



Forum: Security Council
Question of: Addressing the political situation in North Korea
Student Officer: Lara Lührmann
Position: Deputy Chair
E-Mail: luehrmannlara@gmail.com

I. Description of the Issue

The current political situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea poses a threat to international peace. The DPRK is ruled by Kim Jong-Un and his party, who have established a large nuclear weapons program. The DPRK has conducted an unprecedented number of nuclear and conventional weapon tests in recent years. North Korea's nuclear and missile activities violate multiple Security Council resolutions and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Severe economic sanctions have been imposed on North Korea, but these measures have failed to force Pyongyang to change course. Furthermore, these military programs function at the expense of the well-being of North Korean citizens, many of whom face malnutrition and can't access basic amenities. A comprehensive solution requires both deterring North Korea's nuclear threat through pressure and sanctions, while also pursuing negotiations towards complete denuclearization and improving the human rights situation.

II. Definition of Key Terms

North Korea:

Officially the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), with 26 million inhabitants and Pyongyang as its capital

South Korea:

Officially Republic of Korea (RoK), with 51 million inhabitants and Seoul as its capital

Kim Dynasty:

The Kim family ruling North Korea since its establishment. Its leaders have been Kim Il-sung (1948-1994), Kim Jong-II (1994-2011) and the current leader Kim Jong-un



Nuclear weapons test:

Intentional detonation of a nuclear weapon or device in a controlled manner, to determine performance, yield, and effects of nuclear weapons

Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM):

Missile with a range greater than 5,500 kilometers, designed for nuclear weapons delivery

Nuclear bomb:

Works by unleashing the immense energy contained within the nuclei of atoms through nuclear fission reactions, can destroy entire cities

Thermonuclear bomb:

Also known as a hydrogen bomb, works by fusing hydrogen isotopes to nuclei of atoms, can be up to thousands of times more destructive than a fission bomb

Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT):

Recognizes five states (the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, and China) as Nuclear Weapon States, commits them to share peaceful nuclear technology with non-nuclear weapon states while working towards eventual disarmament; non-nuclear weapon states agree to stop pursuing nuclear weapons

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty:

Multilateral treaty banning all nuclear explosions for all purposes, not active as not enough countries have ratified it

III. Background information

The DPRK is an authoritarian state which has been governed by the Kim Dynasty since its establishment in 1948 and is still officially under communist rule. North Korea has the highest proportion of people in modern slavery in the world and has been assessed with the lowest score possible regarding human rights. North Korean citizens face the threat of being



imprisoned for perceived "anti-state" offences. The prison camps are sites of severe human rights abuses and currently detain around 0.3% of the population. North Korea's stagnating planned socialist economy has led to widespread poverty, food insecurity, and lack of basic amenities for the majority of the population.

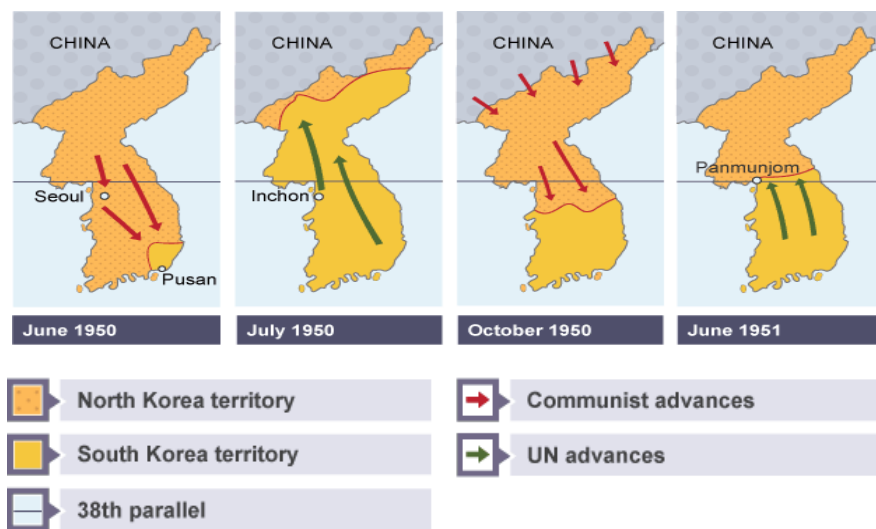
This is due to the regime's prioritization of military spending over economic and infrastructure development. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, leader Kim Jong Il introduced a policy of military-first politics in 1995 which prioritizes the military in state spending and makes it the key component of economic and political power. The DPRK is the country with the highest number of military personnel, with a total of 7.8 million active, reserve, and paramilitary personnel. However, North Korea's conventional military capabilities are not comparable to US or South Korean capabilities; its equipment is outdated, soldiers have limited experience and extensive international sanctions have led to fuel shortages. Therefore, the DPRK is keen on maintaining a nuclear weapons arsenal. Kim Jong-Il announced the first nuclear test in October 2006, the first thermonuclear test was announced by Kim Jong-Un in September 2017. There have been 6 major nuclear tests, all in the last 20 years. The results of the tests have been verified by findings from independent measuring stations which track radionuclide emissions and seismic activity pointing to nuclear tests. North Korean nuclear development raises fears of a regional arms race as other countries may feel compelled to develop their own nuclear weapons as deterrents. In December 2023 North Korea test launched an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) theoretically capable of reaching anywhere in the U.S. mainland. The international community has criticized North Korea's tests and has made it isolated from the rest of the world with wide-ranging UN and unilateral sanctions banning the import of most goods and restricting its trade and economic relations.

