



Security Council

SC

*Topic A: The Question of North  
Korea's Nuclear Weapon Program*

ALEXMUN 2017

Dear delegates,

We're pleased to welcome you to the Security Council of Alexmun 2017. We're very excited to be a part of this Model of the United Nations and for you to join us. My name is Marene Méndez and I'm the president of this committee. I've had experience in models and I've learned MUN teaches all its delegates and chairs about world problems/situations that concern us all. I invite you to join us and live this enriching experience for the first time or to live it again and continue learning new things.

As the moderator of this committee we have Alejandra Bremauntz. She lived in the United States for 8 years. She is also very interested in world affairs and is very excited to be a part of this committee alongside with our next chair member, Amaro Garcia Cubas. He is the conference officer of the Security Council. He has had a lot of experience in MUNs both as delegate and as a chair. Last, but not least, we have Patricio Hernández as our political advisor. He has a lot of knowledge on the topics we'll be addressing and he is the person you can ask any question to, regarding either protocol or the topics addressed.

Every chair member of this committee is very excited for you delegates to be part of Security Council and debate about our important topics, which are:

- The Issue of North Korea's Nuclear Weapon Program
- Reevaluation UN Peacekeeping missions in Syria.

We can assure you an enriching experience and a great discussion of these topics through all the sessions we'll have in the model. We remind you this is Alexmun's most advance committee. Protocol will be strictly enforced, and we expect all delegates to live up to the most excellent academic standards. Realistic debate is expected with realistic plans, ideas and possible solutions that can be proposed, aiming for world peace. We invite you to read more about the topics that will be addressed and to contact any of the chair members of the committee. We are happy to answer any question you might have regarding the Security Council of Alexmun 2017.

You can contact us through our mails:

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## **Committee's brief**

As mentioned before, the Security Council's primary responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 15 members, five of which are permanent members (United States, the United Kingdom, France, the Russian Federation, and China) and each member has one vote. When a threat to the peace or an act of aggression happens, it calls upon the parties to discuss whether to settle it by peaceful means or resort to imposing sanctions or even the use of force. The Council also frequently deploys peacekeeping missions that bring soldiers and police directly into conflict zones. This is an activity that causes controversies in the UN, specially when these missions apply lethal force.

The Security Council also advises the General Assembly about the Secretary General and the admission of new members to the UN; and together, with the General Assembly they elect the judges of the International Court of Justice.

The Security Council held its first session slightly after World War II on January 17, 1946 at Church House, Westminster, London. Its permanent residence since then has been the United Nations Headquarters in New York City though it has held sessions in many cities. It is necessary that a representative of each member of the Security Council stays in the UN Headquarters so that they can meet at any time as the need arises.

The current 15 members of the Security Council are the following:

- United States of America
- France
- China
- Russian Federation
- The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- Bolivia
- Egypt
- Ethiopia
- Japan
- Italy
- Kazakhstan
- Senegal
- Ukraine
- Uruguay
- Sweden

## **Introduction to the Issue:**

Since 1968 the nations in the world that could muster the ability to produce nuclear arms, had agreed to the non-proliferation of these weapons of mass destruction. This in order to prevent the spread of nuclear warheads and also the spread of the technology to produce them, all of this was sealed in a document called the "Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons". Since then this agreement has stopped nuclear war from ravaging the entire globe, as seen in the period between the 1940's and 1980's in the cold war. Many countries have agreed to the treaty since its original inception, however one nation opted out of it in 2003: North Korea.

Ever since, North Korea has posed an immediate threat to the western world. In current times the threat of a nuclear attack by North Korea has increased exponentially. With the passing of the current decade there has been an increase in the number of missile tests made by the North Korea, this has effectively has caused international turmoil between North Korea, Japan, China and the USA.

The North Korean Weapons Program started all the way back in the early 1950's, as a direct aftermath of the Korean War. North Korea, aided by the Soviet Union began to develop their nuclear arms. In the beginning the Soviet Union and the Chinese People's Republic provided assistance and personnel to help the North Koreans develop their program, however after some time, the arms program began developing mainly internally. As the years passed, North Korea began to make huge leaps in the development of their nuclear program and in the year of 1985 North Korea joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

At first North Korea joined the treaty as a non-nuclear nation, meaning that this stated that North Korea was unable to produce nuclear energy and armament. Later, in 1993 North Korea refused various attempts to inspect its nuclear power plants; this caused a great amount of tension between the USA and North Korea, in 1994 both countries conceded to sign a bilateral agreement: North Korea would freeze its nuclear power plants and allow regular inspections while the USA would be more lax while trading with North Korea.

In 2002 international suspicion began to arise when rumors spread that North Korea had started their nuclear program for the second time. The rumors were proven true when in 2003 North Korea decided to leave the NPT, decision that resulted in the collapse of the agreement between the USA and North Korea.

