



Security Council Topic Background Guide
Topic 2: The Situation in the Democratic Republic of North Korea¹

30 September 2015

According to Chapter VI of the UN Charter, the Security Council “may investigate any dispute, or any situation which may lead to international friction or give rise to dispute, in order to determine if either the continuance of the dispute or situation is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security.”²

In the last several decades the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), known also as North Korea, has received considerable attention from the Security Council, due to its acquisition of nuclear weapons and swings between international confrontation and conciliation.³ North Korea conducted its third and most powerful nuclear test in 2013. The country threatened a fourth nuclear test in late 2014, though it never performed the test. In the past several years, North Korea has, however, continued to launch missiles to demonstrate its increasing missile capabilities.⁴

In recent resolutions, the Security Council has demanded the DPRK dismantle its nuclear weapons and halt its missile launches. The Council has imposed sanctions on the DPRK until it does so. According to the DPRK, it will continue to carry out such activities until the Security Council lifts the sanctions and begins to provide economic aid. This creates a challenge for the Security Council.⁵

¹ This document was provided by Montana Model United Nations. It was written by Kedra Hildebrand, Teaching Assistant, and Karen Adams, Faculty Advisor with contributions from Nicholas Potratz (2015). © 2015 by Kedra Hildebrand and Karen Adams.

² “Charter of the United Nations,” Chapter VI, Article 34, available at <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/>.

³ Moon Ihlwan, “Humanitarian Talks Mark North Korea’s Shift in Game,” *Business Week*, 26 August 2008, available at http://www.businessweek.com/globalbiz/blog/eyeonasia/archives/2009/08/humanitarian_ta.html.

⁴ BBC News, “North Korea Profile – Timeline,” 15 September 2015, available at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-15278612>.

⁵ Security Council Report, “UN Documents for DPRK (North Korea),” available at <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/dprk-north-korea/>, accessed 24 September 2015.

History and Current Events

To understand the contemporary situation in the DPRK, it is important to understand the history of the country. From 918 to 1905, a single, independent government ruled the Korean peninsula. In 1905, Japan occupied Korea and ran it as a colony, extracting land, labor, and natural resources. Japanese rule lasted until the end of World War II in 1945, when the Soviet Union (USSR) invaded from the north and the US invaded from the south, pushing Japan out of the area.

The agreement between the US and the USSR was that each would occupy part of the peninsula until elections for a unified Korean government could be held. In 1948, this agreement broke down. The south held elections and, with US approval, declared an independent state, the Republic of Korea (ROK). In return, the north proclaimed its independence as the DPRK.⁶

During the Cold War, the US supported the ROK and the USSR supported the DPRK. The effects of US-Soviet rivalry were so profound that neither North Korea nor South Korea joined the UN until 1991, when the end of the Cold War assured that neither the US nor Russia would veto their ascension. Since the end of the Cold War, the DPRK has become very isolated. In fact, even the DPRK's relations with its longtime ally, China, have strained in recent years. Today many describe North Korea as the "last Stalinist state on earth."⁷

The first leader of the DPRK was Kim Il-Sung, who fought the Japanese in Korea and Manchuria. The Soviets installed Kim in 1946 and he became the prime minister when Soviet troops withdrew in 1948.⁸ The first leader of the ROK was Syngman Rhee, who had studied in the US and was an anti-Japanese activist during the occupation period. The US appointed Syngman head of the provisional government before South Korea elected him president in 1948.⁹

In 1950, the DPRK invaded the South to reunify the peninsula, and the Korean War began. During the war, the USSR and People's Republic of China (PRC) supported the North Koreans. The US, UK, Canada, the Philippines, and several other states supported South Korea. The Security Council authorized support for the ROK in Security Council Resolution 82, which passed without Soviet veto because the USSR was boycotting the Council. The Soviets were

⁶ Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia and the Cold War 1945-2006*, 10th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006).

⁷ "North Korea: Overview," *New York Times*, 16 September 2016, available at <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/northkorea/index.html?scp=1-spot&sq=North%20Korea&st=cse>.

⁸ "North Korea Timeline: Chronology of Key Events 1945-2006," *International Debates* 4, no. 8 (November 2006), p. 2.

