Issue:	The ongoing threat and uncertainty on East Asian security as a result of North Korea's nuclear program
Forum:	Security Council
Position:	President
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Introduction

This research report will give a concise overview of the effects that the continued nuclear proliferation by North Korea has in terms of security and stability in the region of East Asia. You can find a brief history of conflicts that have contributed to the current situation. Please use this research report as the start of your research and preparation for the conference

Definition of Key Terms

Nuclear-proliferation

the spread of nuclear weapons, nuclear weapons technology, or fissile material to countries that do not already possess them. The term is also used to refer to the possible acquisition of nuclear weapons by terrorist organizations or other armed groups (Munro, 2018).

Korean peninsula
The former state of Korea, currently divided in North Korea (DPRK) and South Korea (ROK) at the 38th parallel.

Demilitarized Zone (DMZ)
A buffer zone between the DPRK and ROK functioning as an iron curtain. Both states are not allowed to conduct any military exercises on or near the zone nor fly over the zone.

General Overview

The conflict now known as the Korean Conflict or the Conflict of the Korean peninsula is the result of a long history of power struggle and tension. The most relevant history of the current conflict starts in the early 20th century When the Korean peninsula was annexed to Japan in August of 1910. Korea remained under Japanese reign for the duration of World War II. In contrast to other seized lands, the Korean peninsula did not have a legitimized native or colonial government waiting to regain governing power after the collapse of the Japanese empire.

This power vacuum led to several claimants to power which could be divided up into two parties; the Marxist revolutionaries and the Korean nationalist movement. The former having fought the Japanese during the war with the support of China. Their leader, Kim Il-Sung, had

enjoyed training in the Soviet Union and served in the Soviet army. The latter, also known as the ultranationalists, found their revolutionary inspiration in the industrialism of Europe and the United States (Millett, 2020).

As an administrative measure, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed on dividing the peninsula on the 38th parallel. Although the agreement had been reached on its temporary nature, the two sides started to behave as independent states.

Kim Il Sung enforced his control over the communist party, administration, and military forces. His military and police combined added up to 100.000 backed up by guerilla fighters located in the Western part of Korea. The Southern security forces, backed up by the US President Truman and the United Nations, expanded to 80.000 combatants.

After a brief border war and fierce opposition by the communists, the Republic of Korea (the official name of South Korea) was established (Recchiuti, 2019).

These tensions led to the invasion of South Korea by North Korea in June of 1950. ROK enjoyed the support of the US and the UNSC through the adopted resolution 82. This resolution strongly condemned the DPRK's actions and demanded the immediate end of the invasion. Besides, the UNSC deemed the ROK the be the sole lawful government on the Korean Peninsula. The resolution was completely ignored by the DPRK.

The DPRK, with the military support of the Soviet Union and China, fought the ROK who had the support of the US and the UNSC. This conflict is known as the Korean war and was the first escalation to conflict in the Cold War and sparked the US's containment policy. The war lasts for three years until July 1953 when both parties agree to a truce. Later an attempt to unite the Koreas in Geneva fails and the "temporary" division made in 1945 remains to this day.

During the Korean war, the DPRK's nuclear ambitions had been prevalent but only came to the attention of the international community in 1992. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) discovered the nuclear activities to be far more sophisticated than previously thought. In response, the DPRK withdrew from the IAEA in 1994., the US negotiated a framework to prevent the DPRK from leaving the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which would make the DPRK freeze its nuclear activities and allow IAEA inspectors to investigate in exchange for energy assistance. The framework broke down in 2002 and the DPRK withdrew from the NPT in 2003.

After that, the UNSC has expressed its concern and there have been diplomatic efforts to seek nuclear disarmament in 2009 but this did not lead to any successes. In October of 2006, the DPRK reported having carried out a nuclear test, followed by strong condemnation and sanctions by the UNSC. In June of 2008, the DPRK admits to the existence of a Nuclear program to China and promises to partially shut down nuclear facilities. After the second nuclear tests in May of 2009, the UNSC imposes tougher sanctions on the DPRK including financial restrictions and an arms embargo. In January 2013, the UNSC expresses its condemnation of the DPRK's satellite launch and proliferation followed by the imposition of harsher sanctions in March of that day. The fourth, fifth, and sixth tests took place in the following years up to 2017. Every test followed by increased sanctions. The current sanctions prevent access to many goods such as; coal, iron, minerals, aviation fuel, statues, and helicopters for the DPRK. Although these sanctions are far-stretching, the enforcement duties lie with national government and due to lax inspections in areas in Africa, the Middle

East, and Southeast Asia, a black market opened up and certain goods still come through at times.

