



ODUMUNC 2015
Issue Brief for the
Contemporary Crisis Committee



***The National Defense Commission of the
Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, North Korea), 2015***

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Introduction

Esteemed colleagues, welcome to the November meeting of the North Korean National Defense Commission. We have been gathered here today in earnest by our Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un to address persistent issues that the state has been facing and to operate in glorious tandem, fulfilling the will of the First Chairman through the combined strengths of our Juche ideology. The Supreme Leader may also call on you throughout this weekend meeting to carry out his will, since with the brightest and most capable working together, your success is assured.

The twelve of you, working with Vice-Chairman Hwang Pyong-so as moderator, will take up the task of managing our foreign policy with both our allies and enemies, led by Minister of the Foreign Affairs Department Son Young-soo. You will, under the guidance of the Minister of the undefeatable People's Armed Forces Hyon Yong-chol, maintain and progress our nuclear program. Of course, you will all also be expected to maintain control of the other duties assigned to your station as well.

Figure 1. Ready to Face Any Enemy!



Crisis Protocol

This crisis simulation will be operated in a typical crisis committee format. The exception is that the Chair of the simulation will be moderating this committee as current Vice-Chairman of the National Defense Commission Hwang Pyong-so, and as such will play a slightly more involved role than a Chair in more traditional crisis simulations.

Since the twelve delegates in this committee will all be representing North Koreans, it should be mentioned that the Crisis Manager will be operating on behalf of foreign powers. Should the delegates in this committee wish to speak to a representative of these foreign powers, a motion should be passed to extend an invitation or to open up a means of communication (sending a missive, a phone call, etc).

As a general note, understand that the North Korean National Defense Commission operates differently now than in the past since Kim Jong-un has taken control as First Chairman. While the constitution of North Korea created the committee for near complete control of the military and foreign policy of the state, the committee's purpose has shifted to focus more on implementing the personal orders of the First Chairman and simultaneously managing the foreign policy between North Korea and its allies.

Finally, understand the importance of this committee as a way to experience the hardships of managing a totalitarian state in the face of a world of adversaries. The goal of this committee is not world domination, reclaiming the South, or unleashing nuclear doom upon America. Efforts to steer the committee in these

directions will be fruitless, and repeated attempts by delegates to do so will bring consequences.

Figure 2. Members of the National Defense Commission with Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un



Brief History

The Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea (North Korea, DPRK) formed in 1948 following the Second World War. The Soviet Union retained interests in the northern half of the Korean peninsula while the United States and its allies retained interests in the South. The resulting conflict, known to the North Koreans as the Fatherland Liberation War, began in 1950. Although fighting ended with an armistice in 1953, North and South Korea remain officially at war. North Korea was accepted to the United Nations in 1991.

The Leadership and the Government's Ideology

The country's first Supreme Leader, Kim Il-Sung, *The Great Leader*, was inspired by Stalinist teachings, although he worked to distance himself from Stalinism later in his rule. His major contributions to the North Korean system were two-fold. First, he established solidified the cult of personality that continues to encircle the Kim family to this day. This personality cult hails the Kim leaders as Gods and is pervasive throughout daily North Korean life. Today, there are over 500 statues of Kim Il-Sung throughout North Korea and an imagine of

him in every public place as well as every citizen's home.

Kim's other important contribution to North Korean political culture was the introduction of Juche, the state's policy of self-reliance. Juche, first introduced in a speech by Kim in 1995, is the political ideology that blends Marxism-Leninist with Korean traditions and Kim's own ideals. The ideology consists of three major principals: political independence, economic self-sustenance, and self-reliance in defense. The main treatise on Juche, *On the Juche Idea*, was published under Kim's name in 1982. The ideology even has its own calendar, which the North Korean government has used to replace the traditional Gregorian calendar after the year 1911. Kim Il-Sung died in July 1994 and power transferred to his son and appointed heir, Kim Jong-II.

Kim Jong-II, *The Dear Leader*, consolidated power over a period of three years. In the mid-1990s, North Korea suffered severe floods that resulted in economic devastation and a severe famine that killed 220,000 according to the North Korean government. In order to strengthen the country and the regime following the devastation, Kim 2 adopted the widely known policy of Songun (Military-First). This granted the Korean People's Army (KPA) supreme power over all of North Korean government and society and designated the KPA as the primary recipient of resources. Kim 2 also greatly expanded the cult of personality established by his father. Both men continue to be deified. He died in 2011 and was succeeded by his third son, Kim Jong-Un.

