

# Intermediate Committee SECURITY COUNCIL



# SJMUNC XXXVII

Saint John's Model United Nations Conference

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## Letter From the Chairs

Hello Delegates,

Welcome to the Security Council Committee. My name is Nathan Rezk, and I am a senior here at Saint John's High School. I will be chairing this Security Council along with Gabriel Mercado-Lubo, a Junior here at SJ. We are beyond excited to welcome you to campus and, most importantly, SJMUNC XXXVII. Gabe and I have both attended numerous national Model UN Conferences, notably the University of Chicago and Brown University Conferences, among others. Gabe and I are both also members of our school's regionally competitive DECA club.

The current situation surrounding nuclear weapon development in North Korea is a serious topic. It should be treated as such in order for everyone involved to make the most of their committee experience. While SJMUNC prides itself on being a "learning" conference, delegates should bear in mind that this committee demands adequate preparation and research. We would like to point out that the information provided in this briefing paper was collected in late July; therefore, we encourage all delegates to stay informed on the topic and conduct their own research on the current situation to be as prepared as possible for the committee. We are enthusiastic to see the product of your efforts throughout this committee and are excited to welcome you all to SJMUNCXXXVII. If you have any questions, feel free to email us; we would be happy to answer any of your questions!

Regards,

[Nathan Rezk](#) and [Gabriel Mercado-Lubo](#)

## Statement of the problem

Throughout the last few decades, nuclear weapon development in North Korea has become increasingly rampant. North Korea is estimated to have assembled 50 nuclear warheads and has the fissile material for 70-90 nuclear weapons.<sup>1</sup> Through its nuclear development program, North Korea has developed technology capable of launching missiles by land and submarine. This poses a large threat to countries worldwide, particularly nearby countries such as South Korea and Japan. Countries such as the United States, Canada, and other Western powers, which are now in range of North Korea's nuclear missiles, also face a risk given North Korea's anti-western precedents. The constant threat of nuclear war causes fear across the globe and sets dangerous precedents regarding the use of nuclear weapons in warfare. With billions of people living under the painful reign of this reality, the matter at hand has become one of the most pressing concerns facing global security. In this committee, we will address North Korea's dangerous Nuclear Weapons development and testing program, the possible implementation of new international limitations and guidelines regarding nuclear development, and the safety of the global population, particularly those in the range of North Korea's missiles.

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<sup>1</sup> "Arms Control and Proliferation Profile: North Korea." *Arms Control Association*, [www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/arms-control-and-proliferation-profile-north-korea](http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/arms-control-and-proliferation-profile-north-korea). Accessed 30 July 2024.

## History of the Problem

The story of North Korea's nuclear arms development started in the 1950s but began to take an earnest turn in the 1970s. With help from the Soviet Union in the early 1960s, the Yongbyon Nuclear Research Center was inaugurated and included state-of-the-art Soviet technology. In 1964, China tested its first nuclear missile, and North Korea requested technology from them; however, China declined. Shortly after, North Korea began to pursue its own fission experiments. In the 1980s, North Korea signed a Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) with the Soviet Union, which they would later withdraw from in 2003. This treaty would allow the Soviet Union and North Korea to exchange nuclear resources while also minimizing nuclear testing and other harmful nuclear activities.<sup>2</sup> In 1989, the United States discovered a nuclear construction at a North Korean Nuclear Complex. This heightened tensions, and the United States responded by encouraging adherence to the NPT. Throughout the 1990s, the US would pursue diplomatic solutions with North Korea, to no avail. On October 8th, 2006, North Korea stunned the World when they carried out their first nuclear test. The test was conducted underground and caused a 4.2-magnitude



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<sup>2</sup> "North Korea's Nuclear Program: A History," North Korea's Nuclear Program: A History | Korean Legal Studies, accessed August 2, 2024, <https://kls.law.columbia.edu/content/north-koreas-nuclear-program-history>. 2 Aug. 2024.

