

**Forum:** United Nations Peacebuilding Committee (UNPBC)

**Issue:** Measures to address the denuclearization of Korean Peninsula

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## Introduction

The denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula has long been a topic of debate, but the recent Russian war has made it even more controversial. In the case of the Russia and Ukraine war, Ukraine's denuclearization caused great damage to its own country since it had weaker weapons to defend. Since denuclearization threatened the peace of Ukraine, many people came to the conclusion that denuclearization does not always represent a step toward world peace. While it brings world peace, denuclearization might also deteriorate the country's power to defend itself. Thus, denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula has become a topic of discussion once again.

In March 2012, North Korea stated that it will not denuclearize until the United States removes its "threat" along with the alliance of US-South Korea. North Korea's attempts to develop nuclear weapons and launch missiles are a big threat to the surrounding countries including Japan and South Korea.

On the other hand, under the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), South Korea is not available to develop nuclear weapons or redeploy US nuclear weapons. However, due to the repeated launch of missiles from North Korea and the decrease in support from the US military, South Korea is now in favor of developing its own nuclear factors. Since its power to defend itself is concerning and defense mechanisms are lacking, many South Koreans are now in favor of

developing its own nuclear weapons. Still, South Korea cannot develop its own nuclear weapons, and many nations including South Korea, Japan, and China are under the threat of nuclear war.

## Definition of Key Terms

### **Denuclearization**

Removes or prohibits the use of nuclear weapons.

### **Armistice**

An agreement made by opposing sides in a war to stop fighting for a certain time.

### **ROK (Republic of Korea)**

South Korea, an East Asian nation on the southern half of the Korean Peninsula that shares heavily militarized borders with North Korea.

### **DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)**

North Korea, an East Asian nation on the Northern half of the Korean Peninsula

### **Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT)**

Treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament.

## **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**

The IAEA works worldwide to promote the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy; It further assists its Member States and promotes the exchange of scientific and technical information between them

## **38th Parallel**

A popular name given to latitude 38°N, approximately the middle of Korean Peninsula that divides the country into North and South

## **General Overview**

### **Korean War**

On June 25, 1950, the Korean War began with 75,000 soldiers from the North Korean Army crossing the 38th parallel (the boundary between South and North Korea.) The war involved the United States and support from the United Nations for South Korea while China and the Soviet Union supported North Korea. In July 1953, the Korean War ended with approximately 5 million soldiers and civilians losing their lives. Unfortunately, many refer to this war as “the Forgotten War” for the lack of attention it received.

### **Armistice between North and South Korea**

The armistice was signed on July 27, 1953, officially agreeing to remain separate and occupy almost the same territory they had when the war began. Even after the armistice was signed, military tensions still remain. The Armistice Agreement includes the following: Suspended open hostilities; Withdrew all military forces and equipment from a 4,000-meter-wide zone and established the Demilitarized Zone as a buffer between the forces.

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

Treaty that South and North Korea signed in 1992 to eliminate the danger of nuclear war through denuclearization and to contribute to world peace and security. The Joint Declaration includes the following; South and North Korea shall not test, manufacture, produce, receive, possess, store, deploy or use nuclear weapons.

### **Military Capabilities of North Korea**

“North Korea has one of the world’s largest conventional military forces, which, combined with its missile and nuclear tests and aggressive rhetoric, has aroused concern worldwide” (CFR.org Editors). The nuclear power of North Korea is unclear, but analysts state that North Korea has developed missiles that are capable of reaching the US, Japan, and South Korea.

After Kim Jong-un assumed power in 2011, the nuclear program has significantly accelerated, directing more than 125 missile tests. North Korea has temporarily closed its nuclear-material production site in 2018, but according to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), North Korea has started to produce fissile material once again. Many experts are concerned that it is only a matter of time before North Korea completes its nuclear force.

