

Committee: Security Council

Issue: Evaluating and preventing the threat of nuclear war posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

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I. Introduction

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has been facing economic, social and humanitarian instability since its creation in 1948. It remains the most isolated country in the world and one of the very few socialist totalitarian states.

DPRK's nuclear aspirations are one of the main reasons for their isolation in the international community. Their nuclear programme, ranging from short-and-medium-range ballistic missiles to more complex and modern systems, was inaugurated in the early 1960s with the alleged provision of missiles by the USSR and Egypt in the 60s and 70s. Until 1984 DPRK was reportedly building its own scuds, the Hwasong-5 followed by the Hwasong-6 and later the Nodong and the multiple-stage Taepodong missile series.

For many decades, North Korea's relationship with South Korea and other members of the international community has been rather tense, stemming from border skirmishes, assassination attempts, and alignment with different powers during the Korean War and the following Cold War. As we move towards more modern issues, we see one that immediately calls the attention of the international community: North Korea's growing nuclear power. Additionally, this issue creates major concerns for the regional stability of the Asian region, demanding action by the global community.

North Korean nationalism is at the root of many of these pressing problems. With a government that restricts freedom of expression and movement, association, and many other political and economic freedoms, North Korea's citizens face a heavy threat of execution and brutal treatment. Moreover, the expansion of their nuclear program and threats of nuclear warfare action against South Korea, the United States, and other members of the international community, demands immediate response. As we look towards building a resolution, we must consider the consequences faced by many regional partners, in order to build a solution that protects the global community as a whole.

II. Definition of Key Terms

a) Juche

Juche is a political ideology that constitutes the national shibboleth of DPRK. Juche ideology is Kim Il Sung's interpretation of Marxism-Leninism adjusted to the needs of DPRK. The ideology's cornerstone is the principle of "self-reliance". Self-reliance can be defined as economic autarky and independence. The concept encompasses different aspects, namely chaju, charip and chawi. Chaju embraces political self-determination, national integrity and autonomy.

In the same way, *chawi* entails economic self-sustenance, rejection of foreign economic influence and pursuit of national prosperity. In the end, the philosophy is completed by the attainment of *chawi*, embodying military independence and strong national defence. *Juche* ideology is the very reason why North Korea constantly refuses any international intervention in national political, economic and military issues in the name of sovereignty.

b) Six Party Talks

The Six Party Talks is a program, which consists on negotiations among China, the United States of America, North and South Korea, Russia and Japan in order to “denuclearize” North Korea.

c) 38th parallel (latitude 38° N)

The line chosen by United States during the Potsdam Conference that is dividing North and South Korea, forming the peninsula.

d) Demilitarised Zone

A buffer zone between North and South Korea created under the terms of the armistice signed on July 27, 1953 which ended the war. Though the zone was supposed to be free of both troops and weapons, in practice it is heavily militarised

e) Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD):

A United States Army antiballistic missile system designed to shoot down short, medium, and intermediate range ballistic missiles in their terminal phase using a hit-to-kill approach.

f) Axis of Evil:

A term that former United States President George W. Bush used to describe countries which he thought were involved with terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

g) International Atomic Energy Agency

Organisation that seeks to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

h) Conventional Weapons:

Weapons in wide use that are not weapons of mass destruction.

i) Mutually Assured Destruction

A doctrine that assumes that each side has enough nuclear weaponry to destroy the other side.