tremor on the Korean Peninsula. Just two days prior to this test, the United Nations Security Council informed North Korea that such actions would have dire consequences. The Security Council would go on to condemn this action and impose sanctions just eight days later. Since 2006, the UN Security Council has passed several resolutions to make nuclear development more difficult for North Korea. On June 30, 2019, President Donald Trump became the first sitting US President to visit North Korea. In their summit, the two leaders agreed to resume conversation throughout the following weeks; however, North Korea launched another test missile just a few hours later. Later that year, North Korea terminated their talks with the United States. Since then, North Korea has achieved numerous nuclear feats, including the development and testing of its first hypersonic missile, the Hwasong-8, in September of 2021. This missile is capable of traveling at five times the speed of sound.<sup>3</sup> Their developments have caused a global scramble in which countries such as South Korea are offering to host US nuclear weapons in order to deter North Korean aggression. In 2022, North Korea passed new legislation which effectively prevented them from entering denuclearization talks with any foreign power. Throughout 2023, North Korea continued fiercely testing their nuclear missiles, developing an arsenal, and inevitably heightening tensions.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

## Possible Solutions

The topic of nuclear weapon development in North Korea does not have a straightforward solution due to the multitude of factors that come into play, including, international relations, the authoritarianism of the North Korean government, and the nonexistence of a unified global strategy.

The United States government has employed many strategies to put Kim Jong Un's reign to a halt, such as increasing information access to the North Korean people which could start a positive change in North Korea.<sup>4</sup> Solutions like these would make North Korean citizens aware of the ongoing situation in their own country. North Korea has fought back on efforts like these making it a crime to “illegally install operating system programs on other people's mobile phones” to keep the people out of touch with the outside world.

Economic strategies and international cooperation are also crucial in addressing the North Korean missile crisis. Targeted sanctions can be enhanced to target officials and entities involved in the missile and nuclear programs, as well as sanctions on important industries such as coal and textiles to limit funding for weapons development. Economic incentives can also play a role, offering economic relief in exchange for verifiable steps toward denuclearization, and investment in North Korean infrastructure contingent on compliance.

Humanitarian aid focusing on food security and healthcare can build goodwill and reduce anti-foreign propaganda.

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<sup>4</sup> *United States Institute of Peace*. [www.usip.org/publications/2024/04/increasing-information-access-north-korean-people](http://www.usip.org/publications/2024/04/increasing-information-access-north-korean-people). Accessed 2 Aug. 2024.

These are only a few examples of possible solutions, but we encourage all delegates to be creative with their ideas and come up with thoughtful ways to confront this problem.

## Bloc Positions

### NATO

**Albania:** Supports the retention and potential use of Nuclear Weapons as indicated by their endorsement of various alliance statements of NATO, which it is a part of.

**Canada:** Diplomatic relations with North Korea have been strained due to Canada's close relationship with the United States. Strongly opposes North Korea's nuclear program and supports international sanctions and denuclearization efforts.

**France:** Strongly opposes North Korea's nuclear program and supports international sanctions and denuclearization.

**Germany:** Opposes North Korea's nuclear development and supports international sanctions and denuclearization.

**United Kingdom:** Strongly opposes North Korea's nuclear program and supports international sanctions and denuclearization.

**United States:** Strongly opposes North Korea's nuclear program, advocating for denuclearization and supporting international sanctions.

**Sweden:** Opposes North Korea's nuclear development and supports international sanctions.

**Turkey:** Opposes North Korea's nuclear program and supports international sanctions.

## Other Countries

**Australia:** Strongly opposes North Korea's nuclear program and supports denuclearization efforts and sanctions.

**Brazil:** Supports non-proliferation and generally advocates for diplomatic engagement.

**China:** China's only formal alliance is with North Korea. They have a mutual trade and cooperation treaty which dates back to 1961.

**India:** Supports non-proliferation but is less vocal, focusing on regional stability and diplomatic engagement. India did provide North Korea \$1 million in aid during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Japan:** Strongly opposes North Korea's nuclear program, advocating for denuclearization and supporting international sanctions. Japan has encouraged North Korea to comply with previous guidelines set by the UN.

**Liberia:** Supports non-proliferation and aims for a future free of nuclear weapons.

**Malaysia:** Malaysia is the only country in Southeast Asia that does not maintain diplomatic relations with North Korea and bans its people from traveling to the country.

**Mexico:** Supports non-proliferation and advocates for diplomatic solutions.

**Morocco:** Supports non-proliferation and is generally in favor of diplomatic engagement.

**New Zealand:** Opposes North Korea's nuclear development and supports international sanctions.

Sent ships to Japan to ensure that North Korea does not violate UN nuclear guidelines.

**Nigeria:** Was formerly open to receiving nuclear missiles from North Korea, but has more recently confirmed that the country does not possess any such weapons of their own.

