

**Forum: General Assembly 4 (Special Political and Decolonization)**

**Issue: Measures to mitigate the risk imposed by the DPRK on its neighbouring countries in respect to its nuclear program.**

**Student Officer: Raghav Bhatia**

**Position: President Chair**

**Introduction:**

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has active and increasingly advanced nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs. They are believed to possess the capability to produce chemical and biological weapons.

In January 2003, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea withdrew from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons which is the most widely adhered-to international security agreement. The three pillars of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty are nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has conducted six nuclear tests of increasing sophistication since 2006. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is not a party to the Chemical Weapons Convention or the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and is believed to possess a large chemical weapons program.

Despite having had sanctions imposed on them worldwide, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to develop and escalate its Weapons of Mass Destruction activities.

After years of North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile tests, early 2018 saw a warming up in diplomatic relations. In April, Kim Jong-un announced his plan to halt all nuclear and ICBM tests and participated in a meeting with Moon Jae-in. In 2018, Kim Jong Un had a meeting with Donald Trump in Singapore in which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea pledged "to work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula."

In May 2019, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea resumed its testing of ballistic missiles. In June 2020, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea declared its intention to support nuclear deterrence in the face of perceived U.S. threats.

### **Definition of key terms:**

**ICMB:** Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles are nuclear weapons (more specifically missiles) with a minimum range of 5,500 kilometres.

**Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT):** An international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology along with promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

**IAEA:** The International Atomic Energy Agency is an international organization seeking to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

**Six-party talks:** It is a group of 6 countries (The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, South Korea, Japan, United States of America, China, Russia) that take positive steps to increase mutual trust and make joint efforts for long-lasting peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

**KEDO:** The Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization is an organization founded by the United States of America, South Korea and Japan to implement the United States of America-North Korea agreed framework that froze the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's indigenous nuclear power plant development centre.

**WMD:** Weapons of mass destruction

### **Key Issues:**

#### **The dangers of a preemptive strike (why a violent approach won't work):**

There are two main issues with a military approach: firstly, it might not succeed and could lead to worse retaliation from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea due to the weaponry they possess or could develop. Attacking them would only result in them furthering their development of nuclear weapons and posing a bigger threat to world peace. Secondly, options such as trying to overturn the regime would not really come apart, it would most likely just result in other family members taking the mantle. Assertiveness from the Chinese would result in a stronger China and not be ideal for the United States, India and other countries.

#### **Agreements and negotiations don't last:**

Every time there was an agreement or negotiation, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea always reverted to its path of nuclear testing and would violate the terms of the

treaties. Kim Jong Un is also not very likely to just hand over his nuclear weapons along with destroying the centres for producing these weapons which they have been developing for decades. No amount of sanctions will have an impact on the government and get them to back down.

### **The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's economy:**

Another factor to consider is the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's economy and how the sanctions and pandemic have left its economy even weaker than before. They need to have a monetary incentive to remove their nuclear power because they will be losing their influence due to a lack of leverage.

### **Major Parties Involved:**

#### **The People's Republic of China (Bordering Country):**

China's main goal with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has always been regional stability. From their perspective, while the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear weapons may not be ideal, the situation could become worse if we see a power vacuum.

China's priority is the maintenance of the status quo in the region from a geopolitical perspective. China is not necessarily concerned about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear weapons, Beijing considers it a minimal threat to the People's Republic of China.

Moreover, Beijing is likely pleased that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea wants to drive the United States of America's forces off the peninsula. Once the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear weapons are paired with a significant number of ICBMs over the next few years, they will raise questions about the United States of America's extended deterrence for the region. This will potentially undermine the United States of America's alliances with the Republic of Korea (ROK) and Japan. China would favour this outcome as it would weaken the United States of America's influence in the region which inherently benefits them more than it actually hurts them.

The problem with these perspectives is that it fails to recognize the actual threat posed to China by North Korean nuclear weapons. Any nuclear weapons, especially given how advanced North Korean nuclear weapons are would result in mass destruction in the region and a major loss of lives.

China should consider what the long term implications on the status quo would be if the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to have the power they do. Its current lack of concern is somewhat at odds with Beijing's typical long-term strategic thinking.

### **United States of America:**

For years, the United States and the international community have tried to negotiate an end to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear and missile development and its export of ballistic missile technology.