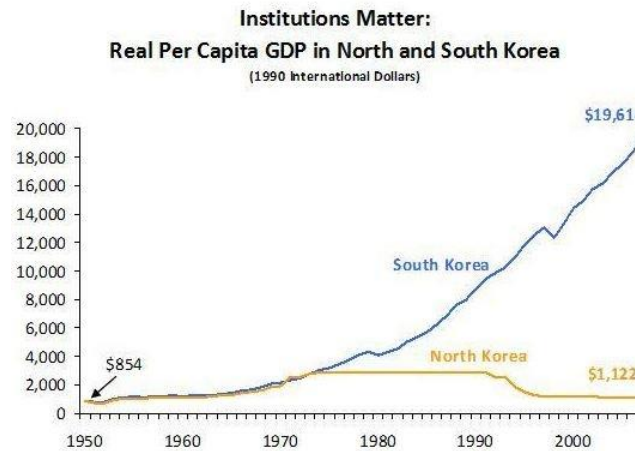
Kim Jong-Un, *Supreme Leader*, continues to solidify his power within North Korea. In order to do so, Kim has purged men he believes to be disloyal or solely representing the ideals of his father. Most famously, Kim 3 reportedly ordered his uncle, Jang Song Theak, and multiple members of his family. He has recently been plagued with health issues speculated to be a result of his growing weight. Kim 3 has yet to contribute significantly to Korean ideology, as his rule is still fairly young. The cult of personality remains strong, with a record number of voters turning out for Kim 3's first popular election in 2014. Although running

unopposed, voters had the choice to vote yes or no. The government reported that no one voted no.

Economic Policies

The North Korean economy is state-controlled. Although Kim 2 introduced limited capitalist policies in the early 2000s, the initiative failed and North Korea continues to depend on foreign aid for food. In 2003, North and South Korea constructed the Kaesong Industrial Park on the North Korean side of the DMZ to allow South Korean companies to employ North Koreans. The total labor force is estimated to break down to about 23% in agriculture, 47% in industry, and 29% in services. The Juche strategy assigns top priority to the development of heavy industry, although significant importance is also placed on developing agriculture and light industry. North Korea remains one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world according to outside analysts.

Figure 3. Economic stagnation



Human Rights

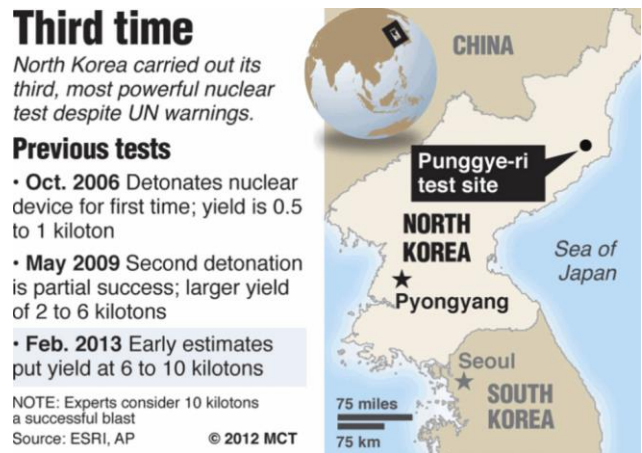
North Korean has been accused of gross human rights violations since the country’s founding. Although the constitution guarantees citizens many rights, in practice, there is no freedom of speech, press, or movement. In February 2014, the United Nations released a detailed, 400-page account of human rights violations within North

Korea. The regime alleges that international criticism of its human rights record is an excuse to attempt to overthrow or disproportionately punish the regime while other states, such as the United States, go unpunished for their own human rights violations. The government maintains that human rights are conditional and that the rights of the group take precedent over individuals’ rights.

Alleged abuses range from political prisoners detained in concentration camps to severely restricted civil liberties, and a total lack of due process in the criminal justice system. The country is alleged to have between 150,000 and 200,000 political prisoners in concentration camps where they perform forced labor and are tortured, beaten, and executed. North Korea also practices generational forced labor in which multiple, subsequent generations of family members will be forced to serve in concentration camps as the result of an ancestor’s alleged misconduct. North Korea vehemently denies that these camps exist. There is also a severe imbalance in the distribution of food, public executions, and no freedom of movement, among a slew of other allegations.