⁹ LaFeber, *America, Russia and the Cold War*.

boycotting because the US refused to transfer China's UN membership from the nationalist Chinese government, which controlled only Taiwan, to the communist government (the People's Republic of China, led by the Chinese Communist Party) that took over the Chinese mainland in 1949.¹⁰

The fighting on the Korean peninsula ended in 1953 under an armistice agreement signed by the UN, the DPRK, and China. South Korea refused to sign the armistice, citing frustration that Korea was to remain divided by north and South. But it did agree to abide by the terms. Under the armistice, both sides withdrew two kilometers from the border on the 38th parallel, creating what is known today as the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).¹¹ The two countries have never signed a peace treaty. Today, there are about a million DPRK forces on the North side of the DMZ and about 500,000 South Korean and 25,000 US forces on the south side of the DMZ.

Kim Il-Sung's political philosophy was "Juche," or self-reliance. It articulated a desire for the DPRK to be completely independent from other states in the international system. In implementing this philosophy, the DPRK has become "one of the world's most secretive societies,"¹² which has made it difficult for other states and organizations such as the UN to know what happens within its borders. This is true in all dimensions of life — political, economic, social, and military.

Nuclear Program

The DPRK's military secrecy has been of special concern because, for many years, it was unclear whether the country was trying to develop nuclear reactors for energy purposes or for both energy and nuclear weapons. In 1979, North Korea started to build a 5-megawatt nuclear reactor at Yongbyon with Soviet assistance. In December 1985, North Korea declared the existence of the Yongbyon facility to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the oversight body for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and joined the NPT.¹³

According to the NPT, the only legal nuclear weapons states are those that had declared nuclear programs when the Treaty was written in 1968, namely the United States (which developed nuclear weapons in 1945), Russia (1949), United Kingdom (1953), France (1964), and China (1964). All other state parties to the Treaty agreed to pursue nuclear programs only for energy, not for weapons. In exchange, the five existing nuclear states promised to "pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to ... nuclear

¹⁰ LaFeber, *America, Russia and the Cold War*.

¹¹ "North Korea Timeline: Chronology of Key Events 1945-2006."

¹² "Country Profile: North Korea," BBC News, 21 August 2015, available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/country_profiles/1131421.stm.

¹³ "Timeline: North Korea Nuclear Threats, Climb-downs, Tests," *Reuters*, 21:19, May 24, 2009.

disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.”¹⁴

In 1992, North Korea agreed to allow inspections by the IAEA, but refused to allow access to certain sites that were suspected of nuclear weapons production.¹⁵

In 1994, Kim Il-Sung died and Kim Jong-Il, his son, succeeded him as North Korea's leader. Soon after, North Korea and the US signed an agreement in which the DPRK pledged to halt and eventually dismantle its nuclear weapons program in exchange for, among other things, international aid to build two nuclear power plants.¹⁶ The agreement is known as the “Agreed Framework.”¹⁷ In 1998, in violation of the Agreed Framework, North Korea launched a rocket that flew over Japan before landing in the Pacific Ocean. In 2001, the DPRK threatened to restart its nuclear weapons program if the US did not keep its promises under the Agreed Framework.

In 2002, US President George W. Bush warned that the US would use military force to destroy any effort to obtain nuclear weapons, and he called North Korea part of the “Axis of Evil,” along with Iraq and Iran.¹⁸ North Korea reacted by saying that the US was “little short of declaring war” and disclosing that it was working on and would not halt a uranium enrichment program.¹⁹ When the US, Japan, and South Korea retaliated by halting fuel oil shipments, North Korea sent IAEA inspectors home, withdrew from the NPT, and announced it was restarting the plutonium reactor at Yongbyon.²⁰

¹⁴ Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Articles II, IV, VI, available at <http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Nuclear/NPT.shtml>.

¹⁵ “North Korea Timeline: Chronology of Key Events 1945-2006.”

¹⁶ Robert Gallucci, “The Agreed Framework: Advancing U.S. Interests with North Korea,” *U.S. Department of State Dispatch* 5, no. 50 (December 12, 1994), pp. 820-823.

