

Forum: Security Council

Issue: The Question of Non-Proliferation in the DPRK

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Introduction

Since the two nuclear bombs that were dropped on Japan in 1945, the world's influential states have struggled to limit nuclear proliferation while bolstering their own nuclear arsenals. Ever since the United States and the Soviet Union developed nuclear weapons in 1945 and 1949, respectively, other states have followed suit. The United Kingdom (UK) developed its arsenal in 1952, France in 1960, the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1964, India in 1974, Israel in 1979 (noting that it does not have a confirmed nuclear test), Pakistan in 1998, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in 2006.

The threat of unrestrained nuclear proliferation incentivized states to negotiate a Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) in 1963. This treaty ultimately led to the negotiation and the drafting of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968, which came into force in 1970. The NPT was planned to be reinforced by the 1995 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). However, the CTBT never came into force, due to the U.S. Senate's refusal to ratify it. The PTBT, NPT, and related arms trade controls make up the Non-Proliferation Regime: a system of consisting of international treaties, agreements, and domestic law designed to minimize the spread of nuclear weapons capability. Such a system has helped bring the world's total deployed nuclear stockpile down from about 70,000 warheads during the peak of the Cold War to less than 5,000 today. Despite achieving this feat, it has not yet solved the issue of specific states determined to acquire nuclear capability. Among these states, the DPRK and its nuclear program worries the international community the most.

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is increasingly concerned with DPRK's nuclear proliferation, especially in light of recent nuclear threats and tests conducted by the Kim regime. While many western states have been focusing on arms limitations, North Korea's intentions appear to lean toward establishing a comprehensive nuclear arsenal. Its main reason in doing as it claims is to defend itself against the United States of America. Because of DPRK's constant threat utilizing its nuclear devices against the United States and its allies, many of the UNSC's resolutions and actions are directed toward crippling DPRK's nuclear program.

The Korean nuclear problem is full of obstacles. Having withdrawn from the 1968 NPT, it is technically legal for DPRK to develop nuclear weapons, albeit without international recognition. As a signatory, the Republic of Korea (ROK or South Korea) is legally forbidden to develop a nuclear program and relies on the United States' nuclear umbrella program, which guarantees U.S. protection for its ally that does not have a militarized nuclear program. The DPRK has ignored constant international calls for the dismantling of its growing nuclear weapons program. Despite talks, such as the Six-Party Talks, the Kim regime in DPRK remains steadfast in its desire to achieve nuclear parity with the Western nuclear states. Talks, however, are mostly one-sided and have quickly broke down, much to the dismay of the international community.

As of September 5th, 2016, DPRK has conducted a total of four nuclear tests. Each test has received in many nations' and organizations' condemnations. In addition, the regime also launched several rockets carrying a satellite payload while claiming the satellite to be purely intended for peaceful, scientific purpose. This claim was met with several governments – United States, Japan, South Korea, and China – criticizing it as an attempt to test their intercontinental ballistic missiles' capability. The United Nations, as well as other nations, have responded to DPRK's nuclear and missile development with an array of sanctions and restrictions.

Definition of Key Terms

Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM)

An ICBM is a guided missile that follows a ballistic trajectory and has a minimum range of 5,500 kilometers. It can carry a payload of 1~10 thermonuclear warheads with each of them striking a different target.

Thermonuclear warheads

A thermonuclear warhead is a nuclear weapon that harnesses the energy from a primary nuclear fission reaction to compress and ignite a secondary nuclear fusion reaction. As such, the explosive power of such device is greater than its predecessor: single-stage fission weapons. It is also called as a hydrogen bomb due to its utilization of hydrogen isotopes during the secondary fusion stage.

Six-Party Talks

The Six-Party Talks were a series of diplomatic dialogues between six governments – Republic of Korea, DPR Korea, the United States, China, Russia, and Japan – established for the purpose of finding a peaceful solution to the regional and international concerns with regards to the DPRK's nuclear weapons program as a result of its withdrawal from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). These talks had some, if not minimal, progress in terms of producing the nuclear program's transparency. However,

these progresses were reversed, when the DPRK withdrew from the talk after the UN condemned its satellite launch.