IV. Historical Background

The Korean peninsula has a long history of kingdoms and dynasties. In 1897, the unified Korean Empire was established in order to assert the nation's sovereignty. However, in 1910 Japan annexed the Korean Empire and made it a colony. Japan deprived Koreans of civil liberties and forced Koreans to assimilate into Japanese culture while suppressing Korean language and history.



After World War II, the Korean peninsula was divided into Soviet (North) and U.S. (South) occupation zones. In 1948, two separate governments were established - the Soviet-backed Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in the North under Kim Il-sung, and the Western-backed Republic of Korea in the South, which was only intended as a temporary arrangement. The North sought to extend its power over the entire peninsula through military action, leading to frequent clashes along the 38th parallel border between North and South Korean forces in 1949-1950. On June 25, 1950, North Korean forces launched a full-scale invasion of South Korea, triggering the Korean War.



BBC chart [Main Events of the Korean War](#)

After three years of conflict, a ceasefire agreement was signed in 1953, establishing the Demilitarized Zone near the 38th parallel and committing the parties to a peaceful settlement. It was explicitly not a permanent peace treaty. The armistice leaves the two Koreas in a technical state of war, with no formal end to hostilities or their legal status as warring parties.



Location of the DMZ

After the war, North Korea built up a planned economy and military capabilities with Soviet aid. In 2023, Kim Jong-un announced a new Two-State Policy, abandoning the unification goal and declaring North and South Korea as two independent countries in an antagonistic relationship.

V. Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Republic of Korea:

South Korea has switched between periods of engagement and hardline policies toward the North. It relies on the U.S. military alliance but also pursues independent diplomatic efforts with Pyongyang. South Korea possesses no nuclear weapons.

United States of America:

North Korea's main adversary since the Korean War, leading the international efforts to pressure North Korea to denuclearize through sanctions and deterrence. The U.S. maintains a large military presence in South Korea to deter North Korea, possesses around 5,200 nuclear warheads and is a Nuclear Weapon State.

People's Republic of China:



Pyongyang's closest ally and most important economic partner, providing the vast majority of North Korea's trade. There is a mutual defense treaty. The PRC possesses around 410 nuclear warheads and is a Nuclear Weapon State.

Russian Federation:

There are strong historical ties to North Korea from the Soviet era. While not as economically involved as China, Russia has political and strategic interests in the region. Russia is a Nuclear Weapon State and possesses around 5800 nuclear warheads.

Japan:

As a close U.S. ally in the region, Japan is directly threatened by North Korea's nuclear program and missile tests. It has been a strong proponent of stringent multilateral sanctions against North Korea. Japan is also the only country who has been attacked with a nuclear weapon.

There are five other countries who possess nuclear weapons: France with 290 nuclear warheads, the UK (225 nuclear warheads), Pakistan (170), India (164) and Israel (90). Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey host U.S. nuclear weapons which intends to aid U.S. nuclear war planning.

VI. Timeline of events

1897:	Founding of Korean Empire
1910-1945:	Japanese occupation of Korea
1939-1945:	World War II
1945, August:	First use of nuclear bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, leaves between 129,000 and 226,000 people dead
1950:	North Korean forces invade South Korea, starting the Korean War
1953:	Korean Armistice Agreement establishes DMZ
1968:	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty opens for signature
1970:	NPT comes into force
1980s:	DPRK establishes nuclear program
1991:	North and South Korea are recommended for UN membership



- 1994: Agreed Framework leads to ten-year plutonium production stop in exchange for aid
- 2002: DPRK admits to secret uranium-enrichment program to power nuclear weapons, violating various agreements, withdrawal from the NPT follows
- 2006: First SC resolution addressing DPRK's nuclear tests
- 2010: North Korea fires artillery at a South Korean Island, reveals new uranium plant
- 2018: Trump agrees to first U.S.-North Korea summit in Singapore, results in joint statement pledging to pursue peace and denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, the declaration provides little details
- 2019: North Korea ends negotiations with U.S., period of no communication between the two follows
- 2023, September: Kim meets with Putin, Russia agrees to develop North Korea's space technology, violating SC restrictions
- 2023, November: Inter-Korean Comprehensive Military Agreement collapses after South Korea suspends it partly and North Korea withdraws

VII. Previous attempts to solve the issue

Agreed Framework between USA and DPRK (1994)

Bilateral agreement between the U.S. and North Korea freezes Pyongyang's plutonium nuclear program in exchange for aid and two nuclear reactors, leading to a decade-long pause in North Korea's plutonium production. However, the deal collapsed in 2002 after North Korea's uranium enrichment program was revealed.