There were no serious attempts at denuclearization until 2018. In June of 2018, a summit took place between the US and the DPRK where Kim Jong Un "reaffirmed his firm and unwavering commitment to complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula".
Since this meeting in 2018, there has been a continuous back and forth between US President Donald Trump and North Korean president Kim Jong-Un.
There is very little transparency into The North Korean internal and international policy except for the negotiations with US President Trump, Nuclear tests, and tiny pieces of information and propaganda leaving the country. The DPRK is ruling according to a military-first policy using it as their sole resource for stability and security. By doing so, it became evident that it is not afraid to let the military expansion take priority over ensuring humanitarian needs. This is evident from continuously risking more sanctions and trade embargos as a result of missile tests. Most specialised political theory on this military-first policy shows that it only functions as a last resort but fails to provide economic and political stability. The North Korean economy cannot compete with that of South Korea and the country, therefore, relies on Humanitarian aid and international support. The two main issues that form a threat to the internal and external stability of the DPRK are internal power challenges from the military and political elite that could cause a shift in governing direction. As far as we know, Kim Jung Un is quite an independent leader that has far-reaching executive, legislative and judicial power. If he would be replaced, the entire direction could shift. The second threat is formed by international relations, mostly with the ROK, which is backed by the US. The inefficiency of the closed communist economy in addition to the continuously increasing sanctions put Kim Jong Un in a tight spot.
Efforts have been made regarding interstate stability in East-Asia. The establishment of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) gave hope in terms of regional stability and security. It has brought some peaceful change and interstate trust but the resolution of real interstate conflict has not been realised. The regional stability in East Asia has mostly been threatened by China's increasing role. To take the territorial disputes in the South China Sea as an example. In this conflict, however, China has taken a bit more of a subdued stance on the issue. This approach is mirrored by the ASEAN in that they steadily promote the non-proliferation of missiles and nuclear weapons, but also try to maintain good economic links with Pyongyang. This subtle and diplomatic approach is not in line with that of the UN or US. At the end of 2019, the ASEAN hosted a summit on the Korean 'partnership' in Busan, South Korea. Kim Jong Un declined the South Korean president Moon Jae-in's invitation.
The current situation has been relatively friendly with regards to most Asian nations but as long as the DPRK still has access to nuclear arms and is clashing with the ROK and US, true stability has not been reached.

Major Parties Involved

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Self evidently the DPRK is playing the largest role in this question. The internal policy of the DPRK is surrounded by secrecy but International Relations specialists have called their policy a military-first one (Gregg, 2016). Its main source of stability is their military on which it spends around $6 billion annually (Model Diplomacy, 2019). It uses its military equipment as a tool to intimidate its neighbouring countries and the US. The economy is suffering from the increased sanctions but the humanitarian suffering of the North Korean population does not seem to form any push for the government to decrease its arms proliferation. The lack of communication and negotiation from the North Korean side inhibits the seizing of tension. Accept for broken promises on the Summit meeting with US President Trump, there seems to be little effort to seize tensions at all (Shin, 2019).

Republic of Korea

The Republic of Korea, also known as South Korea, is feeling most of the immediate threat from nuclear tests done by the DPRK. Although the imminent threat is present, the ROK has consistently opted for a policy of non-proliferation of nuclear arms. It aims to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free Korean peninsula (Kim, 2020). It might be preaching this peaceful and non-violent non-proliferation but it has been developing some serious missiles on its own in recent years. They have been experimenting with nuclear weapons without their obligatory reporting. The IAEA has decided not to start a process of non-compliance. President Moon Jae-in has maintained a policy of cooperation on the Korean peninsula but does recognize the risks involved with cooperation (Kim, 2020).