j) Nuclear Deterrence

Deter attack from other states through use of nuclear weapons

K) Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

a UN treaty aimed at nuclear disarmament and controlling nuclear technology

III. General Overview

a) Korea during the Cold War

Korea used to be a Japanese colony from 1910 to 1945. After the Japanese defeat in World War II, the northern Korean area was occupied by the Soviet Union and the southern territories by the United States of America (USA). Following 1948, two Korean republics were created. Continuous threats were sent to each other's governments in order to reunify the peninsula. In 1950 northern troops invaded the border and took over the South Korean capital Seoul. At this point, the United Nations (UN) advised military intervention to protect the South Korean territory. Fifteen UN member nations including the USA sent troops to Korea. North Korean troops were defeated and the North Korean capital Pyongyang fell to US and UN troops' control. As a result, North Korea's main allies China and the Soviet Union involved in the war also sent military intervention. In this case, US and UN troops were counterattacked and sent out to North Korea. The Korean peninsula found itself in the same situation as a year earlier. Soon after, peace talks began in 1951 and an armistice agreement was signed in 1953. Yet, both Korean territories remained divided. Throughout these two years of peace making the two Korean governments put pressure on their allies so that the fight continued and by this, be able to take over their opposite side. The USA, the Soviet Union and China recognized that the situation in Korea had become too dangerous and continuing the war would be too risky. Therefore, at this point foreign military support ended. Since then North Korea never fully recovered from the war. In fact, both sides remain having political tensions due to North Korea's threats and ambition for nuclear power.

As the Cold War came to a close, anti-North Korean and anti-communism sentiment ran heavy throughout South Korea, damaging the potential for reunification early on. Furthermore, as China started to work towards restoring relations with the West, North Korea began fervently attempting to maintain its independence in the eyes of the global community.

The issue of the two Koreas is far from just a local or regional dispute. During the Cold War, it was a microcosm of the Cold War itself and the Korean War was essentially the first Soviet-American proxy war. In the modern day, the Korean Peninsula no longer poses the danger of becoming the battleground for a proxy war between superpowers, but the potential for a large-scale military conflict remains. The DPRK maintains a standing army of close to 1.2 million people, with another 600.000 in active reserve and a further 5.8 million in non-active



Picture 1 North Korean invasion of South Korea in 1950

reserve. Although most of the North's military infrastructure and equipment is outdated and unchanged since the Cold War, the sheer manpower of its army is a constant threat to South Korea. Furthermore, the North has been known to purchase more modern military equipment on the international weapons black market.

b) Nuclear Capabilities

Following the election of George W. Bush to the American Presidency, North Korean-American relations took a turn for the worse. Bush included North Korea in what his administration designated the "Axis of Evil" and ended the diplomatic accord reached by the Clinton administration in 1994. This resulted in the DPRK leaving the NPT in 2003 and conducting its first successful nuclear missile launch test in 2006. This has been followed by further successful launches in 2009, 2013, 2016 and the most recent, in May 2017.

It is the development of nuclear capabilities that has truly made North Korea a global issue, with special ramifications for the United States of America. While the DPRK's missile programme has generally been deemed to be in rather early stages, with limited capability and low reliability, recent tests seem to show an advance in the range of the missiles being built, with the latest missile suspected to have a range of over 2000 kilometres. If this is truly the case, then the DPRK is significantly closer to realising its goal of possessing missiles capable of reaching the U.S. mainland. Such a scenario would then in turn considerably raise the likelihood of the U.S. beefing up its own nuclear arsenal, which could have a knock on effect for the nuclear programmes of the Russian Federation and China.

Therefore, North Korea has gone from being a difficult but relatively manageable thorn in the side of the U.S. to a major threat in the Pacific region. Accordingly, the United States has responded to the new threat by refusing to rule out the launch of a pre-emptive strike on North Korea, as well as dispatching the Carl Vinson Strike Group, a flotilla consisting of an aircraft carrier, two destroyers and a cruiser to the Western Pacific, close to the Korean Peninsula. However, President Trump has also stated that he would be willing to meet with the DPRK's Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un, which was met by a response from North Korean officials, stating that Kim would be willing to meet Trump under the right circumstances

c) The Sunshine Policy

The Sunshine policy is the term applied to relations between North and South Korea for 10 years between 1998 and 2008. It was initiated by the newly elected South Korean government at the time, which sought to decrease tensions and increase communication and cooperation. The signature achievement of the Sunshine Policy was the opening of the Kaesong Industrial Complex, an industrial park financed mostly by South Korea, which makes use of North Korean labour to produce the goods of South Korean companies. As of February 2016, the complex

employed 54,000 workers, alongside several hundred South Koreans, producing goods for over 120 companies. According to Reuters, the complex has generated over two billion US dollars' worth of trade income for North Korea since its opening in 2004.