Nuclear Ambitions

Figure 4. DPRK nuclear test detonations

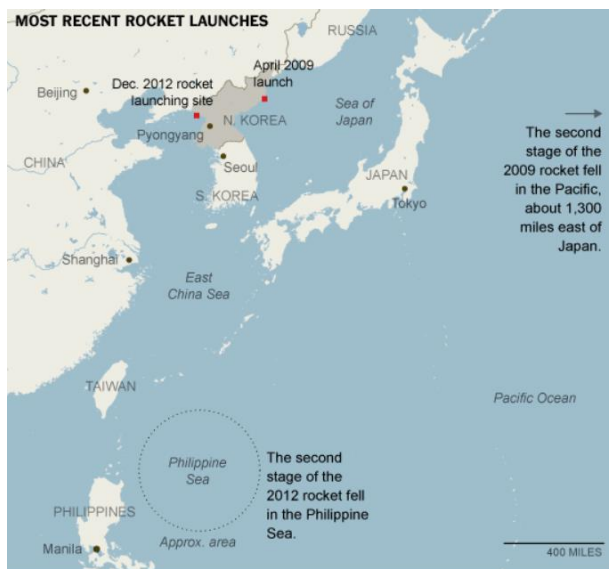


North Korea’s first successful nuclear test occurred in 2006 under Kim Jong-il. State media officially confirmed the device’s detonation on October 9, 2006 and hailed it as wildly successful; however, USGS data indicates that

the explosion was 1/24th to 1/50th the size of the Indian and Pakistani tests of the 1990s, suggesting that the North Korean government greatly inflated the success of the detonation. Despite the program's dismantling in 2007 in exchange for food and fuel aid, the program restarted in May 2009. Since 2009, North Korea has tested two more nuclear devices, one in 2009 and another in 2013. The state maintains that its nuclear program is defensive and is in direct response to the United States' belligerence.

Currently there is little confidence by the outside world that North Korea is capable of deploying a functional nuclear weapon. Their nuclear technology is not miniaturized and, therefore, cannot be attached to warheads. North Korea does not possess intercontinental ballistic missiles and cannot attack the United States with their current technology but is fully capable of attacking neighboring countries that are American allies such as South Korea, Japan, and Guam.

Figure 5. Recent DPRK Ballistic Missile and Space Launch Vehicle Launches



Foreign Relations

North Korea is one of the most isolated states on the planet; however, it does retain allies. Above all, the DPRK uses arms sales—exporting ballistic missile and nuclear reactors

enrichment technology—to maintain connections and as a source of income. Major clients include Iran, Pakistan and Syria. Major diplomatic efforts led by the United States, especially the 2003 Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), have greatly reduced this trade. But exports of ballistic missiles, the most legitimate part of the trade, continues.

China and Russia continue to maintain interests in North Korea. China is primarily interested in preserving the regime to prevent the power vacuum that would result from the collapse of the North Korean government. China also has long-standing emotional and doctrinal commitments to the dependence of the country it saved by intervening during the Korean War, when the Chinese People's Liberation Army lost an estimated 400,000 dead, winning its first victories over the United States.

The Republic of Korea (South Korea) is DPRK's most important foreign policy contact after China. Although the two have been separate since 1947, they continue to regard this separation as unnatural and wrong. Both expect to be the sole representative of the Korean people. Relations have been poor, culminating in a series of military attacks by DPRK against the south, most spectacularly the shelling of islands controlled by the ROK and the sinking of the ROK naval vessel, the Cheonan on 26 March 2010, killing 104 sailors. Despite the difficult relations between the two, there has been discussion of contact between the two countries.

The United States has no formal relations with North Korea. A legal state of war continues between DPRK and the United States, which DPRK continues to see as its primary enemy. These sentiments are not without foundation. American popular literature and statements from political leaders routinely portray the DPRK as America's greatest enemy. These feelings have been overcome occasionally. The most impressive occasion was in 1994, when the two countries accepted an Agreed Framework to avert war, under the leadership of Leader Kim Il-sung and President Bill Clinton. North Korea stopped its nuclear program in exchange for petroleum and light-water nuclear reactor technology (not useful for weaponization) from South Korea and Japan.