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

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, also known as the Non-Proliferation Treaty, is an international treaty that aims to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and to achieve nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament. This treaty, which entered into force in 1970 and was extended indefinitely on May 11th, 1995, recognizes the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China – the P5 members of the SC – as legitimate nuclear-weapon states. Non-P5 nations – India, Pakistan, and DPRK - that acquired a nuclear arsenal withdrew from the NPT in order to pursue their interests.

Background Information

Overview of DPRK's nuclear program

The DPRK successfully built its first nuclear reactor in the 1970s at Yongbyon and began to mine for uranium. During this start-up period, the Kim regime requested help from several western nations but was repeatedly denied. DPRK successfully tested its first nuclear weapon in 2006. However, despite the nation's secretiveness, the country's regime has never been shy to declare its decision to acquire a nuclear weapons program.

Before the reconstruction of the nuclear facilities

In the 1980's, the program continued to develop with more nuclear reactors and the expansion of the Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center. Despite being a party to the NPT, DPRK repeatedly refused IAEA inspectors access to reactor sites. While it was unclear whether the country was producing plutonium for its nuclear devices, the regime continuously expanded both of its reactor sites to produce fuel and refine its supply of yellowcake. There was widespread speculation about how DPRK was using its reactor at Yongbyon to create weapons-grade plutonium. With no obvious civilian use, the plutonium program was widely assumed to be for militarized.

Tensions between DPRK and the west continued to escalate. In 1994 however, DPRK signed the Agreed Framework with the United States, an agreement that mandated the DPRK to halt production of plutonium, disclose the amount of enriched plutonium it possessed, and dismantle its nuclear facilities. In exchange, the United States would assist with economic aid, oil imports, and the construction of two light water nuclear power plants for the purpose of civilian

use. The Agreed Framework failed in 2001, when President George W. Bush refused to supply the promised civilian nuclear technology and other aid. In 2002, DPRK publicly admitted to restarting its nuclear weapons program. That same year, the regime began rebuilding its previously dismantled processing plant with the explicit intent of producing weapons grade plutonium.

After the reconstruction of the nuclear facilities

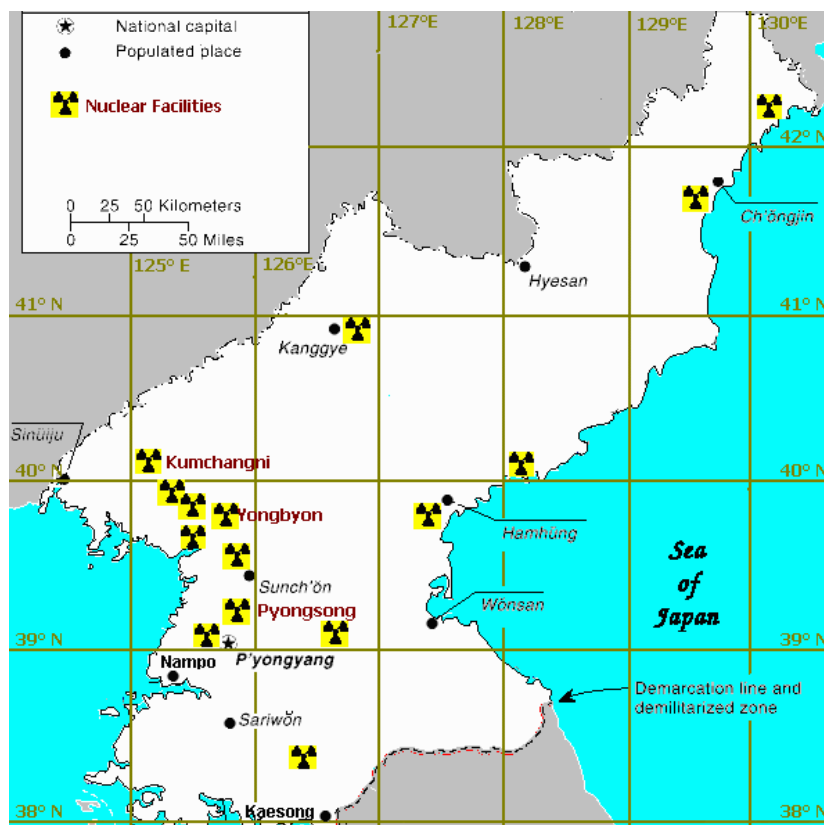
During a decade after the reconstruction of the Yongbyon nuclear center, DPRK announced that it was withdrawing from the NPT and the 1992 Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, which declared that the Korean peninsula would remain nuclear weapons-free. Despite of that, in 2004, the Kim regime permitted an American scientist to tour the Yongbyon facility while announcing that the country had converted the plutonium from 8000 spent fuel rods into nuclear devices.