## **Major Parties Involved and Their Views**

### **United States**

As one of the strongest allies of South Korea, the United States has held several meetings with South Korea to address the tensions in the Korean Peninsula. The US reassured the defense posture under the US-South Korea Mutual Defense Treaty and emphasized the importance of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The US also has pressured North Korea several times to denuclearize, but currently, North Korea is not willing to give up its nuclear weapons despite

economic pressures from other countries.

## China

As China is one of the major allies of North Korea, China's position is critical to resolving the tension on the Korean peninsula. China has a massive influence on North Korea's economy and politics, thus it also influences North Korea's perspective on denuclearization. It is true that China supports North Korea's denuclearization, but they cannot put too much pressure on North Korea since extreme pressure could provoke more risk-acceptant behavior. Unfortunately, the tensions between China and the United States, specifically China wanting the absence of US forces near their border, are becoming an obstacle to achieving peace in the Korean Peninsula. The denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is not only the two Korea's issues but also the conflict between China and the US.

## Russia

Russia considers North Korea as a party of NPT since Russia claims to only recognize nuclear countries that had produced nuclear weapons before January 1, 1967. Thus, Russia categorizes North Korea as a non-nuclear country along with Israel, India, and Pakistan. It is clear that Russia supports the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, but it does not view South Korea as nonnuclear considering that it relies on the United States' nuclear weapons. Hence, Russia requires both disarmament of the United States and North Korea, which is impossible for now.

## North Korea

Despite the pressure from other countries, North Korea has continued developing its own nuclear weapons along with several attempts of missile launches. North Korea states that the alliance of US-South Korea and the US military in South Korea is a big "threat", thus they will continue to develop

nuclear weapons for defense. North Korea's nuclearization is developing at a fast rate and becoming uncontrollable.

## South Korea

The termination of the US-South Korea missile guideline now enables South Korea to develop ballistic missiles with unlimited ranges. Under the original agreement, Washington also deployed nuclear weapons to Seoul, South Korea, as a way of South Korea developing its own nuclear weapons. South Korea is currently restricted from developing nuclear weapons despite the threats from North Korea. South Korea is currently spending more than 46 billion dollars per year on its military budget due to high tensions in the Korean peninsula. In order to have peace on the Korean peninsula, South Korea supports the denuclearization of North Korea. However, since denuclearization is not in process and due to the continued missile launches from North Korea, many Koreans are now demanding the right for South Korea to have nuclear weapons.

## Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
June 25, 1950	Outbreak of the Korean War War between North and South Korea due to the conflicts between democracy and communism
1985	North Korea signs the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)
1994	North Korea and the US signed an agreement that states to dismantle its old nuclear reactors in exchange for international aid to build two new light-water atomic reactors
2003	North Korea withdraws from the NPT and declares it has nuclear

weapons

November 2010	<p>Bombardment of Yeonpyeong</p> <p>First large-scale military attack against South Korea since the armistice agreement in 1953, where North Korea bombards South Korea because of joint military exercise between South Korea and the US</p>
February 2013	<p>North Korea conducts its third nuclear test, the first nuclear test carried out under Kim Jong Un</p>
March 2014	<p>North Korea fires hundreds of shells across the sea border with South Korea, and in response, South Korea fires 300 shells into North Korean sea and sends fighter jets</p>
May 2015	<p>North Korea's deputy director says the country has the missile capability to strike mainland of the United States</p>
2020	<p>North Korea unveils a missile (analysts believe to be one of the world's largest ballistic missiles), and in 2021, North Korea launches two ballistic missiles</p>

## **UN involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events**

- The UN Security Council Resolution 1718 includes the following:
  - Demands North Korea refrain from further nuclear or missile tests
  - Demands of North Korea to return to the NPT
  - Decides North Korea shall suspend all ballistic missile activities
  - Decides North Korea shall abandon its nuclear program in a “complete, verifiable, and irreversible” manner

