

Committee/Council: Security Council

Issue: The de-escalation of the situation in DPRK

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Introduction

Following the Japanese surrender at the end of World War II, in 1945, the Korean Peninsula was divided into two regions: the north, occupied by the Soviet Civil Administration, and the south, occupied by the United States Army Military Government in Korea. Subsequent negotiations concerning a reunification proved futile. As a matter of fact, the Korean War (1950-1953) was initiated, as a result of an invasion of the southern part by the northern one.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is, by its own admissions, an autonomous and autarkic socialist state, which formally holds elections. It is furthermore an officially recognized member of the United Nations since 8 August 1991, following the adoption of Resolution 46/1 by the United Nations Security Council.

Critics, however, have characterized the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a totalitarian state, which does not formally respect the fundamental human rights laid out by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948.

Hitherto, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been the source of geopolitical turmoil, and its regime a subject of much controversy. Yet, its already tense relations with other states, particularly the United States of America and the Republic of Korea, were further worsened as of August-September 2017, when following dubious statements by the President of the United States of America, Donald Trump, the supreme leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Kim Jong-un, announced that “‘deranged’ President Donald Trump will ‘pay dearly’ for his threats”.

“This is the time for statesmanship, [...] we must not sleepwalk our way into nuclear war.”

– António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General

Definition of Key-Terms

Totalitarian state: a state whose governing institutions oppress fundamental human liberties and rights, often through coercion and violence.

Autarkic state: a state whose subsistence, be it economic, social or environmental, is non-reliant on international trade, or foreign states in general.

Nuclear war: a military conflict in which belligerents deploy the use of nuclear weaponry, i.e. a type of weapons of mass destruction.

Weapons of mass destruction: weapons that were specifically designed to kill and cause substantial devastation to a large number of humans or structures.

Total war: a military conflict that includes civilians and uninvolved human resources as legitimate targets, with often cruel and devastating effects for humanity. Notable examples include World War I and World War II.

Songun: the principle guide of policy in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which prioritizes the military, i.e. the Korean People's Army, in affairs of state and economic decisions.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
<u>25 June 1950 – 27 July 1953</u>	Korean War – The Democratic People's Republic of Korea invades the Republic of Korea. The United Nations and the United States provide support to the defending state. The People's Republic of

	China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics side with the invader.
<u>27 July 1953</u>	Korean Armistice Agreement – the hostilities of the Korean War end, and the Korean Demilitarized Zone is created.
<u>4 July 1974</u>	North-South Joint Statement – following minor hostilities since the Korean Armistice Agreement, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea issue a joint statement for the working towards a peaceful reunification. Yet, all talks fail a year later, as the two states wish to join distinct international organizations.
<u>21 October 1994</u>	Agreed Framework – the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea agree to freeze and replace the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear power plant, and attempt ameliorate their diplomatic relations. The agreement, however, completely ended in 2003.
<u>c. 2001</u>	The United States government, under the George W. Bush administration, declares the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a Rogue State. Previous attempts for reconciliation hence prove futile.
<u>c. 2003</u>	The Democratic People's Republic of Korea withdraws from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.
<u>9 October 2006</u>	The Democratic People's Republic of Korea announces that it has conducted its first nuclear weapons test.
<u>25 May 2009</u>	The Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducts a second, largest nuclear weapons test.
<u>17 December 2011</u>	The supreme leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Kim Jong-il dies, and is succeeded by his youngest son, Kim Jong-un.
<u>6 January 2016</u>	A reported artificial earthquake was caused in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as a result of a successful test of a thermonuclear warhead (hydrogen bomb).
<u>4 July 2017</u>	The Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducts its first test of an intercontinental ballistic missile, the Hwasong-14.
<u>3 September 2017</u>	The Democratic People's Republic of Korea claims a "perfect success", following the test of a miniaturized thermonuclear warhead.