¹⁷ “Agreed Framework Between the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea,” The Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) official website, October 21, 1994, available at <http://www.kedo.org/pdfs/AgreedFramework.pdf>.

¹⁸ George W. Bush, “State of the Union Address,,” January 29, 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html>.

¹⁹ North Korea's official state newspaper as quoted in PBS Frontline's chronology for “Kim's Nuclear Gamble,” <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kim/etc/cron.html>.

²⁰ For the full text of the DPRK explanation for withdrawal, see “KCNA 'Detailed Report' Explains NPT Withdrawal,” January 22, 2003, FBIS Translated Text, Federation of American Scientists website, available at <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/dprk/nuke/dprk012203.html>.

These events led to the first of a series of Six-Party Talks including North Korea, the US, Russia, China, Japan and South Korea. These talks were held in Beijing as a sign of China's increased concern over the DPRK's growing nuclear ambitions. The Six-Party Talks aimed to "obtain a full declaration of nuclear materials from Pyongyang (including highly enriched uranium, plutonium, and nuclear devices) and the disablement of all North Korea nuclear facilities and activities."²¹

When the talks stalled in February 2005, the DPRK Foreign Ministry declared that North Korea had manufactured nuclear weapons. In March, the DPRK declared itself a nuclear weapons state.²²

In September 2005, in response to a "balanced package" devised in the Six-Party talks, the DPRK agreed to abandon its nuclear weapons program and rejoin the NPT. This package addressed the "security needs of North Korea as well as the concerns of the international community about North Korea's nuclear activities."²³ Despite this agreement, in October 2006, North Korea demonstrated its nuclear weapons capability by conducting a nuclear weapons test.²⁴ In 2006, the Natural Resources Defense Council estimated that North Korea had ten nuclear weapons and the capability to manufacture one per year.²⁵

As of September 2015, North Korea has held three nuclear tests and threatened a fourth. The second nuclear test occurred in 2009. The test followed North Korea's rejection of previous political and military goals that it had established with South Korea. North Korea claimed that South Korea had "hostile intent." North Korea also intended the test to rebuff the Security Council for the Council's condemnation of the DPRK's nuclear program. The third test occurred in 2013 under the current North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, who replaced his father, Kim Jong-il, after his death in 2011.²⁶ Some observers suspect that Kim Jong-un held the third

²¹ Victor Cha, "Winning Asia," *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 6 (November/December 2007), pp. 98-113.

²² "Timeline: North Korea's Nuclear Test," *New York Times*, 16 September, 2015, <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/northkorea/index.html?8qa>.

²³ "UN Nuclear Watchdog Hopes to Send Inspectors Back to the DPR of Korea Soon," UN News Center, September 19, 2005, available at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=15881&Cr=dpr&Cr1=korea>.

²⁴ "North Korea Timeline: Chronology of Key Events 1945-2006."

²⁵ Natural Resources Defense Council, "Nuclear Notebook: Global nuclear stockpiles, 1945-2006," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 62:4 (July/August 2006), pp. 64-67, <http://thebulletin.metapress.com/content/c4120650912x74k7/fulltext.pdf>.

²⁶ BBC News, "North Korea Profile – Timeline."

test as a means of building his international and domestic “credibility” as a leader to be taken seriously by North Koreans and other states.²⁷

Today, there is no question that the DPRK has nuclear weapons. The more important question now centers on the likelihood that North Korea will use its nuclear weapons, as well as its capabilities for launching nuclear weapons to countries such as Japan and the US. According to the US Defense Intelligence Agency, North Korea has developed nuclear warheads that can fit on and be carried by ballistic missiles.²⁸ In September 2015, North Korea announced that it planned to launch a new satellite into space, though many see the launch as a mere test of the development of intercontinental ballistic program in North Korea.²⁹ Taken together, these developments raise fears that North Korea may use its weapons against previously unreachable targets like the US.