- In response to the North Korea's first nuclear test in 2006, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted its first sanctions resolution on North Korea; ban on nonproliferation exports, an arms embargo, asset freezes, and ban on luxury goods
- The UN has a long term record of assistance to North Korea along with six resident UN entities (UNDP, FAO, UNFPA, WHO, WFP, and UNICEF) trying to provide assistance to the country's most vulnerable groups in areas of food security, nutrition, health, hygiene, etc
- The UN General Assembly established the UN temporary commission on Korea to support the birth of the Republic of Korea (ROK) in 1947. United Nations Command was also launched to restore peace and security on Korean Peninsula when the Korean War broke out. This was the first undertaking of its kind in the history of the UN.
- During the Korean War, the UN-supported South Korea by sending its UN troops
- Through the 1718 Committee -established by Security Council Resolution 1718 in 2006- and the Panel of Experts, the UN monitors the implementation of North Korea Sanctions. The panel produced regular reports on the status of the sanctions and enforcement

### **Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue**

There were numerous attempts to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, such as the sanctions, UN resolutions, and international conferences. However, the attempts to resolve the issue have been ineffective. Formal meetings between South and North Korea have been mostly unsuccessful. Furthermore, even if the UN persuades or forces North Korea to denuclearize, North Korea keeps launching missiles and developing nuclear weapons. Despite the improvements in the tensions, the peace in the Korean Peninsula is still being threatened, thus much more improvement is required.

## Possible Solutions

It is impossible to denuclearize North Korea in a short period of time. Therefore, it is important to look at the issue from various angles to solve it. Past attempts to solve the problem included supporting North Korea with food, finance, and hygiene. There were also extreme attempts to denuclearize North Korea by excluding North Korea from international markets; this solution has the risk of worsening the situation. Possible solutions may be enhancing and supporting North Korea economically, and loosening the tension in the Korean Peninsula. Additionally, the alteration for North Korea to defend its own nation after denuclearization must be addressed since denuclearization will make its country vulnerable to attacks.

## Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)

This issue relates to sustainable development goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. This goal aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. Global peace is being threatened by the continuing threats of nuclear weapons and rising military tensions in the Korean Peninsula. In order to achieve SDG number 16, denuclearizing North Korea is one of the most vital issues.

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## Appendix

### I. Timeline of the Korean War

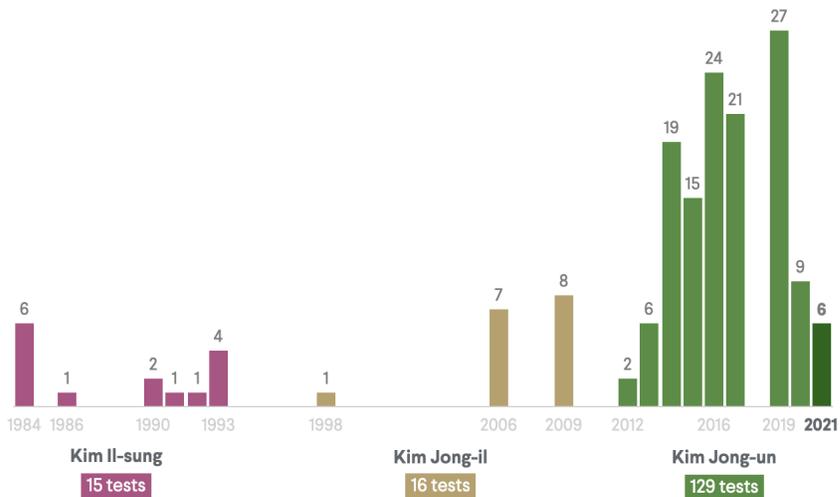
<https://www.unc.mil/History/1950-1953-Korean-War-Active-Conflict/#::~:txt=June%2027%2C%201950%3A%20United%20Nations,peace%20on%20the%20Korean%20Peninsula>.