Those efforts have been full of periods of crises and tentative progress towards denuclearization, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been a major challenge for the global nuclear nonproliferation regime. The United States of America has tried various methods to combat this including sanctions and military cooperation with the United States of America's allies in the region.

The United States of America has also participated in diplomatic initiatives to have the Democratic People's Republic of Korea abandon its nuclear weapons efforts in return for food aid and compensation in other ways. In 1994, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced that it was going to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Under this agreement, Pyongyang committed to freezing its plutonium weapons and production program.

Following the collapse of this agreement in 2002, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea claimed that it had completely withdrawn from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in January 2003 and they once again began operating its nuclear facilities.

The second effort was the Six-Party Talks which began in 2003. In between periods of stalemate and crisis, those talks arrived at breakthroughs in 2005, when the Democratic People's Republic of Korea pledged to abandon "all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs" and return to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and in 2007, when the parties agreed on a series of steps to implement that 2005 agreement.

Those talks, however, broke down very soon in 2009. Pyongyang has since stated that it is no longer bound by its agreements and has no plans of returning to the talks.

In January 2018, North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un declared the country's nuclear arsenal "complete" and offered to discuss it with Seoul. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's participation in the South Korean Olympics. The Democratic

People's Republic of Korea's delegation to the Olympics included Kim Jong Un's sister, who met with South Korean President Moon Jae-in. That meeting led to a sustained inter-Korean dialogue, including a meeting that produced a declaration referencing the shared goal of denuclearization of the Korean peninsula from the Koreans.

### **Russia:**

Many believe the Kremlin voted for United Nations Security Council sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea out of pressure, and that it was a vote that went against Russia's own interests and views on sanctions.

On paper, Russia opposes the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's acquisition of nuclear weapons. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea had once been a non-nuclear-weapons state and a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Russia considers the North's nuclear ambitions as an issue that only affects the Korean peninsula.

Russia views a stable North Korea as more important than having the country forgo its nuclear weapons. And importantly, a nuclear North Korea will not fall under the total influence of China and thus can serve as a deterrent for any military attacks by Beijing.

Based on how Russia views the issues on the Korean Peninsula, it seems to be clear that a resolution of the nuclear proliferation problem posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea requires the entire peninsula to be denuclearized. Having a unilateral agreement is almost an impossible task. Pyongyang's nuclear power is its main deterrent and defence mechanism against large scale attacks. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is more likely to agree if the whole peninsula denuclearizes. The South cannot be considered nonnuclear as long as it can rely on another country's nuclear weapons. Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula would require not only the North's nuclear disarmament, but also the complete, verifiable, and irreversible removal of the US nuclear arsenal, including nuclear-armed bombers and submarines on the peninsula. Indeed, it means disarmament of the United States, which is as impossible as unilateral disarmament of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

### **South Korea:**

There has always been a lot of tension between the South Korean government and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, ever since the Korean war. There was an improvement in the relationship and hope that the two countries would be reunified when in 2003 construction began on a joint North-South industrial complex and duty-free trade facility at Kaesong, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. However, tensions

increased in the north during December 2007, when the Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced a plan to close the land border and all nonmilitary telephone links with South Korea. All military and political agreements with South Korea were nullified. The maturation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear program worsened the relationship between the two countries and only increased fear amongst those in South Korea.

### Timeline:

Date	Event	Briefing
December, 1985	The Democratic People's Republic of Korea joins the Nonproliferation Regime	The Democratic People's Republic of Korea ratifies the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, a multilateral agreement whose dozens of signatories have committed to halting the spread of nuclear weapons. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea builds its first nuclear facilities in the early 1980s.
September, 1991	The United States removes nukes from South Korea	The U.S.A. announces it will withdraw all of its nuclear weapons as part of the original Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.
January, 1992	Koreas agree to denuclearize	Both governments agree to ban nuclear reprocessing and uranium enrichment facilities along with usage or testing of any kind except nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.
March, 1993-June, 1993	The Democratic People's Republic of Korea threatens withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty	Pyongyang rejects inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency and announces its intent to leave the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The country suspends its withdrawal after talks with United States of America. diplomats in New York.
March, 1995	Allies found the Korean Peninsula Energy	The United States of America., Japan and South Korea establish the Korean Peninsula