Economy and Human Rights

North Korea’s adherence to a strict communist economic system, its closure to trade, and a series of natural disasters have led to widespread economic deprivation. According to international aid agencies, two million people have died since the mid-1990s due to food shortages.³⁰ In 2013, North Korea experienced an increase in grain harvest, which helped to reduce its food shortages, though it still fell far short of eliminating hunger and starvation in the country. North Korea has thus depended heavily on food aid from China, South Korea, and the US since the 1990s.³¹ Even with this aid, however, millions of North Koreans continue to face food shortages today. A problem made worse by North Korea’s refusal to accept food aid from the US (and the US’s reluctance to provide aid) since 2009.³²

Enforced political closure has also led to human rights abuses. The DPRK has been accused of holding between 80,000 and 120,000 political prisoners. Prisoners and other citizens are reportedly subject to torture, public execution, slave labor, forced abortion,

²⁷ “Timeline on North Korea’s Nuclear Program,” *The New York Times*, 19 November 2014, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/11/20/world/asia/northkorea-timeline.html>.

²⁸ “Timeline on North Korea’s Nuclear Program,” *The New York Times*.

²⁹ Choe Sang-Hun, “North Korea Plans Rocket Launch that Could Lead to Missile,” *The New York Times*, 14 September 2014, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/15/world/asia/north-korea-plans-rocket-launch-that-could-lead-to-missile.html>.

³⁰ “Country Profile: North Korea.”

³¹ Mark E. Manyin and Mary Beth D. Nikitin, “Foreign Assistance to North Korea,” Congressional Research Service (R40095), 2 April 2014, available at <https://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/row/R40095.pdf>.

³² Amnesty International, “North Korea Human Rights,” 2015, available at <http://www.amnestyusa.org/our-work/countries/asia-and-the-pacific/north-korea>; Nikitin and Manyin, “Foreign Assistance to North Korea.”

“complete thought control,” and infanticide. In one case, an escapee from a labor camp reported that North Korea authorities forced him to burn the corpses of dead political prisoners and use their remains as fertilizer. Another escapee reported that the regime forced a woman in a labor camp to drown her newborn baby because authorities believed the baby had a Chinese father. The UN estimates that hundreds of thousands have died in the camps from starvation, physical abuse, poor living conditions, and work exhaustion.³³

The secretive and closed nature of the DPRK makes it hard to verify such accusations. In 1995, at the World Summit for Social Development, DPRK Vice-President Mr. Kim Pyong Sik painted a picture of peace and prosperity. Sik contended that the benevolent policies implemented by General Kim Il-Sung and furthered by his son Kim Jong-Il ensured that the its people were provided for and were part of a “great harmonious family.” According to Sik, the DPRK government provides food, housing, universal free education, medical services, and support for the disabled, the elderly, and war veterans. In the DPRK, he said, there are “no unemployed, no homeless people, no vagrant beggars, no drug addicts, and no prostitutes.”³⁴

These statements contrast with hundreds of hours of testimony from hundreds of North Korean expatriates who report widespread conditions of poor health, hunger, and human rights abuses,³⁵ as well as reports from foreign journalists who have visited the country and claim that North Korea often presents a façade of high standards of living and human rights to foreign visitors.³⁶ While observers note that these abuses do occur in general, some have still questioned the credibility of specific events described in testimony from former North Koreans. The DPRK’s state media has sought to use propaganda to deny any abuse of human rights and discredit witnesses.³⁷

³³ Peter Walker, “North Korea human rights abuses resemble those of the Nazis, says UN inquiry,” *The Guardian*, 18 February 2014, available at <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/17/north-korea-human-rights-abuses-united-nations>; “Country Profile: North Korea;” Amnesty International, “North Korea Human Rights.”

³⁴ “Statement by H.E. Mr. Kim Pyong Sik At the World Summit for Social Development,” World Summit for Social Development at the United Nations, March 11-12, 1995, available at <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/conf166/gov/950311140848.htm>.

³⁵ Walker, “North Korea human rights abuses;” Alastair Gale, “U.N. Office in Seoul Intensifying Probes of Alleged Rights Abuses in North Korea,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 23 September 2015, available at <http://www.wsj.com/articles/u-n-office-in-seoul-intensifying-probes-of-alleged-rights-abuses-in-north-korea-1442981727>.

³⁶ See, for example, Tim Sullivan, “North Korea: Now you see it,” *National Geographic*, October 2013, available at <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2013/10/north-korea/sullivan-text>.