This agreement was controversial in the United States. In 2001 President George W. Bush cancelled it. This provoked a series of crises, culminating in DPRK's decision in 2009 to restart its nuclear reactor at Yongbyon.

For a review of DPRK's relations with these and other governments, see the Wikipedia article, 'Foreign relations of North Korea', at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foreign_relations_of_North_Korea

Figure 6. Diplomatic isolation

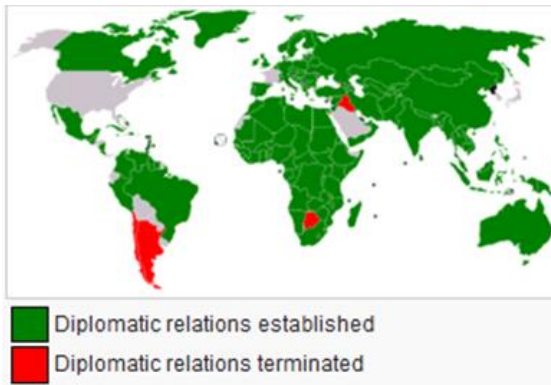


Figure 7. DPRK's NARO-1 Space Launch Vehicle ready for its successful orbital launch on 12 December 2012



Figure 8. Site of the Sinking of the ROK Cheonan, 26 March 2010



Figure 9. Salvaging the hulk of the Cheonan, after the 2010 sinking



Assignment Biographies

Ri Yong-mu - Vice Chairman - Though his associates have been questioned by the Worker's Party of Korea in the past, Ri Yong-mu's loyalty to Kim Jong-un has secured him his place in the NDC as one of Kim Jong-un's senior advisors and Vice Chairman.

O Kuk-ryol - Vice Chairman - Serving as a senior member of the air force, briefly as the head of an electronic warfare agency, and one of the leaders in the production of counterfeit US "superdollars," Kuk-ryol was considered a strong influence in naming a successor after the death of Kim Jong-il.

Pak To-chun - Worker's Party of Korea Secretary for Military Industry - As Secretary for Military Industry for the WPK, Pak To-chun is in charge of the military industry of the state. This encompasses the production of weapons of war and overseeing weapons tests, including experimental ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons programs.

Hyon Yong-chol - Minister of the People's Armed Forces - The Minister of the People's Armed Forces is responsible for the logistical components of the North Korean military, managing relations with foreign militaries and organizing troop training, military strategy, demonstrations, and day to day operations.

Kim Won-hong - Minister of State Security - As Minister of State Security, Won-hong is in charge of North Korea's secret police divisions and labor camps, answering directly to Kim Jong-un. Though these police and labor camps are kept from the global eye as much as possible, the influences and impact that this position has on the people of North Korea is undeniable.

Choi Pu-il - Minister of People's Security - Choi Pu-il is what could be considered progressive for North Korea, combining a fierce loyalty to the new leader with willingness to take new opportunities to strengthen the security of the state and push North Korea into the global

scene. As Minister of People's Security, Pu-il manages the police and prison system, and supplies personal bodyguards for officials.

Choe Kwang-jin - Minister of Finance - A member of the Cabinet of North Korea, Kwang-jin has been asked to attend this meeting of the NDC in order to provide budgetary expertise to the commission. This power ranges from offering advice to "reallocating funds." While Kwang-jin works diligently for Kim Jong-un, he is very much an ideological traditionalist.

Son Young-soo - Minister of the Foreign Affairs Department - As Minister of the Foreign Affairs Department, Young-soo is mainly in charge of gaining and providing the input of North Korea's close allies regarding plans that the NDC is developing, especially pertaining to military exercises. While more global relations are handled by the Cabinet of North Korea, the Minister of the Foreign Affairs Department has the arguably more difficult job of keeping allied governments happy with the NDC's decisions.

Kwok Sang-hyun - Minister of the Policy Department - Kwok Sang-hyun is the figure in charge of one of North Korea's most notable activities: producing and publicising policy statements to the people of North Korea. This constitutes a strong level of control over the presses, and authority to edit and censor by command.

Sol Jung-hoon - Minister of the Administration Department - Sol Jung-hoon oversees the implementation of the policy and manages those tasked with carrying it out. This position has historically sought enforcement of policies through collaboration with the Minister of State Security. This power extends to policy that implements construction and infrastructure as well.