### II. Joint Declaration of South and North on the Denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula

[https://www.nti.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/korea\\_denuclearization.pdf](https://www.nti.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/korea_denuclearization.pdf)

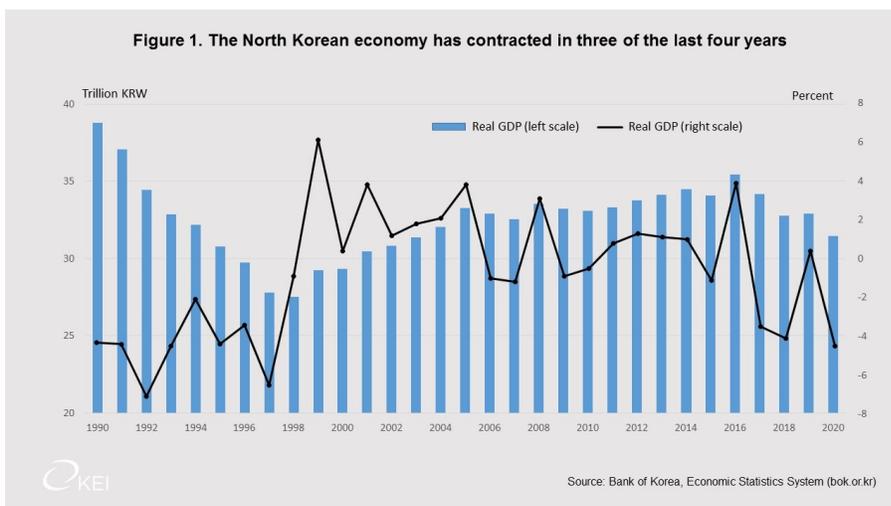
### III. North Korea's Missile Launches

#### North Korea's Missile Launches



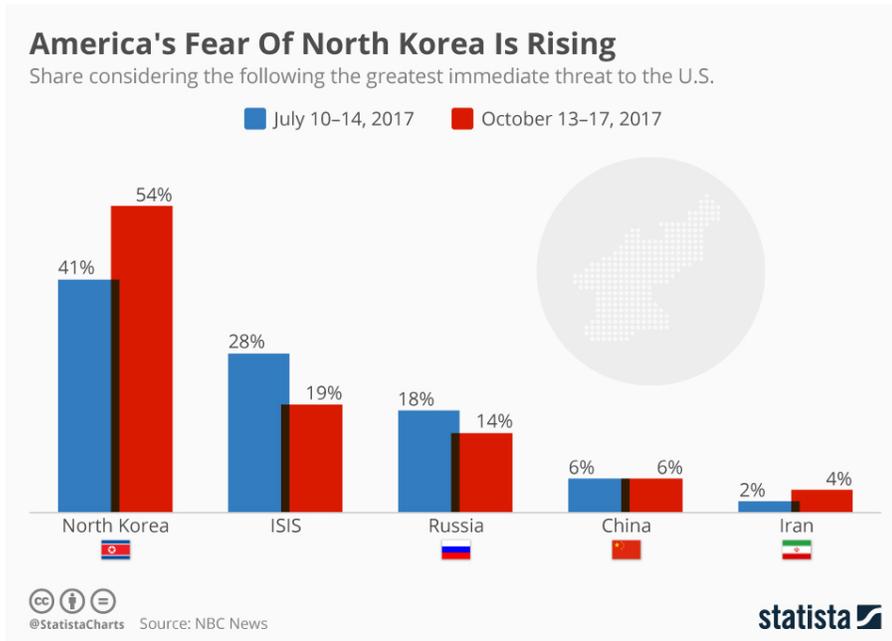
### IV. North Korea's Economic Status

<https://keia.org/the-peninsula/north-korean-economy-shrinks-in-2020/>



V. America's fear of North Korea

<https://www.statista.com/chart/11593/americas-fear-of-north-korea-is-rising/>



VI. US troops in South Korea