³⁷Gale , “U.N. Office in Seoul Intensifying Probes of Alleged Rights Abuses.”

Relationship between Military and Economic Goals

There appears to be a connection between the DPRK's economic problems and its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Before his death, Kim Jong-Il repeatedly tied his promises to stop nuclear development to requests for economic aid and assistance constructing nuclear energy facilities.³⁸ Kim Jong-un has followed a similar strategy. Since he assumed leadership, North Korea has continued to request economic aid and the elimination of sanctions against North Korea as conditions for ending its nuclear weapons program.³⁹

But economics are clearly not the only motivation for the DPRK's nuclear weapons program. The 38th parallel continues to be one of the most heavily armed areas of the world, and no peace treaty ending the Korean War has ever been signed. According to the government, the DPRK built nuclear weapons for "self-defense" against the US, Japan, and South Korea, which seek regime change in the country.⁴⁰ Another goal may be to assert greater independence from China.⁴¹

Increasing tensions between China and the DPRK in the last few years bolster this latter point. North Korea has repeatedly flouted Chinese requests, despite China's status as North Korea's "most important ally" and largest source of assistance. North Korea's third nuclear test represents the most prominent example of the schism between the states. Prior to the DPRK's nuclear test in 2013, China made repeated calls for the regime not to strain relations further with the US by carrying out the test. North Korea ignored China's request and carried the test out anyway. Another indication of declining relations between the countries emerged in 2013 when Kim Jong-un killed his uncle Jang Song-Taek, who was not only a close advisor to Kim Jong-Il during his leadership, but had close ties to China, and became known as a proponent for China's strategies for economic reform in North Korea.⁴²

³⁸ James Laney and Jason Shaplen, "How to deal with North Korea," *Foreign Affairs* 82:2, March/April 2003: 17-19. Available through Infotrac High School Reference.

³⁹ "Timeline on North Korea's Nuclear Program," *The New York Times*.

⁴⁰ Michael Duffy, "What Does North Korea Want?" *Time*, February 13, 2005, available at <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1027498,00.html>.

⁴¹ Larry Nicksch, "North Korea's Nuclear Weapons Program," Congressional Research Service (RL33590), 5 October 2006, available at [http://pards.org/crs_country/CRSReportNorthKorea'sNuclearWeaponsProgram\(October5,2006\)Update.pdf](http://pards.org/crs_country/CRSReportNorthKorea'sNuclearWeaponsProgram(October5,2006)Update.pdf).

⁴² Jane Perlez, "Chinese Annoyance with North Korea Bubbles to the Surface," *New York Times*, 21 December 2014, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/21/world/asia/chinese-annoyance-with-north-korea-bubbles-to-the-surface.html>; Beina Xu and Jayshree Bajoria, "The China-North Korea Relationship," CFR Backgrounders, 22 August 2014, available at <http://www.cfr.org/china/china-north-korea-relationship/p11097/>.

On the Chinese side, several leaders have now rebuked North Korea's actions, and begun to express annoyance with the North Korean regime, while improving relations with South Korea. Chinese President Xi Jinping has never visited the DPRK since entering office, contrasting with previous actions from Chinese leaders. Still, experts doubt that China will sever ties with the DPRK any time soon. China's fear of political collapse in North Korea, which would bring instability to its doorstep and undermine its influence in the region, has thus far superseded its frustration with the North Korean regime's actions. As some observers have noted, China has had to balance providing protection, support, and assistance to the DPRK to ensure its survival, while simultaneously critiquing actions from North Korea that China perceives as potentially threatening to the relative stability between North Korea and countries such as South Korea and the US.⁴³

Previous Committee Work on This Topic

The situation in the DPRK troubles the Security Council for several reasons. First, under the NPT, only states that had nuclear weapons in 1968 are allowed to be nuclear powers. North Korea's withdrawal from the NPT in 2003 is a precedent that the permanent five members of the Council (all of which have nuclear weapons) worry that others will emulate. The DPRK is not the only country to have violated the terms of the NPT. Since 1970, a number of states – including Israel, India, and Pakistan – have developed or otherwise obtained nuclear weapons.⁴⁴ India has been especially vocal about the legitimacy of its nuclear arsenal, referring to the fact that the US, Russia, and other authorized nuclear weapons states have never fulfilled their promise to disarm.⁴⁵

