
Conflict on the Korean Peninsula

Roundtable on „Conflict and Cooperation in Asia“,
Universität Duisburg-Essen

Outline

1. Conflict structure on Korean peninsula
2. Conflict structure: the nuclear dimension
3. Conflict dynamics under Kim Jong-un
4. Building scenarios for the Korean peninsula

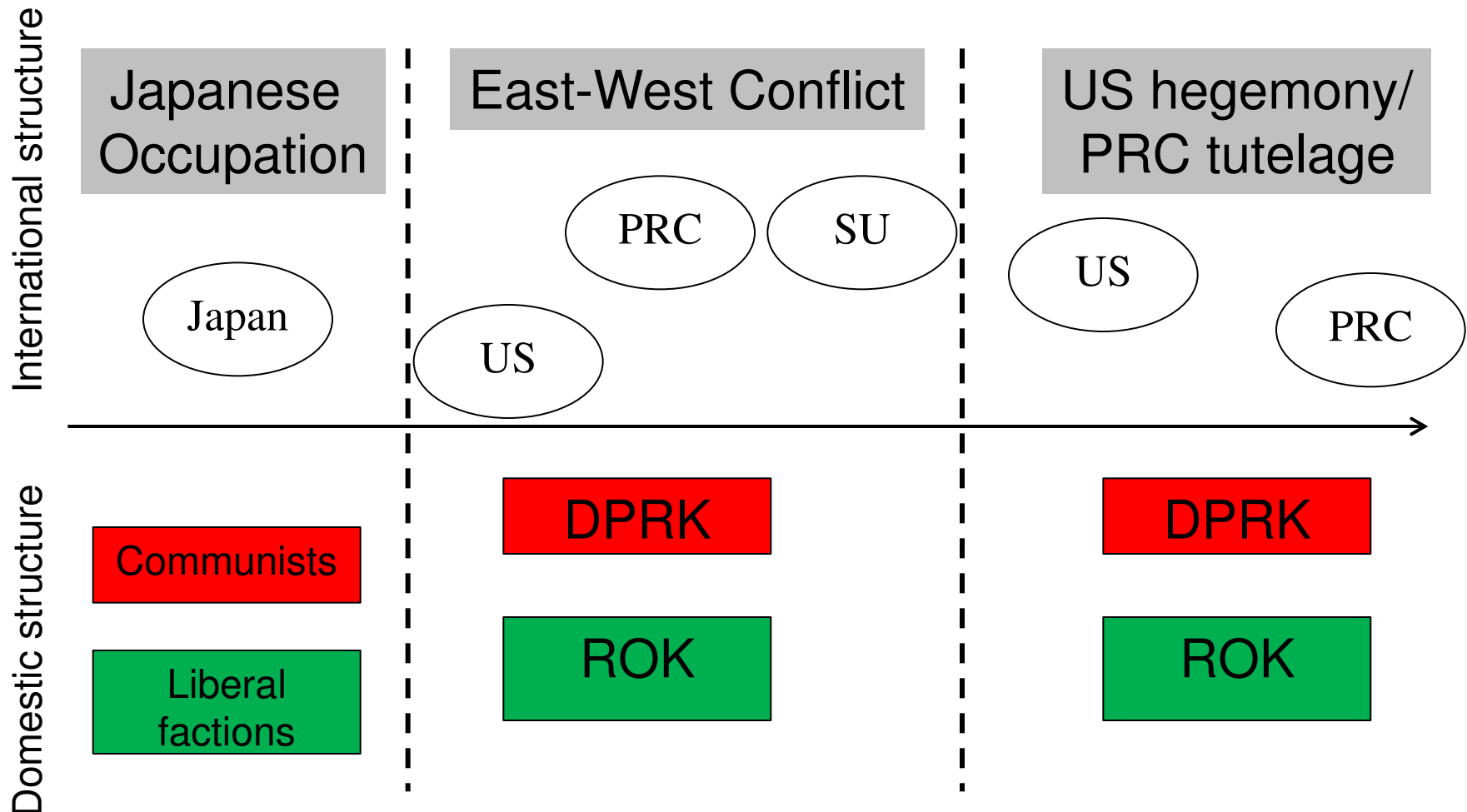
Conflict structure on the Korean Peninsula

Conflict: Definition and delimitation

- Close terms: Competition, antagonistic interests, Aggression, Rivalry, enmity, tensions, fight/struggle (social struggle, struggle for life etc.) , force, revolution, inconsistency, dissens, War, argument.
- Conflict definition by W. Link (1979):
- Social situation, in which
 1. Actors are aware of antagonistic/adverse interests.
 2. Actions are determined by anatagonistic interests.
 3. Action lead to critical tensions which call into question the existing order of the relationship.

