

## Committee: Disarmament and International Security Committee

### Issue: The issue of the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula

Student Officer: Christina Gousi

Position: Co-chair

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## Introduction

It was August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1945, when the Japanese forces surrendered to the Allied forces, thus ending not only World War 2 (WWII) but also the 35-year long rule of Japan over Korea. Since then, the Korean peninsula was divided into two different states: one located in the North (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) and the other one in the South (Republic of Korea). The South was occupied by the Soviet Union and the North by the US until a merged and independent government was established. However, due to the outbreak of the Cold War, which made cooperation between the aforementioned nations impossible, and due to different political views in the North and South, the dream of a unified Korea was abandoned.



Figure 1: Korean Peninsula Locator Political Map (1999)  
([http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/geography/element\\_b/eb4.html#korea](http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/geography/element_b/eb4.html#korea))

## Definition of Key-Terms

### Peninsula

A peninsula can be defined as a piece of land that is surrounded by water on almost all its sides but is still attached to the mainland.

### Korean Peninsula

The Korean Peninsula is located in East Asia, surrounded on the east by the Sea of Japan/East Sea, on the South by the East China Sea and on the West by the Yellow Sea. "Korean Peninsula" is commonly used to talk about DPRK and R.O.K.

### Denuclearization

Denuclearization is defined as the removal of nuclear weapons.

## Nuclear weapon

A device that explodes and releases nuclear energy due to nuclear chain reactions that involve division of atomic nuclei. Nuclear weapons are also called atomic bombs (A-bombs), boosted fission weapons or hydrogen/thermonuclear weapons (H-bombs).

## Background Information

### Nuclear Weapons

They cannot only destroy cities, while at the same time ending millions of lives, but also damage the environment and jeopardize lives of future generations due to their long-term catastrophic effects. Hence, there is no doubt why they are the most dangerous weapons on earth. To this day, nuclear weapons have been used only twice in combat, in the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during WWII. Still, more than 2.000 nuclear tests have been conducted and almost 22.000 nuclear weapons remain in the world.



Figure 2: The nuclear bombing of Nagasaki, Japan, 9th August 1945 during world war two Universal History Archive/UIG via Getty Images

(<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/politics/the-nine-countries-that-have-nuclear-weapons-a6798756.html>)

### Effects

The effects of nuclear weapon explosions can be separated into four categories: 1. immediate, 2. near-immediate, 3. temporary and 4. long-term.

1. Explosions reach temperatures of several million degrees Celsius (°C) and, therefore, human tissue of people found in a wide area near the explosion, is vaporized.
2. People in indoor spaces are instantaneously killed by the explosion due to the collapse and the fire that is caused and those in underground shelters that have survived the explosion are killed due to the lack of oxygen. Lastly, people found outside the area of destruction suffer from injuries such as blindness, internal and external bleeding.
3. Radioactive fallout (particles, such as fission products or debris, that fall to the earth as a result of the explosion) affects survivors. Exposure to radioactive fallout leads to hair loss, internal bleeding,

vomiting, fever, coma and more. Expecting mothers are likely to suffer from a miscarriage or have babies with disabilities.

4. Long-term effects include radiation-induced cancers and thyroid cancer in children. Serious damage to the climate and biodiversity of the region is also one of the most serious consequences.

### Nuclear weapon states

Today, there are 9 countries that possess nuclear weapons, with the United States