While the complex has been shut down on numerous occasions when tensions flared, it has always reopened and even survived the end of the "Sunshine Policy", which came after the return to power of the conservative party in South Korea. Other elements of the Sunshine Policy included meetings between family members who had been separated after the partition of Korea, several joint business ventures and the supply of financial aid to North Korea, including over three hundred million dollars in 2005.

The new President of South Korea has announced his intentions to once again renew the Sunshine Policy after an almost 10 year break. However, this highly depends on North Korea upholding the three pillars, which are:

- No armed provocation by the North will be tolerated.
- The South will not attempt to absorb the North in any way.
- The South actively seeks cooperation.

IV. Major Parties Involved and their Views

a) South Korea

According to a 2014 BBC World Service Poll, 3% of South Koreans view North Korea's influence positively, with 91% expressing a negative view, making South Korea, after Japan, the country with the most negative feelings of North Korea in the world. However, a 2014 government-funded survey found only 13% of South Koreans viewed North Korea as hostile, and 58% of South Koreans believed North Korea was a country they should cooperate with.

According to a 2017 Korea Institute for National Unification, 57.9% of South Korean citizens had responded that unification is necessary. The number had declined as 62.1% of South Korean citizens thought unification is necessary in 2016. Among the respondents of the 2017 survey, 13.8% said 'we really need unification' while 44% said 'we kind of need the unification'. Regarding the survey question of 'Do we still need unification even if ROK and DPRK could peacefully coexist?', 46% agreed and 31.7% disagreed.

At the start of 2018, following Kim Jong-un's New Year message of lowering military tensions on the Korean Peninsula and improving ties with the South, relationship between the two countries has seen a major diplomatic breakthrough. On 2 Jan 2018, South Korea formally invited North Korea to 2018 Winter Olympics and offered high level talks to discuss about its participation on 9 Jan 2018, which the latter accepted. On 3 Jan 2018, North Korea reopened a border hotline with South Korea, restoring a channel of direct dialogue and signaling a possible thaw in relations.

c) China

China, uniquely among world's powers has continued to offer its assistance to North Korea. Its "big brother relationship" goes back to the first half of the twentieth century, when revolutionaries in both nations were experimenting with communism. It was only because Chairman Mao Zedong dispatched more than a million Chinese troops in the Korean War that Kim Il-Sung kept control of the northern half of the peninsula. The Chinese and North Korean relationship used to be so close, Chairman Mao used to compare it to the "anatomical embrace between teeth and lips". The two countries signed the Sino-North Korean Mutual Aid and Cooperation Friendship Treaty in 1979, which guarantees military assistance to each other in case of an outside attack. This treaty has been prolonged twice and is valid until 2021.

Despite this, North Korean-Chinese relations have declined over the past few years. According to Zhu Fend, an influential foreign policy advisor at Nanjing University, "the Kim regime has done absolutely nothing that is good for China's national interests". In February 2017, North Korea (allegedly) organized the assassination of Kim Jong Nam, older brother of Kim Jong-Un. Nam had been living in Chinese Macau and was a Chinese, albeit politically blemished, asset. This is not the first time that North Korea hit a pro-Chinese relative. Kim Jong-Un's Uncle Jang Song-thaek tried to reinvigorate the North Korean economy through market reforms advised by the Chinese and was infamously executed in 2013.

