbolizes the devastating effects of nuclear weapons and it also has drawn a distinguishing line in the strategic thought. The year 1945 marked the dawn of the nuclear age. The nuclear weapons are regarded as instruments of deterrence. A head-on collision between two nuclear capable adversaries could be suicidal for both. By now it is a very well established fact that nuclear weapons have been instrumental in preventing wars between some states and thus establishing peace by strength. However, it should be examined whether the trend could gravitate the problem of nuclear proliferation. Today, the number of nuclear capable countries has grown to nine. North Korea is the latest addition to the series. Nuclear crisis, at a broad level, is a situation created by an actor by developing and/or possessing nuclear weapons, which nuclear weapons provide for its own security arrangements but at the same time considered to create a destabilizing and insecure environment for its rivals as well as for its neighbors. Nuclear crisis is considered as a chain reaction, which may force the rivals/ neighbors to react by way of a nuclear arms race. One's going ahead with making a nuclear bomb may act as a precedent for the others. According to Kenneth Waltz, there could be one or more of the following seven reasons behind a country going nuclear: first, to counter the weapons of other equally strong adversary; second, if a state fears that its great-power ally will not retaliate if another great power attacks on it; third, a country without nuclear allies will want nuclear weapons all the more if some of its adversaries have them; fourth, to check adversary's present or future conventional strength; fifth, if nuclear weapons prove a cheaper and safer alternative to an expensive and militarily dangerous conventional arms races; sixth, for offensive purposes; seventh, to enhance its international standing. All of the preceding reasons, however, underscore only one concern, that is, to provide for one's security in the self-help scenario. Kenneth Waltz argues that the 'spread of nuclear weapons' would provide for peace and stability.

Individual security versus national security:
It is debated that the end of the Cold War in 1991 has shifted the focus to 'positive peace' from 'negative peace' and that consequently 'individual security' has taken precedence over 'national security.' But, 'national security' still remains a matter of perception and it is still predominantly measured in conventional terms. According to Thomas Hobbes, individuals submit some amount of their freedom to the state-that implies authority-and in response the state makes provisions for their security. Simultaneously, sovereignty narrows down the scope of 'individual security' to an 'internal affair' of a nation-state. Nuclear North Korea is a contradiction to the debate of 'individual security' taking precedence over the 'national security.' In North Korea, even today, there is very limited scope for individualism and the state is more important than the individual. North Korea, sometimes referred to as a Stalinist outpost and the hermit kingdom, is a much closed system-very reluctant to open up. In the Post-cold War era and in the new nuclear age, nuclear North Korea could be sighted as an excellent example of 'negative peace', that is, peace by strength. North Korea's strategy focuses chiefly on 'continual existence' of the communist regime in the country vis-à-vis South Korea. North Korean nuclear crisis erupted in 1989; while, the conflict on the Korean peninsula dates back to 1948 and the conflict still remains unresolved. North Korea claims the Communist regime as the only legitimate government on the peninsula and aims at unification of the Korean peninsula

under its authority. In June 1950, under the support of the USSR and the People's Republic of China, North Korea had gone for 'use of force' to unify the peninsula. However, the UN police action under the leadership of the USA failed the unification attempt on the part of North Korea. Though both North Korea and South Korea have recognised each other's existence, the unification issue remains impending. The USA fears an invasion of South Korea by North Korea and North Korea is apprehensive of the USA going for a forced 'regime change' in North Korea. Nuclear capability combined with conventional military strength has helped establishing negative peace on the peninsula, but there could not be long-lasting peace in the region if the protagonists fail to resolve the underlying conflict. The USA, which is the torchbearer of the nuclear nonproliferation, has so far adopted diplomatic means to resolve the North Korean nuclear crisis. The USA aims at Complete, Verifiable and Irreversible Disarmament (CVID) of North Korea. North Korea has used it nuclear capability also as a bargaining chip to make US leverage in economic and financial terms.

Long-lasting peace:
Conflict is a state of affairs marked by antagonism, which implies disagreement or incompatibility between two or more people or groups of people or nation states. It also signifies two groups (nation-states), with perceived incompatible goals, try to undermine each other's goal seeking capability and is sometimes characterized by physical violence. In any situation, nuclear weapons coupled with military strength could help in avoiding a war for some time; however, long-lasting peace could be established only if the 'underlying conflict' is resolved.