**North Korea:** Actively pursues nuclear development.

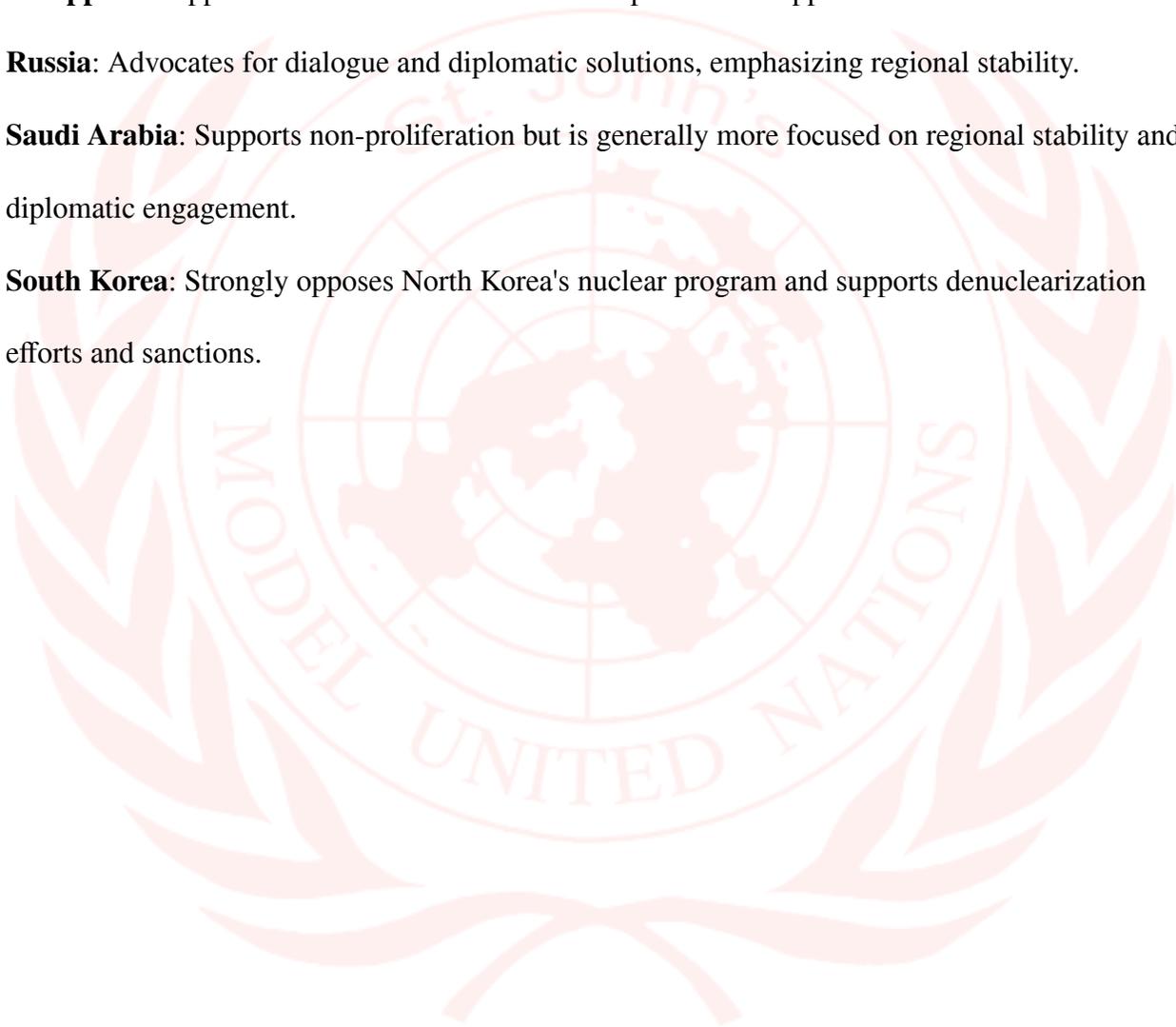
**Pakistan:** Takes a more measured approach, often calling for dialogue and diplomatic solutions.

**Philippines:** Opposes North Korea's nuclear development and supports international sanctions.

**Russia:** Advocates for dialogue and diplomatic solutions, emphasizing regional stability.

**Saudi Arabia:** Supports non-proliferation but is generally more focused on regional stability and diplomatic engagement.

**South Korea:** Strongly opposes North Korea's nuclear program and supports denuclearization efforts and sanctions.



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