China has publicly condemned North Korean ballistic missile tests and its nuclear programme, but has until this year steered away from any significant action. As North Korea's economic lifeline and a source of oil, China holds significant leverage over its neighbor. China has been blamed by the international community for not making use of this leverage enough, with the US secretary of State Rex Tillerson threatening secondary sanctions for doing business with Pyongyang. But shutting down trade between the two could be catastrophic for both parties, as the economic collapse of the Kim family brings a potential security nightmare to its border: a unified Korea led by the south, which currently hosts tens of thousands of US soldiers and a THAAD anti-missile system. China needs North Korea as a buffer zone and seeks to protect it. Furthermore, turning on its ally could on the other hand mean, that the missiles currently directed towards the US and its allies, could suddenly be pointed at China. As Paul Hanle from Carnegie-Tsinghua puts it, "The Chinese are deeply frustrated and want to do something, but they get stuck when they look at the options"

d) United States of America

The hostile relationship between the United States and North Korea developed primarily during the Korean War, during which the US Air Force destroyed almost all infrastructure and napalmed North Korean crops, leaving 20% of its population dead. This is still reflected in today's anti-US rhetoric as in Kim JongUn's new year's speech in 2015: "The United States, the very one that divided our nation into two and has imposed the suffering of national division upon

it for 70 years, should desist from pursuing the anachronistic policy hostile towards the DPRK and reckless acts of aggression and boldly make a policy switch”.

During the cold war, there was little to no relationship between the two sides. North Korea shot down a US spy plane and captured a spy ship in the Sea of Japan. But it was after the cold war that tensions escalated. The Bush administration put North Korea on the list of State-sponsored terrorism as part of the Axis of Evil for its nuclear capacities. North Korea understood it as an attempt to topple the regime and only strengthened its reliance on conventional and nuclear weapons.

The US again tried to normalize the situation, exchanging fuel aid for shutting down the Yongbyon nuclear facility. This seemed fruitful at first, but as North Korea continued its satellite launches under Kim Jong-Un, the process of normalization broke down. The US conducted several military exercises after hostile acts against South Korea and in turn, North Korea infamously prosecuted US citizens in show trials. The US government imposed harsh sanctions against the Kim regime and further increased its military presence in the region.

There is much ambiguity on what Donald Trump’s policy for North Korea is, beside tougher sanctions. If necessary, pre-emptive strikes are on the table, conducting airstrikes on key facilities, combined with cyberattacks and commandos. This is however risky, as it may not succeed because of lack of intelligence on hidden key facilities. And it is hard to imagine Kim Jong Un doing nothing while the U.S. and its allies pounded his nuclear program. Seoul lies within artillery range of the North. Kim could retaliate even without using nuclear weapons. That would mean any attack on nuclear facilities would have to be accompanied by attacks on other installations threatening the South, increasing the size of the conflict.

e) Russia

Russia is a key strategic player in North-east Asia and has a long experience in dealing with various Pyongyang regimes. The Soviet Union used to provide much support for North Korea during the cold war, but after the dissolution of the Soviet block, the government has distanced itself from North Korea and has instead favoured a warm diplomatic relationship with South Korea.

Russia is North Korea’s second largest trade partner with annual trade of 100 million dollars. Arguably, among North Korea’s neighbors Russia now ranks second, after China, in terms of its potential ability to cause intense economic pain to the North Korean regime. This has become especially true in recent years after Japan and South Korea severed virtually all economic contacts with the North. Russia used to provide Pyongyang much needed international banking services prior to international sanctions and provides a black market for weapons.

As the world’s guarantor of non-proliferation, Russia has for instance played a key role in Iran’s nuclear deal and Russia’s diplomatic power will be necessary once again. Russia has supported UN sanctions towards North Korea, calling them “harsh but necessary to ensure a return to the negotiating table”. Any proliferation would inevitably devalue Russia’s own nuclear

deterrent, which is of profound importance to Moscow's great power self-identity. Moscow also worries that Pyongyang's nuclear aspirations could result in an arms race or even war in Northeast Asia, a scenario which is extremely undesirable for Russia. As a more immediate concern, Vladivostok, the Russian Far East's biggest city, is just 200 miles from the North Korean nuclear test site.