Diplomatic efforts mainly focused on the Six-Party Talks. While the talks failed to make significant breakthroughs, they served to measure the state of relations. China refused to adhere to the U.S. demands on how China should pressure the DPRK to give up its nuclear arsenal through sanctions, and the DPRK often boycotted the meetings.

Kim Jong Il's regime announced on October 3, 2006 that it intended to test a nuclear device. State media officially confirmed the detonation on October 9th. Data from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) showed that the detonation to be between 24 times and 50 times smaller than the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests the 1990's, respectively. In response to the detonation, the UNSC passed Resolution 1718, which imposed largely symbolic sanctions on the Kim regime. The resolution was largely pushed by the Bush administration, but it was not fully supported by both China and Russia.

Since the 2006 test, North Korea's relationship with other nuclear states has been a constant balancing act. In exchange for DPRK agreeing to dismantle its reactors, the United States, usually in conjunction with ROK, would provide aid to the impoverished DPRK, who needed it to sustain its population. Such phenomenon was witnessed in 2007, when DPRK closed its reactor at Yongbyon in exchange for diesel fuel. In accordance to that agreement, ROK was set to deliver 50,000 tons of diesel oil as aid. In addition, DPRK destroyed the cooling tower at Yongbyon in 2005, disabling the reactor. In response, the United States promised to remove the state from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list but did not follow through.

DPRK's nuclear program officially restarted on May 2009, when it rebuilt the Yongbyon reactor and built a parallel facility to enrich uranium to weapons-grade purity. DPRK tested its second nuclear device in 2009, third in 2012, and fourth in 2016.



Caption 1: DPRK Nuclear Sites

Key Issues

DPRK's nuclear program

While countries such as the United States and Russia “downblended” the decommissioned nuclear warheads’ uranium’s enrichment level to 3~5% for the purpose of powering their light water reactors and generating electricity for civilian purposes, DPRK does the opposite. While it is true that DPRK utilizes its nuclear reactors in the Yongbyon facility to generate electricity, the main purpose for these reactors are to reprocess spent fuel into weapons grade uranium. It is enriching its uranium and plutonium to a weapons grade level, meaning that their nuclear material stockpile is reaching 90~95% pure uranium-235 and plutonium-239, respectively.

The enrichment of uranium and plutonium

DPRK received centrifuge-related equipment and know-how from the Pakistani nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan’s network beginning in the mid-to-late 1990s. Despite allegation about DPRK admitting the existence of a uranium enrichment program, the government constantly denies any claims. It was after the second nuclear test in 2009 that the DPRK declared to “initiate” uranium enrichment. In the Yongbyon facility, inspectors speculated that it is possible that North Korea

may begin installing more advanced centrifuges in the future, which would increase its output of Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU).

As for plutonium enrichment, the regime began to separate plutonium from spent fuel rods in the Yongbyon facility during 1990s, producing up to 10 kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium. Despite the fact that it later on halted plutonium processing due to its agreement to the Agreed Framework in 2003 and the conditions laid out during the Six-Party Talks, DPRK restarted its plutonium processing facility. Analysis suggest that DPRK, with its current pace, may eventually produce up to 20 kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium per year.