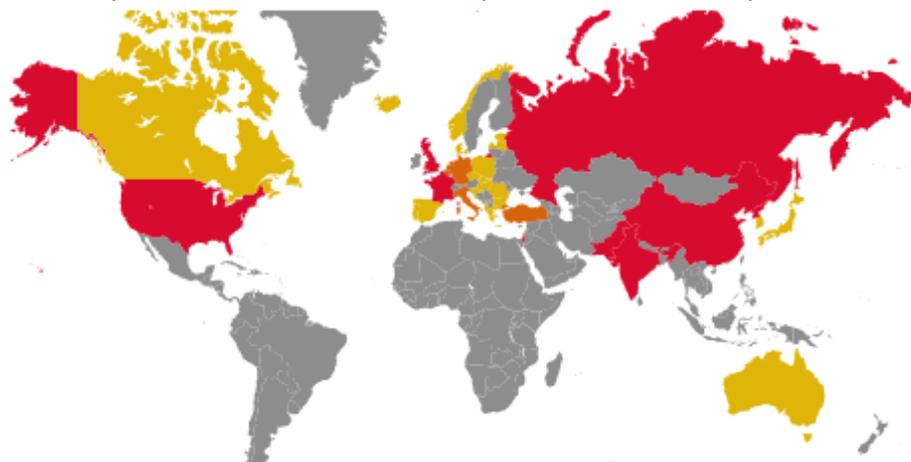


Figure 3:

**Nations with nuclear weapons**

The United States, Russia, Britain, France, China, Israel, India, Pakistan, North Korea

**Nations hosting nuclear weapons**

Belgium, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Turkey

**Nations in nuclear alliances**

Albania, Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain

[\(http://www.icanw.org/the-facts/nuclear-arsenals/\)](http://www.icanw.org/the-facts/nuclear-arsenals/)

of America being the first to develop and use them. The Russian Federation followed in the development and it has the largest amount of weapons, focusing mainly on the modernization of delivery systems. The UK has four nuclear-armed submarines in Scotland and France has a boat on patrol at all times and submarines supplied with M45 and M51 missiles. China's warheads can be delivered by air, water or land, India's were developed violating non-proliferation commitments and Pakistan is slowly improving nuclear arsenal and related infrastructure. Lastly, the DPRK has an emerging nuclear weapons program while Israel has still neither confirmed nor refused its nuclear weapon possession.

Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey serve as US nuclear weapons hosts because of a NATO nuclear-sharing arrangement. Lastly, many nations have research reactors that could also be used for weapons production.

### Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and nuclear weapons

Following the end of WWII, DPRK began developing its nuclear program. However, due to its regime, not much is known about the country as a whole and, more specifically, about its nuclear arsenal. The DPRK publicly declared in 2005 that it possesses nuclear weapons, however, the exact number is still unknown and as stated by the government of the DPRK, nuclear weapons are developed in the country for peaceful reasons, mainly to protect DPRK from foreign military invasions. More specifically, according to DPRK's law, nuclear weapons serve for "deterring and repelling the aggression and attack of the enemy against the DPRK and dealing deadly retaliatory blows at the strongholds of aggression"<sup>1</sup>. The main role of nuclear weapons though serves to help the North Korean regime survive and protect itself against external threats that may have an impact on the sovereignty of the country.

Until now, the DPRK has conducted 4 successful underground nuclear tests (2006, 2009, 2013 and 2016). In the tests of 2006 and 2009 plutonium was probably used and their yield was under 1 (2006) and 2.7 (2009) kilotons. The third test's yield is estimated to have reached 5 to 15 kilotons, but the fissile material that was used still remains unknown. Experts believe that either plutonium or uranium was probably used, but due to the fact that the DPRK possibly had –at the time- an advancing uranium supply, a uranium-based device was more likely used. Shortly before the 4<sup>th</sup> nuclear test, Kim Jong-Un, DPRK's leader, declared that the DPRK had become a "powerful nuclear weapons state ready to detonate self-reliant A-bomb and H-bomb"<sup>2</sup>. According to the DPRK, a smaller H-bomb was successfully tested, but experts highly doubt this, because the yield that was measured was not consistent to the expected yield of an H-bomb.

Concerning the future, it is estimated that DPRK's nuclear weapons can vary from 20 to 100 until 2020. As its nuclear program continues, it will become more advanced focusing on miniaturization and higher nuclear yields. An advancement of the nuclear weapons program will have many implications on the international community, for example DPRK's relations with other countries, especially with the US, will be highly affected, something that could even lead to armed conflict.