Second, Security Council members are concerned that the DPRK will not just inspire other states to develop nuclear weapons but also transfer nuclear weapons, plans, or materials to others. Of particular concern is the spread of nuclear weapons to terrorist groups. This concern is especially acute given the DPRK's economic problems, which might induce it to sell nuclear technology or weapons.⁴⁶

In response to these concerns, the Security Council has passed a series of resolutions to address nuclear non-proliferation, in general, and the situation in the DPRK, in particular. These include:

⁴³ Perlez, "Chinese Annoyance with North Korea;" Xu and Bajoria, "The China-North Korea Relationship."

⁴⁴ Natural Resources Defense Council, "Nuclear Notebook."

⁴⁵ Jaswant Singh, "Against Nuclear Apartheid." *Foreign Affairs* 77:5 (September/October 1998), pp. 41-52.

⁴⁶United Nations Security Council, "Security Council Decides All States Shall Act to Prevent Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction Weapons," Security Council Press Release (SC/8076), April 28, 2004, available at <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/sc8076.doc.htm>.

-- S/RES/1540 (April 2004), which affirmed that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) is a threat to international peace; that the international community must take action against that threat; and that all member states have a responsibility to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction by creating and enforcing laws and measures to prevent the manufacture, acquisition, possession, development, transportation, and transfer of WMD and their delivery systems.⁴⁷

-- S/RES/1695 (July 2006) was adopted after North Korea test-fired long-range and medium-range missiles over the Sea of Japan. This resolution condemned the missile launches and called for a suspension of all activities related to the ballistic missile program. The resolution also called for vigilance by member states regarding North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons and urged the DPRK to return to the Six-Party Talks without any preconditions.⁴⁸

-- S/RES/1718 (October 2006) was adopted after the DPRK's first nuclear test, which demonstrated that it had nuclear weapons. This resolution noted that the "proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery, constitute a threat to international peace and security." It decided that the DPRK should "abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner." Furthermore, the resolution imposed sanctions against the country and individuals supporting its military program. Finally, the Council demanded that North Korea retract its withdrawal from the NPT and accept supervision of its nuclear plants by the IAEA. This resolution passed unanimously.⁴⁹ The imposition of sanctions was especially significant because it signaled that the P-5 members were in agreement about the need for enforcement. But the Council was able to agree to impose sanctions on just a few items.⁵⁰

In 2007, in response to economic aid offered by members of the Six-Party talks, North Korea agreed to shut down the Yongbyon nuclear reactor and allow UN nuclear inspectors back into the country. But in 2008, the government threatened to stop disabling the facility unless the US took the DPRK off its terrorist watch list. It had been on the list since 1988, when

⁴⁷ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540, April 28, 2005, available at <http://www.un.org/en/sc/documents/resolutions/2005.shtml>.

⁴⁸ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1695, July 15, 2006, available at <http://www.un.org/en/sc/documents/resolutions/2006.shtml>.

⁴⁹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1718, October 14, 2006, available at <http://www.un.org/en/sc/documents/resolutions/2006.shtml>.

⁵⁰ "Security Council Imposes Sanctions on DPR Korea After its Claimed Nuclear Test," UN News Center, October 14, 2006, available at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=20261&Cr=DPRK&Cr1>

DPRK agents were involved in the bombing of a South Korean airliner. The US agreed to drop the DPRK from the list.⁵¹

In early 2009, North Korea launched a multistage rocket, said it would quit nuclear talks, and threatened to conduct a nuclear test and intercontinental ballistic missile test. In May 2009, in addition to conducting its second nuclear test, it tested both long range and mid-range missiles over Japan. The DPRK promised to continue such acts until the Security Council lifts all sanctions.⁵²