Link, Werner (1979): „Überlegungen zum Begriff 'Konflikt' in den internationalen Beziehungen – Versuch einer Begriffsklärung“, in: *Politische Vierteljahresschrift (PVS)*, 20(1), 33-50.

Conflict structure on Korean Peninsula



Korean Peninsula: conflict structure 1945-2015

- **Base conflict:** two opposing Korean factions of independence movement from Japanese occupation struggle for territorial rule over Korean peninsula: guerilla warfare (1945-50) escalates into international war ended by UN armistice which then degenerates into (DPRK) terrorist acts well into the 1980s.
- **Residual conflict:** DPRK strives for compensation for occupation in process of normalizing diplomatic relations with Japan.
- **Cold war layer:** US-SU conflict overlays Korean conflict as SU, PRC and US support their respective client regime.
- **Post Cold war layer:** US-PRC engage in proto-conflict over DPRK nuclearization, but cooperate intermittently on containing the military program.

Instruments of conflict resolution (Link 1979)

- a) **Regression** (limit interaction and relational organizations)
- b) **Integration** (increase interaction and relational organizations)
- c) **Revolution** (redo overall structure of relationship, incl. Elimination of conflict parties)
- d) **Isolation/Dissociation** (deliberate or undeliberate breaking free from relationship)

Conflict structure on the Korean Peninsula

The nuclear dimension

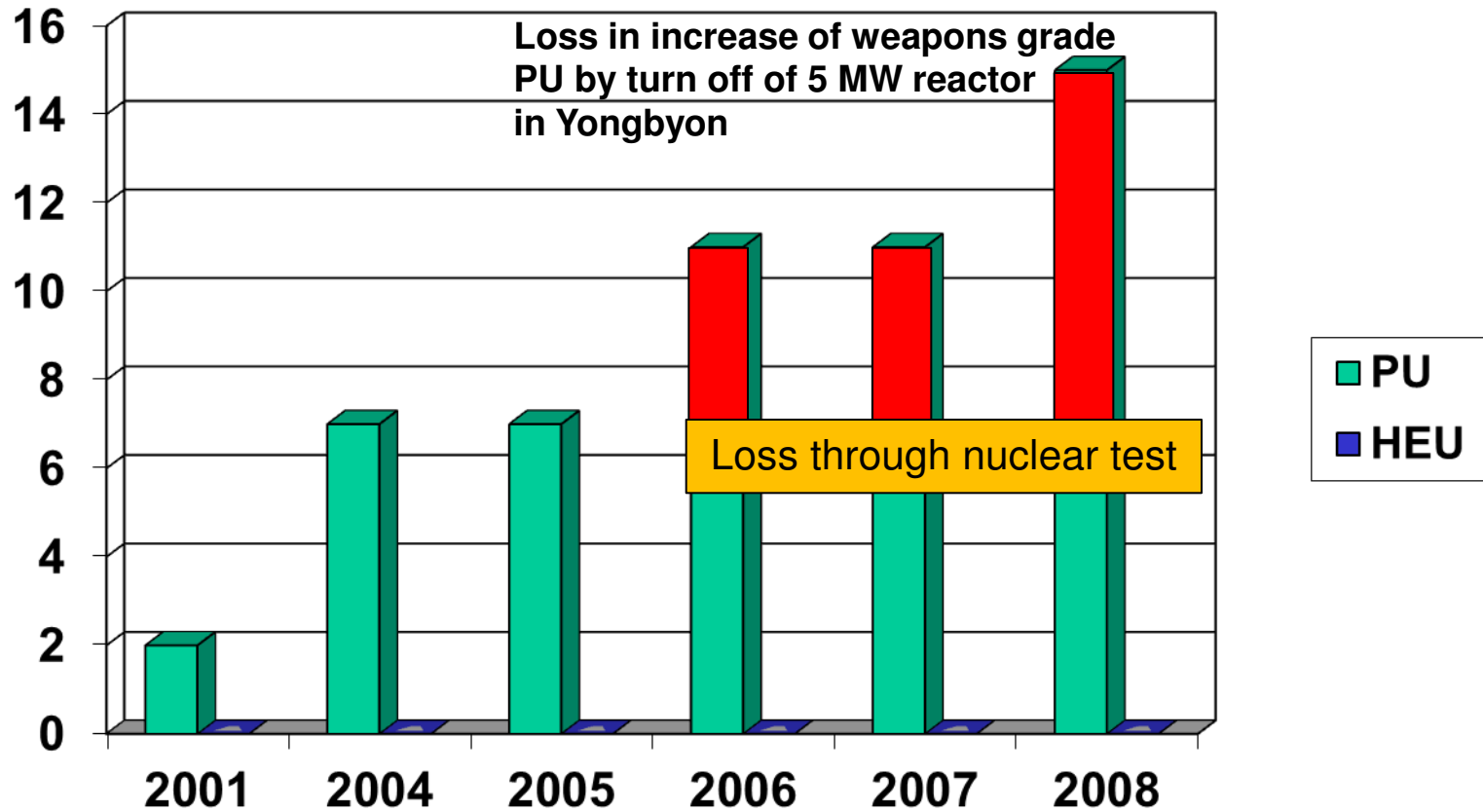
Evolution of DPRK Plutonium-based Nuclear weapons program