Six-Party-Talks (2003-2009)

Multilateral dialogue involving North Korea, South Korea, China, Russia, Japan and the U.S., aimed to negotiate an end to North Korea's nuclear program in exchange for economic aid and security guarantees. The talks ultimately broke down over verification issues.



U.S.-North Korea Bilateral Negotiations

There have been direct negotiations between the U.S. and North Korea, such as the Agreed Framework in the 1990s and the Singapore Summit in 2018. These efforts have not achieved a comprehensive deal.

South Korea's "Sunshine Policy" (1998-2008)

South Korean engagement policy aimed at improving inter-Korean relations through economic cooperation and family reunions, failed to address nuclear threats.

UN Security Council Resolutions and Sanctions

The UN has passed numerous resolutions condemning North Korea's nuclear/missile programs and imposed severe economic sanctions, which have not had the intended effect.

VIII. Possible solutions

There are various approaches favored by different member states to mitigate the issue of the political situation in North Korea. Here are some ideas that might be helpful to reference when coming up with a draft resolution.

Offering North Korea economic aid and integration with the outside

In exchange, North Korea denuclearizes, reduces its oversized military forces, and implements economic reforms. This could transform its economy and reduce the burden of its military spending.

Involving China and Russia in a multilateral diplomatic process

This leverages China's influence and ability to reassure North Korea about economic reform and regime survival. Russia has expertise on conventional arms reductions from its past treaties. This multilateral process could motivate Pyongyang to accept further compromises.

Peaceful coexistence approach

This means recognizing North Korea's sovereignty and abandoning the goal of denuclearization and regime change. Instead, negotiate conditions to limit and manage North Korea's nuclear program through arms control measures.



Enhancing deterrence capabilities and regional cooperation

This approach seeks to strengthen missile defenses, intelligence sharing, and crisis management mechanisms among allies like South Korea and Japan.

Limited preventative strikes and cyber attacks

These could be used to impede North Korea's nuclear and missile capabilities, cyber-attacks could target North Korea's nuclear/missile command and control systems, or introduce malware to degrade these capabilities; however, even limited strikes could prompt massive retaliation against South Korea and U.S. forces in the region.

IX. Questions to consider during research

Attempting to answer the following questions may help you determine your country's position:

- Has your country been particularly involved with any resolutions regarding the political situation in the DPRK?
- How have officials in your country commented on the weapon tests?
- Does your country possess weapons of mass destruction?
- What measures has your country proposed to limit nuclear weapon tests?
- How does your country view the treaty on nuclear non-proliferation?
- Has your country helped the DPRK with expanding their nuclear weapons?
- How are your country's diplomatic relations with the DPRK?
- Has your country signed and ratified the CTBT?

Please be aware you are to submit **one draft resolution and two position papers** to the email address you can find at the top of the document until 21.09. 2024. If you submit anything after this date, your chairs will not be able to look over it. If you have any questions regarding this topic, please do not hesitate to contact us.

X. Relevant UN resolutions



[Resolution 84 \(1950\)](#): One of 4 1950 SC resolutions regarding the Korean War, establishes US command of unified foreign military efforts, reaffirms previous resolutions designating North Korea's invasion as a breach of peace and requiring North Korea to withdraw its troops.

[Resolution 1718 \(2006\)](#): First SC resolution addressing (the first) North Korean nuclear weapons test, sets up a dedicated DPRK sanctions committee, imposes an arms embargo, freezes assets of and bans travel for persons involved in the DPRK's nuclear program, and introduces a ban on a various imports and exports.

[Resolution 2397 \(2017\)](#): Most recent SC resolution regarding sanctions on North Korea after the launch of the Hwasong-15 ICBM, limits refined petroleum imports and requires repatriation of DPRK nationals working overseas.

[Resolution 78/218 \(2023\)](#): most recent GA resolution regarding the humanitarian situation in North Korea, the U.N. has adopted a resolution on DPRK human rights every year since 2003. This particular resolution calls for North Korea to immediately end the systematic, grave violations and abuses of human rights.

XI. Useful links

- Video by Simple History "[The Korean War](#)" (5 minutes)
- Full list of [UNSC resolutions regarding the DPRK](#)
- [North Korea country profile](#) by BBC News
- [Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization](#) (CTBTO) webpage
- [All North Korean nuclear tests](#) as measured by the CTBTO
- UNODA [Nuclear non-proliferation treaty](#)
- Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists explains [what a nuclear war encompasses](#)
- [North Korea's military capabilities](#) explained by the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)
- [List of all nuclear weapons by country](#) by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons



- [North Korean Nuclear Negotiations](#) by CFR

XII. Sources

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