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<sup>1</sup> Wertz, Daniel, and Matthew McGrath. North Korea's Nuclear Weapons Program. Issue brief. N.p.: National Committee on North Korea, 2016. Print.

<<http://www.ncnk.org/resources/publications/DPRK-Nuclear-Weapons-Issue-Brief> >

<sup>2</sup> Anna Fifield, "For the first time, North Korea says it has hydrogen bomb, and it's ready to detonate, but experts are skeptical" Washington Post, December 10, 2015.

<[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/north-korea-says-its-ready-to-detonate-hbomb-but-skepticism-abounds/2015/12/10/fe69922e-17ef-4020-8342-1b07fde0a55b\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/north-korea-says-its-ready-to-detonate-hbomb-but-skepticism-abounds/2015/12/10/fe69922e-17ef-4020-8342-1b07fde0a55b_story.html) >

Another issue concerns international security, mainly because DPRK does not have a no-first-use policy, which means that nuclear weapons could be used anytime against anyone, although government officials have stated that the usage of nuclear weapons will be avoided unless other nations use them first.

#### Republic of Korea (R.O.K.) and nuclear weapons

After the Korean War (1950-1953), the R.O.K. has maintained an alliance with the United States and in 1970 it abandoned its nuclear program, but it still has the technical means to produce weapons. There are 24 nuclear power reactors in the country and 4 are still unfinished. R.O.K. is a signatory to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) (1975) and it has also signed the Joint Declaration of South and North Korea on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Moreover, the R.O.K. also exports nuclear technology. In 2010, the South Korean government publicly declared that it planned to export 80 nuclear power reactors by the year 2030. Its plans to expand nuclear power technology involve the United Arab Emirates, Jordan and possibly China. Despite its legal boundaries, the Republic of Korea is interested in initiating a closed nuclear fuel cycle in order to surpass 20% of the global nuclear reactor market.

## Major Countries and Organizations Involved

### DPRK /North Korea

The DPRK has no intention of abandoning its nuclear weapons program, mainly because, according to the North Korean government, nuclear weapons are manufactured for safety reasons. As stated by the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), the DPRK will never give up its nuclear power and become other countries', mainly the U.S.', slave. Because the DPRK is now a full-fledged nuclear power, denuclearization



will be impossible, according to the North Koreans. Furthermore, during the 7<sup>th</sup>

*Video 1: Kim Jong Un speaks out on nuclear weapons*  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnoVAusyrCA>)

Party Congress in North Korea (6-9<sup>th</sup> May, 2016), Kim Jong-un announced that “As a responsible nuclear weapons state, our Republic will not use a nuclear weapon unless its sovereignty is encroached upon by any aggressive hostile forces with nukes, as it had already declared, and it will faithfully fulfil its obligation for non-proliferation and strive for the global denuclearization”.<sup>3</sup> He also mentioned the importance of an inter-Korean dialogue for denuclearization.

It is clear that there is a big gap in Mr. Kim Jong-un’s words, because on the one hand the DPRK will not denuclearize, but on the other hand the country will, according to him, try to help the international community achieve world denuclearization. What can be understood is that once the other nuclear weapon states denuclearize, the DPRK will work towards denuclearization, since it will not feel threatened by other nations’ nuclear power anymore, thus the country will have no other motive to keep producing nuclear weapons.