causal factors

Evolution

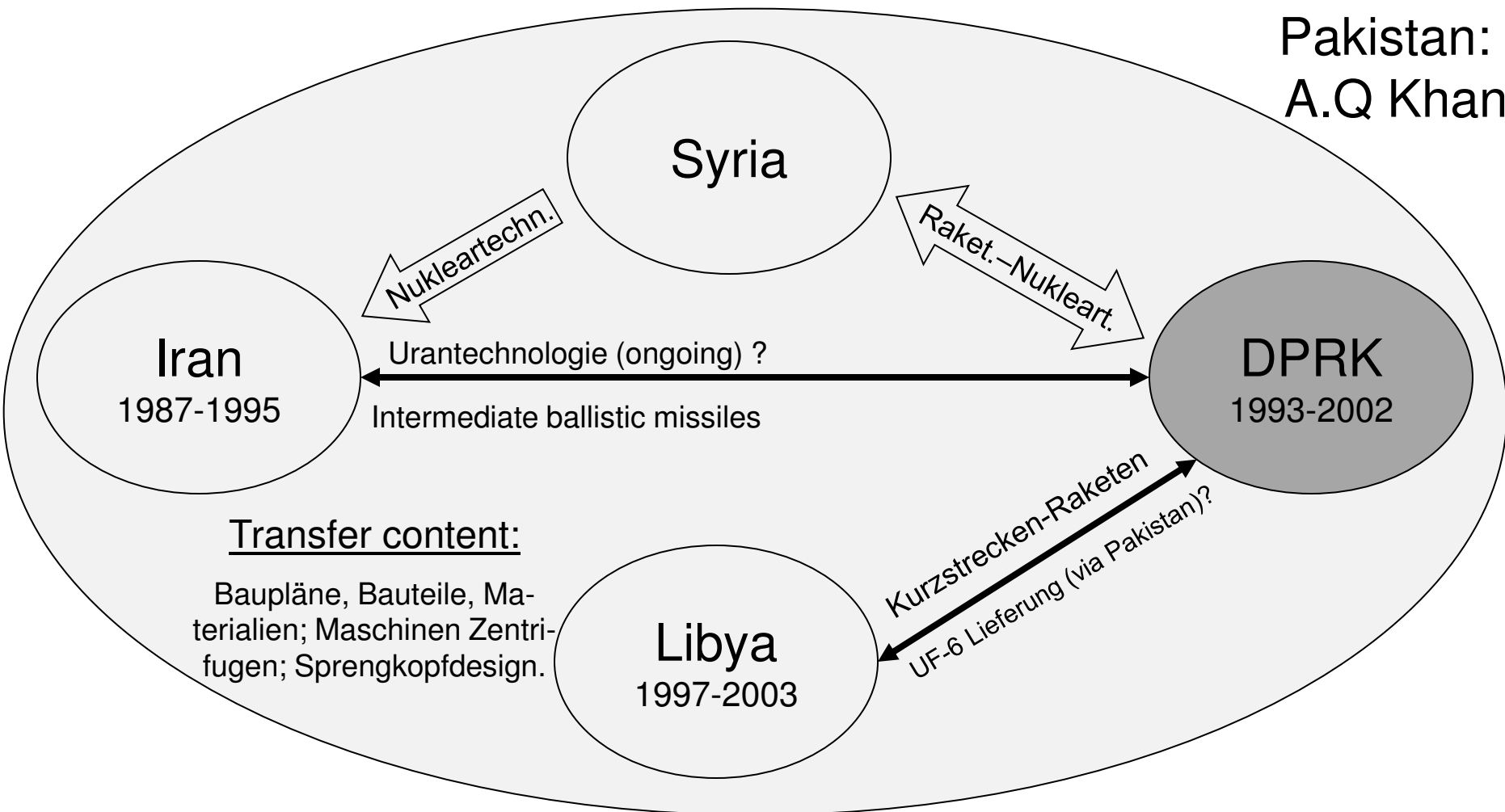
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| 1. US nuclear threat during Korean war; SU behaviour in Cuba crisis | 1. Since 1965: cooperation with SU: building research reactor. |
| 2. US withdrawal from Vietnam; ROK considers nuclear weapons | 2. since 1975: acceleration of building 5 MW-reactor |
| 3. Glasnost/Perestroika in US foreign policy | 3. 1985 NPT accession |
| 4. End of East-West conflict: Loss of traditional ally SU (PR China normalizes relations with ROK) | 4. 1989-1991: withdrawal of burned core elements for reprocessing
=> nuclear warhead production |
| 5. Change in US-DPRK policy under Bush jr. administration 2002/2003 | 5. 2003 reprocessing burned fuel rods: first campaign |
| | 6. 2006 first nuclear test explosion, (Test campaigns 2009, 2013). |

