

Committee: Disec 2

Topic: The question of dismantling North Korea's nuclear weapon capabilities

Chair: Mabel Rush

School: Rathdown School

Summary

Over the last thirty years tensions have been high due to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea growing nuclear program despite constant guarantees that it is declining in nuclear power. After the DPRK signed the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), promising to stop the development of nuclear weapons and technology, it was believed it would stop its nuclear program. However, it has only continued its nuclear research, before pulling out of the NPT. The United Nations instigated many sanctions on the DPRK mainly on weapons-related materials, in the hope of deterring DPRK from continuing. However when this was seen as ineffective, the sanctions were expanded to luxury goods to target the elites.

It is speculated the DPRK was carried out six nuclear tests. They claim to have developed a nuclear bomb small enough to go on a long-range missile. Despite DPRK's allegation it has successfully "miniaturised" nuclear warheads, international experts have long cast doubt on these claims. It also has a ballistic missile; experts believe this could reach the USA.

Definition of Key Terms

Plutonium: a dense silvery radioactive metallic element similar chemically to uranium, that is the chemical element of atomic number 94.

Uranium: a silvery heavy radioactive polyvalent metallic element that is the chemical element of atomic number 92.

Kilotonnes: an explosive power, equal to the power of 1,000 tons of TNT.

Megatons: an explosive power, equal to the power of 1,000,000 tons of TNT.

Hydrogen bombs: also known as thermonuclear bombs, uses nuclear fusion where two atomic nuclei collide at very high speed, which joins them and forms a new type of nucleus. Hydrogen bombs are hundreds or even thousands of times more powerful than atomic bombs. The explosive power of hydrogen bombs is mainly expressed in megatons.

Atomic bomb: uses nuclear fission where the nucleus of an atom is split causing the release of a great deal of nuclear energy. The explosive power of atomic bombs is mainly expressed in kilotonnes.

Background Information

After World War II it was agreed that Korea would be split in half. The Soviet Union controlled the North and the United States Controlled the South. The divide was supposed to be temporary, only until Korea was stable enough to function independently. However, with the emergence of the Cold War, both nations wanted to affirm their power on their side of the country. Both the USA and USSR chose leaders for their half of Korea. With the declaration of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), the country was in a state of confusion of who would rule over the peninsula. After the end of the Korean war due to an armistice the demilitarized zone was established, dividing North and South Korea permanently along with millions of families on either side of the border.

Although the DPRK has made many claims on what their nuclear program has achieved, many of their so called "accomplishments" are disputed as being nothing but talk. DPRK affirms it has conducted five successful nuclear tests: in 2006, 2009, 2013 and in January and September 2016. It is known that the 2006, 2009 and 2013 tests were all atomic bomb tests. The DPRK claimed that its January 2016 test was of a hydrogen bomb. Global experts cast doubt on the claim given the size of the explosion registered however if their claim is true it would be a major cause for concern given that the destructive power of a hydrogen bomb is thousands of times more powerful than an atomic bomb. Another cause for concern would be what the starting

materials the DPRK is using for the nuclear tests are. Analysts believe the 2006 test and the 2009 test used plutonium, but whether the DPRK used plutonium or uranium as the starting material for the 2013 test is unclear. If the DPRK successfully used uranium as the starting material it would be huge upgrade to their nuclear program. The DPRK's plutonium stockpile is finite, however if they could enrich uranium, they could reinforce their stockpile.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)	International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
The Republic of Korea (South Korea)	Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation (KEDO)
The United States of America (USA)	United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)
The Russian Federation	North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)
The People's Republic of China	International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)
Japan	International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)

Timeline of Events

Date	Description
July, 1953	The USA, China, the DPRK, and South Korea agree to an armistice, dividing North and South Korea, and bringing the Korean War to an end.
1959	DPRK and Russia signed a cooperation agreement on the peaceful use of nuclear energy that included a provision for Russian help to establish a nuclear research complex in Yongbyon, North Pyongan Province.
1962	DPRK completes the Yongbyon Nuclear Research Centre, which includes an IRT-2000 research reactor.
December, 1985	DPRK joins the international Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), declaring that the nation would no longer be producing nuclear weapons.

1986	DPRK finish's the construction of a graphite-moderated nuclear reactor, which can produce plutonium.
January, 1992	The governments of North and South Korea sign, the 1992 Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula
March, 1993	IAEA accuses DPRK of violating the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and demands inspectors be given access to nuclear waste storage sites. DPRK block inspectors and announces its withdrawal from NPT However just before the DPRK is due to pull out of the NPT, they suspend their withdrawal after talks with the USA.
May, 1993	DPRK test-fires a medium-range Rodong ballistic missile into the Sea of Japan, while still being in the NPT.
September, 1999	An agreement between the DPRK and the USA is reached in Berlin. North Korea agrees to suspend testing of long-range missiles and the USA reduces economic sanctions on the DPRK.
January, 2003	DPRK officially withdraws from NPT.
May, 2003	DPRK withdraws from 1992 Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.
August, 2003	South Korea and DPRK, China, Japan, Russia, and the USA, launch the Six Party Talks.
July, 2006	DPRK test fires a long-range Taepodong-2 missile, unsuccessfully.
July, 2007	Under the USA's and Russia's supervision DPRK shuts down it main Yongbyon reactor.
January, 2009	DPRK announces it is abandoning all military and political deals with South Korea, accusing it of "hostile intent".
December, 2011	Kim Jong-il dies after seventeen years in power and is succeeded by his son Kim Jong-un.
December, 2012	DPRK successfully launches a rocket-mounted satellite into orbit.
January, 2016	DPRK government announces first hydrogen bomb test. This is met with widespread suspicion.
August, 2017	DPRK launches a missile over Japan for the first time since 2009. The missile landed in the Sea of Japan.
April, 2018	Kim Jong-un becomes the first DPRK leader to cross the border into

South Korea. The two leaders agree to end hostile actions and work towards reducing nuclear arms on the peninsula.

June, 2018	The 2018 Singapore Summit. Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un meet to discuss the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.
June, 2019	Trump becomes the first acting US president to set foot in the DPRK. Trump and Kim restart nuclear negotiations at meeting in the demilitarized zone that separates North and South Korea.

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

Treaty / Event	Description
Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT)	The NPT is an international treaty whose main objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology. It promotes cooperation, for the peaceful use of nuclear energy and to advance to the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament.
1992 Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula	Under the Joint Declaration, the DPRK and South Korea agree not to test, manufacture, produce, receive, possess, store, deploy, or use nuclear weapons; to use nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes; and not to possess facilities for nuclear reprocessing and uranium enrichment.
Six Party Talks	A series of multilateral negotiations attended by China, Japan, DPRK, Russia, South Korea, and the USA with the aim of dismantling the DPRK's nuclear program. DPRK decided to no longer participate in the six-party process in 2009.
2018 Singapore Summit	A meeting between DPRK's Chairman Kim Jong-un and USA's President Donald Trump, held in Singapore. This was the first-ever meeting of the leaders of the DPRK and the USA.

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