### ROK /South Korea

The Republic of Korea has pressured the DPRK many times in the past in order to achieve denuclearization and stabilize the situation in the Korean peninsula, but there have been no positive results. Moreover, the ROK does not believe that the

<sup>3</sup> Kim Jong Un’s Speeches at the 7th Workers’ Party Congress. Rep. The National Committee on North Korea, n.d. Web. <[http://www.ncnk.org/resources/news-items/kim-jong-uns-speeches-and-public-statements-1/KJU\\_Speeches\\_7th\\_Congress.pdf](http://www.ncnk.org/resources/news-items/kim-jong-uns-speeches-and-public-statements-1/KJU_Speeches_7th_Congress.pdf)>

DPRK should be identified as a nuclear-powered state by the international community. In May 2016, ROK officials denied DPRK's dialogue proposal made during the 7<sup>th</sup> party congress, mentioning that it is time for real actions and not just words from DPRK's part. According to the unification ministry of South Korea: "The North's proposal is merely its propaganda drive with no sincerity as it speaks of inter-Korean dialogue while continuing to develop a nuclear arsenal"<sup>4</sup>. For the South Koreans, denuclearization of the Korean peninsula will lead to dialogue and peace between the two Koreas. Lastly, complete removal of nuclear weapons in the Korean peninsula will mostly influence the security in the area, thus possibly affecting the presence of U.S. troops in South Korea.

### Russia

Russia, another member of the Six-Party Talks (Six-Party Talks explained in Previous Attempts to solve the issue), has for long supported peace in the Korean peninsula and the unification of both nations. Russia's historic bond with the DPRK goes back more than 160 years and the USSR has had a significant impact on the founding of the DPRK. Like with China, a collapse of the DPRK's regime would significantly affect the country, because of the new refugee waves that will be created. Hence, Russia's denuclearization interests include security in its Far East borders with the DPRK, but not a change in the political system. Because tensions in the northern and southern parts of the peninsula do not favor Russia's trade opportunities with the ROK, unification is also one main goal.

Shortly after the 4<sup>th</sup> nuclear test, Russian officials warned the DPRK that its threats concerning nuclear strikes could legally justify the use of military force against the DPRK. According to Russia's foreign ministry, the DPRK's threats will lead the country against the international community. However, if military force is involved, no matter how legal and justified it is, the DPRK will most likely respond by using its nuclear force –Mr. Kim Jong-Un has already warned the international community-, possibly leading to another world war.

### China

China, that has maintained a diplomatic relationship with the DPRK, is another country that has for years pressed the DPRK to denuclearize. Hence, China can be seen as both a nation that supports and helps denuclearization but also as the supporter of the North Korean regime. China actually emphasizes the importance of stability in the DPRK following what could be a regime collapse after successful denuclearization. A collapsing regime would lead to a new refugee crisis, which would mostly affect China's borders. Concerning the last nuclear test that was conducted in January 2016, the Chinese mentioned that they would not be tolerant towards the DPRK.

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<sup>4</sup> Ying, ed. "S.Korea Rejects Inter-Korean Dialogue Proposed by DPRK." (n.d.): n. pag. 08 May 2016. Web. < [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-05/08/c\\_135342957.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-05/08/c_135342957.htm) >

According to China's foreign minister Mr. Wang Yi, the nation is willing to begin five-party talks that focus on the Korean peninsula's denuclearization. This idea was proposed at first by the South Korean government on February 22, 2016, but the Chinese did not agree to it, but as it can be seen from the foreign minister's announcement on March 8, 2016, China has had a change of heart. Five-party talks would involve the governments of the USA, China, Russia, Japan and ROK. Nevertheless, one cannot forget the close and traditional relationship between China and the DPRK. China is willing to support the North Korean economy, but it still believes that sanctions are necessary for achieving the goal. Mr. Wang Yi has said that China will act if the security interests of either the Korean peninsula or China are not taken into consideration.

### Japan

Japan does not have any formally established relations with the DPRK, but the two nations have had previous diplomatic talks. Due to the alliance with the US, Japan's views towards DPRK are influenced by the US. Moreover, Japan-DPRK relations are not helped by the unresolved abduction case of 1970-1980 (Japanese citizens were abducted by the DPRK, which confirmed this in 2002). Before the beginning of the Six-Party Talks, Japan did not have a major say in North Korean matters, but after participating in the talks, it became more influential concerning the matter.