Projection of DPRK Plutonium- and Uranium based Nuclear weapons capacity, 2001-2008



The North Korea Proliferation network

Pakistan:
A.Q Khan



Conflict dynamics under Kim Jong-un

DPRK provocations and conflict dynamics 2010-2012

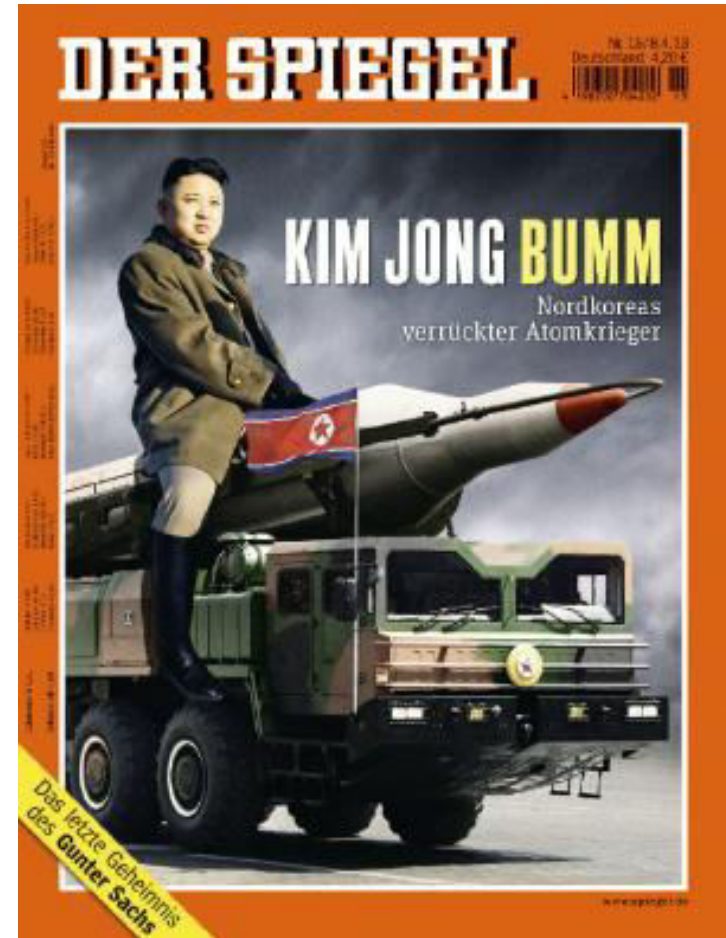
- 26. March 2010: Sinking of South Korean Corvette Cheonan (46 Soldiers die)
- September 2010: Kim Jong-Un is introduced to Party and Military leadership positions.
- 23. November 2010: DPRK-Artillery shells Island of Yeonpyeong in NLL area (2 Soldiers, 2 Civilians die).
- 17. Dezember 2011: Kim Jong-Il dies, Kim Jong-Un becomes successor
- 29. Februar 2012: Leap-Day Agreement settles for Ballistic and Nuclear weapons test moratorium in exchange for food aid
- 13. April 2012: DPRK starts space launch vehicle, failed test, agreement unravels.
- Dezember 2012: DPRK tests missile, but satellite ultimately fails. UN-SC (inkl. PRC) deplotes test und sacntions (UN-SC Res. 2087).
- 12. Februar 2013: DPRK tests nuclear weapon. UN-SC (incl. PRC) deplotes und sanctions (UN-SC Res. 2094).

Escalatory DPRK rhetoric 2013

Datum	Speech act	Escalation
March 5, 2013	We will take second and third countermeasures of greater intensity against the reckless hostilities of the United States and all the other enemies. Now that the US imperialists seek to attack the DPRK with nuclear weapons, we will counter them with diversified precision nuclear strike means of Korean style. The army and people of the DPRK have everything including lighter and smaller nukes unlike what we had in the past. (Korean People's Army)	Threat of nuclear precision strikes
March 7	The revolutionary armed forces of the DPRK will exercise the right to launch a pre-emptive nuclear attack to destroy the strongholds of the aggressors and to defend the supreme interests of the country. (Spokesman for the North Korea's Foreign Ministry)	Nuclear Preemption