There are however reasons why Russia is not completely in favor of curbing North Korea's nuclear arsenal. Firstly, Russia's isolation from the West caused Russia to be diplomatically and financially dependent on China and hence the option of following in China's path is, whatever it might look like, is still an option. Secondly, as US-Russian relations are damaged by cyber hacking, claims of influencing the presidential election and the annexation of Crimea. If they go from bad to worse, it will be difficult, if not outright impossible, for Moscow and Washington to collaborate on North Korea. In April 2017, Russia even moved heavy military equipment towards the North Korean border amid mounting fears of a military clash between Pyongyang and the US.

f) Japan

Japan–North Korea relations have not been formally established, but there have been diplomatic talks between the two governments to discuss the issue of kidnapped Japanese citizens and North Korea's nuclear program. Relations between the two countries are severely strained and marked by tension and hostility. According to a 2014 BBC World Service poll, 91% of Japanese people view North Korea's influence negatively, with just 1% expressing a positive view; the most negative perception of North Korea in the world.

In the early 1990s, Japan conducted lengthy negotiations with North Korea aimed at establishing diplomatic relations while maintaining its relations with Seoul. In September 1990 Japanese political delegation led by former deputy Prime Minister Shin Kanemaru of the Liberal Democratic Party visited North Korea. Following private meetings between Kanemaru and North Korean leader Kim Il Sung, a joint declaration released on September 28 called for Japan to apologize and to compensate North Korea for its period of colonial rule. Japan and North Korea agreed to begin talks aimed at the establishment of diplomatic relations.

In January 1991, Japan began normalization talks with Pyongyang with a formal apology for its 1910-45 colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula. The negotiations were aided by Tokyo's support of a proposal for simultaneous entry into the United Nations by North Korea and South Korea; the issues of international inspection of North Korean nuclear facilities and the nature and amount of Japanese compensations, however, proved more difficult to negotiate.

Coincidental with the changing patterns in its relations with China and Russia, North Korea has moved to improve its strained relations with Japan. Pyongyang's primary motives appear to be a quest for relief from diplomatic and economic isolation, which has caused serious shortages of food, energy, and hard currency. Normalization of relations with Japan also raises

the possibility of North Korea's gaining monetary compensation for the period of Japan's colonial rule (1910–45), a precedent set when Japan normalized relations with South Korea.

The first round of normalization talks was held January 30–31, 1991, but quickly broke down over the question of compensation. Pyongyang has demanded compensation for damages incurred during colonial rule as well as for "sufferings and losses" in the post-World War II period. Japan, however, insists that North Korea first resolve its differences with South Korea over the question of bilateral nuclear inspections. Other points of contention are North Korea's refusal both to provide information about Japanese citizens who had migrated to North Korea with their Korean spouses in the 1960s, and the issue of Japanese soldiers taken prisoner by the Soviets during WWII and sent to North Korea.

V. Relevant United Nations Documents

- [United Nations Resolution 1695](#)
- [United Nations Resolution 1718](#)
- [United Nations Resolution 1874](#)
- [United Nations Resolution 1887](#)
- [United Nations Resolution 2087](#)
- [United Nations Resolution 2270](#)
- [United Nations Resolution 2397](#)

VI. Questions to Consider

- How can the issue on Nuclear Weapons be solved?
- How can the committee come up to an agreement point for all states and preserve peace?
- How can previous actions taken be improved or changed?
- What are some short term and long term solutions?
- How can United Nations cooperate with states and organisations such as International Atomic Energy Agency?

VII. Conclusion

The situation in North Korea is an issue that has been challenge for all member states involved. Nations tend to prioritize their own wellbeing over global wellbeing. For a situation as

pressing as this one, it is crucial for member states to put their differences aside and tackle the issue together. North Korea's increasing expertise in the design and manufacture of weapons and delivery systems will raise the risk of onward proliferation to other states and possibly even to non state actors. Recently, Kim Jong-un has invited President Trump to meet for negotiations over its nuclear program and there are suspicions on whether Kim is willing to talk about giving up nuclear weapons. This could really change the course of things and possibly eradicate this problem once and for all. However, it is important to be realistic and recognize that this might not be the case. After all, it doesn't make sense for a man with nuclear power to give up something so potent while expecting nothing in exchange. This is important to acknowledge through debate and keep in mind that the nuclear age is just getting started.

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