The United States of America

Ever since the Korean war, the involvement of the US in the situation has been a prevalent one. There has been a strong alliance between South Korea and the US where they agreed on cooperation in their efforts to defend against North Korea. This 70 year during alliance led to still having 28.500 US troops being stationed on South Korean soil (Lee, 2019).
In addition to its alliance with the ROK, there is a strongly articulated animosity between the DPRK and the US. To exemplify, in the appendix you can find a list with all the times US president Trump has insulted the country, their leader, or its policy. The US has tried by all means possible (sanctions, diplomatic meetings, economic pressure, military) to push the DPRK into non-proliferation (Robert Jervis, 2018). No attempts have led to any long-term successes.

Timeline of Key Events

August 29th 1910	Japan-Korea Treaty
August 15th 1945	collapse of the Japanese empire
August 1945	establishment 38th parallel
June 25th 1950	Invasion ROK by DPRK

June 25th 1950	adoption UNSC Resolution 82
June 27th 1950	USA joins the Korean War
July 27th 1953	truce to end the war
April 1954	aim to unite Korea in Geneva fail
July 1st 1968	the NPT is signed by 190 parties
April 10th 1992	discovery nuclear activities by IAEA
October 21st 1994	Agreed Framework US DPRK
January 10th 2003	DPRK withdraws from NPT
April 2003	UNSC expresses concern over the situation in the DPRK
October 9th 2006	DPRK carries out nuclear test
June 2008	DPRK admits Nuclear program
June 2008	DPRK promises to shut down Yongbyon power plant
June 12th 2009	UNSC imposes more sanctions on the DPRK (resolution 1874)
April 13th 2012	DPRK proclaims nuclear status in a new constitution
June 12th 2018	Meeting US President Trump and DPRK leader Kim Jong Un.
February 27th 2019	Hanoi summit
November 25th 2019	ASEAN-ROK summit

Previous attempts to resolve the issue

While trying to prevent the DPRK from leaving the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968, the US and the DPRK reached an agreement conveniently called the Agreed Framework. In this framework, the DPRK agreed to freeze its nuclear activities in exchange for light water reactors. This framework started in 1994 and ended in 2002, ultimately leading to the DPRK's exit of the NPT (Davenport, 2018).
In an attempt to force Kim Jong Un to discontinue its nuclear program, an impressive list of sanctions has been put onto the DPRK. This was aimed to target the regime but allegedly ended up targeting the North Korean population the most (Albert, 2019).
Ever since the evasion of North Korea into the South during the Korea war (Recchiuti, 2019), the United Nations Security Council has consistently condemned North Korea's actions. It has passed several resolutions, siding with the ROK and USA (Security Council Report, 2020). As previously mentioned, there has been a diplomatic summit in September of 2018 in Singapore where US President Trump met with Kim Jong Un in an aim to seize tensions. Later they met again in 2019 in Hanoi but this summit ended abruptly after a disagreement about the nuclear disarmament of the DPRK.

Possible Solutions

There are two main approaches to resolve the tensions currently and historically felt in the region as a result of North Korea's nuclear program; a soft one and a hard one.
The first is one is practised and promoted by South Korean President Moon Jae-in. This soft approach consists of cooperative efforts slowly pushing the North Korean relationship to a

more stable and dependable position. Diplomatic efforts like the Singapore summit in 2018 where agreements are set up aiming at strengthening international relations are also part of this approach. Here they often offer rewards in exchange for freezing of nuclear efforts.

The latter is a more straightforward and hardline approach. Using military and economic threats as a means to achieve a nuclear-free end. Historically the UNSC has taken an approach that is more in line with this line of thinking. This, however, could also be because the tools available to the UNSC are more suitable for this approach.

In an ideal world, the soft approach would do enough to ease the tensions but the international community has continuously felt the need to use economic sanctions and military threats as a tool. To solve this issue, it is key to find a proper balance between the two approaches.

Appendix/Appendices

- https://edition.cnn.com/2017/09/22/politics/donald-trump-north-korea-insults-timeline/index.html

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