Militarization and tests

To this date, DPRK has conducted a total of four underground nuclear tests. The devices detonated at these sites have a low blast yield of 1 kiloton TNT, 2~7 kiloton TNT, 5~15 kiloton TNT, and 6~9 kiloton TNT, respectively. It is speculated that such a small blast yield (the nuclear weapon dropped at Hiroshima yielded 21 kiloton TNT) was due to the regime's desire to miniaturize the devices' size, which would allow the military to install it on a long-range missile. Missiles such as the Taepodong-2, which could reach 6,000 kilometers, had already been developed.

Export of nuclear and missiles technology

The international community fears the nuclear proliferation that DPRK may commit. They already experienced several cases of nuclear proliferation in states such as India and Pakistan during the 1970s and 1980s. As such, a new case of proliferation at a country that actively sponsored acts of terrorism would certainly alert the UN and its member states. Although the Kim regime declared that it would abide by international nonproliferation principles, countries such as U.S. remain wary. Such concerns were not unfounded, seeing that DPRK assisted Syria's nuclear program and cooperated with Iran. In Syria, DPRK helped to build the al-Kibar nuclear reactor, albeit destroyed by Israeli airstrike. As for Iran, DPRK cooperated on missile technology and nuclear engineering. As such, this issue is a crucial one to resolve.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

Republic of Korea

The current President Park Geun-hye and her administration maintains previous policies toward its northern neighbor: DPRK. The Republic of Korea considers that DPRK's willingness to cooperate on the issue of nuclear militarization is vague, if not minimal. President Park declares that the North must be fully committed to peaceful and comprehensive dialogues in order to achieve denuclearization and a

better bilateral relation. South Korea, as a member of the Six-Party Talks, advocates DPRK to denuclearize its arsenal, albeit with little or no response from the north. As of now, South Korea imposed numerous sanctions – unilateral or UNSC-mandated – upon North Korea in response to its violation of UNSC resolutions, four nuclear tests, and several rocket launches.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

DPRK first gained its interest on a nuclear arsenal during the 1950s and 1960s, when the Soviet Union began to train North Korean nuclear scientists and engineers and signed the nuclear cooperation agreement. In the following decades, it built, expanded, and advanced its nuclear program and the Yongbyon nuclear site. When it was still a party to the NPT, it granted the IAEA inspectors limited access to the Yongbyon center, resulting in an unsuccessful investigation. Soon after that, it unilaterally withdrew from the NPT. Although it did sign the Agreed Framework with the U.S. in order to receive international aid on its economy, it repealed the agreement in order to further its nuclear ambition. After reprocessing plutonium to a weapons-grade purity, it commenced its first nuclear test in 2006. In 2009, it commenced the second nuclear test. Under the rule of Kim Jong Un, it commenced two nuclear tests: one on 2013 and other on 2016.

United States of America

Obama's administration offered a diplomatic reset to dictatorial states that are willing to leave behind their past adversarial relations. Soon after this offer, North Korea launched its rocket in May 2009. Because of this, Obama's first policy related to North Korea involved sanctions supported by the UNSC's member states. Resolution 1874 was written in accordance to the member states' interests on this issue. The U.S. is a member of the Six-Party Talks on North Korea's denuclearization. The U.S. government believes that the world should have a "strategic patience", meaning that North Korea might take its own decision to denuclearize the country. The U.S. also participates in multilateral talks and negotiations with the intent to avoid tests during the steps of North Korea's denuclearization. The U.S. negotiates with South Korea and Japan: its main allies on the crisis for strengthening mutual profits. Moreover, open dialogue increased and strengthened as North Korea shows its willingness to continue with the denuclearization. The crisis is a challenging situation for the U.S. policy towards North Korea regarding the rockets launches and the three Security Council resolution violations. The relations in the Korean Peninsula play a huge role for the U.S.'s Pacific policies. Thereby, political stability in South Korea is the key factor to consider for the crisis. Further U.S. approaches have mainly been dialogues between China and South Korea, along with North Korea. This cooperative work could help to avoid misunderstandings and further complications on the agreements. Three days after the 2016 nuclear test, the U.S. Air Force flew a nuclear-capable B-52 strategic bomber over the Korean Peninsula as a show of force.

