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Mr. Trump’s assertion that China failed to pressure [North Korea](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/northkorea/index.html?inline=nyt-geo) into curbing its nuclear missile program means that Beijing must confront the prospect of a stormier relationship, not just over North Korea but also trade, currency and the South China Sea that Mr. Trump set aside as he sought President Xi Jinping’s help with Pyongyang.

“While I greatly appreciate the efforts of President Xi & China to help with North Korea, it has not worked out,” Mr. Trump [wrote on Twitter](https://twitter.com/realdonaldtrump/status/877234140483121152), ahead of a meeting, signaling a harder line.

Mr. Trump didn’t detail what might follow that conclusion, but the options on the table with North Korea, including sanctions that could target Chinese companies trading with the country, a military buildup and the use of force, are objectionable to Beijing.

Mr. Trump had suggested he was holding off on getting tough on China’s trade policies in return for Mr. Xi’s help with North Korea. Now, Mr. Xi and his colleagues in Beijing must ask whether Mr. Trump is serious about threats made on the campaign trail.

The prospect of a rockier relationship is particularly sensitive now as Mr. Xi prepares to preside over the Communist Party’s Congress. While Mr. Xi’s re-election to a second five-year term as president isn’t in doubt, he wants to use the gathering to consolidate his authority and reshuffle leadership, and doesn’t want any foreign crises to be distractions.

“I have to say that the crux of the Korean Peninsula problem and the focal point of the conflict is not China,” said a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry, Geng Shuang.

“Resolving the Korean Peninsula issue requires joint efforts, and it won’t work if it depends on China alone.” At the same time, he said “China’s role is indispensable.”

The statement by Mr. Trump surprised and annoyed analysts in Beijing. China had taken steps to tighten trade with the North, they said, and the United States hadn’t given sanctions enough time.

“China has done its best, and these sanctions are working,” said Lu Chao, director of the Border Study Institute at the Liaoning Academy of Social Sciences. “Given time, they will have a greater impact on the economy.”

Direct talks with North Korea’s leader, Kim Jong-un, which seem less likely after the death of [Otto Warmbier](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/19/us/otto-warmbier-north-korea-dies.html), the American student released by North Korea last week, could leave China without a say.

Cheng Xiaohe, a professor of international relations at Renmin University of China, said that Mr. Xi’s government had learned not to take Mr. Trump’s Twitter messages at face value.

“The Chinese government assumes Trump’s tweets do not necessarily represent the administration, the government cannot treat them very seriously. Trump changes all the time.”

Officials in Beijing had expressed confidence that their gestures would placate Mr. Trump, whose platform as a candidate had signaled a confrontational policy. “Why would I call China a currency manipulator when they are working with us on the North Korean problem?” he wrote in a [tweet](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/853583417916755968), defending the reversal of a campaign promise.