March 8	All agreements on nonaggression reached between the North and the South and the joint declaration on denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula are now nullified. (Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland)	Cancellation of all Inter-Korean Agr.
	<u>We are ready for "all-out war" against our enemies. (Kim Jong Un)</u>	
March 10	We would exercise the right to conduct preemptive nuclear strikes if today's "Key Resolve" drills were to go ahead. (North Korea's Foreign Ministry)	Terminated threat
March 12	The Korean Armistice Agreement is to be scrapped completely just from today and the annual training exercises called Key Resolve are an open declaration of a war. (Spokesman for the Supreme Command of the Korean People's Army (KPA) reported by Rodong Sinmun)	Terminated threat

Three Explanations for Conflict dynamics under KJU

1. KJU, as a young leader, needs to prove his authority.
2. KJU is involved in factional power struggle.
3. KJU radicalizes „oppositional nationalism“ of KJI/KIS.



Speech delivered by Kim Jong Un on April 15th, 2012, at Kim Il Sung Square in Pyongyang

- “Military technological supremacy is not a monopoly of imperialists any more, and the time has gone forever when the enemies threatened and intimidated us with atomic bombs.”

- **Ministry of People’s Armed Forces Spokesman’s Statement, 13 March 2013:**

- “The army of the nation and people possessing nuclear weapons will always win a victory in the fight against formidable enemies and most reliably guarantee the powerfulness and security of the country.”

Scenarions for Korean Peninsula

1. **Regime evolution**

KJU regime evolves, changes militant behavior, re-initiates market reforms, and eventually transforms into democratic regimes.