Background Information

The Korean conflict

After the World War II Korea was divided into a Communist, northern half and an American-occupied southern half. The Korean War (1950-1953) began when the North Korean Communist army crossed the borders and invaded South Korea. The United Nations, led then by the United States, sent a military mission, in order to put an obstacle to the invasion of North Korea in South Korea. After many years and following the intervention of China sided with North Korea, the Korean War ended with a temporary peace being signed. A Demilitarized Zone was then set up to divide the northern from the southern part of Korea. South Korea, became then a democracy, in contrast to North Korea, even though both have been led by dictators in the past.

North Korea's nuclear program

Despite the bad economic situation of North Korea, the North Korean Army is one of the largest in the world. North Korea's relationships the West have led it to an excessive investment on its army as well as on its nuclear weapons. North Korea's nuclear program first became an issue in 1992 when International Atomic Energy Agency officials were unable to understand why Korea possess uranium and plutonium, which are radioactive substances that can make nuclear weapons and bombs. Due to following North Korea's threats, the United States and the DPRK agreed that the US would provide food aid and North Korea would not possess any nuclear weapons. This only lasted for a couple of years. By 2003, North Korea had totally changed its policy and has gone back to its initial ideas about a nuclear program. Major events were then followed including six underground nuclear tests so far in 2006, 2009, 2013, 2016 and 2017.

Read more: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-17823706>

Human rights situation in DPRK

In 2014, the UN Human Rights Council published a report that documented numerous human rights violations by North Korea. North Korea strictly controls its borders and the flow of information to its citizens (Unauthorized access to non-state radio, newspapers, or TV broadcasts is severely punished), who are taught that the Kim Family are more than mere humans and they should thus respect them and show them loyalty. Concerning North Korea's leader Kim Jong-Un, he could be charged with crimes against humanity. Although an UN Human Rights Council resolution was adopted, which condemned the human rights abuses and put the creation of a group of independent experts with the aim of finding practical ways to hold rights violators in North Korea accountable into force, the human rights situation in DPRK continues to worsen, as DPRK systematically uses forced labor from ordinary citizens to control its citizens and sustain its economy.

Organizations and countries involved

The United States of America

The United States and Korea's Joseon Dynasty established diplomatic relations under the 1882 Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation. Since then, the relations between those two countries have changed dramatically. They developed during the Korean War and today, they are mostly defined by DPRK's nuclear attempts and its development of long-range missiles as well as its ongoing threats towards the US. With the country's recent successful test of an intercontinental ballistic missile in July, and due to the following statements the relations with the US worsened: "Now that the DPRK's capability to strike the very heart of the US at any given time has been physically proved, the US would find it more difficult to dare attack the DPRK," the North Korean Foreign Ministry said in a statement shortly after the missile launch. "This is the only way to defend oneself and safeguard the dignity of the nation in the present hostile world where the law of the jungle prevails."

As stated by the US Department of State, the US supports the peaceful reunification of Korea, which is a matter of North and South Korea to decide and could only be achieved through constructive dialogues with the aim of resolving inner problems, including North Korea's nuclear test and its human rights abuses. Other than that, the US has provided food North Korea with food supplies and other forms of needed aid during times of natural disasters and famine or during several outbreaks of infectious diseases. When it comes to US recent sanctions, Executive Order 13687 was imposed during 2015, following DPRK's cyberattack on Sony Pictures Entertainment, and Executive Order 13722 in 2016 due to North Korea's nuclear tests. Last but not least, there are no diplomatic relations between DPRK and the US, which is why Sweden acts as the protecting power of US' interests in North Korea.

The People's Republic of China

In contrast to the past, the relations between China and DPRK have also declined over the past few years mainly due to North Korea's nuclear weapons program. Nonetheless, these two countries have been allies since the Second World War and China is still one of the most important North Korea's allies, trading partner, food and energy supplier. Historically, China is also one of the major opponents to any sanctions imposed on North Korea. Both countries have also signed the Sino-North Korean Mutual Aid and Cooperation Friendship Treaty, which includes the mutual immediate offer of military assistance "by all means" against an outside attack. After North Korea's fourth nuclear test, China said: "We strongly urge the DPRK side to remain committed to its de-nuclearisation commitment, and stop taking any actions that would make the situation worse," said foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua

Chunying. The US has also put pressure on the relationship between China and DPRK. The US President, Mr Trump said: "We have a very big problem in North Korea. And, as I said, I really think that China is going to try very hard, and has already started."