Russian Federation

The Russian Federation has been one of the closest allies of North Korea during World War II. The Russian government has strong economic interests on the Korean peninsula with both governments: North and South. It is concerned about the tensions between the U.S. and North Korea due to the consequences and impact on Russia's future projects in the region. The Russian government believes that further sanctions as a threat for the Kim regime will be counterproductive, which would lead to developing a lack of comprehension and cooperation between DPRK and the diplomatic community on the crisis. Nevertheless, the incumbent Russian president Vladimir Putin rejected North Korea as a new nuclear weapons state, signifying changes on Russia's role in Northeast Asia. According to Russian policy, Moscow would rather support the U.S. should DPRK proceed with its nuclear ambitions to a further degree. Despite of that, Russia would support DPRK and China when the international community discusses about sanctions for DPRK in order to maintain diplomatic stability of the Korean Peninsula. Russia has supported talks between the U.S. and North Korea as long as Russia can be directly involved in the issue. These multilateral talks – Six-Party Talks – are aimed to deescalate tensions. Generally seen, the Russian government engages on the crisis due to its future projects on the Korean peninsula. Therefore, Russia believes that they could play a positive role on alleviating the crisis with the help of its powerful ally, China.

People's Republic of China

The Chinese government has nowadays cold and superficial relations with North Korea on global politics. In the past decades, China played a more active role on the Korean Peninsula, especially during the times of the Cold War when it was a part of a triangular alliance with the Soviet Union and North Korea. Both supported each other militarily, politically, economically. The geopolitical changes during the 1990s impacted Chinese-North Korean relations. As a result, the Beijing opened up diplomatic ties with the Seoul. Currently, China and North Korea's relations are mainly based on old traditions and past commemorative events. However, China plays the role of a bridge between North Korean and the international community. Furthermore, China has been seen responsible for North Korea's lack of collaboration and inappropriate diplomatic behavior on the crisis. These allegations were however denied by the Chinese government. Thereby, China expects more compromise from the North Korean government side. In response to the 2016 nuclear test, Chinese Foreign Ministry's spokesperson Hua Chunying said "China opposes this nuclear test. We strongly urge the DPRK side to remain committed to its denuclearization commitment, and stop taking any actions that would make the situation worse."

Japan

In addition to trying to normalize ties with North Korea and resolve the abduction of Japanese citizens by the Kim regime, the Japanese government wants to concentrate on issues such as missiles tests and denuclearization. For these matters, the Japanese government works in close ties with the U.S., China, and Russia. Japan is also one of the six members of the Six-Party talks, in which the

participant member states work in close coordination to solve North Korea's nuclear ambition crisis. Furthermore, Japan attends unofficial talks with North Korean government on consultations on North Korea's political situation and political relations. The Japanese government completely disapproves North Korea's recent missiles launches. Thereby, Japan has constant contact with the USA government to diplomatically solve the North Korean crisis. In response to the 2016 nuclear test, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe called it a "grave defiance of international efforts toward nuclear nonproliferation."