2. **Regime collaps**

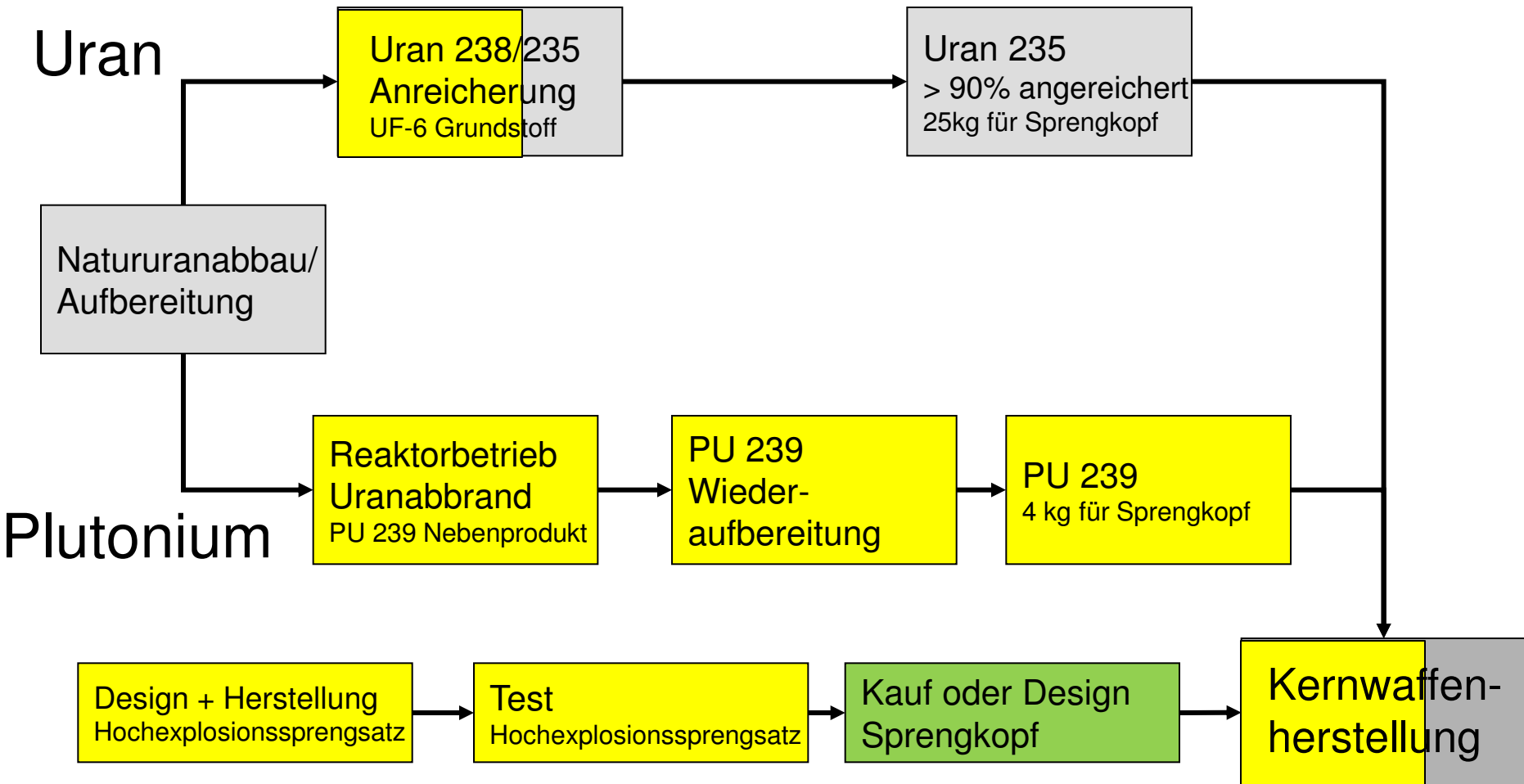
KJU collapses and is succeeded by military junta, DPRK external behavior does not change.

3. **Regime explosion (interstate conflict)**

KJU regime brakes up violently. Factions try to preserve old regime or establish a new regime through initiating external conflict.

Supplementary material

Kernwaffen: Uran + Plutoniumproduktionswege



Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in a meeting with North Korean Deputy Foreign Minister Ri Gil Song in Tehran on Monday, Febr. 24 2014



Quelle: <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13921205001438>