	Development Organization	Energy Development Organization. (KEDO breaks ground in 1997)
September, 1999	The Democratic People's Republic of Korea imposes Missile Moratorium	The Democratic People's Republic of Korea agrees to suspend testing of long range missiles
June, 2000	First Inter-Korea Summit	The two leaders meet for the first time since the peninsula's division. Results in a number of joint commercial and cultural projects.
January, 2001-April, 2002	Bush Challenges The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's commitment to the deal	Bush takes pursues a harder line toward Pyongyang, characterizing The Democratic People's Republic of Korea along with other countries as part of an axis of evil and imposes new sanctions.
October 2002	Pyongyang exits the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty	Pyongyang admits to running a secret uranium enrichment program and withdraws from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.
September, 2005	The United States of America freezes north korean funds.	The United States of America. Treasury department designates Macau based Banco Delta Asia a primary money laundering concern and freezes \$25 million that The Democratic People's Republic of Korea held there.
October, 2006	First Nuclear Test	The Democratic People's Republic of Korea carries out an underground nuclear test and in July tests 7 short, medium and long range ballistic missiles. This resulted in the imposition of trade sanctions..
October, 2007	Nuclear Diplomacy with the United States of America.	After the United States of America. releases the \$25 million in frozen North Korean funds in June, the Six Party talks resume. Its participants issue a joint statement outlining the North's commitment to declare all of its

		nuclear programs, disable its facilities and stop the export of nuclear material in technology and gives the North 900,000 tons of oil. It also pledged to remove the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from its list of state sponsors of terrorism.
June, 2008	Democratic People's Republic of Korea declares nuclear sites	Pyongyang declares its fifteen nuclear sites to Beijing. Bush rescinds some trade restrictions with Democratic People's Republic of Korea . By December however, the discussions break down because of disagreements on verification procedures.
2009	Obama attempts a diplomatic restart	Barack Obama takes office and tries to restart diplomatic relations with The Democratic People's Republic of Korea but these are initially rebuffed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea which launches a rocket believed to be a version of its ballistic missile.
November, 2010	Democratic People's Republic of Korea reveals uranium plant	Pyongyang reveals its uranium plant which was built in secret as well as a light water reactor under construction. Despite sanctions, the regime is committed to advancing its weapons program.
February, 2012	Nuclear Operations were <b>briefly</b> suspended	Following a meeting with the United States of America, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea commits to suspend its operations, invite the International Atomic Energy Agency monitors and carry out a moratorium on nuclear testing in exchange for tons of food aid. The deal falls apart after the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launches a rocket and displays road-mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles.

		the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to advance its nuclear program despite the isolation. The Obama administration opts for "strategic patience". the Democratic People's Republic of Korea carries out various nuclear tests in 2013 and 2016.
March, 2018	Trump agrees to the first United States of America-North Korea Summit	South Korea's national security advisor announces in Washington that Trump has accepted an invitation to meet with Kim Jong Un in Pyongyang. Kim makes a historic visit to the south in the demilitarized zone separating the two Koreas.
September, 2018	Moon and Kim hail progress toward Nuclear-Free Korea	In the third summit, Kim and Moon sign a joint declaration outlining steps toward reducing tensions.
February, 2019	Second US-North Korea summit	The second summit ends early when leaders disagree over sanctions relief and denuclearization. Trump however returns in June to restart stalled negotiations.

### **Previous Attempts:**

#### **The Agreed Framework between the United States of America and The Democratic People's Republic of Korea:**

The United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea signed the Agreed Framework. In this framework, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea agreed to freeze its plutonium weapons program which halted the construction of nuclear reactors in Geneva. The United States of America provided them with food aid, oil, two light-water reactors for civilian use and sanctions relief.

#### **George Bush challenging North Korea's commitment to their deal:**

The president (George Bush) of the United States of America came into office in 2001. He pursued a harder line toward Pyongyang. He characterized North Korea as part of an “axis of evil”. He imposed sanctions on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea in an effort to halt their nuclear weapons programme. The United States of America later designated the Macau based Banco Delta Asia a primary money laundering concern and froze 25 million dollars that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea was holding over there.

#### **The six-party members agree to negotiation in 2007:**

The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea temporarily halted operations at its Yongbyon nuclear facilities in exchange for fifty thousand tons of oil. This was part of an action plan agreed to by the Six-Party members.

In 2008, South Korea’s new leader of the conservative government pushed for reconciliation to exert more pressure on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to denuclearize.

The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea had also committed to abandoning its nuclear weapons programme in 2005 along with implementing the International Atomic Energy Agency’s safeguards along with the terms of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty but they conducted an underground nuclear test in which the explosion yielded an estimated one to two kilotons a year later.