In response to these actions, in June 2009, the Security Council unanimously adopted S/RES/1874, which condemned the nuclear test and imposed tougher sanctions on the DPRK. According to the resolution, the nuclear test was in "violation and flagrant disregard" of relevant Council resolutions, particularly S/RES/1695 (2006) and S/RES/1718 (2006). The Security Council demanded that the DPRK "not conduct any further nuclear tests or launch any ballistic missile technology" and restated its determination for the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons program. The resolution further called on states to cooperate by inspecting North-Korean-bound ships for sanctioned items, such as missile parts and combat vehicles. The resolution required states to submit a report of their findings to the Security Council. To support the actions in the resolution, the Security Council established a seven person panel of experts to provide advice to the Security Council on how to overcome non-compliance, consult with the Council on how to better implement Resolution 1874's mandate, and review and analyze country reports.⁵³

In response to the DPRK's third nuclear test in 2013, the Security Council passed S/RES/2094. The resolution expanded sanctions from previous resolutions by targeting individuals and organizations with ties to the DPRK (which the resolution listed specifically in its annex), as well as targeting the country's banking activities and bulk cash transfers. Individuals and entities listed in the annex of the resolution included members of the DPRK's diplomatic service, governmental organizations, and officials from arms companies known to export and import arms to North Korea. It also modified the panel of experts created in the 2009 resolution to shift its focus to advising the Council on how to implement the provisions of Resolution 2094.⁵⁴

⁵¹ "North Korea Timeline: Chronology of Key Events 1945-2006;" Peter Finn, "U.S. to Weigh Returning North Korea to Terror List," Washington Post, June 8, 2009, available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/07/AR2009060700717.html>.

⁵² "Timeline: North Korea Nuclear Threats, Climb-downs, Tests."

⁵³ UN Security Council Meetings Coverage SC/9679, "Security Council, Acting Unanimously, Condemns in Strongest Terms Democratic People's Republic of Korea Nuclear Test, Toughens Sanctions," 12 June 2009, available at <http://www.un.org/press/en/2009/sc9679.doc.htm>.

⁵⁴ UN Security Council Meetings Coverage SC/10934, "Security Council Strengthens Sanctions on Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in Response to 12 February Nuclear Test," 7 March 2013, available at <http://www.un.org/press/en/2013/sc10934.doc.htm>.

In 2014 and 2015 the Security Council released resolutions S/RES/2141 and S/RES/2207. Both of these resolutions extended the mandate of the panel of experts for one year. The panel of experts currently has a mandate through April 2016.⁵⁵

The UN Human Rights Council and General Assembly typically address the human rights issues in North Korea. In March 2013, the Human Rights Council established the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the DPRK.⁵⁶ In 2014, the Commission released a report noting the widespread human rights abuse within North Korea based on evidence such as the aforementioned testimony of North Korean expatriates. The UN General Assembly responded to the report by calling for the Security Council to refer leaders of the DPRK to the International Criminal Court (ICC), a permanent international court that prosecutes individuals for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. In most situations, a state must be party to the ICC, via adoption of the Rome Statute, for its citizens and leaders to be subject to its jurisdiction. Although the DPRK has not adopted the Rome Statute, the Security Council can expand the ICC's jurisdiction for special cases. So far, the Security Council has not even held a vote on expanding the ICC to cover the Situation in the DPRK, due to China's resistance and likely veto of the proposition.⁵⁷

Conclusion

It is clear that Security Council members want the DPRK to dismantle its nuclear weapons. Yet Security Council sanctions have apparently increased DPRK resolve and belligerence, leading to the recent missile launches and tests. The Security Council is in a tight spot. Should it continue to amp up the sanctions, knowing that this could lead to conflict among the states in Northeast Asia or weaken the North Korean economy so much that the government could collapse, creating refugee and other security problems? Are there alternative or additional measures the Council could take that would better serve the prospects for international peace and security?

In developing your country's position on this issue, consider the following questions:

- Does your country have nuclear energy and/or nuclear weapons? Has it signed the NPT? Is it in compliance with the IAEA?

⁵⁵ Security Council Report, "UN Documents for the DPRK (North Korea)," available at <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/dprk-north-korea/>, accessed 27 September 2015.

⁵⁶ UN OHCHR, "Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea," 2015, available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/CoIDPRK/Pages/CommissionInquiryonHRinDPRK.aspx>.