North Korea

Following the division of Korea in North and South Korea, today there are numerous problems between those two, which are of political, diplomatic as well as military nature. The 1950–1953 Korean War as well as the following conflicts are the major obstacle towards a possible Korean reunification. In recent years, one of the major interaction of South and North Korea was the Park Geun Hye Trustpolitik, which was a more pragmatic approach to North Korea by the President Park Geun Hye of South Korea with the aim of building trust and peace with its neighbor. This would be achieved as long as North Korea kept its agreements made with South Korea to *"establish a minimum level of trust, and second, assured consequences for actions that breach the peace."* As of 2016, however, the KIC (Kaesung Industrial Complex -a joint industrial zone at the southern border of North Korea) immediately closed due to North Korea's nuclear attempts. The President of South Korea announced that it had *"become indisputably clear that the existing approach and good intentions will by no means work in countering the North Korean regime's determination to develop nuclear weapons."* North Korea responded to that by putting KIC under military control and freezing any military interactions with its Southern neighbor.

UN Resolutions

The Security Council of the United Nations has adopted 21 resolutions concerning North Korea, with the most recent ones concerning its nuclear tests. The most important- recent ones include:

11 SEPTEMBER 2017 S/RES/2375

This resolution expanded sanctions to additional sectors of the North Korean economy in response to the DPRK's nuclear test.

5 AUGUST 2017 S/RES/2371

This resolution condemned the 3 and 28 July ballistic missile launches.

2 JUNE 2017 S/RES/2356

This was a resolution condemning the nuclear weapons and ballistic missile development activities, including missile launches, conducted by the DPRK in flagrant disregard of relevant Council resolutions since 9 September 2016.

7 MARCH 2013 S/RES/2094

This resolution imposed additional sanctions against the DPRK in response to a 12 February 2013 nuclear test.

Source: [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/search.php?IncludeBlogs=10&limit=15&tag=%22Security%20Council%20Resolutions%22+AND+%22DPRK%20\(North%20Korea\)%22&ctype=DPRK%20\(North%20Korea\)&rtype=Security%20Council%20Resolutions&ctype=dprk-north-korea](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/search.php?IncludeBlogs=10&limit=15&tag=%22Security%20Council%20Resolutions%22+AND+%22DPRK%20(North%20Korea)%22&ctype=DPRK%20(North%20Korea)&rtype=Security%20Council%20Resolutions&ctype=dprk-north-korea)

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

1948 - Korean Reunification (failed)

1994 - Agreed Framework between the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (failed)

2003-2009 – Six Party Talks (failed)

Possible Solutions

All states shall understand that the situation concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is extremely tense, and that the global community has not heretofore faced a similar phenomenon. As such, utter prudence and comprehension is required for any attempts to provide a solution.

The states' primary objective shall be the preservation of global peace and safety, through a gradual de-escalation of military and diplomatic tensions.

Therefore, potential solutions will include common agreements and frameworks aiming to gradual demilitarization, subversion of weapons of mass destruction, and/or promotion of negotiations between states that are involved with the issue, at all levels.

Sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are not advised, considering the current, utterly tense, international political environment. The escalation of current events to a total war will have devastating effects for humanity, and shall be avoided at all costs. As the United Nations Secretary-General has stated, "this is the time for statesmanship".

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Personal note: Dear Delegates of the Security Council, as you can understand this topic is of high importance and complexity. This is the reason why, this study guide aims to provide you with just the basic information concerning the topic. Security council topics are in general issues concerning sociopolitical crisis around the world and the facts concerning them change every single day. Thus, you are expected to search further the issue and are of course advised to contact me anytime through my personal mail (nikoobi@hotmail.com) for guidance. I wish you the best with your research and I am looking forward to meeting you in the upcoming DSAMUN conference in a few weeks.