As regards the previous nuclear weapons tests, Japan was one of the many countries to condemn them. During its two-year period in the UNSC, it sponsored resolution 1718 (voted after 1<sup>st</sup> weapons test). After the 4<sup>th</sup> nuclear test, Japanese officials visited Moscow, where they agreed to strengthen Russia's and Japan's financial collaboration and to cooperate in order to create a stricter UNSC resolution which would prevent more nuclear tests by the North Koreans. Japan is also working closely with the US and the ROK in order to achieve denuclearization talks.

### United States of America

The United States of America fights for the Korean peninsula's denuclearization and for the change of regime. Removal of nuclear weapons in the peninsula can be seen as one less problem that the US have to face, because

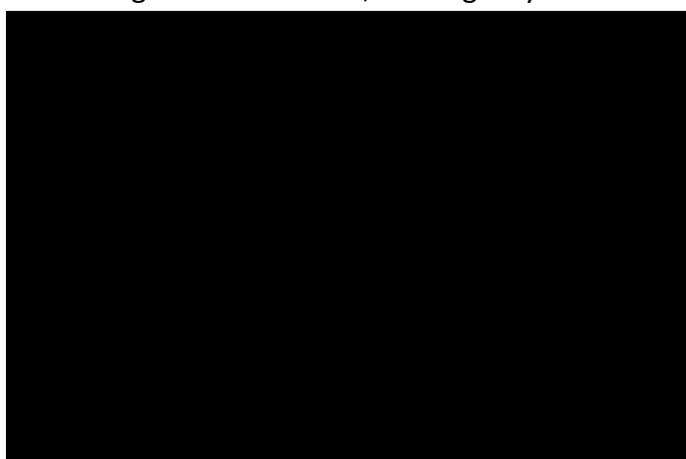
- a. there will be no fear of an unexpected attack on US soil,
- b. the DPRK will not resolve to selling nuclear weapons to terrorist organizations in order to help its economy advancement and
- c. US-Japan and US-ROK military alliances will not be threatened.

Concerning the US' approach towards denuclearization efforts, President Obama's policy towards the DPRK involves the maintenance of diplomatic US-DPRK relations, resumption of Six-Party Talks and "strategic patience", which means that the DPRK is mainly pressured by financial sanctions imposed. However, the policy of "strategic patience" has not actually helped achieve the US' and other countries'

goal. Thus, seeing as sanctions and the current strategy followed by the US are not having any significant impact on the DPRK's weapons programme, the US government should rethink its stance and, maybe, be stricter towards the DPRK, so that at first, nuclear advancement is "frozen" and then the country is denuclearized.

### International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

The IAEA strives for the promotion of peaceful nuclear energy use. Concerning nuclear activity in the DPRK, the IAEA had condemned the 4 previous nuclear tests conducted by the DPRK. The Agency cannot verify DPRK's nuclear activities, thus it has limited knowledge of them. The IAEA is willing to go back to the DPRK if it asked to do so, ever since its inspectors departed in 2009 due to DPRK's wish to end cooperation with the Agency. However, the Agency monitors nuclear sites in DPRK through satellites. Still, the Agency asks DPRK to comply with SC resolutions, to restart cooperation and to implement the NPT Safeguards Agreement.



restart cooperation and to implement the NPT Safeguards Agreement.