⁵⁷ Walker, "North Korea human rights abuses;" Gale, "U.N. Office in Seoul Intensifying Probes of Alleged Rights Abuses." See ICC, "About the Court," available at http://www.icc-cpi.int/en_menus/icc/about%20the%20court/Pages/about%20the%20court.aspx for more information on the ICC.

- What relationship does your country have with the DPRK and permanent members of the Security Council? Consider diplomatic, economic, and military relations.
- How has your country participated in or reacted to the situation in North Korea? Has it been affected by the Security Council sanctions? How would it be affected by military strikes by or against North Korea, or by the collapse of North Korea?
- What can and should the Security Council do to ensure the DPRK's compliance on the nuclear issue?
- How can the UN deal with human rights abuses in the DPRK? Does your country support using Security Council authority to expand the ICC to cover these abuses?

Recommended Reading

Federation of American Scientists. "Weapons of Mass Destruction Resources." Website. Available at <http://www.fas.org/nuke/>.

The FAS is a well-respected source of information on nuclear weapons issues, both technical and political.

Gale, Alastair. "U.N. Office in Seoul Intensifying Probes of Alleged Rights Abuses in North Korea." *The Wall Street Journal*. 23 September 2015. Available at <http://www.wsj.com/articles/u-n-office-in-seoul-intensifying-probes-of-alleged-rights-abuses-in-north-korea-1442981727>.

This article from Wall Street Journal talks in-depth about human rights abuses in North Korea, and the recent UN report on the issue. It includes maps and images showing the suspected locations of North Korean Prison camps. Also see a similar article from *the Guardian* available at <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/17/north-korea-human-rights-abuses-united-nations>.

Manyin, Mark E. and Mary Beth D. Nikitin. "Foreign Assistance to North Korea." Congressional Research Service (R40096). 2 April 2014. Available at <https://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/row/R40095.pdf>.

This report from the CRS talks about the history and current status of foreign aid to North Korea. It provides particular attention to US aid and current US-DPRK relations.

Niksch, Larry. "North Korea's Nuclear Weapons Program." Congressional Research Service (RL33590). 5 January 2010. Available at <https://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/nuke/RL33590.pdf>.

This report provides an explanation of North Korea's motivation for seeking nuclear weapons as well as an overview of the importance of the Six-Party Talks.

“North Korea: Overview.” *New York Times*. Website. Available at <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/northkorea/index.html?scp=1-spot&sq=North%20Korea&st=cse>.

This *New York Times* country profile provides up-to-date information about the DPRK, with links both to new stories and to reports from international organizations.

“Timeline on North Korea’s Nuclear Program.” *New York Times*. 19 November 2014. Available at <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/11/20/world/asia/northkorea-timeline.html>.

This page provides a list of key events in the development of North Korea’s nuclear program and the international response to the program.

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Available at <http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Nuclear/NPT.shtml>.

This site provides the text of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, as well as a list of states that have ratified it. It also provides information on the nuclear activities of most countries in the world and UN efforts to oversee nuclear energy and control nuclear weapons.

UN Security Council. “1540 Committee.” Available at <http://www.un.org/sc/1540/>

Security Council Resolution 1540 (April 28, 2005) is the basis for Security Council action against states that pursue WMD technology. The 1540 Committee was established to collect information about state compliance with the resolution. This is an excellent site to understand what the Council has done thus far and which states have and have not complied with the Council resolutions.

Tim Sullivan, “North Korea: Now You See It.” *National Geographic* (October 2013). Available at <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2013/10/north-korea/sullivan-text>.

This article features personal accounts of the author’s experience visiting North Korea. It focuses on the the illusion that North Korea attempts to portray to visitors to the country and how these contrast with the actual conditions that reveal themselves unintentionally when foreign individuals visit the country.

Xu, Beina and Jayshree Bajoria. “The China-North Korea Relationship,” Council on Foreign Relations. 22 August 2014. Available at <http://www.cfr.org/china/china-north-korea-relationship/p11097>.

This article provides an overview of North Korea’s relationship with China. It pays particular attention to recent tensions between the two countries. See also <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/21/world/asia/chinese-annoyance-with-north-korea-bubbles-to-the-surface.html>.