Timeline of Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

Date	Description of event
1956	The Soviet Union (USSR) started to train North Korean scientists and engineers so as to allow DPRK to initiate its own nuclear program.
1959	USSR and DPRK signed a nuclear cooperation agreement.
1962	The Yongbyon Nuclear Research Center, with the research reactor installed, was completed.
1970s	Kim Il-Sung's request for nuclear militarization assistance to China and USSR were denied.
1980~1983	DPRK started uranium mining operation at locations near Pyongsan and Suncheon.
1984~1986	DPRK completed the construction of a 5MWe nuclear reactor capable of plutonium production. It also constructed the Radiochemical Laboratory, a reprocessing center to separate plutonium from spent fuel rods.
1985	DPRK acceded to the NPT.
1992	Joint Declaration of South and North Korea on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula was signed between the two Koreas on 20 January 1992 and entered into force on 19 February 1992.
1993	DPRK violated and withdrew from the Joint Declaration. It tests the Nodong-1 ballistic missile.
1994	U.S. and DPRK signed the Agreed Framework, an agreement that demands DPRK to halt its militarization of nuclear program in exchange for fuel aid and normalization of relations.

August 1998	U.S. officials discovered a suspected underground nuclear facility through satellite imagery. U.S Congress immediately halted \$35 million worth of heavy fuel aid to DPRK and demanded DPRK to allow inspections of new facilities.
September 1999	The Berlin Agreement between the U.S. and DPRK was signed. The agreement states that the DPRK would refrain from testing long range missiles and allow the U.S. to inspect new nuclear facilities in exchange for the U.S. to lift previous economic sanctions.
2002	DPRK expelled IAEA inspectors from the country.
2003	DPRK resumes Yongbyon facility's operation.
October 9, 2006	DPRK conducted its first nuclear underground test.
April 5, 2006	DPRK tests the Unha-2 rocket (Taepodong-2 missile) over Japan.
May 25, 2009	DPRK conducted its second nuclear test.
February 12, 2013	DPRK conducted its third nuclear test
January 6, 2016	DPRK conducted its fourth nuclear test. The government claimed that it detonated its first thermonuclear bomb (hydrogen bomb).

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- UNSC Resolution 1718, 14 October 2006 (**S/RES/1718**)
- UNSC Resolution 1874, 12 June 2009 (**S/RES/1874**)
- UNSC Resolution 2087, 22 January 2013 (**S/RES/2087**)
- UNSC Resolution 2094, 7 March 2013 (**S/RES/2094**)
- UNSC Resolution 2270, 2 March 2016 (**S/RES/2270**)
- UNSC Resolution 2276, 24 March 2016 (**S/RES/2276**)

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

DPRK's situation, particularly its political tensions, diplomatic struggles, and self-isolation has impacted the international world. The North Korea nuclear crisis did not change much due to the regime's tendency to ask for aid or relieve from sanction before agreeing to the international community's demands. Furthermore, they have violated almost all agreements and resolutions

supported by the United Nations. Nevertheless, actions have been taken in order to avoid further development of the nuclear arsenal.

Despite of the well-intents, these sanctions did not help to fully solve the issue at hand. They have isolated North Korea to punish it for its inappropriate actions while preventing the quick development of North Korea's nuclear reactivation.

In fact, North Korea insists to maintain the face of a crisis upon itself, allowing the leaders to gain support from their population. North Korea's allies and other states have the same goal: to denuclearize the country. However, each state proceeds with different approaches due to their different interests.

In general, one could say that the United Nations has taken as many and as severe actions as possible. The biggest effort on the issue, however, is being done with the diplomatic efforts by the states involved. The multiple dialogues have led North Korea to reconsider certain actions, which were compensated with something in exchange. However, much more effort is needed considering that DPRK constantly threatens regional peace with its nuclear tests and rocket launches.

Possible Solutions

Main North Korean allies should continue participating in negotiations and multilateral talks with other nations. The intervention of North Korean allies in these dialogue will more or less secure the DPRK's commitment to solve the discussed issue. It could be seen from past events that unilateral actions by the western countries, such as joint statements, provoked DPRK due to the lack of support from DPRK's allies.

Sanctions on North Korea should be carefully introduced. Any future inappropriate action on the nuclear crisis should be directly dealt by the United Nations' decisions in coordination with North Korea's main allies to avoid any and all provocations or escalation of tension. Any action in accordance with the United Nations will have to be tackled to finally solve the crisis's impact on international security.

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