Now, 14 years after North Korea's withdrawal from the NPT the majority of the details of their nuclear arms program have remained shrouded in secrecy and only small fragments of information have come to light. Many experts speculate that the increasing obsolescence of North Korea's weaponry has led them to focus on developing their arsenal of weapons of mass destruction. Since 2016 there has been an alarming increase in the tests for ballistic missiles. Even though most of these tests have not presented the most favorable results for the North Korean government, it still makes the idea of a nuclear attack a very real threat, as it seems that with every new test the North Koreans are one step closer to perfecting their weaponry.

Currently there is no precise figure of how many nuclear warheads North Korea has produced, but there are reports that their newer ballistic missiles are small enough to fit them in the tip of these missiles, but it is also stated that there is no proof if this has been done whatsoever.

North Korea's actions have been denounced by various nations of the world, mainly the USA, South Korea and Japan. The latter two are in the most immediate threat since North Korea possesses a large quantity of short ranged missiles that could be used against them.

The main problem with the actions taken by North Korea is not the threat of an attack, the main issue is that the unchecked escalation is making the alliances between Seoul, Tokyo and Washington D.C fragile and wavering, and this one of the goals of North Korea to gain a stronger influence in the Korean peninsula and represent a threat to every power in the world. The other goal, which they refer to as their ultimate goal is to be able to have a functional long range ballistic missile so they can basically hold the US hostages of a nuclear bombardment. As of August of 2017 North Korea has threatened to bomb the island of Guam, a territory controlled by the USA. This has caused the current administration of the American government to threaten the North Koreans with even more sanctions that they have placed over them, as well as a retaliatory attack of "fire and fury" as the current president of the USA Donald Trump stated in an interview held on mid-August.

The American government has the utmost concern for the possibility of North Korean missiles hitting the continental USA, so they have in their best interest to take North Korea to a negotiation table so they can avoid at all costs the development of this dreaded long-range missile. Other nations that want to desperately try to negotiate in a peaceful manner with the government from Pyongyang are the Chinese,

the Japanese and the South Koreans, at least to try and freeze the current development of the arms program.

However the possibility of there being a deal between the North Korean government and the USA (and its allied nations) is relatively low, since there is nothing of interest that the North Koreans would want from these nations.

One nation that has also been responsible for steering the wheel towards international turmoil is The Russian Federation. Their interests have proved far different from the ones of The USA and its allies. Russia has (since 2015) supported North Korea more openly than it used to. Russia's border with North Korea is one of the main trading routes between both nations, and this is important for Russia since North Korea is one of its most avid suppliers of energetic resources like fuel and coal and mineral products such as iron and zinc. President Vladimir Putin has stated that if North Korea receives far tougher economic sanctions from the UN, it would be counterproductive and against Russian interests. However, regarding the use of military force, president Putin has aligned with the notion that an armed conflict would be catastrophic and that a solution should be mainly achieved by more peaceful and diplomatic means.

North Korea has (since July of 2017) bragged about the advancements made to their arms program, stating that their accuracy is pretty high and that their destructive capability is higher, most of these claims are debatable since North Korea doesn't possess the technology to accurately guide their missiles to their targets. This brings relief to the allies of USA and the USA itself since the chances of North Korea in keeping up with the promises to attack Guam or other targets such as South Korea and Japan, strikingly low.

Now, North Korea's actions have been portrayed as incendiary, since they can spark a conflict with the most miniscule misstep, and it should be taken that way. North Korea has been developing this arms program in order to keep at bay any nation that opposes them, these has led the world to live in fear of a nuclear conflict, one that could have very dire consequences for every nation in the world.

The UN, regarding how international peace is at the brink of collapsing has adopted one posture: it has passed tougher sanctions against the North Koreans. The UN SC has decided to approve the following sanctions:

- Vessels that come in and out of North Korea must be inspected at any port in the world, having into account the compliance of the nation in which these ships arrive.
- The number of refined petroleum barrels that North Korea can buy is capped at 2,000,000.
- The import of North Korean laborers is prohibited, unless it is of the utmost need or if it involves the task of de-nuclearization.

The sanctions however, do not include a travel ban for the North Korean leader Kim Jong Un or an asset freeze. It also excludes the ban on textile exports, like the USA proposed on the original draft for these sanctions.

The People's Republic of China has stated that it is worried that the limit on the sale of energetic resources to the North Koreans could, eventually, cause its collapse. The UK has also adopted a more cautious posture towards the sanctions, stating that the original "harsher" sanctions imposed by the US would have made the western world as a genocidal and oppressing force, by giving the North Koreans the excuse to use pictures of the suffering population as a direct cause of the sanctions.

Also, regarding the threat of a nuclear conflict, the UN decided to pass resolution 71/258 (on July 2017) in which nuclear weapons were discussed. This resolution looks for a legally binding way in which the elimination of nuclear arms is achieved. On its main points the resolution urges to avoid the use and experimentation of nuclear arms as well as to punish and pursue any threats made by any nation of the world to use nuclear force. It also states that each member nation should regulate their nuclear energy agencies and maintain aligned to the NPT. The resolution passed on the general assembly with 122 votes in favor, 1 against and 1 abstention.