#### **Barack Obama’s attempts at a diplomatic restart:**

The president of the United States of America, Barack Obama took office in January 2009. He showed a willingness to revive the Six-Party Talks but these efforts were rejected by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea which launched a rocket that was believed to be a modified version of its long-range ballistic missile. They also removed IAEA monitors from its facilities the same year.

#### **The Democratic People’s Republic’s summit with the United States of America during Donald Trump’s presidency and South Korea:**

Trump and Un met in 2018 in Pyongyang to discuss their international relations. Kim Jong Un also became the first North Korean leader to cross the border of the two Korea’s for a summit with Moon Jae in the same year. This marked the first meeting between the presidents of the Koreas in 11 years. They pledged to end their hostilities and make a formal peace treaty. They also confirmed that they both wished for a Korean peninsula that is free of nuclear weapons. Trump later pulled out of the meeting in Singapore citing “anger and hostility” in North Korea’s latest statements but they ended up meeting later in the year where they signed a statement pledging for the pursuit of long-lasting peace

and the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The second summit between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America ended on "friendly terms" but they did not end up signing a planned joint statement. North Korea's foreign ministry stated it would not change its position.

#### **Past actions and the issues with them:**

Various negotiations and treaties signed have been discussed in the key timeline of events along with the previous attempts to denuclearize the Democratic People's Republic of Korea above which highlights how the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has responded to each in the past and how long they have stayed effective. (ones not mentioned or elaborated on in the timeline have been listed directly above)

When looking for possible solutions, the fact that countless sanctions have been imposed on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea along with various agreements and offers made to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea which were initially accepted but they always ended up reverting to their old state and starting nuclear testing and operations needs to be considered and remembered. It is important to find alternatives to sanctions and better ways to negotiate with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

#### **Possible Solutions:**

##### **Important points for the United States of America to consider:**

- The United States of America should keep an open mind in regards to negotiations with Pyongyang. If the talks offer a serious prospect for the main goals then they should consider the treaty/deal.
- Only direct talks with the leaders have any chance of change in policy given their history of ignoring sanctions and not having it stop them from stopping their nuclear programme.
- The United States needs to maintain pressure on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

#### **4 main goals to be achieved:**

The main 4 goals that need to be accomplished are freezing of testing, capping of arsenals, dismantling of the infrastructure and disarming.

**Freezing:** Positive atmospheres are important at this stage in order to convince the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to agree to negotiations.

**Capping:** It is imperative to come up with a way to cease the production of materials needed for such nuclear activities, shut down the Democratic People's

Republic of Korea's existing activities, develop a database of these sites and get inspectors in place.

**Disarming and Dismantling:** Potentially suspending certain sanctions in order to allow the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to have alternative ways to develop the country's economy along with its power and influence to convince them to agree to negotiations. If they do not have a way to recover or have geopolitical, socio-political or economic power/influence then they have no reason to reduce their nuclear power.

### **Engagement oriented approach:**

Having various deals and getting multiple associations such as the Six-Party Talks involved as Bush did in 2001 and Clinton did in 1994 with the Agreed Framework rather than having one big deal that is seeking denuclearization. Slowly target and get all the main 4 goals above achieved through various methods rather than just one. This would require a smaller up-front payment on both sides and makes the Democratic People's Republic of Korea more likely to agree to the deals. They could negotiate a comprehensive freeze of nuclear operations in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. What Donald Trump, the ex-president of the United States of America tried to achieve with the agreements through discussions directly between leaders would be ideal. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's leader, Kim Jong Un is much more likely to agree to treaties this way rather than through sanctions and threats. Countries might need to focus on changing the political terms of their relationship before tackling the longstanding issue of denuclearization. They should consider their past relationships and focus on a fundamental change in their bilateral relations and both parties would need to agree for a political normalization of ties between them which would include peace declarations, human rights and security assurances, etc.

### **Higher levels of pressure:**

This would look at a single large treaty formed in order to achieve denuclearization. This would require varying levels of pressure and coercion. Although this is the simplest and most direct path it is also a very difficult option to achieve and should only be taken as a last resort. South Korea and China would oppose this policy as it could result in a crisis in the peninsula due to the retaliation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This would require the maximum pressure possible, including sanctions from various countries [which have not proven to work in the past], possible military action, cutting off ties and declaring the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a threat similar to what was done in 2001.

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