*Video 2: IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano's Statement on DPRK*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bF2CsTKPVIY>

### Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
05/05/1970	The NPT enters into force
April 1975	R.O.K. signs the NPT
12/12/1985	DPRK ratifies the NPT
19/02/1992	The Joint Declaration of South and North Korea on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula enters into force
10/01/2003	DPRK withdraws from the NPT

10/02/2005	DPRK publicly declares nuclear weapons possession
9/10/2006	DPRK conducts first successful nuclear test
14/10/2006	UNSC adopts resolution 1718
25/05/2009	DPRK conducts second successful nuclear test
12/06/2009	UNSC adopts resolution 1874
22/01/2013	UNSC adopts resolution 2087
12/02/2013	DPRK conducts third successful nuclear test
7/03/2013	UNSC adopts resolution 2094
6/01/2016	DPRK conducts fourth nuclear test
7/02/2016	DPRK conducts a satellite rocket launch
2/03/2016	UNSC adopts resolution 2270

## Relevant UN Treaties, Resolutions, and Events

### UNSC resolutions

#### Resolution 1718 (2006)

Condemnation of 1<sup>st</sup> nuclear test unanimously adopted. The SC voted to prohibit large-scale arms provision and anything related to nuclear technology to the DPRK. It also calls nations to take action through cargo inspections.

#### Resolution 1874 (2009)

Condemnation of 2<sup>nd</sup> test, which violated resolution 1718, unanimously voted. The SC voted for toughest sanctions to be imposed.

#### Resolution 2087 (2013)

Condemnation of December's 2012 launch that violated previous sanctions imposed, unanimously adopted. The SC demanded that DPRK not proceeds with any activities regarding nuclear weapons.

#### Resolution 2094 (2013)

Unanimously adopted following 3<sup>rd</sup> nuclear test. The SC agreed to strengthen UN sanctions on the DPRK.

#### Resolution 2270 (2016)

Unanimously adopted following the 4<sup>th</sup> nuclear test with new sanctions imposed.

### Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

The NPT is a treaty whose aim is to stop spreading nuclear weapons and its technology, to promote peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to promote disarmament. It was adopted on June 12, 1968, in the UN HQ and it entered into force on March 5, 1970. The DPRK, India, Israel, Pakistan and South Sudan are non-signatory states.

Number of Signatory States: 93

Number of States Parties: 191

Full text: <http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/npt/text>

### Joint Declaration of South and North Korea on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula

The declaration was signed on January 20, 1992, and it entered into force 1 month after. Under the declaration, the DPRK and ROK agreed to promote only the peaceful use of nuclear energy and stop all actions concerning nuclear weapons.

Full text: <http://www.nti.org/media/pdfs/aptkoreanuc.pdf>

### Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)

Under the treaty, nuclear weapons test explosions and other nuclear-related explosions are banned. India, Pakistan, and the DPRK have not signed the CTBT.

Number of signatories: 183

Number of ratifications: 164

Full text: [https://www.ctbto.org/fileadmin/content/treaty/treaty\\_text.pdf](https://www.ctbto.org/fileadmin/content/treaty/treaty_text.pdf)

## Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

Ever since the DPRK announced its nuclear weapons possession, the international community has set denuclearization as a basic goal. Although UNSC resolutions, which are binding, have been voted upon and adopted, the DPRK has violated them, thus not making significant steps towards denuclearization. In 2003 the Six-Party Talks, involving China, the US, Russia, Japan, the DPRK and ROK, began aiming at denuclearization through negotiations. However, they stopped in 2009, because the DPRK did not want to continue. Ever since other nations have tried to recommence the talks, but there has been no positive result.

## Possible Solutions

Concerning denuclearization, seeing as the DPRK will not comply with all previous attempts, the general strategy must be altered. The first priority that needs to be set is security in the peninsula, thus proper handling is needed. Diplomatic relations between both Koreas are the basis of stabilization, hence dialogue should focus on military management. Secondly, Six-Party Talks should be resumed immediately and the DPRK's cooperation is very crucial to this. Thirdly, in order to actually begin the denuclearization process, a peace agreement between DPRK and the US, where both nations will agree to not attack each other, is vital. This would make denuclearization easier for the DPRK. Lastly, because the DPRK will not agree to anything unless its political security is maintained, this aspect should be covered in all negotiations.

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#### TIMELINE

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