Ri Yo-han - Minister of the Reconnaissance General Bureau - A secretive position, the Reconnaissance General Bureau is North Korea's intelligence collection and operations branch. While enforcement of findings typically means collaborating with one of the Ministers of

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Security, efforts involving spies, wiretapping, and other covert intelligence activities are overseen by Ri Yo-han.

Hyon Chol-hae - Minister of the Standing Bureau - The Standing Bureau is in charge of ensuring that the movements of high level officials, including the Supreme Leader, are timely and safe. By managing security arrangements and keeping a close eye on logistics, Chol-hae must work with the Minister of the People's Security the Minister of the Reconnaissance General Bureau, and the Minister of the People's Armed Forces to keep inspections, parties, parades and visits completely safe.

Bibliography

There is a vast literature on the DPRK. Much of it is highly polemical commentary, designed to feed American audiences taste for political fright. While not useless, such works cannot be relied on. They present the DPRK as partisans and polemicists fear, not the state as it exists. Instead, reads are recommended to rely on books by social scientists. Their tone may be more cautious, but also more reliable. Especially worthwhile:

The Survival of North Korea: Essays on Strategy, Economics, and International Relations. by Suk Hi Kim, Bernhard Seliger, Terence Roehrig, eds (2011).

Outstanding introduction to the problems of contemporary North Korea. This book contains several analytical articles detailing events that led to the North Korea of today, the purpose North Korea serves in Asia, and economic alternatives that may benefit the country based on its strengths. Most importantly, this book contains an exceptional article on the relationship between China and North Korea, a topic that delegates should be familiar with in order to make more informed decisions during the simulation. Failure to keep one of North Korea's largest allies appeased could spell disaster for the NDC.

The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future Hardcover. By Victor Cha (2012).

Former White House official responsible for East Asia, Victor Cha has written the definitive volume on North Korea, arguably the world's most menacing and mysterious nation. In *The Impossible State*, Cha, a singular expert on the region, exposes North Korea's veiled past; sheds light on its culture, economy, and foreign policy; and explores the possibilities of its uncertain future in the post-Kim Jong-il era. A timely and engaging insider's look at a volatile, and isolationist Asian enigma,

North Korea in Transition: Politics, Economy, and Society. By Kyung-Ae Park and Scott Snyder (2012)

The information in this resource is somewhat similar to the above text, but what sets this book aside is the depth of the articles that focus on North Korea's internal politics. Analysis of the Party system, how the military is ingrained into everyday operation, and how the rise of new leaders can change the function of the state. Delegates looking to become more confident with the domestic policies of North Korea and the intricacies of *juche* idealism as it exists today should seek out this text.

North Korea, 2009-2012: A Guide to Economic and Political Developments. By Ian Jeffries (2012)

For delegates interested in brushing up on the last ten years or so of North Korea's political and economic history but only have books written in the 2000s, this text compiles events by date to show a progression of the events that shaped North Korea into its current state. While I understand that many delegates will be preparing for this crisis committee by looking forward at possible outcomes, it should be stressed that repeating past mistakes is not only unfortunate, but also embarrassing.

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Articles:

[‘North Korea's Next Move’](#), by Robert A. Manning, *Foreign Affairs*, October 2014
As if the world didn't have enough problems, North Korea seems to be gearing up to add a few more. According to the New York Times, commercial satellite imagery has confirmed that Pyongyang recently upgraded its main satellite launching facility, which will enable it to test an intercontinental missile.

[The Next Korean War](#), Keir A. Lieber and Daryl G. Press, *Foreign Affairs*, April 2014
As North Korea issues increasingly over-the-top threats, officials in Washington have sought to reassure the public and U.S. allies. But the risk of nuclear war on the Korean Peninsula is far

from remote--and the United States should adjust its military planning accordingly.

[Pyongyang's Nuclear Logic](#), by Jennifer Lind, Keir A. Lieber, and Daryl G. Press, *Foreign Affairs*, February 2014

The view that nuclear weapons are merely political instruments -- suitable for sending signals, but not waging wars -- is now so common in the United States that it is hard to find anyone who disagrees. Yet that comforting assumption is not shared by leaders everywhere. North Korea, for example, does not test nuclear weapons to send messages, but to make sure that its ultimate deterrent will work. It would be tragic if the United States let misguided Kremlinology distract from the real challenges ahead.