## **Current Issue**

North Korea's nuclear programme is, nowadays one of the principal threats against the international community. In the past few months North Korea's army has conducted several tests with nuclear bombs. According to the Washington Post, they just successfully created a miniaturized nuclear warhead, this is needed in order to fit into a missile. The objective is to travel larger distances. Although this is a not easy task, US intelligence thinks that Pyongyang's government is capable of fulfilling their threats. If they are correct, the threat is real and very dangerous, because that means that a missile warhead could reach Alaska and Hawaii.

Since 2006 North Korea has conducted several nuclear test and their capability of threat has been improved since then. One of the remaining questions is if they are planning to use these weapons to stir international conflict.

The other great doubt is if they are using plutonium or uranium as the starting material, as uranium is much more abundant than plutonium, and hence presents a larger threat.

Pyongyang is using a site in the Mountains near Yongbyon as their main nuclear facility; this site spent fuel from power stations and has been the key source of plutonium nuclear programme, but US and South Korea believes the North has other sites linked to a uranium-enrichment programme.

But what is the global community doing (US, Russia, Japan and South Korea) to block this threat? They are trying to engage the North in rounds of negotiation in order to agree disarmament deals, but implementing this kind of deals has proven to be a difficult task.

All the attempts of negotiation with North Korea have not succeed, and the whole world is worried and in danger.

In the past years, North Korea promised to give up his nuclear ambitions in return for political and economic help, they even destroyed a cooling tower in Yongbyon as a part of the disarmament and aid deal.

However, the government later ignored the deal, and since 2009 implementing the deal has been almost impossible.

The US never believed that they were closing their nuclear facilities, because of the uranium enrichment facility in Yongbyon, which the argued was an electricity facility.



In 2012, they asked the US for food aid and announced that in exchange they would suspend all missile tests. But as always, they didn't respect the deal, by trying to launch a rocket that same year.

In 2013 after being in war with the US and with new UN sanctions, they vowed to restart their nuclear facilities. By 2015 normal operations resumed again.

The new tests in 2016 brought international condemnation, including China, which had been their historic ally. The UN Security Council imposed new sanctions, the last one passed on September 11, 2017, on the Security Council Resolution 2375. There have been 8 resolutions that impose different sanctions, restrictions etc. There have been other sanctions imposed by the United States, South Korea, the European Union, etc.

Last August US president, Donald Trump threatened North Korea in one of his speeches. However, this intimidation attempt failed, and North Korea threatened to strike the US territory of Guam, an island in the Western Pacific.

### **Topics to be addressed.**

Here are some topics you should research as a delegate, as they are the main ideas we expect you to tackle during the model.

- The immediate threat those North Korea possess to the western world. How is North Korea a threat to the international community?
- The importance of the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty. What other treaties and sanctions should be imposed?
- The Relationship that North Korea has with the world powers such as the USA and China. What is the role of the P5 and other countries such as South Korea on the issue?
- The possibility of a nuclear conflict. What are the chances of a nuclear conflict, and what can the Security Council do to prevent this
- The general situation of Nuclear Proliferation Worldwide
- The courses of action that the UN SC should take in case of a nuclear conflict sparking out. What actions should the Security Council take on North Korea to prevent Nuclear War? What role should the SC play in the case that the conflict breaks out?

### **Key Words**

**Ballistic missiles:** A ballistic missile is a missile that follows a ballistic trajectory with the objective of delivering one or more warheads to a predetermined target.

**Cold war:** The Cold War was a state of geopolitical tension after World War II between powers in the Eastern Bloc and powers in the Western Bloc.

**Consequences:** A result or effect of an action or condition.

**Hostages:** A person seized or held as security for the fulfillment of a condition.

**Mass destruction:** A weapon of mass destruction (WMD) is a nuclear, radiological, chemical, biological or other weapon that can kill and bring significant harm to a large number of humans or cause great damage to human-made structures (e.g., buildings), natural structures (e.g., mountains), or the biosphere.

**Negotiation:** Discussion aimed at reaching an agreement.

**Non-proliferation:** The prevention of an increase or spread of something, especially the number of countries possessing nuclear weapons.

**Nuclear arms:** A bomb or missile that uses nuclear energy to cause an explosion.

**Nuclear energy:** Nuclear power is the use of nuclear reactions that release nuclear energy to generate heat, which most frequently is then used in steam turbines to produce electricity in a nuclear power plant.

**Nuclear warheads:** The forward part of a missile or other projectile whose explosive device derives its power from nuclear fission or fusion.

**Turmoil:** A state of great disturbance, confusion, or uncertainty.

**Withdrawal:** A withdrawal is a type of military operation, generally meaning retreating forces back while maintaining contact with the enemy.

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